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THE NATURAL HISTORY OF  
INFIDELITY AND SUPERSTITION  
IN CONTRAST WITH CHRISTIAN FAITH:

EIGHT

DIVINITY LECTURE SERMONS,

PREACHED BEFORE

THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

IN THE YEAR MDCCCLII,

ON THE FOUNDATION OF

THE LATE REV. JOHN BAMPTON, M.A.

CANON OF SALISBURY.

---

BY

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OXFORD:

PRINTED BY J. WRIGHT, PRINTER TO THE UNIVERSITY.

LONDON: JOHN W. PARKER AND SON.

OXFORD: W. GRAHAM.

1852.



**EXTRACT**  
FROM  
**THE LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT**  
OF THE  
**REV. JOHN BAMPTON,**  
**CANON OF SALISBURY.**

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— “ I give and bequeath my Lands and Estates to  
“ the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University  
“ of Oxford for ever, to have and to hold all and sin-  
“ gular the said Lands or Estates upon trust, and to the  
“ intents and purposes hereinafter mentioned; that is to  
“ say, I will and appoint that the Vice-Chancellor of the  
“ University of Oxford for the time being shall take and  
“ receive all the rents, issues, and profits thereof, and  
“ (after all taxes, reparations, and necessary deductions  
“ made) that he pay all the remainder to the endowment  
“ of eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, to be established for  
“ ever in the said University, and to be performed in the  
“ manner following :

“ I direct and appoint, that, upon the first Tuesday in  
“ Easter Term, a Lecturer be yearly chosen by the Heads  
“ of Colleges only, and by no others, in the room ad-  
“ joining to the Printing-House, between the hours of ten  
“ in the morning and two in the afternoon, to preach  
“ eight Divinity Lecture Sermons, the year following, at  
“ St. Mary’s in Oxford, between the commencement of the

“ last month in Lent Term, and the end of the third week  
“ in Act Term.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that the eight Divinity  
“ Lecture Sermons shall be preached upon either of the  
“ following Subjects—to confirm and establish the Christ-  
“ ian Faith, and to confute all heretics and schismatics  
“ —upon the divine authority of the holy Scriptures—  
“ upon the authority of the writings of the primitive Fa-  
“ thers, as to the faith and practice of the primitive Church  
“ —upon the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus  
“ Christ—upon the Divinity of the Holy Ghost—upon the  
“ Articles of the Christian Faith, as comprehended in the  
“ Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds.

“ Also I direct, that thirty copies of the eight Divinity  
“ Lecture Sermons shall be always printed, within two  
“ months after they are preached, and one copy shall be  
“ given to the Chancellor of the University, and one copy  
“ to the Head of every College, and one copy to the Mayor  
“ of the city of Oxford, and one copy to be put into the  
“ Bodleian Library; and the expense of printing them shall  
“ be paid out of the revenue of the Land or Estates given  
“ for establishing the Divinity Lecture Sermons; and the  
“ Preacher shall not be paid, nor be entitled to the revenue,  
“ before they are printed.

“ Also I direct and appoint, that no person shall be  
“ qualified to preach the Divinity Lecture Sermons, un-  
“ less he hath taken the degree of Master of Arts at least,  
“ in one of the two Universities of Oxford or Cambridge;  
“ and that the same person shall never preach the Divinity  
“ Lecture Sermons twice.”



# C O N T E N T S.

## L E C T U R E I.

(Preached March 7.)

THE SOUL OF MAN: ITS INTEGRITY AND CORRUPTION.

PSALM cxxxix. 14.

*I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.* . . . . Page 1

## L E C T U R E II.

(Preached March 14.)

RENEWAL OF THE SOUL BY FAITH IN THE REDEEMER.

HOSEA xiii. 9.

*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help.* . . . . 42

## L E C T U R E III.

(Preached March 21.)

INFIDELITY IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS.

ISAIAH liii. 1.

*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* . . . . 75

## LECTURE IV.

(Preached May 2.)

THE CAUSES, OCCASIONS, AND EFFECTS OF INFIDELITY.

JOHN viii. 43.

*Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word.* . . . . 110

## LECTURE V.

(Preached May 9.)

THE NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPERSTITION.

ROMANS i. 22.

*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.* 151

## LECTURE VI.

(Preached May 16.)

THE EFFECTS OF SUPERSTITION.

JONAH ii. 8.

*They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.* . . . . 184

## LECTURE VII.

(Preached May 23.)

INFIDELITY AND SUPERSTITION COMPARED.

JEREMIAH ii. 3.

*My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.* . . . . 217

## LECTURE VIII.

(Preached June 13.)

INFIDELITY AND SUPERSTITION HOW TO BE PREVENTED  
AND WITHSTOOD.

JUDGES vi. 15, 16.

*And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. . . . . 252*



# LECTURE I.

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THE SOUL OF MAN: ITS INTEGRITY AND CORRUPTION.

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PSALM CXXXIX. 14.

*I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.*

CLEAR indications of the hand of an almighty and intelligent Creator have been long since traced in the structure of our bodily frame, and in various phenomena of our animal existence; and we have reason to expect that, in this field of observation, the progress of science will yet disclose to us new wonders, and bring to light fresh proofs of the wisdom and power of our Maker. If, for example, it shall be shown that the conditions of animal and vegetable life are closely connected with the subtle agency of some potent fluid diffused throughout the universe, the legitimate result of such discovery will be to enlarge our conceptions of that great Being to whose will and power we shall be

compelled to trace at once the existence of this simple law, and all those countless adaptations of the material upon which it has been brought to bear. Just as our acquaintance with the law of gravitation has served to exalt our apprehension of Him who sustains the planets in their orbits, so also, we may confidently predict, new illustrations of creative energy will accrue from every fresh observation of physical truth connected with the world in which we live.

If we ascend from a consideration of our animal structure and life to a survey of the connection which subsists between this portion of our nature and our higher faculties of mind, we pass into a region of still greater wonders. We all know that the body acts upon the soul, and the soul upon the body, so that each can help or hinder the operations of the other; but what is the connecting link, and what are the precise conditions of this agency, none can tell. And it is probable that these questions will still be involved in mystery, notwithstanding all the light which may be thrown upon the laws of mere animal existence. Still, however, if we duly attend to the phenomena presented by the reciprocal influence of body and mind, we shall find not only much to raise our

admiration, and to excite our thankfulness, but much also to instruct us in matters of practical wisdom. It will be no useless knowledge, if our minds are duly impressed with a conviction that, according to the design of our Creator, the body is not, as some have supposed, the prison of the soul, but rather its lodging or its home; a partner, rather than a burden or a drag; an instrument or servant, rather than a taskmaster or tyrant.

But, how wonderful soever may be the union which exists between body and mind, and how beneficial soever the results of that connection, we cannot but feel that we have before us a still higher object of contemplation when we consider the soul itself. Fearfully and wonderfully as the body has been made, and marvellously as it has been adapted to its purpose in the economy of our being, yet the greatest wonder after all is the mind that is able to recognise these things, the soul that "knoweth" them "right well." Who shall undertake to give a full answer to the question, What is the human soul? It is possible, however, to arrive at an answer to this inquiry which shall be true, although confessedly incomplete; and it is in the hope of supplying an answer of this kind, that I venture to propose for consideration,

this morning, the large and important question which now lies before us.

I must crave your indulgence, indeed, for thus introducing into the present discourse a topic more abstruse and less directly theological than may appear to suit this place; but it is not without reason that I now call your attention to the nature and relations of those living powers, intellectual and active, which we claim for the immortal part of man (1)<sup>a</sup>; and I will take care that these observations upon questions of mental philosophy shall be brief, and shall extend no further than is absolutely needful for the argument which is to follow.

In the ensuing course of Lectures it will be my endeavour to draw a comparison between *Infidelity* and *Superstition*, and to contrast these evil and perilous states of mind with *Christian Faith*. And it is in order that our progress may not hereafter be impeded by a frequent discussion of first principles, that I begin with some considerations respecting those faculties of the soul which are neglected, perverted, or abused by the man who rejects the gospel, and are rightly employed, and brought into due exercise by the man who, through divine grace, believeth unto righteousness. In the next Lecture I shall

<sup>a</sup> These numbers refer to the notes in the Appendix.



have occasion to describe the nature and office of true Christian Faith. Our way will then have been prepared for considering, in the two following discourses, the phases and bearings of Infidel systems, with their causes and occasions, and the results to which they lead. A similar survey of the errors of Superstition will follow:—and then, having compared the one class of evils with the other, I hope to make such practical remarks upon the whole subject as may be useful for the confirmation of truth and for the promotion of godliness, not without special regard to the aspect of the times in which we live.

Suffer me now to make those introductory remarks to which I have alluded, concerning *the nature and faculties of the human soul*.

The existence of our spiritual nature is an ultimate fact of consciousness, which does not even admit of proof; and the same may be said concerning our personal identity: so that we at once assume the existence of that individual self, which we denominate *the Soul* (2). And then the question arises, What is this soul?—a question which, within certain limits, we are both competent and concerned to answer. We ask, what is the soul of man, not as to its essence, of which we can know nothing, but as to the faculties

with which the Creator has endowed it, as to its operations, and the manifestations of its being? Only let us remember that, while we speak of the various faculties or powers of the soul, we must not conceive of our spiritual being as a mere collection or combination of independent forces; and we should be careful lest, from our employment of separate terms, we slide into the conception of regions or portions of the soul really distinct from each other (3). The soul is one; and its several powers are combined, not as colours in the rainbow, but as the same colours when blended in the pure and perfect light. We may indeed contemplate and treat of our mental faculties apart, just as we may regard separately the several constituents of atmospheric air; but, as neither of those substances alone constitutes the air, and as the subtraction of one of those constituents involves, in fact, the destruction of the element, so also, neither one nor another of our living powers, taken separately, constitutes the soul, and the loss or absence of either would be equivalent to the destruction of its being.

We have spoken of the soul as endowed with an apparent variety of powers; strictly, we ought to say, a variety of capacities and powers. For the soul is passive, as well as

active: not wholly passive, as if it could only receive impressions or ideas; but yet not wholly active, and not independently active at all. In the constitution of our nature, large room is assigned to capacities of development, and to susceptibilities of influence from without, and especially from above. It is even a feature of our condition as finite creatures, that the very power of activity has its foundation in the passive reception of God's gifts. And therefore, when we speak of the powers of the soul, we must remember that we are speaking of a power of receiving, and a power of becoming, as well as of a power of producing or of acting. Nor should we forget that the faculties and operations of the mind are always in themselves the same, however different the objects on which they may be employed;—that our faculties are the same, and the laws which they follow are the same, whether our minds are conversant with the common concerns of this world, or with the great realities of religion and eternal life.

Having made these general remarks concerning the powers of the mind, we are now prepared to entertain the question, What are those powers, and what is their relation to each other?

Intellectual power, in its lowest grade, and in its first development, displays itself as *sensation* and *perception*; sensation, by which we receive and recognise impressions from external objects, and perception, or the spontaneous recognition of those objects themselves and their attributes in relation to us (4). We thus obtain notices of all the phenomena of the outward world, including not only the forms of matter, with their apparent qualities, but also the indications of mind, disposition, temper, and design in those animate and intelligent beings who surround us. To the senses a considerable portion of our ideas and sentiments must be ultimately traced; and, in one point of view, we may even regard them as the inlets, or the primary means and instruments, of all the knowledge we possess: but we are altogether wrong if, with the ancient sophists and some modern philosophers (5), we so attribute all our ideas to sense as that the mind itself shall appear to be nothing more than a result or product of sensation, possessing no independent powers, and in fact not having any real existence. Our senses are instruments of conveying impressions from outward objects to the mind, means of exciting its activity and calling forth its energies: and there are doubtless

some things which we apprehend only by perception; but then, there are also other and higher faculties to which sensation and perception can only minister. Sensation is not the whole mind in a rudimentary condition (6); nor can its development, however perfect, produce any other of those mental powers, which have really proceeded, in common with sensation itself, from the fiat of the Creator. The senses are needful organs of the mind, but they are not its foundation; it is one thing to say, correctly, that they are the inlets of knowledge, and another thing to teach that sensation, under certain conditions, is our only faculty of knowledge. Nor can we assent to a proposition, which has the sanction of high names, to the effect that all our knowledge is to be ascribed to sense and inspiration (7); as though we possessed, over and above the power of sensible perception, no more than the passive faculty of receiving knowledge directly imparted to us by the Father of our spirits (8). But we claim for the human soul, a power of intuitively discerning truth which does not fall under the cognizance of the senses,—a faculty distinct from sensible perception, and above it. The mind has an inherent power of grasping, for example, the truth of a mathematical axiom,

as soon as that truth may be presented to its view ; and this too in such a manner, and with such effect, that its convictions do not even admit of being strengthened by experience or by argument. In such cases the truth is, as we say, self-evident (9) ; that is, strictly speaking, the mind of itself knows that the proposition is a true one (10). This noetic faculty, or as we may be content to denominate it, Reason, lies at the foundation of demonstration, properly so called, when the certainty of truth, otherwise unknown, is proved by reference to that which is self-evident. For we must remember that truth which is proved has for its foundation truth which cannot be proved,—truth which cannot be proved, but yet may be most certainly known by intuition, by the direct and simple act of mental consciousness (11). And we claim for this faculty of intuitive discernment a high place among our intellectual powers. We have here the ultimate source of a large amount of our most valuable knowledge ; the source of our ideas of power and causation (12), and even of our assurance of the very being and presence of things the qualities of which fall under the observation of our senses ; the source also of arts and sciences, and of all that command over the

material world which distinguishes man from the inferior orders of animate creation.

More than this. Let it be borne in mind that we are now speaking, and shall for some time continue to speak, of human nature in its integrity,—of our intellectual and moral constitution such as it has been “wonderfully” made by God,—and not as it has been woefully marred by sin. Accordingly, we proceed to say that, as the mind of itself is capable of perceiving fundamental principles of truth, so also, according to the original and perfect constitution of our nature, it possesses the power of discerning fundamental principles of the right and good,—a sound *faculty of moral perception and judgment*. Not that this judgment of the mind creates the distinction between right and wrong; that distinction already exists in the immutable relations of things, according to the will of God; and it is this real distinction, not any mere phantom of our own devising, which the mind has the power of discerning. This moral faculty, like the power of apprehending axiomatic truth, or the power of sensible perception, we can neither analyse, nor account for, nor explain. It is a primitive fact of human consciousness, antecedent to moral feeling or emotion, and not to be resolved

into any other process of the mind which may report an action, or course of action, as right only when it may have discovered its expediency. There is, indeed, a process of the understanding connected with moral truth; there are also moral emotions which hold an important place in the economy of the human soul; and of these we will hereafter speak:—but what we now affirm is, that, at the foundation of the whole there exists in the human mind, as it came from the hands of the Creator, an instinctive, original, moral faculty (13),—a power of directly or intuitively discerning the moral quality of actions,—a distinct primitive judgment, or fundamental notion of right and wrong. Some persons regard this power as a peculiar gift of God; and it matters little if they suppose it to have been superadded to all other faculties, or even to have been originally the effect of a special inspiration, as was probably the case with the faculty of speech: but, as we have no consciousness, so neither do we possess any adequate means of information on this head; we do not know at what stage or period of man's creation God bestowed upon his creature this marvellous endowment; and therefore we can have no warrant for affirming that moral distinctions are in



such wise matter of divine revelation as that they can be known only by the medium of tradition<sup>b</sup>,—nor can we find cause to assent to the proposition, that our moral perceptions, or power of discerning between good and evil, are coeval only with the fall<sup>c</sup>. We cannot give the history, nor can we strictly analyse the operations of this power of the mind; but we know that we possess it,—we know that, according to the primitive constitution of our nature, there is inherent in us a moral faculty, by which we directly distinguish right from wrong, as the eye distinguishes colours, or as the mind apprehends the truth of axioms.

Limited, however, would be the amount of our knowledge and the extent of our perceptions, if we were entirely dependent on those channels of information which have been hitherto described,—that is to say, upon the notices of our own individual sense, or the intuitions of our own unaided intelligence. In that case we should be ignorant of all that is removed from us by distance or by time; at best we could but guess and form conjectures with regard to every thing beyond the

<sup>b</sup> Bishop Van Mildert, Boyle Lectures, serm. xiv. On the contrary, see Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, note Q.

<sup>c</sup> See Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde*, cap. 1.

range of our own senses or perceptions. But through the bountiful goodness of Him by whom we have been so “fearfully and wonderfully made,” we are not left in this position respecting that vast multitude of things which lie beyond the reach of our own personal observation. There is another fundamental principle of our intellectual nature, distinct from any of those which have been hitherto enumerated, but in harmony with them all,—the principle of *faith*,—the faculty of grasping evidence, with a propensity to admit it when duly presented to the mind. Just as by sensation and perception we discern certain objects through the medium of the senses, and as by reason we discover some truths, or discern them upon their simple presentation (14), without any other warranty than the voice within, so also by faith we discern other truths through the means of testimony, or by the voice of authority. Attempts to analyse this quality of the human mind have been often made, and have as often failed. But still the fact remains, that, according to the original constitution of our nature, we are able and disposed to yield to evidence in proportion to its nature and its strength (15),—to assent to testimony concerning facts not present and manifest (16),

—and to submit to authority in the announcement or proposition of truths, independently of any internal and direct perception of them by ourselves (17). In matters of common life, from childhood to old age, we continually act, and are compelled to act, upon this principle (18). The child believes its parent or its nurse, and reposes in this belief; and, under certain conditions, the man believes the records of past history,—the testimony of eyewitnesses,—and the very affirmations of trustworthy persons, capable of understanding that which they affirm. And it is not too much to say that, apart from this principle and practice of belief, man, even in the full exercise of all his other intellectual powers, would be enveloped in such a cloud of ignorance on even the most ordinary subjects, that an arrest would be laid upon all the affairs of civilized life, and there must be an end of all social harmony and order. It is by this means that we attain a certainty,—not of sight,—not of demonstration,—not of direct and immediate intuition,—but yet a real and efficient certainty, in many matters of high practical importance concerning which we must otherwise be hopelessly ignorant and in the dark. Here is that which lies at the foundation of human affections and family

ties, of agricultural and commercial activity, and of a large portion of our most valuable knowledge in science, and our highest attainments in art. Above all, it is thus that we obtain our knowledge of many things divine, and especially of relations subsisting between God and ourselves;—an acquaintance with which, as we shall hereafter see, is of the utmost importance to us, while yet, independently of the exercise of faith, it is utterly beyond the reach of every man living (19).

Connected with all those primary intellectual powers which have been thus far described, and designed to render service to them all, is that discursive or logical faculty, which has of late been often denominated the *understanding*, as distinguished from the reason (20), or, with reference to the terminology of ancient times, *the dianoetic faculty*, in contradistinction to the noetic. This consists in the power of reasoning,—that is to say, of classifying, arranging, and drawing inferences from those truths which have been apprehended by the mind in its more fundamental faculties; it carries out principles into their various details and conclusions; and in this way it at once gives clearness to our ideas, and enables us to apply our knowledge to the practical purposes of life. And let it be

carefully observed that it is the province of the understanding to reason not only upon the notices of sense, but also upon truths which are discerned by intuition, by the moral faculty, and even by faith itself. In a word, the understanding is a secondary or instrumental faculty (21), in which we possess an apparatus for the use of all our knowledge; and this possession may at once suggest to us the fact, that the vast and varied powers of our intellect are not designed to terminate in themselves, or in the mere contemplation of their objects, and that we know nothing aright unless we apply our knowledge to some good and appropriate purpose.

It was not until our survey had embraced this dianoetic or logical faculty, the Understanding, that we could proceed to take a full view of a subject of considerable importance, to which I now solicit your attention, namely, *the relations which subsist between Faith and the other conditions and operations of our intellectual nature.* Faith is opposed to Sense; by which we ought simply to understand, not that these faculties contradict each other, but that their spheres of operation are totally distinct: where sense operates, there is no room for faith; where faith works, the absence of sense is implied. Mistakes have been made

even on this simple point; but still greater confusion of thought has been introduced in the contemplation of the offices and claims of those powers which have been usually comprehended under the denomination of Faith and Reason. Here we must ask, What is meant by the term Reason? To the ambiguity of this term we may trace much of the confusion and error which have arisen on the subject now before us; and it may be useful to consider how the case stands, according to some of the leading senses which this term has been made to bear.—Sometimes by Reason a querist or an objector understands the human Intellect. And an error is at once committed by supposing that Faith is at all opposed to, or distinct from, Intellect. On the contrary, Faith is itself an intellectual faculty, designed for the recognition of its appropriate truths when duly presented; as much so as the power of direct and immediate intuition, which is designed for the grasping of abstract and necessary truth, or as the moral faculty, which distinguishes between right and wrong. And this is doubtless what has been often meant,—although the meaning has been sometimes but imperfectly expressed,—when it has been said that Faith is the highest reason, or that Faith is but one way by which

reason is instructed.—Sometimes, again, when Reason and Faith are compared, Reason denotes the intuitional consciousness of primary or necessary truth immediately present to the mind. And it is of Reason, in this sense, that it has been so often and so justly said that Faith cannot and must not contradict it. The objects of Faith are above this reason, but not contrary to it (22); we cannot properly believe what a sound intuitional consciousness rejects and denounces as false. In other words, Reason, in this sense, can never tell us what we ought to believe, but it can tell us what we ought not to believe;—it may and ought to serve as a negative informant, as a check and guard upon our faith. And hence again, when it does not interpose its negative, it acts as a support and corroboration of our faith. It is, in fact, faith's regulator. So far from there being properly any opposition between these two faculties and their several notices, their harmonious but independent action contributes in no slight degree to the beauty and strength of our intellectual system.—Observations such as these, however, are of no force, and are altogether out of place, if by Faith and Reason we mean Faith and the logical Understanding. Our logical conclusions are not

entitled—as reason is entitled—to check or limit our faith. The understanding must stand in its proper place—its place of an assistant or minister—to faith, as well as to all other primary faculties; it must not affect to stand side by side with it. And, be it observed, this instrumental faculty has its proper functions to discharge, with respect partly to the exercise of faith, and partly to the truth which forms its object. It has not any authority, indeed, to admit or reject that truth on the ground of agreement or disagreement with its own conclusions; as, for example, we have no right, such as has been lately claimed, to “criticise the contents of Scripture;”—but this faculty has been appointed to weigh and examine the evidence which claims the assent of faith (23), to ascertain what is the truth proposed, and to take the truth which faith embraces as the basis of its own reflections and deductions. And here is the true meaning of a saying, which, if applied to any other faculty than the logical understanding, is more or less at fault,—that we must believe a thing before we can understand it. Belief is antecedent to understanding; while at the same time it is not contradictory to reason, that is, to immediate intuition; and it is entirely distinct from sense.



Just as we must perceive by sense before we can understand the sensible object, and as we must apprehend by reason before we can understand the truths presented to our cognitive faculty, or comprehend their bearings and relations,—so also we must believe before we can be logically acquainted with the objects of our belief (24). Our formula, rightly and fully conceived, is this,—‘*Non intelligere ut videam, ut sciam, ut credam,—sed videre, sed scire, sed credere, ut intelligam.*’ It is always better to know a truth than to believe a falsehood; or, in other words, it is wrong to believe in opposition to what we see or know: but there are also cases in which it is better to believe than to reason; or rather, in which it is right to believe before we reason. In one word, the understanding or logical faculty is not competent to contradict or to limit the notices of faith, when once it has admitted the evidence upon which we are bound to believe; but its province is to take those notices of faith as its subject-matter, to study their relations, to deduce inferences, and to generalize, to classify, to arrange, and to apply to use. Hence our Theology, properly so called; theology, a science, not founded in the logical understanding, but, like all other sciences, elabo-

rated by it with materials supplied from a higher source.

To proceed. "Fearfully and wonderfully" as we are made in respect of our intellectual powers,—their nature and extent, their nice adjustment and delicate relations,—we must yet remember that intellect, with the sum total of its faculties, does not constitute the whole human soul. Far from it. Even that limited survey of those powers which we have now been taking may well suggest to us the thought that they do not exist by or for themselves alone. If we have the power of a minute and accurate acquaintance with surrounding objects, persons, and events;—if our mind has been endowed with the capacity of grasping abstract truth, and of proceeding from first principles to the sublimest discoveries of science and the most useful inventions and appliances of art;—if, by an inward intuition, we can directly recognise the great antithesis between right and wrong, between good and evil;—if, by the eye of faith, we can discern the invisible, the absent, and the past, and have thus been "fearfully and wonderfully" enriched with a capacity of acquainting ourselves even with the unseen God, and with his workings in creation, and his ways of pro-

vidence, so far as it may please Him to reveal himself and his operations to us, the creatures of his hand ;—if we are endued with a faculty of reflecting and reasoning upon all we know, of arranging and marshalling our ideas, and of drawing sound and useful conclusions from truths which are self-evident and already known ;—if, in one word, to sources of knowledge almost boundless there are superadded, in the constitution of our nature, powers of application no less diversified and vast,—how is it possible to suppose that all this strength and acuteness of intellect, with its amplitude of provision, its manifold adaptations, and its far-reaching energy, has yet been designed to terminate simply in itself,—that man was appointed to know for the sake of knowing, to believe for the sake of believing, or to reason for the sake of reasoning ?

- Accordingly, we find that the soul has not only powers whereby it discerns and apprehends truth, but also powers, mighty in themselves and momentous in their consequences, whereby it puts forth energy and originates action. It is not a mere intelligence, it is *an intelligent will*. Nor do either of these powers exist in a state of independence ; but there is an intimate union between the intel-

lect and the will, between the head and the heart: the intellect is designed to guide and inform the will, and it is quickened in its own operations by the determinations and promptings of this active faculty. When the mind apprehends certain objects, it becomes subject to emotions and affections corresponding to its apprehensions,—emotions of pleasure or pain, affections of love or aversion, modified according to the nature of the case. And these emotions and affections are not designed to terminate in themselves; it is altogether an unhealthy condition of the mind when emotion is excited and dies away without leading to any result, or when affection is dormant and inactive. These powers or sensibilities of the soul are properly the springs of wishes, of desires, of volitions, and thus of action or endurance, of fixed purposes, and of a settled character. And these active living powers we denominate *the Will* (25); a wondrous faculty, which we should in vain attempt to analyse, and the existence of which, as a simple fact of consciousness, it would be useless to endeavour to prove. All language gives utterance to expressions denoting the will to possess or to enjoy an object, to command or to perform an act, without room for inquiry as to the meaning which

those expressions are designed to convey. In this matter, as in many others, a child may apprehend what a philosopher is unable to explain.

Now this will is naturally *free*,—it is a self-determining power. Not, however, that it has been given to us as a separate or single faculty, independent of all other powers of the mind: on the contrary, as has been already said, it ought to be controlled and guided by the intellectual powers in their due and healthy exercise; and thus it is properly subject to the influence of motives, and is capable of being disciplined and strengthened by the force of practical habits. The will is not free as a planet may be said to be free, if starting from its orbit and wandering in space; but it is free as the planet is free from all bonds and shackles, from every thing external to the system of which it forms a part. The will is not the servant of necessity, that is, of any foreign restraint or force determining its choice (26); and while it is true that the will is quickened, or has its energies aroused and called forth, by the influence of motives, yet it must be remembered that motives do not fashion the will, or impress on it its character. Naturally, that is to say, according to the original and perfect

constitution of our nature, the will is free. Wishes, desires, and volitions follow in the track of the emotions and affections; and these in their turn are excited in a certain definite way, by an enlightened and duly regulated intellect (27); but, except through the medium of the intellect, the will knows of no bias or constraint whatever: and, more than this, while it ought to submit to the regulation of intelligence, of the moral faculty, or of faith, it is yet capable of refusing this submission; it has the power—the fearful power—of spurning and breaking loose from legitimate control, of resisting the most cogent motives, of turning a deaf ear to the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely.

And in this freedom or self-activity of the will, this inherent power of obeying or resisting the dictates of a lawful guide, we find the foundation of human responsibility, and the elements of human virtue (28). Man is responsible for his actions and his character, for his feelings and dispositions; because, with reference to these matters, he possesses, or ought to possess, a power,—if sometimes an indirect, yet always a real and effectual power,—of self-control (29). It is not the strong will, or the firm and steady purpose,

which, as such, is good and praiseworthy (30); but it is excellent and commendable only when putting forth its energy under lawful and appropriate guidance;—like a noble animal that yields obedience to its rider (to which it has often been compared), or like the wheels of a machine that move swiftly, not, as might be the case, at random and in confusion, but under the influence of a regulator.—And as the intellect pervades and rules the will, so also the will has been appointed in its turn to act upon the intellect (31). Nothing has been a matter of more common observation than the fact that purity of heart, or a well-directed will, largely contributes to the vigour and acuteness of our intellectual faculties. Indeed it is hard to say to what extent the intellect is dependent on the will for its very play and operation,—for the exercise and consequent development of its powers. Our intellectual powers appear to be susceptible of influence from the will, as the strings of a harp are dependent for their tone on the state of the surrounding atmosphere. And amidst the whole range of our intellectual powers, none are more powerfully affected by the state of the will than are the moral faculty and faith (32).

Now, it is in the full harmony of all these

powers, existing in their several relations, that we find *human Virtue*, or the moral goodness of this complex being, man (33). Virtue consists in the right control and exercise of the intellectual and active powers. In our perfect state, the moral faculty, with its attendant minister, the logical understanding, is sufficiently able to declare to us what is right; and virtue consists in the obedience of the will to this faculty, pointing, as it does, to the due employment of the mind in the pursuit of truth, and to the right direction of the will, in the supreme love of God, the true love of our neighbour, and a well regulated self-love in subordination to the whole. Still, however, after all the announcements of our moral perception and judgment on this head, the question remains, Where is the obligation to virtue and a virtuous course of conduct? If we suppose this question to be answered by intelligence, or by will, or by both combined, then we represent these faculties as sitting in judgment on themselves. But we seek a faculty, supreme alike with reference to both, and adapted to command them in their relations to each other. And that faculty we find in *Conscience*, properly so called;—conscience, not the moral perception and judgment which declares, This is



right and that is wrong,—but *the law within the heart* which says, What is right, that you are bound to do, what is wrong, that you must avoid (34). This is no mere faculty of discernment; it is a sense of duty, a consciousness of moral obligation. It is an inward law;—not the objective law of right, which is apprehended by the moral perception and judgment, but a law supreme within the soul, demanding submission to the law without. It is the presiding faculty, calling upon all the powers of the soul for the discharge of their respective functions, and the preservation of their appointed harmony.—And besides this, it is the work of conscience to notice and record the neglect or the fulfilment of its own commands. There is *a sentiment* within the heart, together with a law; a sentiment of peace under a discharge of duty, or a sense of guilt and uneasiness and pain when there has been a departure from the principles of godliness and virtue.—But, whence this peace, whence these pangs and terrors? What is their remotest source? And what also is the ultimate ground of that moral obligation which conscience so distinctly apprehends (35)? The answer is, that conscience, most deeply seated in the soul of man, brings it within sight of

God. The sense of obligation which is inseparable from the utterances of conscience when speaking authoritatively, as by law, and the peace or pain which adheres to conscience, as a sentiment, when the law has been either observed or broken, all point to that living One, that sovereign personal God, whose will is contravened by the breach of this inward law, or fulfilled by its observance, and whose favour or displeasure are the objective realities reflected in the conscience as an inward sentiment. Hence our obligation to that which is holy, just, and good. The moral faculty discerns that it is right; the understanding discovers that it is useful; conscience declares that it is according to the will of God. We are bound to a life of godliness and virtue, not merely because this is expedient, not even only because it is right, but because it is prescribed to us by the sovereign authority of Him who is our almighty Father, our righteous Governor, and our Judge. Conscience is that spiritual faculty which has been ordained to receive, and to rejoice in, the smiles of our Almighty Father. Enlightened and quickened by that blessed Spirit, who alone effectually teacheth man knowledge,—and without whose gracious visitations, be it carefully observed, all our faculties, even in their best

estate, are nothing worth,—yet, with power conveyed to it from that heavenly source of light and life, here is that faculty of the human soul which devoutly contemplates the holy God; here is that which knows and feels that God is love. The soul—*the intelligent will, self-conscious, and responsible in the sight of God*—enjoys unspeakable delight while it perceives in its own rectitude a conformity to the pure and holy will of the Most High. And it is thus that the moral and spiritual harmony is complete; it is thus that the radiance of clear sunshine is cast over all those beauties of order and proportion which exist in a well-regulated mind, in a pure and upright heart. Wonderful, even in itself, is the harmony that is evolved from this most curious and finished piece of spiritual mechanism; and when the soul, through its most refined and spiritual faculty the conscience, hears God himself pronouncing that it is very good,—when the stamp of Heaven's approbation has been placed upon all its apprehensions and conclusions concerning the true, the beautiful, and the good, upon its every emotion and affection, upon every determination and aspect of its will, every wish, every desire and volition, and upon the whole course of its activity from first to last,—then

indeed do all these powers of the soul, like the morning stars, sing together and shout for joy! And wonderful indeed is the capacity of our spiritual nature for happiness such as this,—happiness, not sought for as a chief or only end, but flowing, as a direct result, from godliness and virtue. Who can estimate the peace, satisfaction, and delight prepared for the soul of man in the healthful exercise of its manifold powers of apprehending truth, of appreciating the lovely and the fair, of discerning what is right and good, and of receiving instruction from on high? Who can, above all, recount its joys in the harmonious movement of its will in accordance with truth and goodness thus discerned, in conscious compliance with the will of God, in the possession of divine favour now, and in the prospect of that favour for ever?

But, where is this harmony to be found? Where is the man who possesses an intellectual and moral nature pure, unclouded, and upright,—a will perfectly subservient to the commands of conscience, guided by the light of truth and morality and well-founded faith,—and a conscience, accordingly, in a state of unbroken peace with God? Alas, we nowhere find a living man corresponding to this type; but we find ourselves in presence

of a fact, declared to us in Scripture, that human nature, which was originally very good, is now in a state of moral disorder and spiritual desolation. When we endeavour to ascertain the original constitution of man from a consideration of his present state, we can do so only as an architect sketches the plan of a building from its ruins. And, just as a ruin has sights and sounds peculiar to itself,—as it has acquired many a fantastic form, and many a foreign hue and tint, with foliage out of place, and has become a habitation of inferior creatures instead of the abode of men or a temple consecrated for holy worship,—so also we find within a fallen soul the mutilation and perversion of its faculties, and the presence of ideas and feelings, of desires and volitions, which form no part of the original gift of our all-wise and benevolent Creator. Man, in his actual state, is not the possessor of an upright intelligent will, conscious of its rectitude, and rejoicing in the sight of God; he does not fulfil the purpose of his being; he does not enjoy that happiness which the harmony of his nature is adapted to produce, quickened and irradiated by the approbation of his Creator. And holy Scripture gives us all needful information concerning the origin of this mournful state

of things. The record of the Fall, which, without question and without hesitation, we take as it lies before us in the Bible, makes it plain that man lapsed into this state of ruin by his own abuse of the liberty wherewith God had graciously endowed him,—by his voluntary choice of evil at the instigation of the tempter (36). Sin is not, as some modern theorists maintain, merely a negation, or a natural defect (37);—it is not the result of sensuousness, or selfishness, inherent in man's system, as it came from the hands of God;—it is not either a necessary evil, or an inferior modification of good, originally designed to work out beneficent effects in due time and under favourable circumstances;—but it is a moral effect, and that too a mischief and a plague, of which man is himself the cause.

Now, the root of sin is in the will (38). Man fell from his state of original uprightness, when his will disobeyed his conscience commanding what was right according to the will of God (39). And it is precisely in this *aversion of the will from God* that we place the corruption of our nature, or that original sin, which is the sad inheritance of every one born into the world. Let us not exaggerate this evil; an evil, if rightly understood, already of appalling magnitude (40). The Fall

has not directly thrown mankind into a state of total ignorance; it has not at once destroyed all our intellectual and moral powers; it has not obliterated all right views and all right feelings, all moral sentiment, all justice and benevolence; nor has it destroyed that freedom of the will without which no responsibility can exist. And, in like manner, the Fall has not silenced the voice of conscience as a law, nor destroyed its power as a sentiment within the heart. But still, tremendous is the evil of that sin which really does adhere, and universally adhere, to our fallen nature. It is, as we have said, the aversion of the will of man from the will of God; and this aversion God righteously condemns. Here, therefore, is a breach between the creature and the Creator, a relation of opposition and enmity in the place of harmony and love; and *Conscience* testifies to this state of disorder; it *is restless and uneasy* (41), and bears on it a reflection of the most certain truth that the holy God is offended with the sinner. Here is a wound in our moral nature, which, if not healed, is deadly;—a mischief which involves in its continuance no less than the everlasting desolation and misery of the offender. And, as the fearful and wonderful construction of the human

soul is apparent in the harmonies and excellence of its perfect state, so again does this become manifest in the history of its degradation and its ruin. If you inflict a wound upon the human frame, the mischief, if not stopped, will spread; disease and derangement will extend from fibre to fibre, from limb to limb, until at length the whole body, so curiously wrought, so “fearfully and wonderfully made,” will become a mass of corruption, and will return unto its dust. And such too is the wound which sin inflicts upon the soul. We find herein the commencement of a deadly process; and it is just because the spiritual mechanism is so fine and so delicate, and because there are such nice relations and sympathies established between all the powers of the soul, that this process is so certain, and its results are so fearfully complete.

Mark now the progress of this evil,—great in its beginning, still greater and more tremendous in its issue. Man has sinned; God is offended; and, by the sufferings which he lays upon the sinner, by the restraints with which he hems him in, by the penalties which he has solemnly denounced, and which he causes to follow in the train of disobedience, he makes his displeasure manifest. At the same time, the sinful soul stands, like a



culprit, at a distance from its Maker, with the displeasure of the Most High reflected in the accusations of an upbraiding conscience, torn by the conflict of contending feelings, and oppressed by the weariness of unsatisfied desire.—But this state of things cannot last. If there be not a fresh infusion of spiritual life, there must be the consummation of spiritual death. Already, in the evil that has taken place, the seeds of still further evil are contained. An uneasy Conscience—a conscience disturbed by sin, and not yet lawfully set at rest—produces *wretchedness* in a variety of forms; it generates fresh *sin*; it may even conduct its unhappy subject to the very extremities of blasphemous *despair*. And as for the rebellious Will, this too is the seat of a corruption which cannot but spread and increase, if the root of the evil remains. *The will that has broken loose from God* is not, and cannot be, independent. Having renounced its allegiance to the Creator, it *falls under the power of the creature*. Having cast off that service of God which is perfect freedom, it has entered into bondage. Abandoned to the caprice of irregular desires, with the besetting and enthralling influence of the objects of sense and appetite, it becomes continually more and more the slave

of passion;—it is entrapped and fettered and debased in the region of selfishness, of self-indulgence, self-will, and self-conceit;—it is doomed to drudgery in the service of a worldly mind, with all the evils of an inordinate love of wealth, of honour, or of power;—or it is defiled by the pollutions of fleshly lusts, lost in the pursuit of pleasure more or less refined, and fearfully exposed to those manifold horrors to which coarse sensuality has been known to conduct its victims even on this side of the grave. Such are the bondage and corruption which await the sinful will that disobeys the voice of conscience, and departs from a lawful and loving conformity to the will of God.—And the evil stops not here; but by degrees it thoroughly pervades the faculties of that complex and wonderful organisation of which it has taken hold. *The depraved Will impairs the Intellect* (42). It withholds attention where attention is due, and at other times fixes it with undue or exclusive intensity;—it interferes with the powers of observation, and obscures the perception of truth;—sometimes it gives an undue prominence or activity to one faculty and sometimes to another;—and not unfrequently it hinders or forbids the needful operations of the mind to such an

extent as to incapacitate it from comprehending the light by this unlawful influence of its own sinful love of darkness. Such is the overpowering and devastating action of the perverse will, that has escaped from the restraints of conscience, which was ordained to regulate its otherwise destructive force; like the rush of water bursting in a torrent over the homes of a busy population, and sweeping to destruction that very apparatus of elaborate machinery which it was designed to set in regular motion by the ministry of an equable and constant stream.—Amidst all the confusion and dimness of the mental vision produced by the influence of a depraved will, there is a cloud of thick darkness especially drawn over the knowledge of the Most High:—and, not only may this darkness arise, as it were indirectly, from false reasonings and vain speculations concerning the nature and attributes of God, but, more directly still, it may be induced by the *corruption of the Conscience* (43). Alas, it is possible, too possible, that a corrupt will, and a perverted or beclouded intellect, may carry disorder and pollution into even that spiritual faculty which at first testifies against transgression and pleads for God within the soul. When its functions as the regulating

principle of man's moral being have ceased to tell upon the mind and heart, then the disorders of the soul begin to act destructively upon itself. It learns to cry Peace, where there is no peace. It is constrained to falsify its reports to God, or to make no reports at all:—its commands are silenced; or, what is worse, it may be so infatuated or so bribed, as to grant license and permission, and even to give commands, at variance with its own proper dictates in conformity with the law of God. Conscience itself becomes, in this way, a delusion and a mockery; it ministers to the worship of an idol enshrined in the darkness of a corrupt and sinful soul. And eventually, so far may spiritual ruin proceed, even in this present state of being, that the very *sense of responsibility* in the sight of heaven may be *destroyed*, and *man may say within his heart, There is no God*. Alas, this sinful delusion may continue, until it shall be dispelled in those regions of eternal woe, where devils believe and tremble!

For this tremendous evil—this source of unutterable misery—where shall we find a remedy? Who shall say, Peace, be still, to the troubled and accusing Conscience? How shall the wandering Will be brought back,—the rebel be subdued, and its energies once

more enlisted in the service of its lawful sovereign? Who shall pour fresh light into the dark chambers of the soul, and there reduce confusion into order, and for unhappiness give peace and joy? Burdened and sin-worn humanity may ask these questions, but all its wisdom and philosophy must fail to return an answer (44). Then let us be devoutly thankful that “the things which are impossible with men are possible with God<sup>d</sup>.” let us meekly and gladly receive the assurance conveyed to us by the word of inspiration—an assurance which it will be my welcome duty to consider in the next Lecture as fully as I can—that “being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>e</sup>.”

<sup>d</sup> Luke xviii. 27.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. v. 1.

## LECTURE II.

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RENEWAL OF THE SOUL BY FAITH IN THE REDEEMER

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HOSEA xiii. 9.

*O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is  
thine help.*

TO the question, Where shall we find a remedy for the evils of the Fall? nature returns no answer. True indeed it is that God has never left himself without witness in the world; true also that the world has never been utterly unable to receive that witness(45); and that, accordingly, in one very important sense, natural religion lies at the foundation of revealed. But what is this natural religion, and what its value and its power? It lies, as we have said, at the foundation of revealed religion; but it is by no means the root from which it springs. Man's natural idea of the Deity is, to say the least, imperfect and obscure (46): it is not what it would have been if reflected, in its integrity and its beauty, from a pure and

tranquil conscience ; there is great reason to believe that in its present impaired condition, the human mind is, of itself, unable to rise above the ideas of polytheism, or pantheism, at the best : and even if, by the progress of our intellect, we attain to a conception of one living and personal God(47), still we have no means of knowing Him under his character of Love, and we are utterly incompetent to find our way to the restoration of a state of peace and amity between this great Being and ourselves. Left to its own impulses and devices, the natural religion of fallen humanity is essentially selfish ; its aim is simply to escape divine vengeance, or to derive some benefit from God's favour. And if it ascends beyond this idea to that of purer adoration, it still keeps more than a reverential distance from the object of its worship ; it stops short, hopelessly and always short, of holy communion and friendship, of confiding and rejoicing love. As it tells us nothing of God drawing nigh unto us, so it also leaves us without power to draw nigh unto God ; it provides us with no cure for that radical and elementary corruption of our nature, the perverse and selfish bias of our will. By the best and most diligent use

of the light of nature, and under the influence of the purest motives which even cultivated nature(48) can supply, man is of himself unable to rise in the scale of moral excellence and consequent felicity beyond a state of internal discord, with a sense of unsatisfied want, and the experience of feebleness and wretchedness without prospect of relief (49). In a word, natural religion, so far from being able to point out a remedy for the evil which has befallen us, can, at the best, but make the mischief more apparent; instead of furnishing a solution of our difficulties, its office is rather to proclaim those difficulties, and to raise the inquiry, hopeless though it be, Where shall our help be found(50)?

Now, this help, rightly understood, is nothing less than the great comprehensive blessing of *Redemption*, in the Christian acceptance of the term. The twofold evil included in the Fall of man involves the necessity of a twofold method and process of recovery. There is need, as it is commonly said, of a deliverance at once from the guilt and from the power of sin; in other words, the disturbed relation between the Creator and his offending creature must be restored, and at the same time the corrupt will of



the offender that had turned away from God must be turned to Him again.

And here the matter of primary importance is the renewal of a friendly relation between God and man,—the work of *Reconciliation*. Primary this must necessarily be, because it must rest altogether with the Most High to effect this great work, if it be His pleasure so to do,—and to effect it in His own way, and by the methods of His own appointment. No change in the subjective state of man can, of itself, produce a change in the position which he occupies on account of the unalterable past. The reason of such a change must be found, if any where, in the will of God. And primary again must this aspect of Redemption be, because, whatever may be the value of a subjective change for the better, if it should take place, yet a guilty conscience unappeased is sufficient to hinder such a change, and to stand for ever in the way of a renewal of man's will to its original rectitude and the love of God. Accordingly, some act of the divine government whereby guilt may be cancelled, and a way opened for communion between the life-giving Spirit of God and the sin-stricken soul of man, is the matter of our first necessity. Nor must

we conceive of this outward or objective redemption as accomplished merely for the sake of promoting that other work which has need to be wrought within us. Atonement for sin is a real and most solemn transaction of itself, needful to make way for the exercise of divine benevolence. It is not merely a display of that benevolence, made with a view to allay the apprehensions of mankind, and to produce a favourable impression on the human mind and heart; but, while it is indeed a result and manifestation of the divine goodness, it is, in itself, an act of homage to God's unchangeable and holy law (51). The justice of the Most High is not, as we are sometimes told, a mere modification of his benevolence; but there is in Him the righteousness of a moral governor as really as the tender compassion of a Father. And it is to Love, not alone, but in union with the most unbending holiness and truth, that we ascribe the mighty work whereby the controversy between God and man has been appeased, and a reconciliation has been effected, so complete on the part of the Most High, that "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive<sup>a</sup>."

<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Closely connected with this objective redemption, or the work of reconciliation external to ourselves, is that great blessing of redemption subjective, with the consideration of which we are now more immediately concerned. This consists in deliverance from the power of sin by the influence of the Holy Spirit in the soul. And our question is, how is this brought to pass? On what principles, and in what way, does the divine agent accomplish his great work within us? We shall find that while He works according to his own laws, or agreeably to the methods and within the limits which He has himself prescribed, He condescends also to operate in accordance with the previously established laws of our intellectual and moral nature. Christ, by his Spirit, enlightens the soul of man, as the sun enlightens the atmosphere around us. The air, of itself, is dark; the light that pervades it is not its own; but yet there would be no light without the atmosphere, for the sun makes use of it in order to disperse his rays. And just so the Holy Spirit employs, while he quickens, the faculties of the human soul. Only let it be carefully observed, that it is one thing to say that the Spirit operates according to established laws, and another thing to affirm or to imply that

all spiritual influence resolves itself into law (52). To adopt this latter position would be, in effect, to maintain that man is the subject of no real spiritual influence at all ; and to represent him as dependent for spiritual health upon the workings of his own mind, or the progressively improving functions of his own intellectual and moral nature, cherished by favourable circumstances or conditions, and advancing of itself, or by the aid of kindred spirits, towards its perfection. But our case is widely different ; our help is not discoverable here. “ The natural powers and faculties of man’s mind,” to adopt the language of Hooker, “ are through our native corruption so weakened, and of themselves so averse from God, that without the influence of his special grace they bring forth nothing in his sight acceptable, no not the blossoms nor the least buds that tend to the fruit of eternal life. Which powers and faculties notwithstanding retain still their natural manner of operation, although their original perfection be gone ; man hath still a reasonable understanding and a will thereby framable to good things, but is not now thereunto able to frame himself. Therefore God hath ordained grace to countervail this our imbecility, and to serve as his hand, that

thereby we which cannot move ourselves may be drawn, but amiably drawn. In a word, the manner of God's operation through grace is, by making heavenly mysteries plain to the dark understanding of man, and by adding motive efficacy unto that which there presenteth itself as the object of man's will<sup>b</sup>."

These things having been premised, we proceed to ask, in what way, under the economy of the gospel, does the Holy Spirit bring back man's will into conformity to the will of God? How does he fulfil his great mission within the human soul?

It is no mean part of the manifold wisdom of God displayed in our salvation, that *the Holy Spirit*, herein working according to the constitution of our nature as described in the preceding Lecture, *begins his great work by pacifying Conscience*. Conscience is disturbed by sin; and, even if this uneasiness be not attributable to the Spirit of life and holiness—as assuredly the disturbing of a *corrupt* and *hardened* conscience must be traced back to this heavenly source—yet, if mere natural conscience, as the Fall has left it, can proceed so far as to fill the soul with a feeling of dis-

<sup>b</sup> Hooker, Fragments of an Answer to the Letter of certain English Protestants; Appendix, No. I. to Book V. of the Ecclesiastical Polity, Keble's edition.

satisfaction and confusion, or a fear of danger, still we may confidently say that it can proceed no further in the direction of spiritual health. It may disturb, but it cannot tranquillise itself; it may do harm, but it cannot do good, within the chambers of the soul:—selfishly, man may be wretched under a sense of want or in prospect of suffering, but self cannot cure this wretchedness. Our help in this matter is in God alone. And observe the process by which this help is graciously administered. The Spirit does not address Himself immediately to the agitated sentiment; but He reaches it in what we may denominate a regular and lawful way,—a way conformable to the constitution of our nature. He first convinces the soul of sin,—not merely of the fact of sin, but of its evil nature, of its ill desert; awakening and giving new force to that sense of obligation which a sense of the mere fact of sin, however painful, tends directly to weaken or obscure; making the soul feel that it has destroyed itself, and that it deserves the condemnation which is appointed to ensue. This is not natural to fallen man; his own impulse is to justify himself; but God teaches him to condemn himself. And He teaches him this lesson by disclosing to him the extent, the beauty, and

perfection of the law which he has broken, by setting it before him in its true character as holy, just, and good, and by making him sensible of the most certain truth that this holy law is no other than a transcript of the perfect will of God. Hence the value of those earlier portions of the sacred record which some persons regard with but little reverence. Here is the true significance of the awful thunders of Sinai, of the solemn denunciations of Jewish prophets, and of all the legal announcements of the Bible, whether in the Old Testament or in the New. By the law, declared without, and brought home to the heart by an influence within, the Spirit teaches sinful man to lay his mouth in the dust, and to confess that God is righteous who taketh vengeance (53.)

Great is the work which has thus far been accomplished. Already has the Conscience been brought into a state that may bear upon the Will for good. The soul has been made to view sin, in some measure, as God views it, to hate what he hates, and to condemn what he condemns. And is not this already an incipient conformity of will? When two parties agree in hating the same thing, have they not herein at least some bond of union with each other? And therefore blessed be

that light and that influence from on high which teaches me to hate what God hates, even though it be sin that is dwelling and reigning within my fallen soul!

But, is this a state of peace? Is it even a state of mind which must inevitably conduct to peace? Undoubtedly not. To the soul that is still led and quickened by the Spirit this will indeed be found to have been an entrance upon the way of peace. In that case, the next step in the spiritual progress conducts to holy *mourning over sin*, and to *a desire*,—an earnest and deep desire,—*for the favour and friendship of the holy God*. But a progress such as this can be effected only under the guidance of the Spirit. If the Spirit be grieved, resisted, quenched, even after the conviction of sin shall have been wrought within the soul,—and if man, with all this conviction upon him, be abandoned to himself,—think not that his conviction will conduct him to conversion. Be assured that it may even minister to evil; it may become a means of driving the sinner further from God, rather than drawing him nearer. If the only truth that man has grasped be that which relates to the evil nature of his sin,—and if his own unaided understanding be left to reason upon this truth, Behold I



am vile,—who shall say that there shall not speedily arise this torturing inquiry, How is it possible that God loves man, or that he ever did love man even as the innocent creature of his hand, seeing that He has suffered him to fall under the dominion of that sin which I now feel to be so evil and so hateful? God may be righteous who taketh vengeance, but who shall persuade me that God is love? Tremendous question! And how does the Holy Spirit, in his infinite wisdom, meet it? Does God, as it were, argue this point with his fallen creature? He does nothing of the kind. He lends no sanction to our speculations concerning the origin of evil; nor does he lead us to expect any benefit from a solution of the questions to which such speculations would conduct us. Knowing what is in man,—dealing with us according to the constitution of our nature,—He addresses himself at once to our primary faculties; He first of all announces salutary truth which we may know, and presents to us sound first principles which we may embrace,—and then, but not until then, he enables the understanding to confront the deductions which it had falsely drawn from the truth already apprehended, with the deductions which it now correctly draws from the

new truth which he graciously presents to it. In his wisdom and his love, He comes to the awakened conscience with the announcement of a fact. He meets the fact of our sin and condemnation with the fact of our Redemption and its attendant blessings.

And this is *Revelation*, in the full and proper sense of that expression (54). Revelation is not a mere raising or refining of man's natural powers, so that those powers may comprehend or effect what they could not in their otherwise debased condition;—but it is the declaration of a mystery, that is, of fact or truth which our natural faculties, even if exalted to their utmost pitch, are unable to discern or to discover (55). And the Christian revelation, in particular, is the declaration of that great mystery of godliness,—the redemption of mankind by Christ (56); it is an authoritative announcement of an act, and that too a rare and exceptional act, in the divine government, achieved in order to remedy the evils of man's rebellion. “Revelation,” says Bp. Butler truly<sup>c</sup>, “is to be considered as informing us of somewhat new, in the state of mankind, and in the government of the world, as acquainting us with some relations in which we stand which could not

<sup>c</sup> Analogy, part II. chap. 1.

otherwise have been known." True:—these relations could not otherwise have been known. The things which the gospel reveals are "things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man<sup>d</sup>." Even those facts of redemption which might be historically known could not be apprehended in their true character, in their meaning and power, independently of an express and authoritative declaration on the subject made by God to man. For these are the counsels of the Most High respecting the recovery of our fallen race; these are facts and methods of proceeding concerning which it must be emphatically said, "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor<sup>e</sup>?" "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<sup>f</sup>." As without Christ we cannot know God in his relation to ourselves, so without revelation we can obtain no knowledge of Christ (57). "God was in Christ," says St. Paul, "reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation<sup>g</sup>." Here is a plain statement

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 9.    <sup>e</sup> Rom. xi. 34.    <sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. ii. 11.    <sup>g</sup> 2 Cor. v. 19.

of the importance of the gospel as well as of that work of Christ which forms the substance and subject of the gospel. Suppose the work of the Redeemer to have been accomplished,—that he had taken on him our nature, had died for our sins and risen again for our justification, and had ascended up on high,—suppose, in short, every thing to have been done which was needful to atone for sin, and to make the work of our redemption objectively complete;—but yet suppose too that all this had been unknown to us,—that there had been no attestation to the Saviour's person, no record of his work, no declaration of God's good will to man in and through the Redeemer; in a word, suppose that there had been a Saviour but no gospel, —a Saviour but no tidings of salvation brought to the ears of man,—then do you not perceive that there would have been wanting one great provision towards the restoration of the fallen soul? A gospel without a Saviour would indeed be no gospel at all: but even a Saviour without the gospel would be no Saviour *to us*. This is the rod of the Saviour's power in the kingdom of his grace. And we thank God that there is not only the Saviour who “is our peace<sup>h</sup>,” but

<sup>h</sup> Eph. ii. 14.

also the word of revelation “*preaching* peace by Jesus Christ<sup>i</sup>.”

This revelation, or divine exposition of the work of Christ, with its causes and results, is not imparted to individuals by any independent and special impulse on their minds; nor is it in any measure entrusted to uncertain oral tradition; but it is written in a book (58), in itself the most durable monument and the safest repository of truth with which human nature is acquainted, and, in this particular instance, by the guardian care of its almighty Author, preserved in its essential integrity throughout the lapse of ages to the present day. This sacred volume,—the vehicle of a revelation which is no dead letter, but a spiritual thing, a living communication from the infinite mind of Deity to the finite mind of man,—we therefore thankfully receive, with reverent regard, as the charter of our salvation (59). And, although this acceptance of Scripture has been long since scoffed at under the name of Bibliolatry (60), and is even to this hour by too many men derided or denounced, still to this principle we steadily adhere. And here is no spiritual bondage; rather, here is real spiritual freedom. In this case it is

<sup>i</sup> Acts x. 36.

emphatically true that where there is no law there is no liberty ; and our spiritual liberty is secure only so long as we submit, without reserve, to the authority of Scripture. We reject the licentious doctrine that the Bible proposes a spiritual problem which must be solved by the human mind in the exercise of its own inherent powers(61) ; and with equal determination we reject also that despotic principle which affirms the coordinate authority of Tradition, or sanctions the pretensions of an infallibility supposed to reside in any community of men(62). We carry our finite understanding and our uncertain Traditions to Scripture, not Scripture to our Understanding or Tradition. When once we have ascertained the contents of Scripture, we receive these things not as the subject of our criticism, but as the basis of our Faith ; and in so doing we are not in bondage to the letter, nor in bondage to man, but we are freemen of the truth, and of Him concerning whom it has been said, “ These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing ye might have life through his name<sup>k</sup> ” (63).

This sacred record contains, we say, that

<sup>k</sup> John xx. 31.

objective revelation which the Holy Spirit employs as a means or instrument in his subjective operation on the soul of man(64). While He outwardly testifies of Christ, He gives inwardly power to believe. But to whom does he give this power? Observe how the work of which we now speak is really a continuation or carrying forward of the work to which we have already referred:—how both the preaching of the Cross and the faith which receives it stand in immediate connection with the preaching of the Law and the contrite conviction of sin. For, what is the preaching of the Cross, or the gospel of the grace of God? It is a message to man, bidding him to lift up his eyes, and look upon the rainbow of the covenant. But that bow must rest upon a cloud; and the cloud on which it rests is no other than the broken Law and the gathering wrath of Almighty God, which the Spirit has already made manifest to the conscience of the sinner. And more than this. At the very moment that the Spirit points to the bow in the cloud, he makes that cloud itself darker and more terrible than ever. Never was such a testimony borne to God's hatred of iniquity as that which was given when Christ died

“the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God<sup>l</sup>”. In the death of the Redeemer, more than in all the denunciations of the Law, we discern a witness of the evil nature of transgression, a warning that sin must not and will not be unpunished, a solemn foreboding of the storm of unmitigated wrath that is ready to burst upon ungodly and unpardoned souls. But then, in the cross of Christ, we do also see, at the same time, the bow upon this cloud; and it is indeed a great advance in the work of the renewing and sanctifying Spirit when He proclaims, in addition to God’s hatred against sin, His love and compassion towards sinners, when He takes up the very subject-matter of His distinct and special revelation, and, pointing to the cross of Jesus, cries aloud, with a voice distinctly heard from one generation to another, “God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life<sup>m</sup>”,—a voice which may well call forth that responsive echo, “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins<sup>n</sup>”. “Behold, what manner

<sup>l</sup> 1 Peter iii. 18.

<sup>m</sup> John iii. 16.

<sup>n</sup> 1 John iv. 10.



of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God !<sup>o</sup>”

Such then is, in its essence, the preaching of the Cross. And as the preaching of the Law was a preparation for the proclamation of the gospel, so also the contrition and the yearnings of a lowly heart are an introduction to that faith by which the gospel is embraced. This faith is no isolated act, no independent state of mind, nothing that takes place apart from the work in which the Spirit has already been engaged. For, who is the man that believes the gospel? Not the man who is in love and in league with sin. Not the careless or hardened transgressor. But the man who has been convinced of sin, as none but the Spirit can convince him ; the man whose heart has been made humble and tender, who has been made to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and to long for peace with God. It is in complete accordance with the constitution of our nature that, for the reception of the gospel by faith, there must exist a previously formed disposition and desire (65), no less than a present perception of the truth. There must be the seed, indeed,—the seed of divine truth,—before there can be the

<sup>o</sup> 1 John iii. 1.

plant ; but the seed cannot produce the plant unless it be cast into a congenial soil ; that which is seed in the intellect becomes a living plant only in the heart(66),—that honest and good heart which has been prepared by the heavenly Husbandman. Alone, this preparation would be useless ; thorns and briars, as we have already seen, may overrun the soil that had been cleared ; sin may again reign within the heart that has been made to hate it, if there be not within that heart a new affection that shall finally subdue it. But the husbandman comes with his good seed, and casts it into the waiting heart. To the humble and earnest soul the Spirit not only outwardly proclaims the gospel, but gives inward power to believe it(67):—and the soul, thus prepared and empowered, *embraces the truth of God, and places its whole trust and confidence in the Redeemer whom that truth reveals*(68). Revelation addresses itself to faith, or that power of the mind whereby we believe upon *testimony* facts which we do not know by personal experience, and receive upon *authority* truths, not contrary to reason, but yet such as reason, by its own direct intuition or consciousness, is unable to discern. This is no new faculty with which the Holy Spirit

endues the soul for the single purpose of receiving gospel truth ; but it is that existing faculty which this Almighty agent quickens and directs, at the same time that He presents to it an appropriate object. Under this heavenly influence, religious faith is a belief in God, as a living personal being with whom we have to do, and who has graciously made a communication from Himself to our spiritual nature , and Christian faith, in particular, is a believing consciousness of redemption declared to us in Scripture, with a recognition and cordial acceptance of the historical personal Redeemer, as the object of our unlimited trust and confidence(69). “Nor will the firmest belief in the Scripture narrative, with the clearest apprehension of the gospel scheme and the soundest views of Christian doctrine, constitute faith in Christ, until, to this clear conviction of the sufficiency of his atoning sacrifice, be added a real desire for its fruits, and a heartfelt confidence in its efficacy ; until the Spirit has enabled us to repose in humble reliance, for time and for eternity, upon the mercy and truth of a reconciled God(70).”

And “the just shall live by faith<sup>p</sup>.” In the way that has been now described, help has

<sup>p</sup> Rom. i. 17.

been provided from on high for fallen man who had morally destroyed himself. By a stupendous act of the divine government, accomplished according to the wise and merciful counsels of God's own will, all distance or displeasure of the Most High towards his fallen creature has been, for His part, entirely removed,—reconciliation for iniquity has been made,—and large gifts of divine bounty, larger than any that had been promised to mankind in the state of primeval innocence, have been placed within the reach of every penitent and returning sinner. The gospel, the proclamation of this exercise of mercy, made to the man whose heart has been humbled by a sense of his lost estate, after his conscience has been awakened to perceive it,—this truth of God, outwardly revealed and inwardly applied by the Holy Spirit, becomes the effectual means or instrument of spiritual renewal (71). The soul that had been cast down by a sense of sin is raised up again by a perception of redeeming love; the heart that had fainted under a sense of moral and spiritual weakness is reassured by a believing reliance on the arm of Almighty power. And so, that great work of Redemption, in and by which God is reconciled unto man, becomes, when apprehended by faith, the source of that

saving subjective change in the human soul whereby man is reconciled unto God.

Hence flows *peace of conscience*,—that “peace of God which passeth all understanding<sup>i</sup>.” “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ<sup>k</sup>.” And “we which have believed do enter into rest<sup>l</sup>.” Happy are they who cordially respond to that word of redeeming love, “Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee<sup>m</sup>,” whose ears are open to the voice of heavenly remission, whose hearts are filled with the spirit of adoption! Rich indeed are the tones of peace and consolation which flow from the word of revelation for the refreshment and delight of the listening believer. Blessed are the people who practically know that joyful sound, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God<sup>n</sup>!”

And while the gospel leads the soul to peace, it at the same time calls forth *love* (72). When “we have known and believed the love that God hath to us<sup>o</sup>,”—when we feel ourselves once more in the position of children in the presence of a Father, and are under the influence of the Saviour’s Spirit, pleading his cause within our hearts,—then, “the love of

<sup>i</sup> Phil. iv. 7.

<sup>k</sup> Rom. v. 1.

<sup>l</sup> Heb. iv. 3.

<sup>m</sup> Mat. ix. 2.

<sup>n</sup> Isa. xl. 1.

<sup>o</sup> 1 John iv. 16.

Christ constraineth us<sup>p</sup>,” and “we love Him because he first loved us<sup>q</sup>(73).” Here is the great fundamental principle of Christian morals supplied to us by the gospel. And “the second is like unto it<sup>r</sup>,” “Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another<sup>s</sup>.” Nor is it possible to overrate the importance of that office of Christian faith which consists in this kindling of holy love. For love is the very strength of spiritual life. True indeed it is that there are the beginnings of life in an awakened conscience, and in the aspirations of good desire. And faith is itself an act of spiritual life. Life, however, possesses no vigour without love; and nothing less than love can be eternal. But “God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son<sup>t</sup>.” Love flows down from the Redeemer’s cross into the believing heart. And who, we ask, can estimate the greatness of this blessing? Consider, for a moment, the expansive quality, the unwearied progress, the perpetual vitality of divine and holy love. Love is of God, always flowing from Him or returning to Him; it proceeds from God, through Christ, to all men, but specially to them that believe, and then it goes back to Him, carrying with it

p 2 Cor. v. 14.      q 1 John iv. 19.      r Mat. xxii. 39.

s 1 John iv. 11.

t 1 John vi. 11.

the affections and desires of the believer by whom it has been apprehended and received. And the law of its nature is that it shall never stop in its beneficent career ; it must flow onward, through all the infinitude of being, far abroad over the whole surface of God's intelligent and moral creation. Here is the great law of life and motion in the spiritual world. Sin is the breach and violation of this law ; it is an obstruction that has been impiously thrown up to stay the onward flow of that holy principle which gushes forth from the fountains of eternity. But redemption throws this barrier down. In Christ the love of God has gathered up its strength, it has put forth its omnipotence, and the barrier falls and is swept away for ever ; once more the love of God is shed abroad in the believer's heart, takes its free course through his thoughts and sentiments and desires, his words and actions and the whole tenor of his life, goes out into the world with its manifold tokens and results, and pursues its destined course until it returns again to heaven.

It is this holy love, in its direction towards God, that animates *prayer*, and draws near to the throne of grace in *acts and offices of holy worship* ; worship, not, as some would represent it, "rendered to mere dictation," but

rendered as part of a reasonable service, through “the right state of affection towards God.” The son asks the father for bread; the captive, ransomed from the dungeon, lies low before the throne.—And the Christian’s love to God does not expend itself even in acts of worship; but it rules and controls his will. To the *will* that has been made capable of receiving an impulse such as this, love is a motive principle of sovereign and pervading power. Out of the mouth of Christ proceedeth a two-edged sword; and as with one edge that sword cuts up self-righteousness, so with the other it destroys self-will. The believer who sues for mercy, and enters into peace, on the terms propounded in the gospel, and who comes with an empty hand and with a craving heart to receive the blessings of redemption, comes also with an inquiry rising from the depths of a subdued and obedient spirit, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do<sup>v</sup>?” His faith produces within him a holy conformity and a cheerful submission to the will of God, with a desire and effort to be perfect, even as his Father in heaven is perfect. And hence this living principle puts forth its energy in raising the whole moral character; it governs or quells the passions according to

<sup>v</sup> Acts ix. 6.



the dictates of an enlightened conscience and a sound morality; it subdues the remainder of pride, restrains and regulates self-love, overcomes the world, and quenches the fiery darts of temptation; while to all moral goodness it gives a stability and weight which we look for in vain from any other principle that can be brought to bear upon the soul. As a spiritual sense of the broken law leads us to embrace the proffered grace of the gospel, so the grace of the gospel sets us upon the hearty fulfilment of the law,—the law, not in the letter, but in the spirit, not as a rule imposed upon us merely from without, but as a principle regulating the heart within; our love to God Himself passing over, by a process altogether in accordance with the constitution of our nature, into love towards His law.

Nor does the work of faith stop here. The moral character, thus purified and invigorated within the man, impresses its energy upon his *outward life and course of action*. Faith is no speculative, dreamy, sentimental habit of the soul; it is eminently practical (74). The man who lives the life of faith is the man who at the same time works the works of God,—works of integrity and uprightness,—works of benevolence and mercy,—works of industry and labour,—works for the glory

of God and for the welfare of mankind,—works as of one who has a spring of activity within him, as well as a glorious reward before him. A mere assent of the understanding, even when accompanied by strong conviction and intellectual belief, may be dormant, powerless, and still,—putting forth no power within the soul, impressing no character upon the heart, leading to no energy in action. But faith, which grasps the revealed truth of God, has within it a principle of heavenly life; and it lies in its very nature to impart its own vigour to every thing within its reach. It penetrates and invigorates all the powers of the soul. It is found among those powers, wherever it exists, not as a jewel or as a piece of gold that is embedded in a heap of sand, but rather, according to the just conception of Luther, as the heat of fire is found in water that has been made to boil. Without it, the powers of the soul may be cramped and fettered, may be wasted, misdirected, perverted, or abused; but Christian faith liberates and heightens all the mental faculties, while it ennobles and expands all the sentiments and impulses of the heart, imparts to them a right direction, and finds them a congenial employment.

It is worthy of special remark, that the healthy condition of the affections and the will, attendant upon Christian faith, assists the believer's *intellectual apprehension* of divine truth, and makes him, in his measure, "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord<sup>u</sup>." As the depraved affections and the debased will entangle or impair the intellect in matters of religion, so the renovated will and the rectified affections liberate and restore it (75). The loving spirit is the ready learner in the school of Christ. As to the meaning and interpretation of Scripture, as to the power and application of first principles of Christian morals and the rule of a holy life, and even with respect to the deep things of God, the man of faith and love is often found to possess a power of penetration and a correctness of judgment far superior to the attainments of other men more learned than himself, but less richly furnished with the gifts of heavenly grace. And hence those words of our Saviour, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight<sup>x</sup>." Nor ought we to overlook the

<sup>u</sup> Isa. xi. 3.

<sup>x</sup> Mat. xi. 25, 26.

fact, that, even in matters not directly religious or moral, a connection may frequently be traced between strength of intellect and the presence of Christian principle (76). Again and again has the individual mind, under the power of religious faith, displayed a clearness, vivacity, and vigour to which it had been otherwise a stranger. And if we look abroad upon the history of the world, we find that in proportion to the prevalence of the Christian spirit among a people—and, to a certain degree, even according as the masses of society have been instructed in the elements of Christian knowledge—there has been an incomparable advancement of science and art, an augmentation of all the substantial blessings of civilized life, and a progress in those works of industry and those appliances of skill which tend to the well-being of the human race.

In this way, and in many others, the faith of the gospel is, beyond all question, the most powerful promoter of *social and public welfare* (77); it is the friend of liberty, the advocate of order, the bond of peace, the supporter of law (78), the favourer of progress in all that is really good, the counsellor of the wealthy, the benefactor of the poor, and the patron of all social institutions for the spread

of sound knowledge, for the relief of misery and want, and for the establishment or growth of friendly intercourse between man and man.

Nor is it strange if, in that faith which is the mainspring of godliness and virtue, we find also the secret of *human happiness*. Hence flow, in very truth, serenity, cheerfulness and joy to the individual believer,—peace and contentment, harmony and gladness, within the confines of a happy home,—wisdom in prosperity, comfort in adversity,—the true relish and enjoyment of life,—calmness and composure, hope and triumph, in the hour of death. Until that hour, indeed, faith must maintain a struggle; the sword of the Spirit must be in her hand, contending against evil,—slaying the hitherto unsubdued corruptions of the heart, and overcoming the evil power of the world; and it is, at the same time, her constant office to cover the soul as with a shield from the assaults of its malicious and watchful enemy. But, when that hour shall arrive, the conflict will have ceased for ever; the believer, made more than conqueror through Him that loved us<sup>y</sup>, will receive his crown of life; and then, but not until then, will the real blessedness of faith

<sup>y</sup> See Rom. viii. 37.

be fully understood. In the mean time, let us thankfully remember that while this Christian grace, the work of the Holy Spirit, confers priceless benefits, even for the present time, upon individual souls,—while it animates the church and labours to regenerate the world,—it also involves a preparation for those “new heavens” and that “new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness<sup>y</sup>,”—where the sons of men will no more fall away from their allegiance to the Most High, but, having found their help in Him who has redeemed them, will cleave to Him for ever as the fountain of their being and the source of their felicity, and will joyfully unite in that song of everlasting thanksgiving and praise, “Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen<sup>z</sup>.”

<sup>y</sup> See 2 Pet. iii. 13.

<sup>z</sup> Rev. i. 5, 6.

## LECTURE III.

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INFIDELITY IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS.

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ISAIAH liii. 1.

*Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?*

CHRISTIAN faith, in its vitality and power, includes, as we have seen, not only an intellectual belief of revealed truth, but also an act of the will whereby we heartily embrace that truth, desire the fulfilment of the promises made to us in Christ, and rely upon Him for whose sake they have been given, and by whose faithfulness and power they are to be accomplished.

Without affiance in the revealed Redeemer, it is to little purpose that we assent to the word of revelation. And, accordingly, while we admit the credibility of the gospel narrative, and believe, or think that we believe, all Christian truth, there is still room for the inquiry, "Dost thou believe on the

Son of God<sup>a</sup> (79) ?” Where is our cordial acceptance of the Saviour as he is set before us in the gospel, if there be no hearty surrender of ourselves to Him to be saved by his merits and to be ordered by the governance of his Holy Spirit,—if self-righteousness and self-will are still dominant within us ?

In order, however, to that habit of trust and confidence which fills up the measure of faith in Christ, there is need, as we have already seen, of a belief of Christian truth. Even if there can be a belief of the gospel without faith in Christ, yet certain it is that there cannot be faith in Christ without a belief of the gospel. Hence the evil and danger of *Infidelity*, that fearful state of mind which I have undertaken to consider in the present Lecture and the one which is to follow. And here let it be once for all observed, that, when I speak of Infidelity, I do not intend to imply any thing like contempt or scorn. I shall use this word rather with deep sorrow, because it alone seems fitly to denote the subject which we have in hand ; that is to say, *unbelief* or *disbelief* concerning Christian verities, not latent, or cherished only in the heart, but *speculative*, *systematic*, and *avowed*. As to the difference

<sup>a</sup> John ix. 35.



between *unbelief* and *disbelief*, it may be said that *unbelief* denotes properly a rejection of the proofs of Christianity, as insufficient in its favour, or a rejection of its doctrines, as not discernible or discoverable by reason ; while *disbelief* implies an assumption that we possess evidence sufficient to counter-balance the proofs alleged, or that we perceive the doctrines to be contrary to reason. But these two states of mind, in point of fact, are closely connected with each other. Mere unbelief, or a state of pure doubt or suspense of judgment, for any length of time, is hardly possible on a subject such as this : there may indeed be a real and culpable indifference ; but if there be doubt, it may be regarded for the most part as only a transition to belief or to disbelief. Disbelief, too, it should be remembered, involves, more or less certainly, an opposite belief : the mind that really disbelieves the gospel is not likely to be a mere blank with reference to the subject-matter of the gospel ; but it is likely rather to believe something else, at variance with the system which it repudiates. The disbelief suggested to our first parents in Paradise was not a simple rejection of God's word,—("Ye shall not surely die,")—but it included the admission of a promise in oppo-

sition to that word,—(“Ye shall be as gods.”) An element of faith has been lodged in our very nature ; and hence it is that, if we do not believe the truth, we are prone to believe a lie.

Be assured that I am not insensible to the painful nature of the subject which now lies before us. I know that it is a ghastly spectacle which I am about to bring before your view : it is no better than a corpse, a mouldering corpse ; intellect without the knowledge of God,—man’s whole soul without the love of Him. How can we turn aside to see this mournful sight, now, on the first day of the week, when our Saviour burst the fetters of the tomb, and rose, for ever, from the dead ? I confess to you that, on reviewing the course of observations which I am still prepared to urge upon your notice, I felt for a moment no slight degree of hesitation as to their fitness for an occasion like the present. But, upon earnest consideration afterwards,—regarding the intentions of the founder of this Lecture,—remembering also that our blessed Lord and Master, in the temple of Jerusalem, not only proclaimed the truth, but exposed hypocrisy and unbelief,—and trusting that what I have to say may, by God’s blessing, be made subservient,

if not to the edification of the sound and established believer, yet to the instruction of the unlearned, or to the confirmation of some weak and wavering soul,—I have felt it consistent with my duty, or rather I have found myself in duty bound, not to shrink from the task of calling your attention to the existence and nature of speculative unbelief. Considering, too, that, in the present day, Infidelity presents itself under manifold aspects, and that, though less threatening than formerly, it is yet perhaps not the less dangerous, by reason of its pliable principles and its exceeding versatility of form, I have judged it expedient to propose as the subject of this Lecture a survey of the various phases of this gigantic evil (80); intending, as we proceed, to intimate the logical connection of its different forms with each other; and hoping, in this way, to minister at least a cause of thanksgiving to those persons who, by God's grace, are beyond the reach of these anti-Christian principles, and to give a salutary warning to others, who may be almost upon the borders of this spiritual vortex.

Consider, in the first place, Infidelity, scarcely fashioned, and perhaps hardly conscious of its own true character, but yet

really existing and putting forth some degree of energy, in the form of a *rationalistic rejection of Christian doctrine*. In this form, having reference rather to the substance of the gospel than to its proofs and evidences, Infidelity is capable of such diversified modifications, and assumes so many disguises, that it may sometimes escape detection, and is often in a position to repel, with logical correctness, the charges which may be justly brought against it by those who perceive its real tendency and nature. Here, therefore, is no inconsiderable peril; peril for the young,—peril for the unstable,—peril for all whose feet are not firmly planted on the Rock of ages,—peril too for all who think that they are standing on that Rock securely in their own strength,—the strength of their own reason,—the ardour of their love,—or even the pureness of their conscience in the sight of God.

The faintest, but still dangerous, phase of this rationalistic spirit consists in the habit of making an arbitrary *choice and selection* of dogmas to be believed, by those who professedly, and with more or less sincerity, accept the Christian revelation as a whole. Certain tenets are received, as upon the authority of the record: but others are re-

jected, more or less consciously, in spite of that authority. What is this but Infidelity begun? To say the least, here is something less than simple and entire submission to divine teaching; here is a refusal to receive the whole truth in its breadth and fulness, and therefore in all its vital power. Together with some measure of faith, the mind cherishes a principle at variance with faith,—a principle of self-reliance and self-will in matters from which these feelings ought to be excluded. And either this intrusive and rebellious spirit must be subdued, or faith, already sickly, will expire. Beware then of rejecting any truth which you recognise as among the contents of Scripture, on the ground of its being above the reach of your own independent apprehension, or at variance with some of your own logical conclusions.

From this unhealthy state of mind the transition is too easy to a systematic *elevation of reason above all the notices of revelation*,—that is, to *Rationalism* applied to the whole substance of the gospel. This takes place when men systematically require that revealed truth shall be,—not only not contradictory to sound reason, which is to be justly expected,—but that it shall be in

accordance with the independent notices of reason or deductions of the understanding,—that it shall be such as they are of themselves able to discern or to discover,—that it shall not transcend their own mental powers. The Rationalist undertakes to judge for himself, or by mere human aid, what are the truths which revelation ought to propound, and then brings the actual revelation to the standard which he has set up(81): what agrees with his own preconceived opinions or theory, he is ready to receive; but all beyond this he rejects. Or, if he allows that his individual reason is not of itself equal to the task proposed, still he maintains that the standard of revealed truth is to be found in the common consent of mankind; and that we may safely refuse our assent to dogmas said to be contained in the inspired record unless they have found admission into the minds of at least a majority of those men to whom they have been propounded. And so he is ready to believe (as he imagines) what reason has already affirmed, or what the understanding can fully comprehend when submitted to its action; but here he is determined that his faith shall find its limit. The truth, however, is, that, so far as this tendency

prevails, there is no exercise of faith at all. It is of the very essence of Faith, as we have already seen, to believe what reason cannot of itself discern; it is enough that reason does not contradict it. And, as to the understanding, it may fail to comprehend the notices received by faith without thereby throwing discredit upon faith itself, just as it must fail to comprehend many of the notices of sense and reason, while yet the authority of those powers remains unimpeached and unshaken.

Under the rationalistic system to which we are now referring, there is for the most part a rejection of all the vital and distinctive doctrines of Christianity (82), — those which announce the relations subsisting between God and man. By this process, the mind lets go its hold, one by one, of all the essential and specific doctrines of the gospel; for example, the divinity and incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ; the real and proper influence of the Holy Spirit as a personal divine Agent working upon the soul of the believer; the efficacy of prayer; the value of instituted ordinances as peculiar and effectual means of grace to those who rightly use them; the personality and tempting agency of Satan and his angels; the resurrection of

the dead; the eternity of future punishments; and the individual and personal possession of eternal life by the righteous. In short, natural religion is falsely held to be the method by which man may draw nigh to God, and live in conscious peace and harmony with his Maker,—whereby his passions may be restrained, his morals purified, his whole soul made to move in the region of spiritual harmony and holy love.

But, when all the distinguishing doctrines of Christianity have been set aside, what is there in the gospel to entitle it to our regard as an express revelation from heaven? By rejecting the substance of the message, a foundation has been laid for a logical disavowal of the fact that such a message has been conveyed to us. And accordingly, among teachers of the class to which we now allude, we soon find, perhaps after some vain speculations concerning the methods and degrees of inspiration, that the reality of inspiration is utterly denied. Prophets, Apostles, and even Christ himself are regarded simply as good men, in advance of their age, who laboured with some measure of success for the enlightenment of the human race, by making a wise use of their natural powers; but, according to this theory, there has been no



knowledge of divine truth supernaturally communicated by the Holy Spirit, nor are the writers of Scripture to be regarded as the organs of any extraordinary message to the great family of man; in short, there has been no inspiration, and therefore there is now no revelation whatever, in the proper acceptation of the term (83).

Views such as these, though doubtless always existing, belong, in a marked degree, more to a past age than to the present. But, while Rationalism appears to have lost much of its former reputation, there is another method of arriving at the same end which finds acceptance in the minds of many persons at the present day. These men are not rationalists; they are so-called *spiritualists* (84). They do not deny the great truths which lie on the very surface of the sacred record; nor do they disavow the fact of a divine revelation, and so leave man entirely to the dictates of his reason and the conclusions of his understanding, with the additional aid to be derived from his fellow creatures all uninspired like himself. But their theory is this. There is, say they, a revelation made from God to man, but it is only subjective, inward, to the already existing spiritual life or religious consciousness of

humanity; the inspiration by which this life or consciousness is awakened is common to every man who will wait and seek for it; and as to religious truth, it is simply that which individuals, or the mass of humanity, so far as their powers have been heightened by the divine afflatus, are able to apprehend. The prophets, apostles, and Christ himself, they admit to have been inspired, but only in a higher degree than Confucius or Plato, than Raphael or Columbus, or any other great teacher or benefactor of mankind. And the Bible is a revelation, that is, the record or representative of a revelation, because it contains an account of the lofty deeds, the noble thoughts, the pure imaginings of highly gifted men, which may be useful to other men who, being themselves inspired, know how to turn these records to a good account, just as we may also derive benefit from the musings of Homer and Shakspeare, from the philosophy of a Socrates or an Antoninus, or from the memoirs of philanthropists and heroes. According to this system, we are not to suppose that the gospel announces positive spiritual facts, such, for example, as that which is usually understood by the Atonement; but it propounds ideas which may be differently received by different men, and

will possess a power and value according to the spiritual mould into which they may be cast. The man who has listened aright to the voice of Nature, and has caught inspiration from its grandeur and its beauties,—whose soul has been elevated by contact with the productions of genius, has held high communings with the great men of all ages, has been enlightened by the discoveries of science and stored with the riches of advancing civilization,—this man is supposed to possess the faculty of deep insight into spiritual truth, and to possess the power of gazing, with pure and ennobling perception, upon the face of Deity. It is assumed, but unwarrantably and falsely assumed,—and here lies a capital fallacy of this unsubstantial theory,—that there exists in the soul of fallen man a spiritual perception, life, and consciousness, sufficient to carry him forward to perfection, independently of any direct influence of the Holy Spirit, and without the instrumentality of any objective truth, or any positive and supernatural declaration of the mind and will of God. And it is even pretended that, in this way, man may, of himself, advance beyond the morality and the religion of the gospel.

Now, in this Spiritualism, let it be observed,

there is nothing original or new (85). This system is, in substance, only one of those phases of unbelief which have appeared and disappeared at intervals from the earliest age of Christianity,—but which, thanks be to God, have never yet succeeded in making the gospel obsolete, and in robbing mankind of the knowledge of salvation. It is, however, fraught with danger; and its power of mischief arises, in no small degree, from its capability of disguise. It can put on the semblance of Christian truth; it can comply with any form of words, even the soundest form, in creeds and confessions drawn up with the greatest fidelity and care. Under this system, sin may be spoken of as a reality,—but then it is regarded as consisting only in the dominion of the senses over man's higher faculties, or only as the effect of outward conditions, a result of error, of prejudice, or of defective education; and in like manner sin may be also denounced and branded as an evil thing,—but an evil, only on account of its unhealthy, withering, or disturbing influence upon the subject mind which it affects. There is such a thing as a regeneration of human nature, not only possible, but to be earnestly expected and zealously promoted;—because there may be a develop-

ment of all that is good and noble in man's spiritual being; because learning may dispel his ignorance, science may enlarge his command over the world of matter, social institutions may be improved, or even placed on some new basis, so as to acquire a wondrous potency for the amelioration of the race: things which can be only instrumental and subordinate being wrongly exalted into the rank of agencies, or rather man himself being considered as the only agent,—the Holy Spirit, with the power of gospel truth, being wholly overlooked. Again, Christ is a Saviour, according to this theory;—because he is a model, oh how perfect and how pure, of patient suffering, and of a blameless, well-regulated life; he taught much that, even in this enlightened age, we must still acknowledge to be wise and just and good; he takes a high place among those heroic souls, those sages and men of noble mind, who have been, from time to time, the instructors, the benefactors, the saviours and redeemers of mankind. Christ is, moreover, divine; for so is every man, especially in proportion to the development of his spiritual life. And the Saviour made an atonement for sin;—for he taught man how to overcome it. Prayer is right and good, because it is a tranquillising

and elevating exercise of our spiritual faculties. And as for the resurrection to eternal life, why should it be denied? There will assuredly be a spiritual resuscitation of the whole mass of humanity at some future day, when science and civilization, and free institutions in church and state, in trade and commerce, shall have fulfilled their task, and when men of high intellect shall have accomplished their mission in the world!—Alas, that we should have occasion to repeat such sentiments, even by way of exposure, and for the sake of warning! But this form of Infidelity, antiquated as it may have seemed to be, has again ventured to encounter the light of day; it has been brought out and paraded forth with a kind of magnificent display; appearing, however, to the eye of an intelligent observer, no better than the preparations of funereal pomp, ready, if possible, to carry the gospel to the tomb. But we fear not the result. The gospel is not dead; still, by the power of its Author, it is “spirit and life<sup>b</sup>” within the church; and to each individual, by faith and prayer, it may become the means of life within his heart. We fear not the general result of a renewed conflict with this form of unbelief; but at the same

<sup>b</sup> See John vi. 63.

time we well know that this system possesses its peculiar attractions, and is therefore dangerous to the minds of many. Its high-sounding expressions,—the compliments, hollow indeed but often loud, which it pays to the Saviour and his gospel,—its imaginative and poetic elements,—its professedly lofty aims,—its apparently benevolent and expansive character,—all these things are adapted to win the attention, and to excite the admiration, of those who are unwilling or unable to look beneath the surface of its claims. It is dangerous to the ardent, to the sentimental, and to those who in their search after novelty fondly imagine that they find it here; it is, in short, more or less dangerous to all who do not possess a vital consciousness of sin,—who do not know that the separation which sin has made between God and their own souls is a positive and fearful fact,—and that, as nothing short of a righteous and merciful act of the divine government can meet their wants, so nothing less than an objective divine revelation can certify them of that act, and can thus become a means of peace and blessing to their souls.

To proceed. The doctrines of Christianity, or its spiritual facts, are closely interwoven with the substance of the gospel narrative, or

its record of historical facts ; and, when once men have abandoned the teachings of the word, and have refused to acknowledge an inspired revelation, they are prepared, with logical consistency, to deny all that is supernatural in the alleged series of facts upon which the authority of revelation is greatly made to rest. The mind that revolts at mystery, or religious truth which we cannot know independently of a direct and outward revelation, is also shocked and repelled by miracle, that is, something which cannot take place without a supernatural interposition of Almighty power. And, as we have already asked, if there be no distinctive Christian truth, what need is there of the Christian revelation ? so we may also inquire, if there be no occasion for a revelation, what occasion can there have been for any miraculous or supernatural interpositions on the part of the great Author of nature, who has so wisely appointed that the universe shall move in obedience to regular laws of matter and of mind ? Or if, according to the other theory, there has always been a subjective revelation in the mind of man, and the only inspiration to be expected is that which has been breathing upon him in all ages of the world, still the question may be raised, what likelihood



is there of any special and extraordinary interference of the Creator at any given period of time,—what is needed, or to be desired, more than the regular development of that spiritual element which has been implanted in the minds of all, and which cannot take place otherwise than under certain conditions, and in compliance with established principles or laws? Upon this hypothesis, miracles, prophecy, and the whole system of direct teaching by revelation and spiritual influence, instead of appearing to be necessary, or even beneficial, appear rather in the character of lawless forces, with sudden and disturbing movements, in the otherwise regular and beautiful evolution of humanity. And accordingly we find that Infidelity sometimes assumes the form of *Naturalism*, or an assault upon the Bible chiefly with reference to its supernatural historic elements.

In the last century, the sophistry of Hume was employed to make it appear that miracles, as being contrary to our uniform experience, are incapable of being proved by any evidence whatever; and that we must rather conclude that such events are impossible, inasmuch as the sequences of nature are invariable, and never can be broken. This fallacy has been abundantly refuted; and

there are perhaps few men in the present day who rest their objections on the ground which Hume would have taught them to occupy. Infidelity, however, still maintains, as one of its positions, that miracles, under any circumstances whatever, are impossible ; for the most part appealing, in support of its affirmation, to certain deep principles of error to which we shall have occasion hereafter to refer.

Apart also from this general objection to the more remarkable and salient portions of the evangelical history, and indeed even without appearing to deny the truth of the sacred narrative, there are other methods by which modern unbelievers have attempted to rob that narrative of all that is supernatural and divine.—According to some, the miracles of Scripture were really wrought, and presented all the appearances described in the sacred record ; but they were miraculous only to the apprehension of ignorant persons who did not understand how they were performed ; the workers of these miracles were scientifically in advance of their age,—they had a command over the powers of nature which was then extremely rare, although it is only such as many men possess in the present day, or such at all events as

will be common in the course of time,—and, by the employment of their skill and ability, they produced effects which were marvellous in the eyes of the multitude, and tended to give them an unbounded influence, which they wisely exercised for good. And thus an attempt is made to shew that what appeared to be miracles were really no miracles at all.—Still more common, however, has been the system of explaining away the miracles by resolving them into mere natural phenomena, or remarkable contingencies. In order to support this view, criticism has employed itself in softening down some expressions and removing others, in rejecting as incredible what is too plain to be misinterpreted, and in reducing, as far as possible, the supernatural works recorded in Scripture, to the appearance of natural, but somewhat remarkable and felicitous, events.—Far more elaborate, and perhaps more plausible, has been an attempt of recent date, to exhibit all the miraculous and supernatural features of the gospel history under the character of an aggregate of myths or legends. Such is the hypothesis of Strauss,—in accordance with a system which had been long since marked out by an infidel writer of our own country (86). He supposes that,

historically speaking, there was such a person as Jesus of Nazareth, whose life and actions attracted attention in Judea, and made a lively impression on the minds of a certain body of Jewish admirers and disciples. After his decease, his sayings were cherished in the memory of his friends, and his actions were by degrees embellished and exaggerated according to the taste and temper of the age, and especially in harmony with certain Messianic notions at that time prevalent. To the originally simple annals of this illustrious teacher, additions, marvellous in their character, and intended to do honour to the subject, were continually made; Jesus himself was represented as superhuman and divine; and exploits supposed to be worthy of so transcendent a Being were ascribed to him by his devotees,—not indeed altogether arbitrarily or without foundation, but so contrived as to picture or embody some great ideas which were attributed to Jesus himself, or which at all events found place in the minds of his followers. And the gospel narrative, as it has come down to us, is supposed to consist of a real account of some few events which belonged to the personal history of Jesus, but overloaded and almost obscured by mythical drapery and adventi-

tious ornament. By this process, the great body of the evangelical history is supposed to have been successfully dissolved into thin air, into mere fable, or at best into allegories embodying the conceptions of an ignorant and superstitious people. Upon examination, the whole of this unbelieving theory is found to rest on unwarranted assumption, and to be propped up by most fallacious reasoning; the mind perceives that if in this way any thing has been proved, then the proof is valid against all history (87), and forbids our attaching credit to any testimony concerning past events; an inquiry, too, arises as to the origin of those ideas which are set forth as the sources of the imagined myths, and it is felt that the difficulty, if such there be, instead of having been removed, has only been transferred to another portion of the sacred history; and, besides all this, it is remembered that the gospel life of Christ is no isolated narrative, but one that subsists in immediate and inevitable connection with the history of the church from the time of the apostles to the present day,—a connection which can be explained, if the Saviour were really such as the Evangelists have described, but which is utterly inexplicable, and is more marvellous than all legends and all myths, if

He were no more than such as to meet the conceptions of the German speculatist.

From Naturalism our thoughts may now turn to *Deism*,—a class of Anti-Christian principles well known as having prevailed in England chiefly in the last century (88). Infidelity in this form no longer appears as mere philosophy, or speaks in the accents of calm or lofty speculation. It includes indeed some attempts at historical and verbal criticism, and makes some show of wisdom suited to the age in which it flourished; but for the most part it opens its mouth in blasphemy, and proclaims aloud the sentiments of an evil and ungodly heart. Not content with arguing against the gospel, or explaining away its statements and its truths, this coarser form of unbelief denies the facts which it is unable to disprove, and inveighs against the person, the work, and the gospel of the Saviour, in terms of contempt or scorn, in the tone of profane and impious raillery. Marked, to a great extent, by a coarse illiterate ignorance of the evidence and history of the Christian religion, it is yet loud in its invectives against the claims which it puts forward, the restraints it imposes, and the principles it would establish. By turns rancorous and flippant, it openly derides the

religion of the gospel as having been founded in imposture, and having been received and cherished only by the credulity of the superstitious and the weak. At one time it rejects its morality as a burden too heavy to be borne; at another it proclaims the gospel itself immoral, denounces it as a mischief to society, adverse to the welfare and happiness of mankind, unworthy of the nature and character of Almighty God. And whether we consider the ignorant misrepresentations of Paine, the sneers of Gibbon, or the scoffings of Voltaire, it is impossible not to perceive that their opposition to the gospel is founded upon moral repugnance and distaste. Their writings are a clear echo of that rebellious sentiment, "We will not have this man to reign over us<sup>c</sup>." And so far as this school of infidelity continues to subsist, we find its adherents, for the most part, among men of depraved moral habits, of low taste and uncultivated intellect, revelling very often in the haunts of profligacy and vice, or filled with political rancour, and struggling against the restraints of all laws human and divine.

It may be observed, that Infidelity, under all the phases which have been thus far con-

<sup>c</sup> Luke xix. 14.

sidered, professes to acknowledge the being and providence of a living and personal God. Scarcely, however, is it to be expected that the mind of man can lose sight of its relations to the Most High, and at the same time retain a just conception of the nature and attributes of the Supreme Being himself. And therefore it is not surprising that there is an Infidelity which says, not only, There is no revelation, There is no Redeemer, but even, more or less boldly and distinctly, *There is no God.*

Some men there are who, while they reject Christianity and know not the true God, have yet a lively conception of the order and harmony which pervade the Universe, with the traces of design and the manifestations of will and power which we find everywhere around us. Hence therefore they retain the impression of a presiding or universal Intellect; but at the same time, that which they thus recognise as mental energy, or the divine essence, or even a divine being, they regard as more or less identical with nature—conceiving that, in some way or other, either God is the Universe, or the Universe is God. This is *Pantheism* (89), in its two-fold aspect. Throughout the material system, some suppose, there is Intelligence,



putting forth its energy, and manifesting itself in various appearances of design and symmetry and life, such as matter alone, itself unconscious and inert, never could display; but then this Intelligence is not distinct from the Universe which it animates and guides,—it has no independent existence, no personality, no moral attributes,—it is no one living and true God. Such is that form of Pantheism which says that the Universe is God. By others, with an appearance of greater spirituality, it is maintained that the great Intelligence is the original substratum of all matter and all mind, continually evolving or developing itself in the forms of creation, in life and thought and feeling, existing in all things, upholding and quickening all things, and yet distinct from none; working, or rather developing itself, according to certain laws of its own appointment, from which, having once appointed them, it is itself unable, as by miracles, to depart;—an infinite substance, in which all things animate live and move and have their being, and into which, according to a regular and invariable process, all are again absorbed. Such is that Pantheism which affirms, in effect, that God is the Universe.

Now the teachings of this theosophy pos-

sess some charm for many persons who have not become disciples of the school of revelation, and who are therefore strangers to the higher attraction of the cross of Christ. To the reason which cannot be satisfied with supposing that all things are made, or proceed, by chance, this theory professes to give an account of such matters apparently more consistent. To the imagination and the feelings, unenlightened and undisciplined, it speaks in captivating terms when it tells of God in everything, of his glory in the brightness of the firmament, of his voice in the breeze and in the stream, in the accents of the thunder and in the roaring of the deep, of his beauty in the landscape, and, above all, of his inspiration and his presence in the soul of genius, in the bosom of the hero, in all intellectual energy, in all strong affection, in all the earnestness of indomitable will. Not to the humble mind, but yet to minds of a certain order, there is in all this, taken in the pantheistic meaning, something plausible, however false. And there are other aspects of this doctrine, to men of a right mind still more fearful and revolting, but to some men still more welcome. Enough, that there is no living, personal, independent Being, the father of the Universe, the moral

ruler and governor of the human race,—enough, to make good men shudder, and to administer something like comfort to the proud and self-willed, the licentious and profane! There is no God; enough to make heaven mourn and to cause hell to triumph! Or, if the patrons of this theory insist upon the language which themselves employ, and affirm that they teach us rather that there is a God, and that God is everywhere present, still, when they tell us what they mean by that which they call God, we know and feel that it is not the God in whom heaven can rejoice or before whom hell can tremble. According to the Pantheist, no relations can subsist between the Creator and the creature; in fact, man is no creature of God's hand,—he is himself a portion of the Deity, or developed for a season out of the divine essence, not in any way distinct from the infinite and great First Cause,—and all his thoughts and feelings are only so many movements and pulsations of a life which is from first to last divine. Hence therefore evil can have no existence in the form of sin. And as for a future state of being, it is a state in which, according to this theory, all personality or dream of personality will have ceased, the individual having been absorbed into the infi-

nite, the drop having been swallowed up in the ocean, the soul, with all its former consciousness, having lapsed and disappeared for ever! What a depth of unbelief, which, while it refuses to acknowledge the existence and agency of a personal God, an intelligent creator and moral governor of the Universe, ignores, at the same time, all creaturely dependence, all moral responsibility, and all personal existence in a future world!

There appears to be only one step lower to which even the boldest Infidelity can descend; and that is *Atheism*, properly so called.—The Atheist is sometimes satisfied with taking a merely negative position(90). Without attempting to prove that there is no God, he simply affirms that, to his apprehension, there is no sufficient proof of his existence, or that the evidences of his being and his operation, to which many men appeal, are to his mind no evidence whatever: and therefore he holds himself excused from believing that there is a God, and from accepting the consequences, which must follow from such admission, respecting the creation of the world, the responsibility of man, and the prospect of immortality hereafter.—But this position, dreary as it is, by no means forms a resting-place of this infidel

philosophy. Atheism, even in the present day, is positive and dogmatic in its teaching. It professes to account for the absence of a Deity, and to prove that there is no God, or at least that there is none engaged in present operation on the Universe around us. The ancient hypothesis of the formation of the Universe by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms may now, perhaps, find few supporters; other theories, apparently more scientific, are commonly preferred.—One theory admits indeed, or does not find it needful to deny, that at some period of time exceedingly remote, an intelligent creator laid as it were the foundations, or planted the first germs, of existing worlds and systems; but that, having impressed upon certain elementary monads the capacity of a regular process of development, with a tendency towards it, he then left all things to take their course without further interference or direction; and under these circumstances, after a series of imperfect formations, the present more orderly and beautiful system is supposed to have evolved itself.—Other atheistical philosophers, wholly discarding the idea of a divine creator, trace all the developments and movements of the Universe to some inherent force that acts, as they ima-

gine, by virtue of a primordial necessity.— While others, yet more boldly, refer every thing in the material Universe and in the domain of what is commonly called mind, to the spontaneous operation of simply mechanical laws. As man has no God above him, so neither does he possess a soul within; he is no more than a fleeting, evanescent, combination or development of matter; and when this material fabric is dissolved, his existence is for ever at an end!— Here is a system of tremendous import; and yet feeble beyond measure are the principles which are made to bear its weight. If we ask, what are the laws of nature or of matter, we can hear of nothing but the regular sequence of causes and effects; and if we inquire for the power to which this connection may be traced, we receive no answer, or are left to believe, in contradiction to our consciousness, that power is an empty name, or that the power is inherent in the cause itself. If from the laws of matter we direct attention to its manifold adaptations and arrangements, wholly distinct from the operation of its laws,—often necessary in order to their operation,—and as evidently traceable to some first cause as are the laws themselves,—again we obtain no adequate reply, and we

are left to our own conviction that the wonders around us are the product of an intelligent will, almighty and all-wise. And while, moreover, we behold on every side of us the presence of life, the indications of benevolence, and the manifestations of moral government and order, there are no assumptions, no arguments, which can outweigh our own inward consciousness, that the hand that made the Universe, the power that sustains it, the will that rules and the love that blesses it, are divine.

We have thus looked into an abyss that has engulfed thousands and ten thousands of immortal souls. Let this survey of the tossings and the wrecks of unbelief, in its manifold forms of Rationalism, Spiritualism, Naturalism, Deism, Pantheism, Atheism, lead us at least to desire and to pray that, by divine grace, we may ourselves be established, and may be made the means of establishing others, in the *faith of Christ*. At the same time, who is there among us that may not do well to listen to that sacred admonition, "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God<sup>d</sup>?" Especially let me address one word of earnest entreaty, on this head, to the younger portion of my hearers. It is a great

<sup>d</sup> Heb iii. 12.

object of my desire that, in the whole course of these Lectures, I may be enabled, from time to time, to speak that which shall be good and profitable unto you. It was chiefly with regard to your state and circumstances that, at the beginning of this discourse, I pointed out the danger of arbitrarily selecting some portions or some features of revealed truth, to the disparagement or the neglect of others. But be assured that there is a state of mind, if at first sight less suspicious and alarming, yet perhaps more common, and undoubtedly more insidious, and more fatal as an introduction to an unbelieving rejection of the gospel, or even to the blasphemous denial of a God. I speak of *religious indifference*, coldness of affection, carelessness of thought, levity of judgment, with respect to those high and sacred verities which, as Christians, you professedly believe. If, amidst the fascinations that beset you, you have no real, deep, and reverent love to God your Saviour,—if, among all your labours, you are conscious of no earnest effort for the attainment of that one thing which is pre-eminently “needful,”—if, together with your literary or scientific studies, there is no devout inquiry at the oracles of God, no prayer for heavenly illumination, strength, and guidance, no jealous watching over your own



hearts, your motives and desires, your springs of thought and action,—then, what does all this testify? Does it not, although you perhaps may not hitherto have thought so, yet does it not really bear witness to latent unbelief, already working in the inner man? Does it not, to say the least, declare that your faith is so weak, so dormant, so much in peril of being stifled by corruption within, or of being crushed by the weight of the world and the power of temptation without, that it is high time for you to awake as out of a sleep that may soon become the sleep of death, and to cry mightily to God for help? And surely that voice is a friendly one which now earnestly implores you to shrink from the contamination of moral pollution, to turn a deaf ear to the voice of the seducer, to stand upon your guard against spiritual sloth, to dread self-conceit as practical idolatry, and to remember that your only security against the most fearful unbelief, as well as against the worst and most inveterate habits of ungodliness, consists in this, that you do now, in these your early days, by a practical reception of revealed truth into your hearts, with prayer, acquaint yourselves with God, as your Father and your Friend in Christ, and be at peace.

## LECTURE IV.

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THE CAUSES, OCCASIONS, AND EFFECTS OF INFIDELITY.

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JOHN VIII. 43.

*Why do ye not understand my speech? Even because ye cannot hear my word.*

IN our last Lecture we took a survey of various forms or phases of speculative unbelief; we found that there are many different ways in which men refuse even to give credence to that revealed truth which lies at the foundation of Christian faith. And now we ask, How are we to account for this? Whence comes it that man rejects a revelation from his Maker, on subjects of the deepest importance, and commended to his acceptance by sufficient evidence at once internal and external,—by moral evidence arising from the subject-matter of the revelation, or its adaptation at once to the character of God and to the wants of man, and by historical evidence consisting in adequate outward

attestations to the fact that such a revelation has indeed been made from heaven? By the very form of this inquiry we designedly exclude all discussion concerning the nature and extent of Christian evidence; we assume, according to the language of our Saviour in the text, that the fault of unbelief lies, not in the gospel, but in the mind that rejects the gospel; that unbelief exists, not because God has not made his revelation sufficiently clear, or has not duly impressed on it the stamp of divine authority, but because, for some subjective reasons, certain men cannot receive the revelation which has been fitly and adequately made to them. And our question is, What are those reasons? How are we to explain the melancholy fact that the gospel evidence, although ample in itself, yet, in too many instances, fails to produce conviction?

Here we must remark, in the first place, that the great and original seat of infidelity is *in the heart*. Often, if not always, the rejection of Christian truth, when that truth is fairly presented to the mind, may be traced to some perverse moral disposition, something which corresponds to the scriptural expression, “an evil heart of unbelief<sup>a</sup>,” and bears

<sup>a</sup> Heb. iii. 12.

out the assertion that “men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil<sup>b</sup>.”

It cannot be doubted that *the corrupt will* is sometimes *directly* engaged in blinding men’s eyes to the truth of Christianity; a secret wish that the gospel may not be true making way for the persuasion that it is false (91). A man—perhaps a young man—yields, we will suppose, to the impulse of passion; he repeats his sinful indulgence; and, having begun to fall into licentious habits of life, his conscience is ill at ease:—free from some bonds of social restraint whereby he was once controlled, he yet finds himself harassed, if not impeded, in his course of sensuality and self-gratification, by the voice of an unearthly monitor from without, which finds a response within the chambers of his soul, charging him with sin, and disturbing his enjoyment. But he is determined not to be checked in his career; he wishes that this troublesome voice were silent;—and therefore, alas, weighty are those reasonings of his own mind, and welcome are those suggestions or arguments of some companion in sin, which in some way or other declare that the terrible word of God is less than it professes to

<sup>b</sup> John iii. 19.

be,—that it is not at all what is pretended,—that it is a dead letter,—that it is a fable. More fearful than tongue can tell is the licentious wish that it could be clearly proved that the Bible is not the word of God. And may those warnings on this head, which are often uttered from this pulpit with all faithfulness and truth, never be unheeded! May they be clothed with power, and carried home to the hearts of all who need them, by the Spirit of the living God!

But, do not the advocates of our religion sometimes dwell too exclusively upon this source of infidelity? Are not the assertions which relate to it sometimes too broad and sweeping? Surely there are limits in the statement of this matter which ought to be carefully observed. It is not always that the depraved heart is thus directly concerned in the work of forbidding access to the power of Christian evidence, or that a conscious wish or desire lies immediately at the foundation of unbelief. And even when the proximate cause of a rejection of the gospel is indeed to be found in the prevailing temper of the mind, still it is not invariably one and the same disposition to which this effect is to be ascribed; it is not always the love of sensual pleasure that exerts this evil influ-

ence: and it is to be feared that a sense of injustice has been occasionally felt under charges which more or less plainly imply that every unbeliever—especially if he be a young man—is a profligate, revelling in debauchery, or at least ruled by the prevailing love of coarse sensual indulgence. The truth is, that the unbeliever may often be as far removed from this licentious disposition as his most vehement accuser; and even when the perversion of his judgment is to be traced immediately to the state of his affections and the bias of his will, it may often happen that the sinister influence consists, not in common sensuality, but in some of the more sober developments of self-exaltation and self-will. It is often sufficient for this result that the will is not duly influenced by the truth which the intellect apprehends, so that a man's practical volitions are not in accordance with his speculative belief;—a speculative belief, which by this want of energy not unfrequently conducts to speculative unbelief; truth, when imprisoned in the intellect, dying in its prison house (92). And it deserves to be well remembered that no state of mind or bad moral habit is more dangerous as a direct conductor to unbelief than mere vanity,—the empty and idolatrous love

of approbation or applause, encouraging the affectation of superior knowledge, or of extraordinary acuteness, and leading to attempts at intellectual display. Deep is the meaning of those words of the Faithful and True Witness, “How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only<sup>c</sup> (93)?”

But I desire now to call attention to the fact that *the influence of the will*, or the state of man’s heart, in producing anti-Christian principles, is often—and perhaps even for the most part—*indirect* (94). The power of the will in relation to the intellect consists very much in fixing or withholding attention,—attention, which, with some degree of effort, is necessary for the due exercise of the mental powers. It is possible to shut our eyes upon a truth or fact which contradicts our will; it is even easy to reject all means and appliances for the conveyance of unwelcome notices to our minds, just as a Brahmin is said to have destroyed a microscope which shewed living animalcula upon his vegetable food. And it is by withdrawing or detaining attention from the substance of revelation, or from its credentials, that the perverse will of man very frequently succeeds in producing

<sup>c</sup> John v. 44.

or fostering a mental decision adverse to the reception of the gospel. But infidelity is rarely, if ever, altogether negative; the mind can hardly be a mere blank on the subject of religious truth; from within and from without it finds itself compelled to adopt some opinion, and to entertain some sentiments, on this momentous matter; and hence the man who does not believe the truth of God, believes something else which is repugnant to that truth. Where then, in this respect, lies the danger? Clearly, in those false maxims and those specious arguments relating to the surface of things which may be easily comprehended and lightly taken up,—which are fashionable, and readily admitted, or never contradicted in certain circles of society,—recommended perhaps by the charms of wit or the graces of poetry and song, or in some other way adapted to assist men in forming or maintaining their opinions, in constructing or defending their creed, with as little attention as possible,—without any painful effort of the mind,—and without interference with more congenial subjects of reflection. And here is, perhaps, the source of much of that infidelity which unhappily prevails among men of business, men of science, and the more decent votaries of pleasure.



This, however, is not the only source of unbelief which may justly be regarded as potent, although indirect. The natural history of Infidelity can be but imperfectly understood unless it be remembered that gospel truth is to a great extent at variance with the dictates of an *unenlightened conscience*; and that, even when it does not directly disagree with its perceptions, still it is at least without force or meaning in its presence. And then,—that for the establishment and preservation of this unmeaning system there should have been a direct intervention of Deity,—that, for what must appear to the man of unawakened conscience as no more than a republication of the law of nature, there should have been the apparatus of prophecy and miracle, and even the incarnation and death of the Son of God,—how can this be credible? The occasion does not appear adequate to the effort that has been made, or to have called for the employment of that wondrous instrumentality which is said to have been brought into such energetic operation. So that here is an intellectual difficulty, a difficulty for the logical understanding. But it is a difficulty arising from the unsoundness of a first principle which has been embraced by a conscience

not convinced of sin. As there is a preparation for Christian faith in a conscience enlightened and aroused by the law, under the power of the Holy Spirit, so there is a foundation for unbelief in a seared, hard, or blinded conscience, insensible to guilt, and more or less ignorant of the nature and extent of a moral obligation to the heartfelt, spiritual, service of Almighty God. And while there are some cases in which an uneasy conscience seeks refuge in unbelief, it is likely that there are many more in which unbelief has its stronghold in a conscience that rejects the charge of sin, and therefore repudiates as false the gospel which propounds its remedy (95).

We proceed now to a consideration of those *intellectual vices* which must be regarded as sources of unbelief: and these, I think, may be reduced to two,—namely, *pride of intellect* on the one hand, and *mental sloth or negligence* on the other (96).

Man's *intellect is proud* when it, as it were, practically says, If I cannot master every subject, yet at all events no subject shall confound or baffle me (97). And there are various ways in which this mental pride becomes a fruitful source of anti-Christian Infidelity (98).

We find one formidable development of this haughty spirit, fraught with incalculable mischief, in the claims of self-sufficient and imperious reason with reference to *the source of religious knowledge*. In the minds of many unbelievers, and in many a system of infidel philosophy, the root of the evil lies in an assumption or demand that all divine truth must be discovered from within; that it must be originally perceived in the depths of man's own consciousness or intuitive reason (99). It is held that by an internal light or feeling man is competent to arrive at all needful knowledge concerning the nature and will of the Supreme, and the relations which we sustain towards Him;—religious truth is made to rest upon a metaphysical or speculative basis;—the mind asserts a power, not merely of making deductions from first principles, but of drawing up from its own depths, or as it were evolving out of itself, those first principles themselves: and it is regarded as derogatory to the dignity of human nature that what is ultimately derived from any other source should be taught and received as a matter of religious knowledge or a guide to religious practice. According to this transcendental philosophy, all truth is ultimately subjective; man is his own in-

structor, a fountain of light and wisdom to himself. Whatever cannot be shewn to be more or less identical with some original intuition is therefore to be at once rejected as untrue; and it is supposed that the more completely our powers of intuition are brought into exercise, the higher and purer is the truth which we discover. In the view of this theory, all foreign elements of truth tend only to adulterate and debase our knowledge; or rather, there are no foreign elements of truth; all that does not spring up from the human mind itself is error and delusion.

It can be hardly needful to point out the sceptical and destructive tendency of a system such as this. Hereby all information from experience is at once repudiated;—all regard to the historical past, and all due respect for its teachings, are made to disappear (100):—indeed, according to this philosophy when pushed to its results, even our bodily senses are held to be no trustworthy informants in matters pertaining to their own department;—and, as for the gospel,—objective truth inseparably connected with historical facts, and resting upon evidence, — truth which professes to be such as man could not of himself discover, and which he is required

simply to discern and to receive by faith,—it is manifest that the very idea of such a revelation is utterly inconsistent with these arrogant claims of self-sufficient, independent reason. Such inconsistency is, in fact, openly avowed; it has been boldly declared by the advocates of this philosophy, that an objective revelation is impossible; and here is the spirit which obviously pervades the ostensibly profound teaching of many of those schools of unbelief which have unhappily sprung up, of late, in Germany.

It is a deep error upon which infidelity thus reposes. Rightly, wisely, and with profit, as we have already seen, does the Christian recognise the fact that there is a vast amount of religious truth which reason is unable to discover, which none but God can declare to us, and such as, when presented from without, faith alone, by divine grace, is able to discern, and, with the aid of an enlightened understanding, to apply to its legitimate and salutary use. As a needful preparation for receiving the truth which has been sent down to us from heaven, we must humbly recognise the fact that the source of religious knowledge is not in ourselves. By a living faith, we must collect it from without, and then, by God's grace, work it up, so that it may be-

come the nourishment and comfort of our souls. Our mind, to refer to a well-known saying, ought to be, not like the ant which merely collects and accumulates her stores, and still less like the spider that spins her web out of her own substance, but it ought to be like the bee which gathers her sweets abroad, and then converts them into honey (101).

Again, proud reason conducts to Infidelity while it spurns at *the limits of our knowledge*. God, in His wisdom and His love, has taught us enough for our salvation and our peace; but there is a state of mind which reclaims against the amount of that truth which He has thus graciously revealed for the apprehension of our faith, protesting that it is not enough. And by thus indulging a vain desire to be wise above what is written, men not unfrequently become wise (as they suppose) in opposition to the record. It is at best a dangerous exploit of the human mind to endeavour to gain new light, from some independent source, upon subjects concerning which God has spoken; and it is no less than profane to seek to penetrate beyond that line at which sound reason may perceive that God himself has set up a barrier to our progress. Deep as man's mind may be, and vast as are

its powers, still it should be content, like the ocean, to listen to its Maker's voice, saying to it, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed<sup>d</sup>." But, when the intellect yields to sinful pride, it strives to overpass its limits. Hence the attempts which have been made to solve the mysteries of being, to pry into the essences of things and explain the phenomena of existence (102); and hence again, by no very circuitous process, the theories of Pantheism, and those speculations of a delusive spiritualism which, as we have seen, are in direct hostility to some of the fundamental truths of revealed religion. Let us beware of a restless craving after knowledge which the Most High has not placed within the reach of our attainment.

Again, sometimes the proud mind takes offence, not directly at either the source of our religious knowledge, or at its limited extent, but rather at the *obscurity* which attends that amount of it which we do possess. In every department of ordinary knowledge there are truths which we apprehend without being able to comprehend them, that is, to understand them fully (103); and, in those cases, the mind, from necessity, if not under a sense

<sup>d</sup> Job xxxviii. 11.

of duty, admits and acts upon recognised truth, notwithstanding the remaining obscurity in which it is involved. This obscurity attaches, in full measure, to many matters of religion; and here especially it becomes a standing proof and token of our dependence,—the darkness which remains impenetrable being well adapted to remind us that the light which we enjoy has been vouchsafed to us by another and a higher Being, who imparts it in measure, according to the counsel of his own will. To this sense of dependence on heavenly grace and illumination the humble soul heartily gives welcome; that soul can even love spiritual twilight, because of its proceeding from the sun; twilight, not rather than the clear shining of the sun in its meridian strength, but rather, far rather, than the glare of its own poor fires, or the most gaudy display of sparks which itself can kindle. And besides this, even apart from Christian humility, the sense of our condition simply as finite beings may well serve to reconcile us to the existence of that which is commonly, though improperly, called mystery, in matters of religion (104). To us, all things, even those which may at first appear simple and distinct, run up at length into mystery. The more we know, the more we are sensible of



ignorance. A cloud of obscurity always rests upon the horizon of even our most extensive field of vision ; and, as it has been truly said, “ with every increase of diameter in the sphere of light, there is an increase of surface in the circumambient darkness (105).” But in this darkness, this obscurity, the proud intellect not unfrequently refuses to acquiesce ; and, choosing rather to give the reins to wanton and presumptuous speculation, it loses itself in a labyrinth of error (106). A claim is put forth by the logical understanding for entire satisfaction upon all points on which it finds itself capable of raising a question ; and the mind refuses to believe any truth which it cannot clearly understand. In the face of these logical demands, a whole mass of evidence goes for nothing as long as there remains room, or the semblance of room, for query or objection ; and truth is regarded as not proved until it is thoroughly explained (107). Hence flowed a large portion of those forms of unbelief, usually called heresies, which appeared in the second and third centuries (108). To this source we trace that infidelity of the middle ages which is well known to have been consequent upon the cultivation of the scholastic philosophy (109). Hence also, infidelity in its more modern ra-

tionalistic aspect: hence its arbitrary selection of certain truths of revelation to be believed while others are rejected, and its acceptance of some truths only in its own modified or perverted sense of the terms in which they are conveyed. And hence too all unbelieving rejection of mystery, as though mystery were certainly, or probably, at variance with truth.

Lastly, the human intellect, in its pride and folly, sometimes complains of *want of certainty* rather than of want of light; in other words, it demands, not more truth, but greater evidence of truth, or evidence of some other kind than that which it possesses (110). It asks, in effect, for demonstration, even where demonstration never can be given (111). But, is it not presumption to demand that particular kind of proof which the Most High has not been pleased to grant,—especially when that proof is wholly unsuited to the subject? And is it not worse than folly to overlook the fact that the evidence by which revelation is supported is the same in kind, and is equal, if not superior, in degree, to that upon the strength of which we are compelled to proceed in the ordinary affairs of life? What answer has been given to the just remark that the trial of our faith, arising

from the nature of Christian evidence, is no greater than the trial of our moral principles, arising from the presence of temptation (112)? And is it not a fact that many men, who reject the Christian religion on the ground of want of certainty or defect in proof, do themselves believe some proposition at variance with Christian truth upon the authority of evidence incomparably less than that by which the claims of the Gospel are sustained?—Surely, reflections such as these may convince us that the demands which we sometimes hear for greater evidence and stronger proof proceed, not from mental acuteness, but from intellectual pride.

Distinct from pride of intellect, as a general cause of Infidelity, is *mental sloth or negligence* (113). In other words, as one intellectual sin which produces this evil is the arrogant attempt of man's mind to discharge an office to which it has not been appointed, the other consists in a culpable neglect to fulfil the task to which it has been legitimately called. It is the office of the intellect to endeavour honestly, and with all due care and effort, to ascertain what is the truth which has been revealed, and what are the credentials by which the claims of revelation are sustained. As long as the question con-

cerning the value of this evidence may be undecided in the mind of an individual, so long there exists, to say the least, a demand for his diligent and candid attention to the proofs in favour of the gospel. There is no demand upon such a man for unhesitating, uninquiring, immediate assent; but there is a demand, involved in the very nature and subject-matter of the pretension, for earnest inquiry, for impartial, sober, and diligent investigation. The miracles recorded in Scripture are a challenge to attention; and perhaps this was from the first a chief part of their design,—the performance of a miracle being like the ringing of a bell in order to call attention to the spot from which the sound proceeds. Nor can we imagine any method of attestation to divine truth which should dispense with the necessity of a close and thoughtful examination of its value. Even if one should rise from the dead, in our own day and generation, with a commission to preach the gospel, we should still be obliged to institute a searching inquiry as to his personal identity, and the circumstances of his departure and return. And if a voice should speak to us from heaven, we should be in duty bound to take great pains not only in listening to its communications, but

in distinguishing it from a mere subjective impression, or from an effect produced by human agency in order to deceive. And in either case, the labour which would be required for the due investigation of the fact would be, to say the least, as much as is now demanded for the weighing of Christian evidence. The demand then is, and must be, for attention,—attention minute and laborious in proportion to the powers and opportunities of the observer, and especially in proportion to his ability and disposition to doubt or disbelieve; for, be it carefully remarked that the same power of mind which enables a man to raise or to entertain an objection, whether in the way of philosophic argument, of verbal criticism, or of historical research, enables him also to ascertain and to appreciate existing evidence by which that objection may be met and overcome. But, while attention is thus required,—while earnest and vigorous regard to the claims of religious truth is imperatively and righteously demanded,—there is abundant proof that, by the advocates of Infidelity, it is often culpably withheld. Unbelief may frequently be traced to the want of intellectual earnestness and labour (114), or of intellectual honesty and candour, and sometimes even to the want of

intellectual power in the case of men who have rashly entered on the field of argument without adequate resources. Sometimes this mental sloth or carelessness displays itself in the result of blank and barren ignorance,—in the want of adequate acquaintance with the contents of the sacred volume, or with many of those facts of history which contribute to the sum of Christian evidence; and it is even no rare case that men who are well informed on other points,—perhaps men of business or men of science, who are profoundly versed in matters appertaining to their own profession,—are yet most deplorably unacquainted with the proofs and substance of the religion which they venture to reject. Sometimes again the want of mental earnestness and reverence on the part of unbelievers is betrayed by their shallow sophistry, and their habit of unfair or insufficient reasoning. In the writings of almost every school of infidelity we meet with unwarranted assumptions,—one-sided or partial views of truth or evidence,—and specimens of hasty inference in all forms of illogical confusion: and if we need any further proofs of logical deficiency or carelessness among the advocates of unbelief, we may find them in those inconsistencies and contradictions by which they

often overthrow their own arguments, or the arguments and systems of each other (115). I do not hesitate to say that it would be possible to construct a Manual of Fallacies, in which all the examples, and those most copious, should consist of arguments which have been, at some time or other, employed by the opponents of the Christian religion.

We have thus far considered the ultimate sources or primary causes of Infidelity, consisting in certain states or habits of mind on the part of those persons who reject the gospel. But we have not yet arrived at the whole answer to the question before us. It is impossible to read the history of unbelief aright without perceiving that there are many *outward occasions, or secondary causes*, to which its existence or growth must partly be referred. In this respect, as in many others, man, especially in a state of highly civilized society, is to a certain extent the creature of outward circumstances:—and this is a fact which ought not to be overlooked. Only, let us not misapprehend this matter. Let us not perversely exalt an *occasion* into the rank of a primary or producing *cause* (116); and, above all, let it be carefully remembered that the outward occasion cannot take effect independently of the subjective cause with-

in; that the secondary cause has power only when the primary cause exists, and in co-operation with that cause; that man is in no case the creature of circumstances, except so far as by an inward act or disposition of his mind he invites, consents, or yields to their influence;—and therefore that, whatever may be the occasions of infidelity, by the fault of those who are around us, or of our social institutions, these things alone can never induce the habit of unbelief in any man whatever, and accordingly can never justify, or even altogether account for, its presence or its power.

If we attach due weight to these remarks, we are prepared to consider the fact that there exist, in no scanty measure, certain outward or secondary causes to which we may partly attribute anti-Christian unbelief.

One such occasion is clearly to be found in that spirit of *persecution*, and of overbearing and aggressive *intolerance*, which has too often attended the possession of ecclesiastical power, especially as developed amidst the usurpations of the papacy(117). In some cases, suspicion and jealousy arising from prohibitory measures too indiscriminating and too stringent, have tended to pave the way for an open revolt in the shape of infi-



delity ;—in others, as, for example, with the schoolmen of the middle ages, fetters which have been forged so as to preclude the legitimate and healthy exercise of the intellect, in the way of open investigation of religious truth, have been snapped asunder by the resistance of mind prepared, after escaping from its struggles, to run into the extreme of riot and excess :—and, as to the tendency of direct persecution and the tyrannical bondage of conscience, it is hard to estimate the amount of unbelief which has thus been unintentionally fostered. It can scarcely be doubted that some violent measures adopted for the suppression of heathenism under Constantine made way for a reaction under Julian. Who can recount the instances in which disaffection to the gospel has been produced or cherished by the lordly domination of Rome, and the horrors of its ruthless Inquisition ? And even where Rome has ceased to afflict the consciences and minds of men, its oppressions may still be regarded as a secondary cause of unbelief, connected with the recoil of the human soul from the bondage under which it had been so long and so extensively detained.

On the other hand, where greater freedom of thought and discussion has prevailed, we

cannot hesitate to reckon among the occasions of Infidelity those bitter *controversies*, those fierce *contentions and disputes* on points of religious faith or discipline(118), in which Christian charity has been sunk beneath a flood of molten zeal, and the aspect of religion has been made repulsive to those persons who are either unwilling or unable to distinguish between the genius of the religion itself and the faults of its professors. It has been observed that infidelity has been especially rampant at the conclusion of religious wars(119); and we may expect that its cause will always be promoted by that discord which may arise from a licentious abuse of the principles of the Reformation, no less than by that unholy pressure of ecclesiastical despotism which made the Reformation needful (120).

Among the occasions of Infidelity we must, I fear, reckon also certain *weak and injudicious methods of defending truth* which have sometimes been adopted by Christian apologists(121). A bad defence of gospel truth, as of any thing else, is more injurious than a fierce assault; and we can hardly avoid the conclusion that, in this case, evil has ensued from weak arguments, apart from any display of uncharitable temper, or any of those

illiberal and unjust accusations which are obviously and directly a means of doing harm. Among weak defences which have been attended with loss instead of profit we may reckon some kinds of *a priori* demonstration of the being of a God;—and some arguments for the immortality of the soul on the ground of its immateriality;—together with apologies which insist only on minor points, overlooking or perhaps even contravening the essential characteristics of the Christian revelation. And it may deserve consideration, whether harm has not been done by a too exclusive attachment sometimes to the external or historical evidences of religion, and sometimes to the internal or moral. Has there not been an undue depreciation of each class of evidence in turn? To say the least, we shall do well to beware of extreme views and statements on this matter; and it would be a circumstance at once wrong in itself and damaging in its results, if unbelievers should be able to point first to one set of divines who pronounce one kind of evidence almost worthless, and then to another company who as loudly declaim against the value and cogency of the other. The truth is, that internal and external evidence go together and support each other; they

are to be regarded not as rivals but as associates; and their strength consists in union. It may be said also that these two kinds of evidence are severally adapted to convince different classes of men: but perhaps it is still more worthy of remark that they are addressed not so much to different men as to different faculties of the human mind,—the internal evidences speaking to the heart and conscience, the external to the logical understanding; and therefore each in its own department may be needful to the same individual inquirer after truth. Certain, at all events, it is, that we act unwisely if we attach exclusive importance to either; and especially we may erect a stumbling-block, if to a man of acute understanding we insist only or chiefly upon internal evidence, or to a man of deep feeling we dwell too largely upon the external.

Nor is it only by our mode of defending Christianity that occasion may be ministered to the progress of unbelief. The same effect may follow from a wrong or defective method of exhibiting religious truth, by an *imperfect or injudicious teaching or preaching of the gospel*. If the public ministrations and the religious literature of an age be almost entirely occupied with the intellectual aspect

of Christianity, treating the substance of the gospel merely as a science, and sinking religion in theology, the effect is spiritual stagnation within the church, with a great advantage to those who openly assail her from without, and a large accession to their ranks. And, on the other hand, if religion be exhibited as a matter of mere sentiment or feeling,—if all the efforts of its friends and ministers are directed with a view to move the heart and stimulate the conscience, without due care to inform the judgment, and to make men acquainted with the grounds of a rational belief,—and, above all, if an age be marked by enthusiasm or fanaticism properly so called,—if there be a prevalence of false or fictitious sentiment,—if there be the cant of affected sanctity in the place of true religious earnestness, and censoriousness in the place of zeal,—then we may too surely predict that many a mind which is nurtured in this sickly atmosphere will pass into a state of speculative unbelief, and will openly declare against that gospel which it has never thoroughly believed, at the same time that it revolts against those excesses and abuses by which it has been inwardly disgusted.

If, however, such mischief has ensued from defective or mistaken preaching of the gospel,

then who shall estimate the injury occasioned by *formal, insincere and heartless preaching*? Who shall describe the advantage given to the cause of infidelity by the teachings and ministrations of men who seem to speak as if great realities were only fables, or at least as if they were not themselves inwardly affected by a persuasion of their truth? And more than this, must we not confess with sorrow that infidelity has been often nourished by the worldly spirit,—by the careless and sometimes even notoriously wicked lives of unworthy ministers? Above all,—again with sorrow be it spoken, yes, with deep sorrow be it spoken,—while yet we thank God for bright examples of piety and virtue, for the lives of saints and even for the deaths of martyrs, among the higher orders of our clergy,—still, if we love the truth, we cannot but declare that infidelity has sometimes found its choicest pabulum in the sloth and apathy, the avarice and worldly craft, the duplicity and treachery, the spirit of self-aggrandisement and self-indulgence, or the jealous, haughty, overbearing, and despotic temper, too frequently displayed by men who have been called to occupy commanding and conspicuous stations in the church. Not that the fault in this matter lies wholly with the clergy. Alas!

the low standard of piety and virtue which has from time to time prevailed throughout the church, has given great occasion to the enemy to blaspheme (122); and fearful are the wounds which have been inflicted on the cause of truth by those who have been admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, but have not laboured to "eschew those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same<sup>e</sup>." Nor can it be denied that, in the often accidental and sometimes unavoidable intermixture of the affairs and ministrations of religion with political and social abuses or corruptions, unbelievers have found occasion of too successfully inveighing against the whole system of the gospel. And we may add, reserving a more full consideration of this subject for the future, that the superstitious corruptions of religion have largely contributed to the same result.

Again, who can sufficiently estimate the strength which infidelity has derived from the *bad, defective, and injudicious education of the young* (123)? Not to speak of education in the full sense of the term, including as it does the capital consideration of moral discipline and training, who may not perceive that the bad cause has been unconsciously

<sup>e</sup> Collect for the third Sunday after Easter.

advanced by the errors which have been committed by Christian parents and teachers in the matter of literary and scientific instruction?—It is a bad education, tending to infidelity, when the young are instructed in arts and sciences, and are not adequately taught the grounds and substance of religion, and not led rightly to regard this branch of knowledge as a matter of the first importance; so that religion is at once dissociated from the ordinary affairs of life, and then, by no inexplicable process, the minds of youth are accustomed to regard an acquaintance with divine truth as no better than a mere appendage to their other acquisitions, which appear to be of far greater dignity and value. This is a sore evil; nor must we be surprised at any inroads which infidelity may make as long as large numbers of young persons pertaining to the educated classes of the community are sent into the world prepared to confess without a blush that they are ignorant of the very first principles of religion, uninformed in sacred history, unread in the very letter of the Bible!—Again, it is a bad education, likely to nurture unbelief, when the young are taught to acquire knowledge, or to value its possession, solely or chiefly for the purpose of display, as a source of profit, or in any other way that tends to lower or hinder their esteem of



it for its own sake, and for its legitimate purposes in life.—It is also a bad education, leading to the same result, which, proceeding upon the want of a due acquaintance with the limits and extent of the human faculties, gives an undue preponderance to the speculative or the reasoning powers, or calls these powers into premature and unhealthy exercise; as when a teacher proceeds upon the principle that children ought not to be encouraged to believe religious truths which they cannot clearly comprehend.—And, once more, that is a bad education, under this point of view, which is wholly superficial, giving a smattering of many portions of human knowledge without a deep insight into any. The habit of mind which proceeds from such a method of instruction is directly in favour of an impression that there are no deep grounds of belief, no real elements and principles of knowledge, nothing but second-hand, uncertain information, nothing but the mere semblance or shadow of truth, in religion, as in every thing else. And how can a mind thus trained be expected to repel the plausible objections or arguments of unbelievers, which, superficial as they may be, are yet as solid as any other with which that mind has ever been in contact? True indeed it is

that much of our knowledge must be superficial to the last; but if we have been real students in any one branch of learning or of science, we shall know how to estimate what is superficial at its true value; and we shall be secured from the danger of many a flimsy argument, and many a shallow pretension, on the part of men who would shake our belief in Christianity, by declamation, sophistry, or wit.

At the same time, there can be no doubt that not only the defect, but the *perversion and abuse of literary studies and of scientific research*, have sometimes acted as occasions of unbelief. It has been made a subject of just complaint, that while men of one science do not intrude upon the provinces of other sciences, men of all sciences intrude upon theology (124). And it may be especially remarked that much of that infidelity which exists in the form of materialism has found its occasion in the cultivation of physical science. The mind that is deeply engaged in researches concerning second causes, and especially the mind that is busily conversant with the practical application of scientific principles to mechanical purposes, or to the advancement of professional pursuits, hereby receives a training perhaps too much in

harmony with its original disposition to overlook the great First Cause, and to withhold due attention from moral and spiritual truth.

Such then are the principal sources from which it appears that the stream of Infidelity, from age to age, has flowed. Sometimes it proceeds, more or less directly, from *sinful self-will, and the desires of a depraved heart*, in union with a *conscience* either *restless*, or, more frequently, *unawakened, blind, and dead*:—sometimes it comes from *pride of intellect, seeking all knowledge in itself*,—*spurning the limits* which have been assigned to it,—*disdaining obscurity* where yet it is impossible that all can be clear, or *demanding demonstration* in cases where probability is the best and safest guide that has been vouchsafed to us:—sometimes, again, it may be traced to *a careless and negligent understanding*, misguided, misinformed, and losing itself too easily and too willingly in the labyrinths of error:—and lastly, these evil propensities and dispositions are too often *favoured and cherished by external conditions and circumstances* which throng around the heart and mind already prepared for delusion. And therefore,—apart from a consideration of that judicial blindness which may be inflicted on

those who have grieved the Holy Spirit,—and of those temptations of Satan which are specially adapted to produce a speculative rejection of the gospel,—having regard to no more than the purely human causes and occasions of this fearful state of mind,—surely there is reason why we should sincerely and fervently unite, from time to time, in that meek petition, “From hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word and Commandment, good Lord, deliver us!”

The same desire and deprecation may arise from a due reflection upon *the effects and consequences* which Infidelity is adapted to produce (125), considered in relation either to personal character and happiness, or to the condition of society at large. When, from any cause whatever, speculative unbelief has taken possession of the mind, what is the result? Truly we may answer, in the words of Scripture, “Their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah; their grapes are grapes of gall; their clusters are bitter<sup>e</sup>.”—Infidelity, according to its own profession, takes away all those principles of godliness, virtue, and consolation which the gospel especially supplies;—and, whatever may be its promises on this behalf, it really sub-

<sup>e</sup> Deut. xxxii. 12.

stitutes nothing in their room. It overthrows the very foundations of morality and goodness, withdrawing their strongest and most commanding motives, and destroying the sanctions by which their claims are most firmly supported. It lowers the standard of moral excellence even to the dust, and causes its very idea to pass under a terrible eclipse. It degrades human nature, in theory, to a level little higher than that of the brutes; and, in its practical effect, it is known to have induced those habits of intemperate sensuality which sink their votaries far lower than that level. Depriving men of the sense of a friendly relation to Almighty God, and sometimes even of a sense of dependence on his providence and will,—and at the same time shutting out the prospect of an immortality to come,—it robs them of that true self-respect, that right sense of the worth and dignity of their own nature, and of the importance of this present condition of being, which, where it properly exists, may be made highly useful against the debasing influence of surrounding iniquity and vice. Infidelity cramps the best energies of the human soul, and at the same time cuts it off from that sacred alliance by which it might otherwise receive a perpetual accession of liberty and

strength.—In its effects upon human happiness, the work of destruction is complete; it takes away all ground of solid satisfaction and well-assured peace of mind; compelling its adherents to declare that a long life of earthly prosperity has been to its unbelieving possessors no better than a long course of emptiness and weariness, of disappointment, vexation, and sorrow.—And, as for the preparation which it makes for that future state of being which it even refuses to acknowledge, how can it be expected but that the very entrance upon that state, face to face with that God whom it has denied or whose word it has rejected, will fill it with indescribable and incurable dismay!

If, lastly, from the effects of unbelief upon the well-being of individuals, we pass to its results upon society, how appalling is the scene which reveals itself! Mournfully does this world's history bear witness to the fact, that Infidelity, whatever be the form which it at any time assumes, saps the foundations of civil authority and of civilized society, destroys all true patriotism, and gives full course to the miseries which follow in the train of unbounded and lawless ambition; and that, by its fierce democratic spirit, its contempt of marriage, and its hostility to all

the sacred ties and sympathies of domestic affection,—by its spirit of intolerance and impious fanaticism, with its instigation of the malignant passions of a people even to sanguinary violence and rage,—by its want of good faith and of all those principles of truth and honesty which contribute to bind man to man,—by its frequent encouragement of licentiousness, its low estimate of human life, and its want of all dread of future retribution, leading to the unscrupulous commission of acts of cruelty without a shadow of compunction, and to the perpetration of deeds of horror without the feeling of dismay,—by these attributes and tendencies which unquestionably belong to it, disclosing themselves sometimes singly and sometimes in fearful combination, Infidelity can be regarded in no other light than as the destroyer of public safety,—the promoter of turbulence, anarchy and confusion,—the most fiend-like enemy of the whole family of man. If we look to the close of the last century, we find that “outrage upon outrage, horror upon horror, falsehood upon falsehood, the annihilation of truth, order, justice and humanity, were the bitter fruits of that blasphemy, to disseminate which had been the unceasing object of the professed advocates

of liberty and reason (126).” And if we would be satisfied concerning the design and tendency of kindred infidelity in our own day and generation, it may be well for us to attach due weight to a fact which has been credibly reported to myself, that, a short time since, when an infidel emissary was asked, Why are you so active and laborious in spreading atheistical principles? that question was met by the significant reply, ‘Because England can never be revolutionized so long as Christianity retains its hold upon the people!’

How then can we duly estimate the magnitude and number of the evils which Infidelity involves, and how can we thoroughly contrast them with the blessings of the gospel? We should only perplex our vision by an attempt to bring this whole subject under our review. Let us ask singly, in conclusion, what is the aspect of speculative unbelief upon human hope (127)? Where are the hopes of Infidelity; and if any exist, what is their abundance, their richness, and their blessedness? What is their brightness in the hour of sorrow, their radiance and glory in the valley of the shadow of death? In the mind of one unbeliever there may exist something like a hope of future happiness,—but,



alas, how vague, how uncertain, and how dim;—a hope that may smile upon a man while reading a philosopher's treatise, but will expire when he lays it down again,—a hope that will mock its possessor in the day of trial, and when most needed will miserably perish.—Another tells us plainly that he has no hope at all, he has nothing but uncertainty at best. “I give my body to the dust, and my soul to the great Perhaps. I am going to take a leap in the dark (128).”—Another hopes—if hope this may be called—for blank annihilation; or, at best, he regales himself with bright prospects of the progress of the human race:—but if he be asked what he expects his own lot to be in the day of that glory which will cover the earth, his answer is, Just such as the lot of a wave that appears once for all upon the surface of the deep, and is then swallowed up, to appear in its own distinct form no more again for ever. How altogether different from the prospects of the gospel! Here is indeed a future for humanity at large, more bright and glorious than any that has ever had place in the most glowing visions of the unbelieving mind;—but here is also for every individual believer a “hope of eternal life<sup>f</sup>,” that “maketh not

<sup>f</sup> Titus iii. 7.

ashamed<sup>g</sup>." The cross of the Redeemer stands at the gate of heaven. It is Faith that discerns it there; and then Hope looks up from this poor earth, from all its sorrows and from all its joys, and triumphantly exclaims, "When thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, thou didst open the kingdom of heaven to all believers!" There may be hope wherever there is faith; but without it there can be none,—none that is worthy of the name,—none that will not eventually leave the soul desolate, friendless, and helpless, in the darkness of everlasting despair.

<sup>g</sup> Rom. v. 5.

# LECTURE V.

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THE NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPERSTITION.

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ROMANS i. 22.

*Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.*

HAVING considered the nature and the forms, the causes, occasions, and effects, of Infidelity or speculative unbelief, we proceed now to institute a similar inquiry concerning Superstition (129).

And here we must ask, in the first place, *What is Superstition?* It would be unprofitable, on the present occasion, to make any remarks on the obscure etymology of the word (130); but it is of great importance that we endeavour to obtain a definite and correct idea of that habit of mind and consequent course of practice which the word may be rightly employed to signify. There are vague and imperfect descriptions of this evil, which merely remind us of some of its forms or developments, instead of telling us where the root of the matter lies: and it is

not too much to say, that these inadequate statements are worse than unsatisfactory; when accepted as propounding the whole truth, they are delusive and dangerous.—Superstition is imperfectly described when it is represented as consisting merely in a wrong or mystical view of the connection of causes and effects (131); or as being no more than an error of judgment by which we erroneously ascribe certain things or events to a supernatural cause, or expect from them a supernatural effect. Defective also are the views of some Romish writers, who, following Augustin, make the essence of Superstition to consist in the worship of created objects, or in intercourse with evil spirits (132); confining their regard, in fact, to only one species of superstition, the idolatry of the heathen world.—A better definition is that which may be found in Aquinas (133), whereby Superstition is made to consist in the offering of worship to an improper object, or in an improper manner. But, while we may accept this as a description of superstitious worship, still we are left to remember that worship is not the only thing which may be properly called superstitious; and the question remains, Why do men worship these unlawful objects, or adopt these unlawful modes of adoration?

In other words, we are still obliged to ask, What is Superstition itself?

Now, the fundamental idea of Superstition, as of true religion, is Faith. Whether it relate to the connection of causes and effects, to the agency of demons in human affairs, or to the object or mode of divine worship, the form of superstition is every where a development of faith.—And the idea of superstition again coincides with that of religion, inasmuch as both alike have for their object God and the invisible world, considered in relation to ourselves (134). Hence it is that superstition and religion are so easily and so often confounded, sometimes wilfully, sometimes as by oversight. They occupy, as it were, the same territory in the human mind, and have to do with the same class of experiences and the same kind of actions. The question then is, What is it that creates the difference? What is that which distinguishes superstition from religion?

There is a popular method of comparing Superstition with Infidelity which embodies, although not without some confusion, the true answer to this question. It is commonly said that Superstition consists in believing too much, and Infidelity in believing too little. This statement, however, is not pre-

cise and accurate. The question is not one of more or less; but it relates to two different habits of mind,—the habit of not believing, and the habit of believing. Infidelity is the habit of not believing religious truth, sufficiently declared and propounded; Superstition is the habit of believing that which seems to be religious truth, but is unsupported by sufficient evidence: and it often happens that the same mind which refuses to believe the gospel, is yet strong in its belief of that which is not the gospel. Subjectively speaking, and therefore most accurately on a point like this, Infidelity is a refusing to believe where there is reason for belief, Superstition is believing without reason; and hence practically, with reference to religious truth, Infidelity is the habit of not religiously believing what God has revealed, Superstition, the habit of religiously believing what He has not revealed (135). The difference lies not in the presence or absence of faith, but in the quality of that faith, whether as reasonable or unreasonable, as founded or not founded upon sufficient grounds, and as having for its object what is true or what is false. Religious faith is fundamentally a *reasonable belief* of revealed truth; Infidelity is an *unreasonable disbelief* of this truth and

rejection of its evidence ; Superstition is an *unreasonable belief* of that which is mistaken for truth concerning the nature of God and the invisible world, our relations to these unseen objects, and the duties which spring out of those relations. In superstition there is faith unwarranted or misplaced ; and hence the heathen rites and ceremonies of worship were superstitious, not when they were observed by unbelieving men, but when they were observed in faith, without which, as one of the ancients says (136), they were utterly sapless and devoid of meaning. In Mahometanism there is superstition, because there is an unfounded belief of various falsehoods, all springing from the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* that Mahomet is the prophet of God. And the same may be said of Rabbinism, because it religiously believes many things as true upon the spurious authority of the Talmud. This therefore is the fundamental characteristic of Superstition ; that, in matters relating to religion and the unseen world, it believes fictions in the place of truth ; that its creed is adopted, and its observances are practised, without adequate authority (135). It matters not precisely what that creed and those observances are, but what they are not. And accordingly, Tertullian may be said to have

written with far greater insight into the nature of Superstition than Augustin, when he denounced certain observances as superstitious, not on account of any direct conformity with heathen idolatry, or as connected with any supposed intercourse with demons, but simply on the ground of a want of command or warrant by the Lord or his Apostles, and thus as tending to *make* their observers like the heathen (137).

If we inquire concerning *the forms and developments of Superstition* (138), as they have appeared in different ages and countries of the world, we here find substantial similarity amidst great variety and even diversity of detail. Whether we look to the east or to the west, to the seats of superstition of earlier or of later date, we discover that, with due allowance for diversities of climate, race, and other outward conditions, superstition has every where borne substantially the same features, and has been uniform in its aspect upon human life and history.

We may consider these acts and expressions of superstition as they have reference to the nature and attributes of the Divine Being,—to the methods of approaching Him in the way of worship or with other acceptable service,—or to the existence, works, and



will of other supernatural beings supposed to exert an influence upon human weal and woe.

With regard to the nature and attributes of God, we find that superstition, in some way or other, deifies the creature; ascribing divine nature and qualities sometimes to the heavenly bodies or to the earthly elements, either directly, or indirectly in the way of symbol or of image;—sometimes to human beings, such as departed heroes, benefactors or rulers of mankind, or individuals in the ancestral line of the worshipper himself, represented as retaining, more or less, the attributes of human nature, human passions, and even human vices in their worst excess and under their most revolting aspects;—sometimes again to the abstract qualities of the human soul, or the ideal of human virtue or depravity;—sometimes to powers of malignancy and mischief, gods of cruelty, bloodshed, and war;—and not unfrequently to the supposed unseen inhabitants and guardians of some particular locality.

As to the kind of worship and service which superstition offers to its deities, this has been found usually to consist in external rites and ceremonies, formal observances, attended with pomp and splendour barbaric or refined, and almost always strongly marked either by fe-

rocity or frivolity, by austerity on the one hand or licentiousness on the other, and not unfrequently by the combination of blood-stained rites with the indulgence of most voluptuous practices. Prominent among the rites of superstition have been certain debased and perverted forms of sacrifice,—sacrifice which degenerated from what we doubt not was originally a divine institution of high and blessed import, until it descended in practice even to the murderous rites of Moloch, after having embodied the wrong idea that the objects of false worship were delighted with the enjoyment of the offerings themselves, and that divine favour was procured as the merited reward of the gratification thus presented, or as a return for the price thus paid.—With the offering of sacrifice has been connected a sacrificing priesthood; a body of persons regarded, not merely as ministers in religious worship, but as mediators between the gods and men, without whose good will and services there could be no access for the worshipper, and no acceptance of his offerings.—And lastly, the annals of superstition abound with records of the works of supposed personal merit; the merit of doing or of suffering something by which the performers of these works might establish

for themselves a claim of right to the divine clemency or bounty. Works of merit are common to the superstition of the Hindoo from remote ages of antiquity, and to the Mahometan whose system is of more recent date: and the same may be affirmed with regard to meritorious sufferings or labours,—penances, pilgrimages, an endless variety of ascetic observances, and not unfrequently the prospect of some kind of purgatory after death.

The same kind of uniformity marks the annals of superstition considered as including an unenlightened dread of natural objects or events, arising from mispersuasion concerning their origin and purport; or as having regard to demons and other supernatural agents less than divine, or to occult operations and influences supposed to have a bearing upon human destiny (139). Great is the variety of appliances which superstition has always had in store, in the shape of supposed supernatural means of procuring natural good, or of averting, and sometimes of inflicting, natural evil. Regarded under this point of view, and supposed to subserve this desirable purpose, witchcraft and magic, charms and incantations, amulets, relics, and the like, are coextensive with mediating priests and

other forms and appurtenances of superstitious worship. And to these things we may add a long catalogue of superstitious ways and methods of seeking acquaintance with futurity, and with other secrets as dark and mysterious to the mind of man as those which futurity involves. Astrology and divination, with their omens, portents, and oracles,—dreams, visions, and impressions on the mind,—vulgar predictions, and, again, the arts of witchcraft and magic,—have been held in high esteem by superstitious men as supposed to possess the august and supernatural power of uplifting the veil which overhangs the future, or of drawing aside the curtain that conceals from ordinary observation some precious secret of the present.

It is a fact not to be denied, although deeply to be deplored, that from an early period in the history of the Christian Church, superstition mingled itself with the purer elements of gospel truth and religious worship; adhering to Christianity partly in the way of an adroit imitation of the gospel itself, and partly in the way of professed embellishment:—an *imitation* to be detected only by a real and practical acquaintance with the divine original;—an *embellishment* which possessed manifold attractions in the eyes of

those who were not sufficiently acquainted with the beauty of the simple truth. The imposture was adapted to the age which gave it birth; it gathered strength in still more gloomy times which followed; and during many generations there were few men, if any, even among those to whom the gospel was "a savour of life unto life," who could wholly disengage their minds from the thralldom which had been prepared for them, or could even discern the nature and extent of their spiritual bondage. The leaven of superstition pervaded the churches both of the east and of the west; or rather, in all parts of the world, the leaven of gospel truth made slow progress, and sometimes appeared to be almost lost in the mass of human superstition.

To speak more particularly of the west; it was a mournful spectacle which was here displayed not long after the time in which Christianity became the religion of the empire. The fault was not,—and in fact this would have been no fault at all,—that due importance was attached to the externals of religion (140); that Christianity was regarded as something more than a divine philosophy; and that in the administration of the gospel and the celebration of divine offices regard

was had to the complex nature of man, as a creature endowed with bodily senses, in conjunction with the powers of his intellect, and the feelings of his heart. Superstition lies not here; although here may indeed be one of its readiest points of contact with what is holy, pure, and good (141). But this evil has its roots, as we have said, in false belief; and it was under the influence of a false belief,—of a reception of falsehood in the guise of Christian truth,—that we find the churches of the west, as early as the time of Constantine, rapidly sinking into superstition (142). The practical part of religion was corrupted before the theoretical (143); and it is worthy of remark that certain leaders of the church sometimes promoted, by their own personal influence, or by the general tone of their language, those very superstitions against which they themselves made special protestations.

In the actual progress of corruption, the first thing which strikes our observation is that *multiplication of outward observances*, that gorgeousness of ceremonial and pomp of circumstance attaching to religious offices, which it may be hard to denounce as un-Christian and positively wrong, while yet we may instinctively feel that it involves an

error of excess. Soon, however, it became evident that under this weight of decoration there was lurking a real and distinctive element of superstition (144), in that practical persuasion of men's minds whereby the form of worship was supposed to constitute the essence of religion, and hence *outward ceremonies were in reality made to usurp the place of godliness and virtue*. And soon did the practical Christianity of the age degenerate almost entirely into the performance of a cumbrous ceremonial, including a large number of ritual observances which not only did not flow from the precepts or the spirit of the Christian religion, but were *directly at variance with its first principles*. This was already superstition; it now became evident that a false faith was growing side by side with the true, if it had not already suppressed the growth of the heavenly plant, and occupied its place.

In course of time, little less than the whole mass of superstitious error which had developed itself in the heathen world was engrafted on the religion of the gospel. Grave errors were admitted concerning *the object of divine worship*; for while prayer and praise were still addressed to Him to whom alone they can be due, adoration was concurrently

directed to the Virgin Mary, to angels, and to saints; and, at length, to such a pitch was this form of demon- or hero-worship carried, that the worship of the true God was obscured and almost buried beneath the ceremonials of a new idolatry.—Great again were the errors that prevailed with regard to *the mode of worship*; for, while prayer and praise, and the administration of the Christian sacraments, and even the public reading or preaching of God's word, were never totally suspended, yet were these acts of reasonable service partly sensualized and evacuated by the mode of their performance, and partly corrupted, overloaded, or distorted, in consequence of mistaken views of the divine requirements, and through an unscriptural and perverse attachment to externals as possessing a supposed intrinsic value or power, together with the copious indulgence of arbitrarily contrived and self-pleasing worship, such as was neither acceptable to the Most High under the old dispensation, nor is permitted under the new.—At the same time full scope was given to a superstitious *reliance on the agency of supernatural beings less than divine* in the conduct of human affairs; so that the tutelary saints of Christendom vied in number with the household gods of pagan antiquity;—in the



doctrine of the sacraments, which had lost its scriptural simplicity, large satisfaction was given to the mind that was craving for the operation of *magical incantations, and mysterious, but potent, charms*;—*visions* were seen, *prophecies* uttered, and pretended *miracles* were wrought, not indeed by any express enactment, but under the immediate patronage and approbation of the teachers and rulers of the church;—the heathen *doctrine of merit*, of meritorious works or meritorious sufferings in this world, and purgatorial sufferings in a future state, was adopted to the full;—and, worst of all, *the doctrine of human mediation*,—that “false system” which “assumes the great business of pardon and reconciliation with God to be a transaction that belongs to priestly negotiation (145),”—this heathenish theory of the power of the priest was virtually exalted to the rank of a Christian doctrine; and it assumed continually greater prominence and importance, until at length it reached its culminating point when the papal supremacy was made an article of faith (146).

Here, alas, are examples, only too copious and too strong, of erroneous practice founded on false belief in matters of religion,—that is to say, of Superstition,—rampant in the

Christian church. And how can it be otherwise than that superstition must abound, whenever the poisonous maxim is suffered to prevail that the traditions of the church are to be treated with as reverent regard as the letter of God's word? Here is at once a foundation laid for misbelief without limit and without restraint. This principle,—the principle of acknowledging human Tradition as of coordinate authority with the word of God,—this is of itself Superstition, properly so called, in its deepest, firmest, most vigorous, and most productive root.

It is needless here to touch upon a controversy which was once keenly agitated, whether or not, and if at all how far, Romish superstition is to be referred directly to a pagan origin (147). Certain it is that, so far as the one was not borrowed from the other, they are both to be traced to common sources in the mind and condition of man; and the question which really deserves our notice, and which we must now proceed to consider, is this, *What are those causes and occasions of superstition* which exist in human nature and come to light on the surface of man's history (148)?

Superstition takes its origin, sometimes, in *a disturbed and restless conscience* (149),—the

conscience of man in some measure desirous of being delivered from his guilt, while yet little, if at all, aware of the real nature of that evil which has brought him into a state of condemnation. There is a dread of punishment or of other evil consequences, and therefore a desire to avert the impending calamity (150); but the dread is instinctive, and the desire is selfish; superstition shrinks from the penalty of transgression, but only on the transgressor's own account, that he may escape from suffering. And here lies the difference between the ultimate subjective source of superstition and that of Christian faith. That faith has for its foundation an awakened conscience; but it is a conscience that has been aroused to recognise the fact of sin by that perfect Law which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, has at the same time displayed to the moral sense the evil nature of transgression as contrary to the will of God, which is holy, just, and good. And the desire which has been kindled by this stimulated conscience and awakened mind is a desire, not merely to escape the bitter consequences of sin, but to be delivered from sin itself. To this complex feeling the gospel addresses itself with an adequate provision. It comes, as we have seen, pro-

claiming at once the gift of pardon, and the bestowment of spiritual life and vigour, through Jesus Christ: and *it begins by pacifying conscience*; it causes love to God, which is spiritual life, to flow from a sense of God's pardoning love to us, with a hearty acquiescence in reconciliation by the blood of the atonement. The gospel, by the power of the Holy Spirit, meets all the wants of the soul that sincerely desires to be delivered at once from the guilt of sin and from its power; and it is to this state of mind that its voice is specially directed.—But there are other conditions of man's soul which dispose him to listen rather to the voice of a stranger. Miserable man, whose conscience is dead to a sense of his own deep guilt in the sight of God, or who is so in love with sin, or so determined to persevere in the practice of iniquity, that he will not endure the thought of guilt and condemnation as its sure accompaniment! He is an easy prey, as we have already seen, to that speculative unbelief which may confirm him in his ungodliness, and keep his soul at a distance from pardon and peace, from holiness and happiness, for ever.—Unhappy too the man whose conscience is alarmed, but who is willing to accept an opiate by which his terror may be allayed

without the destruction of the evil that has brought guilt upon his soul;—the man who is desirous to pacify conscience and at the same time to continue in sin. To such a state of feeling the gospel does not address itself; the man who entertains it is not prepared to become a disciple of Jesus, but he is prepared to become the victim of some delusive superstition.—Or, there may, in some cases, exist a desire for purity together with a desire for pardon; but then it is for purity in order to pardon: a desire which still betrays the want of a due sense of the real nature, the deep pollution and demerit of sin; a desire too which implies the thought of man's becoming, more or less directly, a saviour to himself; or, to say the very least, which inverts that divinely established order of things whereby objective redemption precedes the subjective, and even makes way for its accomplishment. And here again we have before our view a state of mind and heart, not met by gospel promise, but one for which superstition abundantly professes to provide. The gospel proclaims pardon in order to holiness; penances, pilgrimages, and ascetic observances without number, speak of holiness in order to pardon. So that we may say, in brief, that one great preparative for that mis-

belief or false persuasion of the mind which is the fundamental element of superstition consists in a conscience awakened but not pacified, combined, more or less, with the want of heartfelt, active love to God. And without thus taking into account a disordered conscience and a perverted moral sense, we shall be utterly at a loss to assign an adequate cause for much of the superstition which has existed among mankind from the earliest ages to the present day. It must be traced, in a considerable measure, to the spirit of bondage and of guilty fear.

By no means, however, would we affirm that an uneasy conscience, or a dread of God and of righteous retribution, is the only state of moral feeling which makes way for the rise of superstition in the human mind. Superstition, especially that which concerns itself with supposed supernatural agencies for the prevention of evil or for the attainment of good, may exist in the man of *a thoroughly worldly mind* (151), devoid of any anxiety concerning his relation to God, or even unconscious of that relation. Hope and fear may arise from the primary affections of love and hatred when directed solely to the possession or avoidance of this world's sensible good and evil. And in the covetous,

eager, or tremulous desire of a heart overpowered by a love of the world we may find a basis for extreme credulity, misbelief, or unwarranted persuasion concerning the methods of obtaining possession of worldly goods, or of security against temporal loss and harm. The passion of fear, blindly shrinking from its object(152), or that of hope, blindly pursuing it, is always ready to pave the way for Superstition.—And in this work other passions may concur. *Pride*, or the vain elation of the fleshly mind(153), when self demands to be the repairer of the breach which self has made, not unfrequently combines with a consciousness of guilt in giving rise to various forms of penance, and severities of an ascetic life. The pride of reason, which revolts at the idea of remaining ignorance, and the busy but morbid curiosity of the logical understanding, may conduct to the unwarranted belief of superstition, no less than to the presumptuous speculations of anti-Christian unbelief; and even spurious humility may lead to the same result.—The same may be affirmed of *sensuous tendencies*, unenlightened and uncontrolled (154), — of *sensual propensities* sinfully indulged (155), — of the vain *love of novelty* or a morbid craving after excitement,—of *misguided zeal*

(156),—and of *self-love* seeking gratification in arbitrary additions to divine institutions or precepts(157). Even *natural affection*, undisciplined and uncontrolled, may prepare the way for superstition ; as is manifest in those customs which have been founded upon inordinate affection towards the memory of the dead. *Enthusiasm*, properly so called, especially in some of its extreme developments, when men are ready to mistake impressions of their own minds for the voice of God, and regard themselves as possessing an inward light independent of the Scripture, and raising them above it, is clearly to be regarded as a predisposing cause of abandonment to the charms of superstition ; a fact which became manifest in the case of many of the English puritans, who eventually yielded to the appropriate attractions of the church of Rome. It has been found too that, in morbid sentiment and perverted feelings of even a more devout or sober cast, superstition has found a vantage-ground for its assaults upon the mind, and has been able to overpower or entrap it, when in this unhealthy state, with those arguments or pretensions which would otherwise have been wisely rejected as altogether powerless and vain. And hence it is not without cause that



danger of this kind has been ascribed to *religious emotion misplaced*, when impulse takes undue precedence of reason, or when the excitement of mere feeling occupies the place of conviction and deep principle. There is always harm in the want of a due subordination of the powers of the soul, or of their right position and influence with regard to each other; and it is one capital fault of superstition that hope or fear or some other affection lies at the foundation of its faith. With the Christian, as we have seen, faith is at the foundation of hope and fear and all other religious affections,—at the foundation even of that love to God by which his other affections are controlled; but with the superstitious man this order is inverted, and faith is made to follow in the train of the affections,—in the train, it may be, of turbulent and domineering passion. And when this restlessness of passion is *combined* with the workings of an uneasy conscience, we have the groundwork of superstition in its most prevalent and most intense developments. “The two peculiar features of man’s existing condition are evil passions and an evil conscience. No superstition can become popular which does not provide or admit something to meet the craving demands of both(158).”

We have thus far discovered preparatives, tendencies, and predispositions to superstition, rather than its direct and immediate source. Superstition is, essentially, a form of misbelief, and our question now must be, *whence does this misbelief arise?*

Even in the case of infidelity, or the absence of belief, the corrupt will and conscience must be regarded as causes indirect rather than direct; and they operate chiefly by means of withholding attention to the object of a true belief. Much more must superstition, which involves a positive belief, be traced directly to some intellectual source. In our inquiry concerning this source we may be again assisted by contrasting the nature of superstition with that of Christian faith. When the conscience has been rightly convinced of sin, and the heart has been led to desire deliverance at once from its guilt and from its power, the inquiry thus raised is met by positive objective truth, the truth of revelation preaching peace, by Jesus Christ, and holiness, to be wrought in the souls of believers by the power of his Spirit. And Christian faith consists in the simple and cordial reception of this truth. But, for the cravings which arise from a disordered conscience, and from tumultuous passions such

as have been now described, there is no satisfactory provision within the whole compass of the Bible; the demand, how loud and urgent soever it may be, obtains no answer from without. But then it does raise an echo within the chambers of the mind. Imagination with its fictions supplies the place of revelation with its truth. In the absence of objective realities corresponding to its desires, the mind believes its own inventions; it must believe something, and in this case it gives credit to its own vain thoughts, substituting that which might be, or that which might be wished, for that which is. In the superstitious, imagination supplies the place of reason; and its visions are substituted for the truths of such a revelation as reason alone is able to appreciate and to accept. Hence it is that men have been in all ages willing to worship gods of their own invention; they have first imagined, or pictured to themselves, certain beings such as they desire, such as would be indulgent to their sins, or such as would accept their own satisfactions for sin, and the offerings of their self-willed service,—and then they have cheerfully done homage to the phantoms of their own devising.

Not that the exercise of the imagination is itself an evil, or that it must necessarily lead

the mind into the labyrinths of religious delusion and error; the evil arises only from the exorbitant or licentious indulgence of this power of the mind (159), without control from some of the legitimate sources of our knowledge; and especially it has place when the fictions of imagination are made to usurp the place of knowledge. According to the constitution of our nature, by the will of God, the imagination is subject to this control; and therefore mischief ensues from its morbid and unlawful excitement, or from the workings of its caprice. And hence it is not simply to the imagination that we must trace the presence and power of superstition in the mind,—not only to imagination even as excited by the feelings and desires of the soul,—but to *imagination at once excited and unchecked*. In other words, another element of superstition is *ignorance*, or want of knowledge, and of that mental discipline for which knowledge is absolutely needful.

It sometimes happens that ignorance is described as the parent of superstition in too broad and indiscriminating terms; either in language which might be taken to imply that all uneducated persons must be intensely superstitious, or in such manner as to lead us to infer that this noxious temper must be

altogether strange to the more learned and scientific portion of mankind. There ought to be certain distinctions and limitations in our statements on this subject. It is true, as we have said, that ignorance is one element in superstition,—an element of a negative kind, consisting in the want of a necessary check; but it is not true that this is the only element; nor is it true that superstition always implies a general ignorance or want of intellectual culture. The case may perhaps be fairly stated thus. In default of the cultivation and use of the mental powers, and of the knowledge to be thus procured, man, in his present state, is almost unavoidably exposed to superstition more or less gross and universal (160). At the same time, the highest degree of culture, and the largest measure of attainment, if alone, must not be regarded as a sufficient barrier against this evil; it may be, and in many cases it actually will be, enough to save from the grosser forms of superstition, but it may leave the mind a prey to others. And more than this; there are cases in which the exercise of intellect itself may become a source of superstition;—speculation and philosophy (as, for example, the Hindoo theosophy, pantheism, and Neo-Platonism) have often led to this result (161);

—and the logical understanding may find a congenial employment in constructing or completing a superstitious system, in supporting or defending it by arguments most elaborate and subtle, and in adorning it with artificial decorations; as we may perceive in the case of the schoolmen who modelled and embellished the dogma of Transubstantiation. The possession of common information may suffice to save us from the illusions of the senses, from extravagant devotion to sensible objects, or from gross superstition as to the agency of supernatural causes in the direction of human affairs; but there is need of a knowledge of God in Christ, a knowledge derived from the pure fountain of revelation, and displayed to the mind by the enlightening power of the Holy Spirit, in order to preserve us from false belief, and therefore from superstitious notions and practices, concerning the method of approach to the Divine Being, and the nature of acceptable service, together with many other particulars concerning the powers of the unseen world.— And, once more, when we speak of ignorance as a source of superstition, it should be carefully remembered, that there is a superstitious bias of the mind against which no mere culture or information of the intellect can

oppose an effectual resistance, but which will rather avail to press into its own service all advantages derived from the most liberal instruction and the most diligent study. It is true, beyond all doubt, that those grosser forms of superstition which relate to worldly good and evil can hardly find place among men of ordinary information in the present day, because their knowledge of natural causes and events is enough to control or check the fictions of the mind in this direction. But at the same time it is not less true that there exists a reason why men of large attainments in literature or science are accessible to superstition of a more refined and exalted character, concerning our relations to the Deity and our eternal destiny. The vastness of their knowledge discloses to them the fact that their ignorance is almost infinite, and hence they are ready to distrust at once their reason and their experience when occasion may appear to call for such humility;—deep religious consciousness, with a sense of unsatisfied need, may easily appear to minister such occasions not a few;—and when, from the depths of their inmost soul there arises a call for a certain combination or order of events, however strange, they are more ready to believe the occurrence of

such a state of things, according to the dictates of their hearts, than to decide upon its non-existence or impossibility, according to the testimony of their senses, or the conclusions of their understanding.—And thus it is that superstition may be traced, not simply to mere ignorance, but partly to mental neglect, inactivity, and indolence, and partly also to the misdirection, perversion, and irregular or proud excesses of the human mind, in all instances alike omitting the due discharge of its appointed functions in restraining the licentiousness of a busy and vain imagination.

We must therefore not be surprised at any phenomena which superstition may present, as long as any portion of mankind are the subjects of *a guilty fear* or of *a worldly mind*, in union with a wild *imagination*, indulged in its excesses by *ignorance*, or the want of appropriate and commanding knowledge. Causes such as these,—prompted and aided, as they have continually been, by secondary causes, or occasions, from without,—by the artifices of designing men seeking to gratify their ambition through means of influence derived from false pretensions to unearthly authority and power, or to satiate their avarice by the gains of their imposture (162),



—by the charms of poetry and music, the graces of eloquence, the beauties of sculpture, painting, and architectural design,—by tales of the marvellous in legends and traditions, supported by the claim of veneration for antiquity (163),—by the contagious influence of sympathy among a crowd of devotees, or the members of a religious community or class,—and in many cases, doubtless, by the special and powerful, though unseen, operation of the great father of lies in his attempts to subjugate the soul of man,—these things, I say, if duly considered,—and especially if regarded in the strength of their frequent combination,—may be found amply sufficient to account for the existence and for the potency of all the superstitions by which the church has been infested from the earliest ages to the present day.

It will be my endeavour, in the next Lecture, to describe the evil effects and consequences of superstition, with regard to individuals, and to society, especially that sacred society, the Christian church. For the present, I remark, in conclusion, that the evil of which we are now speaking is insidious in its approach, plausible in its efforts to obtain a hold upon the mind, and of imperceptible and stealthy growth. It is one of those

subtle delusions from which we must not hope to deliver, or even to protect, ourselves, except in proportion as we keep our hearts with diligence, watching unto prayer, and living in lawful dependence on the enlightening and sanctifying grace of the Spirit of truth and holiness. I say *lawful* dependence; and I would earnestly remind you that our dependence is not lawful, unless we look for divine grace and heavenly protection, not only in answer to prayer, but also in the way of a devout and faithful use of the written word of God;—the written word, regarded as the only foundation of our faith, our shield against error, the appointed lamp unto our feet and light unto our path<sup>a</sup>, the dictate of infinite wisdom, and the voice of a father's love, alone able to make us “wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus<sup>b</sup>.”

Why should we be willing for a moment to follow the ignes fatui of weak and sinful ignorance, or to wander at the promptings of our own bewildered minds, when our path may be bright with heavenly radiance, and our every step may be illuminated by the truth and Spirit of Him who has been made a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory

<sup>a</sup> See Ps. cxix. 105.

<sup>b</sup> 2 Tim. iii. 15.

of his people Israel<sup>c</sup>? Why should we build upon the sand of man's vain imaginations, while we are faithfully and lovingly invited to repose in safety on the Rock of ages? Devoutly let us listen to that message of salvation, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded<sup>d</sup>." With thankful hearts let us continually give heed to the admonition of the Holy Spirit by St. Jude, "Ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life<sup>e</sup>."

<sup>c</sup> See Luke ii. 32.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 6.

<sup>e</sup> Jude 20, 21.

## LECTURE VI.

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### THE EFFECTS OF SUPERSTITION.

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JONAH ii. 8.

*They that observe lying vanities forsake their own  
mercy.*

HAVING considered the sources of Superstition, we now direct our attention to its *consequences and results*. The issues of unbelief, as we have already seen, are disastrous in the extreme,—the very opposite of those peaceful and happy effects which flow from Christian faith. But of what character are the fruits of Superstition? Are they also noxious? Are they not possibly harmless? Let us attentively examine this question, as a question of deep practical importance. It may probably be found that the evils of Superstition are in themselves less pernicious or deadly than those of unbelief; but it will also appear that, regarded in their ultimate results, they deserve to be no less sincerely

deprecatèd, and no less assiduously avoided by all those who, through divine mercy, have obtained access to the blessings of the gospel.

Much has been said, and in some respects truly said, concerning, not the harm, but the benefits, which have accrued to mankind from the influence of superstition and the observance of its practices. It can hardly be denied that, while superstition has been always attended with evil, yet, under certain circumstances, it appears to have been also productive of some good. As a principle of restraint, and especially of restraint from crimes against society, it is better than unbelief with even its best and most refined philosophy; nor can there be room for doubt that, throughout the heathen world, both in ancient and in modern times, large contributions to the temporal welfare of society have been extracted from superstitious fear. "A superstitious terror," says a writer of the present day, "has been the means of restraining multitudes from crime, when love to God or to virtue would have been altogether ineffectual,"—he means, of course, in the absence of that love to God or to virtue which would have been effectual, if present. "Witches and fairies, ghosts and demons, gods and goddesses, the penances inflicted by the

priesthood, and the terrors brought from the invisible world, (we allude of course to superstitious terrors), have all exercised a power in keeping back mankind from deeds which would have proved injurious to society. The peopling of the air, the streams, and the woods with supernatural beings, and of the darkness with ghosts, has deterred from the commission of crime multitudes who were not prepared to be awed by the thought of an omnipotent God. Every one knows how dangerous it is, so far as the peace of society is concerned, to remove even a false religion until such time as a true religion has taken its place; for in rooting up the weed, the very grain may be torn up along with it." This statement may be admitted as containing a full representation of the truth. But let us carefully observe how far the truth extends. The benefits of superstition have reference chiefly, if not wholly, to society; that is, to human society, with all its corruptions, and without its appropriate remedy, —society beyond the influence of true religion, or refusing to admit that influence. Besides this, so far as any good effects proceed from superstition, they flow, in fact, not from the false belief itself, but from those elements of truth and fragments of religion

which some superstitious system embodies or involves,—from those sacred embers which still glow beneath the rubbish of error and delusion (164). And further still, it should be well considered, that, whatever advantages may be supposed to proceed from the inferior principle, the same are also to be ascribed, only in a far higher degree, to the influence of pure religion. Evil may be held in check by superstition; but by the gospel it is destroyed:—superstition may repress its outward development; Christianity attacks it at its root.

These things having been premised, we proceed to observe that, notwithstanding all considerations which can fairly be adduced in its favour, Superstition not only appears to fearful disadvantage in contrast with the true and elevating religion of the gospel, but it becomes plain that, while the religious principle is essentially a good thing,—a good of the highest order, the jewel of the soul,—superstition, on the contrary, is essentially an evil thing,—hurtful to our spiritual nature, at variance with human peace and happiness, and tending to eclipse the brightness and to impair the blessedness of any degree of Christian principle or spiritual goodness with which it may coexist. For it must be

freely admitted that superstition may to a certain extent have place in the mind of an individual, or among a people, together with some measure of Christian knowledge and of vital godliness; while, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that so far as it does exist, it operates as an element of evil. Antecedently to experience, we might expect, from the nature of the case, the following conditions and results. Superstition being fundamentally a kind of religious faith,—although faith misplaced, faith on a wrong foundation,—it would seem likely that the superstitious mind may embrace some other habits of religious faith,—and if so, why not some elements of Christian faith? Still, however, we should not expect to find in such a soul the faith of the gospel in its integrity and the fulness of its power; because, so far as a man's religious faith or consciousness has found and acquiesced in a false object, such object is likely to occupy some portion of that room which is rightfully and exclusively demanded for the object of a right faith, that is to say, the true God, the real Saviour, His precious promises, and the whole compass of His holy word. Nor is this all: but, as the faith which superstition implies may thus be expected to occupy some place which ought to



be better filled, so also the positive falsehoods which that perverse and misplaced faith brings into the soul cannot but exercise a deleterious influence upon the positive truths which a right faith is at the same time supplying. So that while, in some respects, superstition may be expected more or less readily to amalgamate with Christian faith, there are also other points of view under which we may foresee that it will contribute to corrupt and empoison, or even to neutralize and supplant, that faith. And there can never be any truth in a supposition, which seems to be sometimes vaguely and inconsiderately indulged, that an infusion of superstition in the truly religious mind may contribute to make it none the worse, but rather in some degree the better;—a supposition which, upon a moment's reflection, may be discovered to imply that God's pure truth is not sufficient for its purpose,—that it needs the support of a vain imagination, the supplement of a spiritual lie, in order to work with full effect upon the soul of fallen man. As if the sun in the heavens should need the glare of some gorgeous picture to assist it in giving light unto the world!

The records of experience confirm, and

more than confirm, all the anticipations which I have thus ventured to express. Practically, superstition and its effects are variously modified, especially when they exist in conjunction with Christian faith and principle: but these modifications, countless in number and endless in their diversities, we do not here attempt to take under review; nor do they properly belong to the subject now before us. Our inquiry is, What are the results and consequences of Superstition considered in itself; or, in other words, of what nature are the evils which follow in its train, so far as these evils actually ensue, not being counteracted or overborne by some better principle (165)? As we stated on a former occasion the good effects of Christian Faith, without making deductions for the weakness of faith in particular instances,—and as we noticed the evil effects and tendencies of Infidelity in themselves, without taking into account the outward checks, restraints, and mitigations by which its operation is affected,—so now likewise it will be our business to inquire absolutely, what are the evils which Superstition is adapted, of itself, to cherish? What are its own legitimate effects upon the mind, disposition, and happiness of individuals, and upon the interests of human society?

It has been a matter of common observation, that Superstition *debases and impairs the intellect* (166). And the charge is no less just than prevalent. This evil habit debilitates the mind of man, sometimes by inducing indolence, while it withholds occasion for the exercise of thought and judgment; sometimes by forbidding as presumptuous and vain the full play and exercise of the intellectual powers, contracting the operations of the mind, and interfering with the development of its energies, through the want of a simple and fearless confidence in truth; and, not unfrequently, by a kind of wasting process, in occupying the mind with the contemplation of frivolous or unworthy objects, or in mocking it with the presence of delusion when it had been seeking for the grasp of truth. Witness the obstructions which superstition has opposed to the cultivation of natural philosophy (167), and of many of the subjects of ordinary science and learning. More particularly still, observe its bad effects upon dogmatic theology, or the intellectual conception and embodiment of the facts and truths of the gospel (168); consider how the minds of superstitious men have been occupied with subtle reasonings, vain inventions, and false or frivolous theories, in connection

sometimes with obscure points of doctrine, and sometimes with matters of mere form and ceremony or some details of outward observances, instead of being more nobly and usefully employed in obtaining a deep, enlarged, and increasingly reverent and thankful apprehension of those great things which God our Saviour has done for our redemption, and those which He is still ready to accomplish for the purification of our souls, and their advancement to perfection. Nor has this mischief been confined to the experience of individuals in whom it has been at work. It has become, although unjustly, an occasion of discredit to Christianity itself. Again and again has the religion of the gospel been reproached with a tendency to promote narrowness of mind, and to encourage a certain meanness or poverty of intellect; whereas, in point of fact, these results have been attributable, not to religion, but to that superstition by which religion has been alloyed. Here is, in truth, one point of contrast between the effects of superstition and those of Christian faith. Faith, as we have already seen, directly tends to liberate, purify, and invigorate the human intellect; superstition affects it with feebleness, bondage, and restraint.

More striking and more fatal still are the *ill effects* of superstition *on the moral and spiritual nature of mankind*.—Contemplate the results which have flowed from misbelief concerning the Deity and the unseen world. Debasing, beyond measure, has been the effect of superstitious conceptions of the nature and attributes of God (169), and of the employments and happiness of a future state, especially as contrasted with the influence of divine truth on these momentous subjects, seen by the light of the gospel. When man creates a deity like himself, all the imperfections and vices of that imaginary being are reflected back with increased intensity and with baneful power upon the soul of the inventor. This effect has been displayed with full force in the history of pagan antiquity, no less than in the systems and practical working of oriental mythology; and, while we look at these dark chapters of human history, we must remember that results of the same kind will always follow in proportion to the obscuration of the true scriptural idea of God in our minds, and to the admission into our hearts of any idol, the creature of superstitious fantasy or fear, in the place or by the side of God. The fabrication of fictitious gods, and the ascription of strange

doings to these imaginary beings, has been always a favourite employment of the superstitious mind of man; and has been constantly attended with its own reward. With reference to the ancient heathen, it has been truly said, “Depraved and insane invention took this direction with ardour. The mind threw a fictitious divinity into its own phantoms, and into the objects of the visible world. The promiscuous numberless crowd of almost all shapes of fancy and of matter became, as it were, instinct with ambition, and mounted into gods (170).” And if we ask, what result was produced by the apprehension of these vain and self-created gods upon the minds of their deluded worshippers, the answer is, that these idols were the very patrons of wickedness and vice. “They were alternately the toys and the tyrants of their miserable creator. They appalled him often, and often he could make sport with them. For overawing him by their supposed power, they made him compensation by descending to a fellowship with his follies and vices. And to this intellectual obscuration, and this legion of pestilent fallacies, swarming like locusts from the smoke of the bottomless pit in the vision of St. John, the fatal effect on morality and happiness corresponded. Indeed, the mischief

done there perhaps even exceeded the proportion of the ignorance and the false theology; conformably to the rule that any thing wrong in the mind will be the most wrong where it comes nearest to its ultimate practical effect, except when in this operation outward it is met and checked by some foreign counteraction(170)." The experience of mankind is uniform in this respect; alike do the mythologies of the east and of the west, the superstitions of Rome pagan and of Rome papal, bear witness to the fact that superstitious misconceptions of the object of divine worship cannot but act with baneful influence upon the mind and heart of the deluded worshipper.

Nor must we overlook the fact that superstition in the method of worship, no less than with reference to the object, is attended by its characteristic detriment and evil. In this respect, the demoralizing influence of superstition has been abundantly displayed, partly in the substitution of outward observances for repentance, godliness, and virtue,—or the practical habit of making religion consist in positive rites,—and partly also, which is still worse, by the employment of those things as a fancied atonement or satisfaction for transgression (171); these observ-

ances becoming, in effect, a palliative to the consciences of ungodly men, and subserving the evil purpose of a licence for the commission of fresh crimes (172). In this way especially, the imagined intercession of saints, and the falsely conceived efficacy of the supposed mediation of a human priesthood, have tended most fearfully to minister encouragement to sin; and, in like manner, the undue importance, or rather the supposititious value, which superstition has always been prone to attach to ascetic observances, has contributed, by way of necessary consequence, to the depreciation of that true morality which consists in the spiritual love and service of Almighty God as our heavenly Father, in Christ. Bishop Van Mildert has truly said (173), in accordance with what all sound Protestants have constantly observed, that “the ordinances of the Romish Church, relative to fasting, confession, penance, celibacy, and monkish seclusion from the world, . . . . . by imposing upon men burdens too grievous to be borne, and such as had no warrant from the holy Scriptures, tempted them either to rest in mere externals, or to assume an appearance of sanctity, while they secretly indulged in the grossest lusts of the flesh, as well as in the most presumptuous specula-



tions of the understanding.” And we may add, that these vain inventions and arbitrary observances are attended with mischief of another kind, inasmuch as they minister temptation to self-conceit and spiritual pride, continually promising to do much towards “the satisfying of the flesh<sup>a</sup>,” or the gratification of carnal, corrupt nature.—In a word, superstition, even when it professes to labour for the subduing of sin, tends rather to increase its vigour and to promote its operation. It removes and alienates the soul from God, even when it promises to introduce it to his presence and his favour. In the spirit of true Christian philosophy, it has been well said by one who has spoken in this place (174), “All that interposes between the living soul and the living God, save the divine Mediator, who himself is God as well as man, frustrates, more or less, God’s revelation of himself, and the power of his Spirit upon us. It deadens the joys, it disarms the terrors, which the soul feels when in immediate contact with the living God. It is an evil thing to substitute idolatrous or even logical personalities (for some personality, real or notional, the soul will have)—as Rome preeminently does—for the direct presence and living touch of

<sup>a</sup> Col. ii. 23.

the Almighty<sup>b</sup>.”—And then, if to all these matters we add the weighty consideration that superstition, nourished in its native element of bondage and fear, is sadly insensible to the manifestations of God’s love, and is a stranger to the constraining influence of that love upon the soul,—and if moreover we take into account the well-established fact that superstition perverts the moral sense by readily confounding the distinction between right and wrong in connection with its own views on questions of religious discipline and worship (175),—how can we fail to perceive that its spirit is strikingly at variance with the spirit of the gospel,—that spirit of fervent love and of uncompromising holiness,—love kindled and ever gaining fresh intensity at the cross of Jesus, and holiness, always aiming at conformity to the Saviour’s image, and so pressing forward to the perfection and purity of heaven?

To proceed. *Superstition easily coalesces with impure sensuality* (176), keeps it in countenance, and assists its growth;—an evil tendency which has become too manifest in the licentious character of ancient polytheism, in the gross impurities of the oriental systems, in the immoralities which have found

<sup>b</sup> Garbett, Sermon on the Personality of God, pp. 145, 146.

shelter in the creed of Mahomet, and in the practices which have too often been tolerated or allowed within the walls of cloisters. Be assured that we greatly mistake the character of superstition if we suppose it to be incompatible with the sinful indulgence of sensual passions. "His debaucheries," says an English historian, speaking of a profligate French monarch, "formed an extraordinary contrast to the superstition of his character; and both brought him into universal contempt (177)." But there was really no contrast in this case. Superstition and profligacy are no aliens to each other; they belong to the same parentage, and are often found in friendly association. The offspring of mere feeling in one direction is too much disposed to be indulgent to the impulses of feeling in another; the man who is impelled to the discharge of religious acts and offices under the mere influence of excited sentiment is likely to be too easily swayed by irregular impulse seeking its gratification in the guilty indulgence of passion,—and that too especially while he vainly imagines that by some religious rites he has screened himself from punishment which he would otherwise have reason to dread. Beware of the delusion that superstition, under however plausible a guise, may

be made to act as a check upon sensuality. There is no safety except in the love of God; and the power of that love will always be in proportion to the purity and simplicity of faith.

The evil of which we now speak, like others which attach to our fallen nature, is *of a self-propagating character* throughout. This corrupt tree spreads its roots while it extends its branches; it tends to strengthen and expand the principles from which it derives its origin. In its progress, no less than at its beginning, it is scrupulous and timid. It fosters the ignorance from which it springs. It has been perpetually found to encourage that spirit of fraud and imposture, to which, more or less remotely, it is indebted for its existence. It is at once the offspring and the parent of a worldly mind. And especially it may be observed that, as mental indolence and apathy appear among the causes to which superstition may be traced, so also a disposition to inertness and inactivity is not a little prominent among its ascertained results. It has been found to be ordinarily attended with that want of alacrity in warding off danger, and that absence of industry and energy in the pursuit of attainable good, which at once constitute a defect in personal character,

and directly tend to social and political decay (178). Sometimes the timidity which clings to superstition leads men to sit down in despair when they ought to be resolutely employed in promoting their rightful interests, or in discharging a bounden duty; and sometimes it causes them to shrink from an attempt at progress or improvement through a dread of doing harm. It appears highly probable that the superstition of Christians,—although certainly not (as Gibbon would have us believe) the religion of Christ,—was one great cause of the decline and fall of the Roman empire(179). We are familiar with accounts of the sluggish and evil influences connected with a superstitious reception of the Mahometan doctrine of fate (180); and in the history of modern Europe it seems to have been established as a fact beyond all controversy, that the good order and well-sustained energy of protestant nations, together with the civilization and prosperity which follow as legitimate results from the public adoption of sound religious principles, stand out in striking contrast with the languor, disorders, and decay of other countries which continue to be oppressed by papal superstition(181). Nor is it only with regard to our material or temporal interests that

superstition tends to paralyse effort and to hinder advancement. It cherishes spiritual sloth; and hence, in this way as well as in others, it contributes to spiritual backwardness and decay. It says "there is a lion in the way, a lion is in the streets<sup>c</sup>," when there ought to be the Spirit of the Lion of Judah in the heart. It bids the sluggard fold his hands and take a little more sleep, when he ought rather to be aroused from his lethargy, and encouraged to be watchful against sin, to be active in his Master's service, or to be fighting the battles of the Lord. Not that superstition is always and altogether torpid. On the contrary, it is often fitful and restless; it is sometimes tossed in the tempest of violent hope or fear; and not unfrequently it is fierce and eager in the pursuit of mischief. Still however, in some way or other, either in its listlessness on the one hand or in its feverish excitement on the other, it nourishes a temper altogether different from that persevering spirit of beneficent industry and labour which we have reckoned among the characteristic results of Christian faith. "Superstition," it has been truly said (182), "disposes men now to ecstatic action, now to prostrating helplessness." Its victim "vacillates between

<sup>c</sup> Prov. xxvi. 13.

hot and cold, between hope and fear, between self-confidence and despondency. He is afraid to act, lest offence should be given to the God he fears, and afraid not to act for the same reason. He is ever restless, but his activity is more frequently exercised in spreading misery than in propagating good. It is faith in a living God, the Governor of nature, [and, we must add, the Saviour and friend of the believer,] that calls forth the energies of heaven-born souls, and sends them forth in the work of relieving misery, uprooting corruption, stemming the tide of depravity, and helping on the amelioration of the race in knowledge and virtue."

Superstition, like licentiousness, is, in itself, *hard-hearted and unfeeling*; but, in the one case as well as in the other, this temper may be held in considerable check, and may even find little or no occasion of development. As the man of pleasure may exhibit nothing but hilarity and smiles, or may be distinguished by gentleness and amenity of manner, so may the superstitious man, or even a superstitious system, be favourably marked by light-hearted gaiety, by a prevailing character of mirthfulness rather than of gloom, by a disposition to festivity rather than by a tone of severity or harshness. But, on the

other hand, when circumstances call for, or strongly favour, the development of this evil principle, when superstition exists in its grosser forms, amidst the night of barbaric ignorance, or when, even in its utmost refinement, it is confronted in its deepest principles by the opposing power of truth, and is compelled to struggle for its existence in the face of gospel day, then—think of our protestant martyrs!—it becomes manifest that in the heart of superstition there is a demon of ferociousness and cruelty (183) in close companionship with the demon of guilt and fear. Witness, on this behalf, the horrid rites of oriental heathenism (184), of that paganism which so long prevailed in the north of Europe, and of that which reigns to the present day in the heart of Africa; witness the temper of the Jewish Pharisees when excited in opposition to the gospel, the savage persecutions inflicted on Christians by adherents of the most smiling and apparently benignant forms of ancient polytheism, and, in more modern times, the deep atrocities of the dark and murderous Inquisition.

Remarkable has been the influence of Superstition in *producing controversies, divisions, and strife* (185). In this respect again it stands opposed to the spirit of Christian



faith, which, in itself, and so far as it really prevails, is a spirit of harmony and unity, of brotherhood and peace. Truth, which lies at its foundation, is one; and if this truth were received in its simplicity and power, by the members of a whole community, all would then love as brethren; as there is to real Christians “but one body and one Spirit and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of all,” so would all be “of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity,” and would “with one mind and one mouth glorify God” (186). All that is at variance with this spirit indicates, not the presence or the effect of Christian faith, but its weakness or its absence, or the existence and efficacy of some principle altogether different. And such a principle is that which we are now considering. Divisions, and controversies, and fierce contentions are not merely accidental to superstition, or results chargeable only to corruptions which may have debased it, or to heterogeneous elements which may have mingled themselves with its own native principles or its regular observances, but they are effects which follow naturally, and (unless checked by contravening circumstances) necessarily,

from its inmost essence. Superstition rests upon false faith, faith that fastens upon an object presented by the imagination and the feelings of individual men, or of certain classes of mankind, existing under peculiar conditions. But the figments of imagination, and the impulses of feeling, admit of, or rather certainly involve, an endless diversity; and, just as bitter controversies and foul asperities arise when men insist upon the universal admission of their own opinions, so the same effect cannot but ensue when they claim an equal conformity to their own mere impulses, or to the products of their own imagination. If, in the licentious exercise of private judgment, in the pride of reason and the vanity of thought, we find one source of disunion and discord, it is also no less certain that in the lawless claims of private feeling, and in the vagueness of mysticism, we find another. And more than this; experience may tell us that controversies which have arisen on questions of men's own superstition have been so distinguished by fierceness and rancour that they hold a bad preeminence among those things which have ministered to hatred and prejudice, and have contributed to hinder men from godly union and concord. When dogmas or practices,

originally adopted from mere impulse, are upheld or insisted on as matters of conscience,—when men think that they are doing God service by forcing upon other men some arbitrary methods of supposed propitiation, or some private inventions in the mode or circumstances of divine worship, regarded as meritorious or as otherwise indispensable to salvation,—who does not perceive that resistance is as likely to ensue, and therefore a conflict is as certainly prepared, as when an attempt may be made to enforce uniformity of opinion or to lay fetters upon thought? If thought be vague and uncertain, are not the feelings and the imagination still more fitful and capricious? And when self-love mingles with the impetuosity of feeling, have we not reason to dread a more violent commotion than when the same self-love exists in union with mere pride of reason? I say *mere* pride of reason, because this pride, and especially pride of the logical understanding, may combine with warmth of feeling in the support of superstitious error.

On all these grounds, we have reason to expect that Superstition will be found to be not only a cause, but a most prolific cause, of controversy and dissension. And experience declares the fact. On the face of history it

is abundantly proclaimed that if men have contended in unholy warfare concerning the principles of truth, they have fought with still greater bigotry and bitterness concerning some groundless tenets, or some arbitrary practices, which have had their origin in their own imaginations. Bitter, for example, are the animosities which have raged between devotees of different religious Orders, each vainly confident of its own fancied stock of merit, or of the value of its own imaginary way of access to the favour and the blessings of heaven. And,—to adopt another instance of a still more painful kind,—fierce are the controversies that have arisen on superstitious questions, properly so called, in connection with the doctrine of the holy Eucharist (187). We know full well how possible it is for a body of learned or scientific men to engage in hot dispute concerning the rationale of a certain supposed effect, while, in point of fact, no such effect exists. And thus, when once it has been admitted, as a principle, that some change takes place in the substance of the elements consecrated, or regularly and solemnly set apart for sacred use, in the Lord's Supper, a wide field for discussion is immediately opened; room is afforded for the exercise of the logical understanding

in moulding this doctrine into some coherent system, or in defending one system against another; and great battles may be fought by men of powerful intellect, and of devout and earnest minds, on the grave questions how, and how far, and why, and with what effect, the imaginary change takes place. Hence, for example, the violent dispute which raged between Dominicans and Franciscans at the Council of Trent concerning the manner in which the supposed Transubstantiation is effected; a dispute which was found to be incapable of adjustment, and led only to the poor expedient of expressing the superstitious dogma in terms sufficiently vague to admit of a twofold interpretation, so as to suit the views of either section of the disputants (188). Alas, this philosophy of superstition continues, to the present day, not only to waste the energies of many a noble mind, but, what is still worse, to serve as an arena of idle and profitless debate, and even to engender strife within the borders of the church! Nor have we reason to predict a speedy termination of this struggle. Rather, we may expect that it will continue as long as there are men whose hearts give welcome to the false first principles upon which superstition rests, and who are prepared to

apply the powers of a vigorous understanding to the exposition and assertion of those principles. Superstition, in fact, provides itself with refinements and subtleties, in proportion to the growing clearness and intensity of religious truth ; its pretences multiply, and become more plausible, according to the power of those assaults which threaten its destruction ; it knows how to avail itself of the progress of philosophy and science so as to call in new resources to its aid ; it knows even how to present itself as a subject of philosophical inquiry at once attractive and apparently profound, in order to combat the intellectual apprehension of that true religion which is its constant, and eventually invincible, opponent.

Closely allied to this contentious temper is that *spirit of intolerance* which has often followed in the train of Superstition (189) ; intolerance, leading in many cases to violent and even sanguinary persecution, and to the infliction of multiplied wrongs in the name of religion, with all the social and political evils which such enormities involve. The fanatical attempt to advocate the cause of religion by the sword, whether in the case of the Mahometan who fought under the banner of the false prophet, or in that of the

Christian who marched in the crusades, was founded in deep superstition (190); in both instances the warriors fought, in order, as they supposed, to obtain remission of their sins. And whether we look to the blood-stained annals of papal Rome, or to the more impotent attempts of those who breathe the spirit of Rome without possessing her power, we are compelled to conclude, as a matter of history and of painful observation, that superstition can hardly exist in the mind of an individual, and certainly not in the bosom of a church, without producing the foul spirit of stern intolerance and relentless persecution (191).

Not unconnected with the manifestation of this contentious and overbearing spirit is the fact that Superstition has invariably appeared not only as the firm ally, but as the most productive source, of *spiritual despotism, priestcraft, and priestly domination* (192). Add the figments of superstition to the truths and institutions of the gospel, and instantly the Christian presbyter is changed into a sacrificing priest,—a fancied intercessor or appointed mediator between God and men; he becomes a representative of Christ, instead of an ambassador for Him,—a delegate to exercise His power, instead of a minister whose

office is to preach the gospel, and to rule and feed the flock committed to his care, commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God. No sooner has this priestly transformation been effected, than the best friend of his brother men has been turned into the worst of tyrants. All history concurs to teach us that the greater is the degree of superstition embodied in any system of religion, the greater is the amount of power lodged in the hands of its ministers,—power of an absolute and despotic kind, entirely distinct from that wholesome influence which arises from the exercise of wisdom and benevolence in connection with an orderly designation and a position of lawful authority. In point of fact, these two things, the power of the mediating priest on the one hand, and the influence of the Christian presbyter on the other, bear to each other precisely the same relation as that which subsists between superstition and religion; the one is false, the other is true; the one is an unwarranted substitute for the other, or a kind of spurious imitation; the fictitious priesthood springs from the corruption of human nature,—the corruption at once of the deceivers and of the deceived,—but the Christian ministry is the appointment of heavenly wisdom, and a



gift of the Saviour's love ; the priesthood of superstition, crafty and cruel, is powerful for evil, but the Christian ministry, so far as it maintains its character and is faithful to Him who has established it, is a channel of countless blessings, an instrument of incalculable good. The priests of superstition, sometimes seeking their own individual advantage, or, perhaps more often, simply and faithfully subserving the interests of some monstrous system to which they devotedly belong, are devourers of the flock ; but the true ministers of Christ, replenishing continually their own emptiness out of the Saviour's fulness, repairing from their weakness to His strength, and thus receiving into earthen vessels the treasure of the gospel, rejoice in becoming, according to their measure, the real, though secondary, benefactors of all who are entrusted to their care,—helpers of men's faith, abettors of their hope, and patterns of their charity,—heralds of salvation to the lost, and partakers in the joy of those who receive the glad tidings of the gospel, and are saved through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

If the effects of superstition upon the minds and hearts of individuals and upon the condition of the church and the world at large are such as have been now described,—

if its expedients for re-establishing a friendly relation between man and his Maker are vain, and if, in its influence upon the soul of man, there is nothing to purify and elevate, but much rather which tends in the direction of still deeper degradation,—if also, we may add, superstition obstructs the progress of the gospel, and even, as will hereafter appear, paves the way for infidelity,—then no question can remain as to its *unfavourable aspect upon human happiness, in this world and in the next* (193). Misery flows from sin, from a sense of guilt and from the power of an ungodly, worldly, mind; superstition seeks for some alleviation to this wretchedness, but its search is vain, and its proper fruit is disappointment, the disappointment of a craving spirit, in the midst of need, in the face of sorrow, and on the borders of the eternal world. It has its deep and ecstatic excitements, and its gratifications of taste more or less refined; but it has nothing to give in answer to the demands of the human soul for peace, and rest, and solid satisfaction (194). It can mar religious peace, even in the Christian's bosom, but it never can impart it; perplexing, obscuring, and exciting uneasiness in the hearts of even those in whom the element of a living faith predominates, but never

fulfilling to them its favourite promise of adding strength to their confidence, and depth to their tranquillity. If infidelity forbids hope, superstition mocks it; and, so far as we yield to the power of misbelief, and are of the number of those who “observe lying vanities,” we “forsake” our “own mercy.” “My people,” says God by the prophet Jeremiah, “have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water<sup>d</sup>.” And again it is written concerning the victim of misbelieving superstition, “He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand<sup>e</sup>?” Be assured that all peace with God, all spiritual life and blessedness, flow into the soul, through the channel of humble and lively faith, from Him who has said, in truth and love, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest<sup>f</sup> (195).” “If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink<sup>g</sup>.” “Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me<sup>h</sup>.” “Peace be unto you<sup>i</sup>.” Our wisdom and happiness con-

<sup>d</sup> Jer. ii. 13.<sup>e</sup> Isa. xlv. 20.<sup>f</sup> Mat. xi. 28.<sup>g</sup> John vii. 37.<sup>h</sup> John xiv. 1.<sup>i</sup> John xx. 19.

sist in thankfully receiving this message of the gospel with all simplicity of mind, and in yielding ourselves, with progressive devotedness, to the living and loving Redeemer, to the influence of his Spirit, the force of his example, and the guidance of his word; heartily reposing in the mercy of the Most High as declared in our redemption, and gladly committing ourselves, in the way of righteousness, to the care of that good Shepherd, who will not suffer us to want, but who gives to each individual member of his flock abundant reason to declare, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me<sup>k</sup>."

<sup>k</sup> Ps. xxiii. 2-4.

## LECTURE VII.

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INFIDELITY AND SUPERSTITION COMPARED.

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JEREMIAH II. 13.

*My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.*

**I**N the foregoing Lectures I have attempted, not to conduct an argument, but to describe a history,—the Natural History of Infidelity and Superstition, in contrast with Christian Faith. This contrast with Christian faith I have found occasion to indicate, from time to time, while engaged in the separate consideration of the alleged evils, in their nature, sources, and results. In some respects also Infidelity and Superstition have been already compared with each other; but many observations on this head have been reserved for the present Lecture, in which I now proceed more particularly to institute this com-

parison, partly with reference to what has already been said, and partly also with regard to some new features of these evil habits, which can be most distinctly understood only when viewed in juxtaposition with each other.

It has been shown, in general, that Faith, in its essence or its fundamental idea, is a *reasonable belief*; Infidelity is *unreasonable disbelief*; Superstition is *unreasonable misbelief*. Hence therefore Infidelity appears as the direct *contradictory* of Christian faith, opposed to its existence; while Superstition is rather the *contrary* of that faith, capable of coexisting with it, but in a state of antagonism, hindering its development, and opposing its beneficial operation (196). Infidelity is *anti-Christian*, Superstition is *un-Christian*; the former is more directly opposed to the gospel, the latter more indirectly. Infidelity, so far as it prevails, *excludes* Christian faith; Superstition *thwarts or counteracts* it.

With regard to the comparative sources of these two habits of mind, it may be observed, in accordance with what has been already said, that the deepest moral spring of Infidelity is, for the most part, an unawakened conscience combined with sinful self-will and the indulgence of sinful habits; but the in-

most cause of Superstition is usually an aroused or restless conscience desiring repose, the heart being still devoid of active love to God; while in each case the same cause occasionally operates which may be considered as ordinarily belonging to the other.—With respect to intellectual sources, the difference is more strongly marked; speculative Unbelief arising principally from the abuse or perversion of intuitive reason or of the logical understanding, to the neglect or the suppression of faith,—Superstition rather from the irregular, hasty, or excessive exercise of the principle of belief, with a culpable neglect or contempt of the powers of reason and understanding. In either case, there is the want of a due exercise or control of our moral and intellectual powers, with reference especially to that divine salvation which involves our recovery from the ruins of the fall, and is therefore of indispensable necessity to our present and everlasting welfare.

If again we inquire, in general, concerning the comparative effects of Infidelity and Superstition upon individuals and upon society, we find that the former of these two evils leaves human passions and vices to prevail and to work out their results without control, while the latter, although sometimes indeed

it restrains them as with a bridle, is also capable of exciting them, and of adding, as it were, the impulse of a spur.—As to their influence on human happiness, apart from the misery common to both, which arises from the want of real reconciliation to God, and the power of sin unsubdued within the heart and more or less practised in the life, it appears that, while it is the especial tendency of Infidelity to destroy or hinder hope, it is the work of Superstition rather to engender disappointment.—Perhaps also we may add, as another general feature of distinction, that Infidelity is peculiarly a principle of impiety, or want of reverent affection towards God, while Superstition is more directly a cause of ill-will and illiberal conduct towards man.

Passing over thus briefly these general subjects of remark, which have reference to what has been already stated more at large, we now direct our attention to some more minute points of comparison, a survey of which, it is hoped, will not be uninteresting in itself, while it may also tend to shed fresh light upon some other matters and to strengthen some of our previous conclusions. Especially we may be assisted in conceiving a just dread of Infidelity on the one hand and of Superstition on the other, by observing how often



and how extensively they agree in those points wherein they “war against the soul<sup>a</sup>.”

The statements of Scripture leave no room to doubt that Infidelity and Superstition are alike indebted to the operation of Satanic agency. So far as the father of lies is permitted to tempt men to evil, or to minister occasion to the development and activity of that evil which is already in their hearts, it is plain that he works with equal success in promoting an unbelieving rejection of the gospel on the one hand, and a superstitious corruption of it on the other. It was Satan who tempted to disbelief in Paradise; and, if we receive the scriptural account of false belief, or superstitious error, we shall find that, in these “latter times,” or under the Christian dispensation, men are led astray, and induced to “depart from the faith” by “giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils<sup>b</sup>,” i. e. doctrines concerning demons, or proceeding from their evil influence. It also appears evident that these seducing spirits employ the sin of some men, which exists in connection sometimes with unbelief, and sometimes with superstition, as a means of promoting the opposite mischief in the minds of others.—And we may observe that these two evils

<sup>a</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 11.

<sup>b</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 1.

bear equally upon their front the marks of their earthly origin in human wickedness and vice. In the one case no less than in the other, there are endless shades of variation; in neither do we meet with one consistent set of principles uniformly carried out; the mutability and imperfection of man,—of man not merely as a creature, but as a fallen, maimed and weakened creature,—is everywhere apparent. The varying, shifting, fitful forms of infidelity or of superstition are but a reflection of the restlessness of the empty, weary soul that has forsaken “the fountain of living waters,” and has hewed out for itself “cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” And again we feel that in both cases we encounter human sin, when we observe that each of these evils flows, in fact, not from any inherent want of a needful faculty, a want such as could be traced only to the will of the Creator, but rather to the abuse or perversion of a faculty, or even to the corruption of a good principle, a principle implanted for the best of purposes, and needful for the health and vigour of the soul.

Between Infidelity and Superstition there exists a substantial agreement, as we have already seen, with regard to the deep moral

source from which they take their beginnings in the soul ; but there is also a circumstantial difference, which must not be overlooked. Both may be traced to the want of active love to God and devotion to his service ; both alike reveal the voluntary and sinful distance, or alienation, of man from his Maker (197). According to his original constitution, man seeks after God ; in his fall, he, for the most part, desires not His presence, or the knowledge of His ways ;—or, if sometimes his heart be drawn towards the Most High, by sentiments of thankfulness or of praise for the wonders of creation or the bounties of providence, by a sense of helplessness and danger leading him to seek protection, or by a consciousness of guilt impelling him to deprecate deserved punishment,—still this constrained approach of the soul to the Supreme is most feeble and most transitory, and the occasional or temporary movement is met by a repulsive influence, the love of sin or the evil love of self and of the world so steadily and powerfully bearing the soul back again from God, that, on the whole, it willingly takes up its permanent and final abode amongst “lying vanities<sup>c</sup>,” forsaking its own mercy. It is this distance from God which infidelity

<sup>c</sup> Jonah ii. 8.

and superstition alike contribute to keep up : only for the accomplishment of this same end the methods which they adopt are different ; the one interposing one set of objects between God and the soul, the other intruding another. Infidelity teaches men to escape (as it were) from the presence of the Most High by fixing their attention on the works of God, to the exclusion of the Author of them all, and by teaching them to deify their own intellect or feelings ; while superstition presents to their regard saints and angels, or fancied human mediators, on whom the soul may practically rest, at the same time that it is afraid or otherwise indisposed to enter into the presence-chamber of the Lord of heaven and earth.

Again, with regard to their ultimate sources, Infidelity and Superstition agree in this, that in both cases man looks for knowledge and happiness to himself, after having refused to look to God ; the difference being that infidelity looks to self under one aspect, superstition under another (198). For knowledge or guidance, infidelity looks chiefly to reason, superstition to the imagination and the feelings ; for happiness, the former relies upon man's own moral strength and courage, and the perfectibility of his nature, by its own

native effort, or its regular development, while the latter depends rather upon some external means of atoning for guilt, and of counter-acting or overcoming the power of sin, but means of its own devising or at its own command, and more or less independent of the will and power of the Most High.

There are also certain conditions of the intellectual powers, essentially the same, from which, only in different ways, Infidelity and Superstition severally take their rise. Such is the habit, whether indolent, careless, or hasty, whereby men draw their conclusions, or proceed to act, upon the strength of a mere impression on the mind, without duly exercising the judgment on the question of evidence or of facts. It is an intellectual duty to suspend our inferences until they may have received sufficient warrant; but hasty inferences, often incorrect and sometimes of most pernicious tendency, are continually drawn, partly under the influence of pride of intellect and presumptuous self-confidence, and partly under the influence of fear; in the former case, the erroneous conclusions usually lead to infidelity, in the latter to superstition. The superstitious man "receives a fiction of the imagination, and rests upon its truth." The unbeliever, "acting upon some prejudice

or mental impression, which has probably no better foundation, puts away real and important truths without any examination of the evidence on which they are founded. The misapplication of the reasoning powers is the same in both. It consists in proceeding upon a mere impression without exercising the judgment on the question of its evidence, or on the facts and considerations which are opposed to it. Two characters of a very opposite description thus meet in that mental condition, which draws them equally, though in different directions, astray from the truth (199).” Hence arise unbelief on the one hand, and credulity on the other.—In like manner, there is a mental sloth or negligence, leading to confusion of ideas, or to one-sided, partial, views of truth, which ministers equally, though in different ways, sometimes to infidelity, and at other times to superstition. Sometimes we find men leaning exclusively to the objective in religion, whence arose many corruptions of the papacy; and sometimes as entirely to the subjective, whence especially infidelity in its spiritualistic phase (200): sometimes there is an undue want of discrimination, at other times there is an unhealthy and false exclusiveness: and either of these mental conditions is unfavourable to

a reception of truth. "Superstition," it has been truly said (201), "mixes and confounds divine and human causes, natural and supernatural, the instrument and the efficient principle, the objective and the subjective, one with another; whilst unbelief, on the contrary, recognises only the human, the natural, and the subjective; both erring in this respect, that they do not properly separate and discriminate this twofold combination."—And once more, with respect to the use of the intellectual powers, it is obvious that, while both infidelity and superstition are correctly referred to ignorance as one of their producing causes (202), there must yet be some difference in that ignorance which leads to such opposite results. But how can this be? We must remember that ignorance is not a pure negation; its existence does not imply that the mind is a mere blank. Ignorance, rightly considered, will be found to consist, not in a mere vacuity of mind, or in the absence of all ideas, but in the absence of correct apprehensions, often if not always combined with the presence of other ideas entirely at variance with truth; and hence it is that ignorance, involving the presence of one set of perverse ideas, leads to infidelity, and

ignorance, including another set of false views or sentiments, leads to superstition.

Worthy of remark is the similarity of position occupied by Infidelity and Superstition in relation to the gospel. We have already said that the former is to be regarded more precisely as contradictory, the latter as rather contrary, to Christian truth; but both are in opposition to that truth; and it is this agreement in practical opposition, in more particulars than one, to which I would now direct attention. This conflict of Infidelity and Superstition with the gospel may indeed be regarded as a mark of their common origin, so far as they proceed, in the way of suggestion, temptation, or influence, from the Spirit of Evil (203); and herein it may be not un-instructive to notice the fulfilment of that early prediction, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel<sup>d</sup>." But, apart from this consideration, and regarding, as we propose to do, only the practical working of these two principles, it is useful to observe how, while they appear so different from each other, they yet have a bearing in the

<sup>d</sup> Gen. iii. 15.



same direction, and harmoniously contribute to work out the same result. — Sometimes we may observe that a speculative rejection of the gospel coexists in the same individual, or the same class of men, with a frame of mind manifestly superstitious; as in the case of the modern Jews, who, while they vehemently reject some of the highest doctrines of the Christian religion as incompatible with reason, are yet obstinate in their belief of some of the most absurd fables of the Talmud. And it may be remembered that, in a somewhat similar manner, many of the philosophical heathen in ancient times combined an active opposition to the gospel with a firm adherence to the rites and tenets of their polytheistic superstition.—Again, while on the one hand the spirit of unbelief is ready to accept from the sacred record only that which it can fully comprehend, and that which agrees with what reason can of itself discover, and, on the other hand, it is the temper of superstition to catch very often at the form of words without seeking, or, as it would sometimes say, without presuming, to apprehend their meaning, — who does not perceive that in either case alike the effect produced is essentially the same, an effect which is no other than that of shutting out

the substance of truth from the mind? In the one case, the mind receives nothing, because it is full of its own conceits; in the other it receives likewise nothing, because it takes words without meaning; it bows, as it were, with respect, before a mystery, but shuts its eyes upon the revelation of that mystery, when God has graciously made that revelation, and has attached a blessing to the practical unfolding of the mystery to the apprehension of the believing, diligent, and inquiring soul. So that, in each case, while the process is different, the result is, in fact, the same.—Again, how remarkable is the unanimity which prevails between unbelief and superstition in decrying a reverent regard to the substance of the written word of God, the letter of the Bible with its due interpretation! “Biblicism,” says a modern unbeliever, “is the scourge of the church” (204). And who does not know that Rome has a thousand times said in effect the same? An adherence to the substance of the Scripture, in its letter and its meaning, with a consequent imbibing of its spirit, is, indeed, the scourge of superstition; and there are forms of infidelity, as well as kinds of superstition, which are content to admire what they regard as the spirit of Scripture, apart from

the letter, herein however practically acknowledging only their own spirit under another name: but it is well for us to remember, that, true as are the allegations that the letter without the spirit profiteth nothing, it is no less true that there is no value, as there can be no certainty, in the spirit without the letter. This disembodied spirit of the Scripture is no better than a phantom which may be made to subserve alternately the purposes of infidelity and of superstition with like success. On the other hand, as we must not embrace the alleged spirit of Scripture without the warrant of the letter, so neither does the bare letter, taken by itself, suffice for our instruction. If we derive our creed from the mere letter of Scripture, and especially if we adopt it from only some fragments of the letter, without rightly employing the powers of our mind, under the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit obtained by prayer, for the due apprehension and appreciation of its sense and force,—in that case also we are preparing the way either for that false belief which, mingled with the product of our own imagination and feelings, or of those of other men, may develop itself into some form of superstition, or for that intellectual recoil as from something imperfect, erroneous, or ab-

surd, which tends in the direction of an unbelieving, and perhaps contemptuous, rejection of the sacred record. And hence it is that both infidelity and superstition have been found to array themselves, now against the spirit of Scripture, and now against the letter.—Once more, while these two principles are thus equally ranged against the letter of God's word with its real and life-giving signification, it is instructive to observe how they have also learnt to combine their forces against the effectual publication and the free circulation of the sacred volume; and how instinctively they recognise their own most formidable opponents in those men who earnestly labour for the promotion of sound scriptural knowledge among the masses of mankind. Take the case of our Protestant Reformers. "It is most remarkable," says a Christian advocate, "that infidel writers seem to take peculiar pleasure in reviling their characters and depreciating the value of their exertions" (205). And we need not stop to shew that this is the temper of the friends of Romish superstition, no less than of the patrons of infidelity. Never were unbelievers more ready to asperse the character of our venerable Reformers, to cavil at their judgment, or to cast out their names

with scorn, than are too many among those who would willingly see the scriptural faith of Protestants exchanged for the errors and superstitions of the papacy.—And thus it is that, in a variety of ways, the two evil principles of which we speak reveal themselves as labouring conjointly for the accomplishment of that great work of self-will and lawlessness, the abjuration of objective truth, the rejection of the written word of God, the denial of its supremacy in matters of faith and conscience, and the abnegation of its authority as a direct and peerless communication from the great Author of truth and holiness.

Hence the advocates of divine revelation find themselves always really, and often equally, arrayed against both these opposing systems at once; a case which was strikingly exemplified at the era of the Reformation, when the labours of God's faithful servants were directed, not against the superstitions and corruptions of the papacy alone, but against Romish error on the one hand, and philosophical infidelity on the other. Against the infidel we find the Reformers declaring the insufficiency of unaided reason, and unfolding the sanctions and contents of the divine law;—against Romanism they announced the scriptural doctrine of justifica-

tion by faith, and exhibited the true idea of the Christian church;—while, in opposition to both kinds of error alike, they maintained the duty of a right use of reason, and the fact that even those portions of divine truth which are above reason, are yet not contrary to its intuitions, or at variance with its legitimate conclusions, so far as religious truth lies within the compass of its apprehension. This is the battle which was fought at the time of the Reformation in the cause of God and of his truth (206); and the church will be at all times but inadequately furnished for the discharge of her duties in the defence of the gospel, if she be destitute of sons who may succour her by turns at all points of this extensive and formidable contest.

If we inquire concerning the tactics of Infidelity and Superstition in their opposition to gospel truth, we shall here again find a remarkable similarity. By turns they are both openly aggressive, or silent and stealthy in their method of attack: each of them sometimes rears its head boldly against the truth, and against all systems which support the truth, and sometimes lurks out of sight, sapping the foundations of religion rather than avowedly aiming at its overthrow, and covering the church with a mist rather than

bursting upon it in a deluge. It is hard to say whether of the two can be the more violent or the more crafty. In the present day, the covert method of attack appears to have been adopted as the best and easiest policy by the patrons both of anti-Christian infidelity and of un-Christian superstition; and we may say of each—as has been said of one of these opposing influences in particular—that it is seeking “quietly to insinuate itself like a liquid through certain appropriate veins and channels of the body corporate;” it “is cowering and cunning, dealing much in inuendo and insinuation; generally walking with soft and stealthy steps, satisfied with freedom from restraint and with its great indulgences; and fearing nothing so much as an earnest and pure religion (207).”—If however we consider the manner in which Infidelity and Superstition work against religion when once they have gained power in the soul of an individual or in the bosom of a church, we shall find that the destruction which proceeds from the former is the more violent and sudden, and that which ensues from the latter is the more gradual and slow. Infidelity comes upon the ground of religion as it were with fire and sword, devastating all around; superstition rather covers the

soil with rank and noxious weeds, stifling and choking, and in this way eventually destroying, the sound faith and Christian principle to which it is opposed. Infidelity, when it has found its opportunity, destroys religion with a blow; superstition eats it out with rust.

It is impossible to pursue the comparison with which we are now engaged, and to consider the mutual relations of Infidelity and Superstition, without strongly perceiving that they produce and cherish each other (208): that speculative unbelief tends to engender superstitious misbelief, either in the mind of the same individual or in the breasts of other men; and that in the same way Superstition paves the way for Infidelity, or contributes to its prevalence and strength.

Infidelity, we say, conducts to Superstition. According to the constitution of our minds, all uncertainty and doubt is attended with a sense of pain from which we would willingly escape; and still more sensitively does the soul shrink back from a mere negation. In questions of religion, speculative unbelief, especially when it has proceeded to an extreme, occasions a void which the soul does not willingly endure. The heart and conscience rebel against the false intellectual



theory: there is an inward consciousness of Deity and of the divine presence, which atheism denies; there is a sense of that need of divine favour and protection which infidelity refuses to admit; there are times at which conscious helplessness instinctively turns to the apprehension of superhuman power, and when conscious guilt testifies to the existence of a sovereign Judge and asks the way to pardon. Sometimes a prospect of futurity bursts upon the hitherto unbelieving soul, and contradicts the arguments by which the grave had been made to appear as man's eternal home; and sometimes, when men have been harassed by doubts, and especially when misgiving has succeeded to unbelief, the trembling soul is more than ready to yield itself blindly to the dictates of pretended authority, dreading to exercise reason in a right and needful way, and not venturing to think for itself at all, in remembrance of those terrible results to which the abuse and perversion of its reasoning powers had formerly conducted it. In this state of mind, men are an easy prey to whatever appropriate superstition may present itself, and especially to whatever may be pressed upon their notice, and offered to their acceptance, by artful and designing patrons (209). We may

apply to infidelity and superstition the following remarks of a modern writer concerning scepticism and mysticism considered under a philosophical point of view. "The extreme of scepticism is sure to lead into the central regions of mysticism,—the most sweeping unbelief into the very worst follies of credulity. The greatest unbeliever is of all men the most credulous; he rejects perhaps a thousand truths which rest upon most solid and satisfactory evidence, but then is obliged to accept some crude system of his own into which none of these truths (to save his consistency) are permitted to enter. The sceptic, for example, who denies the divine origin of Christianity, may often appear, at first sight, rational in his objections, so long as he is engaged in pulling down the common belief of Christendom; but the moment he is called on to build up a system of his own, the moment he is required to account for the facts of the case upon some other hypothesis, he soon begins to draw far more largely than his opponents upon the very credulity which he has derided. And not only this, but the more universal the scepticism, the greater must be the credulity by which it is followed; because exactly in proportion to the number of facts which are at

first rejected must be the paucity which are left behind on which to construct a new system. From these considerations therefore we can easily see how naturally, and almost necessarily, in the march of intellectual philosophy, mysticism springs out of the spirit of scepticism (210).” The same line of observation may account, to a considerable extent, for the progress of the human mind from speculative unbelief to the indulgence of superstition in matters of religion; and if we carefully observe the tendencies of the present age in their relation to the infidel theories and speculations of the former portion of the century, we shall be painfully convinced that now again, as at other periods in the history of mankind, speculative unbelief has paved the way for superstitious extravagance and evil (211). “Nothing,” it has been said, “is more observable in the history of modern philosophy than its downward tendency in this respect. It has started from its high transcendental ground, and has promised to return from its supersensual flight laden with the richest treasures of wisdom. But it has ended with giving us an abstraction in the place of a God, and with pointing to the higher attributes of humanity as our highest objects of worship, inasmuch as

they constitute the highest object of our knowledge. Much has been done in this way towards facilitating the return of the popular mind to that polytheistic worship which has proved to be the most natural form of a simply natural religion (212)." And hence we may plainly perceive how philosophical unbelief may become a pioneer to Romish superstition: it makes a gap for that superstition to fill up; it opens a breach by which its forces may enter in and take possession.

And, as Infidelity thus makes way for Superstition, so, on the other hand, Superstition conducts to Infidelity (213). It would not be difficult to shew that the existence of superstition even involves that of infidelity, more or less latent, and in a greater or smaller degree (214). And its tendencies are obvious.—It promotes the opposite cause by that spirit of intolerance and persecution, with which, as we have already seen, it is more or less openly attended.—It promotes it also by the attempt to which it not unfrequently leads of disparaging the foundation of true belief in the effort to obtain credit for an alleged ground of false belief; the habit of depreciating Scripture and its authority in order to exalt the value of Tradition.—In itself,

and when flourishing in full vigour, Superstition, by its frivolities, atrocities, or other indications of unsoundness, repels the more thoughtful and reflecting mind, and serves as an occasion of objection against all religion; a fact long since observed and stated by Plutarch (215), and existing, in full force, to the present day.—Perhaps, however, it is especially when a false religion grows old among a people, or when a superstition has become obsolete because it has been outstripped by the learning or intelligence of a cultivated age, that its evil tendency in furnishing a pretext for unbelief, or in giving boldness to its pretensions, becomes most apparent (216). It is chiefly in the dead carcase of superstition that infidelity receives its horrid life. When the false system is no longer animated by its early spirit, and nothing remains to sustain its influence and vigour, “when the circumstances which first favoured its formation or introduction have changed, when in an age of reason it is tried and found unreasonable,—when in an age of learning it is found to be the product of the grossest ignorance,—when in an age of levity it is felt to be too stern,—then the infidel spirit takes courage, and with a zeal in which there is a strange mixture of scowling revenge with

light-hearted wantonness, of deep-set hatred and laughing levity, it proceeds to level all existing temples and altars, and erects no others in their room (217).”

From this reflection we may derive a practical lesson of considerable value. We may learn from it not to regard the overthrow of existing superstitions in any part of the world as a sufficient introduction to the reception of the gospel. In India, for example, the principles which have now been enunciated would lead us to expect that the mere destruction of idolatry would be succeeded by pantheism, atheism, or some other form of infidelity; and that this state of things would of itself again make way, not for the reception of the pure and unadulterated gospel, but either for Mahometanism, or for some superstitious corruption of Christianity; most probably, for the delusions and errors of Rome (218). So also with reference to the modern Jews. It will not be sufficient to disabuse their minds only so far as to induce them to reject the spurious authority of the Talmud; if we do this, without imparting to them an enlightened apprehension of the gospel, we shall, in all likelihood, commence a process in the Jewish mind from superstition to infidelity, to be succeeded, at no very

distant time, by a return to superstition under some other form. And so likewise, in dealing with our home population, it is clearly not enough to impart to the young such an education as will avail to raise them above popular prejudices and vulgar superstitions, nor will it suffice to impress upon their minds a general sentiment of respect for religion, or to win from them a vague acknowledgment of the truth of Christianity; but we must make them really acquainted with the gospel, we must impart to them a sound knowledge of true religion in its facts and in its principles: and then, but then only, by the aid of good discipline and with the influence of a good example, under the power of the Holy Spirit, we may hope to have fortified them against the assaults of manifold error, and to have sown that good seed which shall spring up abundantly to everlasting life. In these cases, and in all others, we do good, and effect a sure work of wisdom and benevolence, only so far as we promote an enlightened and practical acquaintance with the truth as it is "in Jesus<sup>e</sup>." Superstition does indeed, at this moment, form an obstruction to religion in the minds of many men, perhaps especially among the Jews; but we must always

<sup>e</sup> Ephes. iv. 21.

remember that it is only one part of our task to throw down this barrier; nothing can for a moment supersede the duty of the positive and faithful preaching of the gospel; nothing but an admission of the simple truth must be regarded as the right foundation of pure and undefiled religion; in all our efforts for the enlightenment and amelioration of mankind this must be our motto, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith<sup>f</sup>." We must not be satisfied with rooting up weeds, and clearing the ground of thorns and briars; we must also sow good seed. But yet we must not despise or shrink from the task of clearance and preparation by the removal of prejudice and error. We must fulfil both portions of the work that has been assigned to us; and for this, as well as in many other respects, we have great need of wisdom from on high, and of the continual supply of the Spirit of Christ Jesus. When men have learnt to disbelieve what is false, they especially require to be set firmly upon their guard

<sup>f</sup> Rom. i. 16, 17.



against disbelieving also what is true ; while they are made to understand the evil character and the baseless claims of superstition, they ought at the same time to be well instructed in the nature and the foundations of Christian faith. In the present day, and under our existing circumstances of knowledge and refinement, Romanism is chiefly dangerous as the handmaid and precursor of infidelity ; and there is danger attending even the confutation and overthrow of Romish superstition, lest, while we are engaged in the work of demolition, we should forget the necessity which exists for the work of edification, the work of building men up on their most holy faith at the same time that we keep them clear of that which is contrary to faith. If we have the sword in one hand, we must have the trowel in the other (219). Whatever may be the special task in which a Christian minister may be at any time engaged, he should always act under the influence of this ruling thought,—the Lord hath “sent me” “to preach the gospel<sup>g</sup>.”

We need not here enter upon a detailed comparison of the effects produced by Infidelity and Superstition on human character

<sup>g</sup> See 1 Cor. i. 17 and ix. 16.

and happiness, a comparison already involved in what has been said concerning the results of each. Alike do these two evil habits keep fallen man at a distance from God, and hinder the restoration of the divine image on the soul; alike they interfere with a right apprehension of the divine attributes and character, and with a sense of our relation to the Most High: it may be said indeed that infidelity for the most part unduly exalts man, while superstition rather degrades our idea of God, but, in either case, the result is to a great extent practically the same. Both infidelity and superstition eventually fail to subdue those evil principles and passions which mar the happiness of individuals, and disturb the peace of society; while both the one and the other tend to produce their own appropriate mischiefs, and both have left equal impressions of their unmercifulness and cruelty in the sanguinary annals of the world. And hence we have seen, without surprise, that neither the one nor the other of these perverse principles, how loud soever may be its pretensions, and how alluring soever its promises, is able to impart true peace to the soul, and to sustain it with enduring comfort. Infidelity supplies no object to man's highest and best affections; superstition supplies a false

one : and therefore both alike can but contribute to land him in despair and misery. For the most part, the great object of infidelity is only an abstraction, while the soul needs a personal object ; the objects of superstition are personal indeed, but the personality is fictitious, whereas the soul, in its necessities, calls for reality and truth. A real being,—a living person,—supreme over all others,—who knows neither beginning of years nor end of days,—and this Mighty One with a heart full of compassion and benevolence towards the individual soul,—a friend that sticketh closer than a brother,—a friend whose smile is in the sunshine that falls on our path, and the light of whose countenance will be the glory of our heaven when suns shall be no more,—a friend whose voice is in the storm, and the sweet accents of whose love will fill our souls with rapture when storms shall have been hushed for ever,—what philosophy, what dream of the imagination, can shew us for a moment such a being, such a friend, as this ? Who is this but Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, the crucified, risen, and glorified Redeemer ? Who is it but He that can faithfully declare to the sin-stricken, drooping, sons of men, “ Peace I leave with you ; my peace I give unto you ;

not as the world giveth, give I unto you<sup>h</sup>?" Whose voice but His can effectually call forth that prayer so full of hopeful faith, "O God the King of glory, who hast exalted thine only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy kingdom in heaven, We beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send to us thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us unto the same place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before" (220)? Brethren, be thoroughly assured that it is nothing less than faith in this Almighty and most merciful Saviour that can become an instrument effectual to renew and sanctify, to comfort and to bless, our souls. Faith, as we have said, in its essence, is belief,—a reasonable belief of truth; but Christian faith is the belief of gospel truth, of a word of promise,—a word which is no dead letter, but a living thing,—a promise which implies the personality, the presence, the power, the love, and faithfulness of Him who makes it; so that it is impossible really to believe this word of promise without at the same time believing in its Author the living Redeemer, resting in His love, and yielding to the influence of that love by the power of His Spirit in the heart. This is the Christian's

<sup>h</sup> John xiv. 27.

faith; this is the reception which he gives to the gospel of the grace of God, "preaching peace by Jesus Christ<sup>i</sup>." Alas, that even where this gospel has been proclaimed in its freeness and its fulness, there should still be occasion to take up the prophet's lamentation, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed<sup>k</sup>?" Sad is the testimony which is borne by attentive observers of human nature to the fact that there are multitudes of men, in Christian lands, who continually oscillate between bold infidelity on the one hand, and abject superstition on the other (221). In the interval there are various stages, but there is no real resting-place; and much less is there any advancement towards a state of perfection and eternal bliss. We may be tempted to ask, When shall the end of these things be? We know, from the word of God, that truth will eventually prevail, and that the kingdom of righteousness, and of the righteous One, the Almighty Redeemer, will be finally and for ever established. But, in the mean time, who can tell what will be the comparative prevalence of Infidelity at some periods in this world's history, or of Superstition at others? Is it, as some say,

<sup>i</sup> Acts x. 36.

<sup>k</sup> Isaiah liii. 1.

that sceptical opinions, although once exploded, may recover strength, but that an obsolete superstition can never be revived? Or is it not rather true that infidelity is the more self-destroying system of the two, and that superstition possesses the greater measure of vitality? Who can tell what answer will be supplied to questions such as these by the experience of a future century? Who can tell? Perhaps not one. But, as to ourselves,—as to the duty which lies before us to be performed in our day and generation upon earth,—there is no uncertainty, no room for question or for doubt. That duty lies in the practical exercise of a living Christian faith,—faith which is no mean between infidelity on the one hand and superstition on the other, but is the opposite of both,—a lively faith in the living personal God, and in that Almighty and loving Redeemer who, by his work on our behalf, and by the operation of his Spirit in our hearts, restores the disturbed relation between God and ourselves, and renews the nature that had fallen into ruin;—it is here, and here alone, that we discover the element of peace, the way of holiness, and the spring of our everlasting felicity. Let us thankfully accept the tidings of heavenly mercy, and look unto Him from

whom cometh our help. Too wise to undertake the task of hewing out to ourselves “cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water,”—or weary with having attempted it,—let us perpetually repair, by faith, to the fountain of living waters, ever-flowing, and all-sufficient for the life, the refreshment, and the comfort of our souls. “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness<sup>1</sup>.”

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah lv. 1, 2.

## LECTURE VIII.

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INFIDELITY AND SUPERSTITION HOW TO BE PREVENTED  
AND WITHSTOOD.

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JUDGES vi. 15, 16.

*And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. And the Lord said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.*

**I**N this concluding Lecture, I propose to point out those habits of mind and that course of action which may justly be recommended as likely to hinder or counteract the evils to which our attention has been directed. Our question is, How may Infidelity and Superstition be properly prevented and withstood? And may the Spirit of truth and holiness give us, in this matter, a wise and understanding heart!

Here, in the first place, I remark that, from what has been said concerning the ob-



jective nature of revealed truth, and the personality of our God and Saviour, we may well learn to attach due importance to all *sacred Institutions*, or those outward and visible means which have been graciously appointed for our use in matters of religion. If Christianity were a mere philosophy, it might be embodied in the teachings of a school; or, as a divine philosophy, it might be imparted and cherished solely by the inward illumination of the Spirit: but we can be at no loss to perceive that the establishment of external monuments, and the observance of certain prescribed forms and actions, are in perfect harmony with the character of that spiritual life which flows from faith in objective truth, in facts, and hence in a personal Being to whom this truth and these facts refer. Well may this reflection lead us to a devout admiration of the wisdom and compassion displayed in our redemption by Him who knows what is in man, and who doeth all things well! But besides this, we must consider how we ought to act with reference to that which we admire. We must inquire what are our duties;—and that not only in general, but what are our special duties, as members of a learned profession, and more particularly as Christian

ministers (where the case is so) either in fact or in prospect ;—and again, what are our present duties, under the existing aspects of infidelity and superstition ;—with reference to those standing monuments, institutions, ordinances, which have so much to do with the preservation, purity, and efficiency of “the faith once delivered to the saints<sup>a</sup>.”

Now, among these outward monuments or institutions we reckon, as second in importance to no other, *the written word of God*,—that historical record which conveys to us the declaration of God’s good pleasure concerning our redemption. The Bible is not a mere code of doctrine or of precept ; it is, to a great extent, if not chiefly, a record of facts ; and the truths of revelation are related to these facts as the soul of man bears relation to his body. Nor is it a mere accidental circumstance that this record is deposited in a written volume ; but this is a matter of divine appointment. The Bible is therefore a sacred institution, an ordinance of God ; and while it were worse than vain to speculate as to the possibility or expediency of a dispensation by which the gospel should have been lodged in oral tradition, it is right for us to remember that, as the case actually

<sup>a</sup> Jude 3.

stands according to the will of God, if you take away the Bible out of the world, or so far as you do virtually take it away, you take away Christianity itself.

This consideration enforces upon all Christians the duty of an enlightened reverence for the sacred volume, together with a devout and earnest study of its contents. But it imposes also some especial obligations upon those persons who may be appointed for the defence or exposition of the gospel. Here then let us learn in what spirit and in what manner it becomes any one to fulfil *the office of a Christian apologist, or an assertor of the genuineness, authenticity, and authority of holy Scripture*. If the Bible be such as we have described it, then this office is one of high value and importance, for it involves in it the task of preserving the ark of God. Infidelity would destroy this sacred vessel; Superstition would hide it or defile it; and the task on which you enter is to maintain it in its existence, in its integrity, in its purity, and in its proper place. How will you accomplish this? Let me earnestly say to the champion of the Bible, Take good heed to the plans which you pursue and to the spirit in which you act. Let there be no unhalloved effort in this sacred cause. Place little

confidence in repressive measures; and adopt none that are in any degree unjust, uncandid, or unfair. Sometimes indeed we must “answer not a fool according to his folly,” and must “stop the mouths<sup>b</sup>” of gainsayers; but sometimes also, and perhaps far more frequently, we must “answer a fool according to his folly<sup>c</sup> ;” and must be found “in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves<sup>d</sup>.” And here we have need of wisdom, of wisdom from above.—Stand on your guard also against the adoption of extreme, or crude and erroneous, views concerning the relative offices and powers of Reason and Revelation; lest, while you oppose the false infidel principle of rejecting as untrue or uncertain every thing which reason cannot comprehend, you should be found or supposed to be setting yourselves against a really Christian effort to obtain a reasonable apprehension and appreciation of revealed truth (222). Nor be ready to denounce even the attempt of the logical understanding to comprehend the accordance of divine truth with our intellectual perceptions, or to obtain a clear conviction of the fact that revelation is not contrary to reason; remembering that it is rather to be desired that the truths of

<sup>b</sup> See Titus i. 11-13.    <sup>c</sup> Prov. xxxvi. 4, 5.    <sup>d</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 25.

revelation, so far as possible, should be, as it were, taken up by our reason, pass over into it, and mingle with it, as a new principle of inherent light and life and energy (223).—Again, be watchful against the employment of any weak, unsound, untenable methods of defence, the use of unstable arguments, or the application of vain and arbitrary theories (224). Much that is plausible may not be useful; and nothing can be really and permanently useful but what is true. It is also to be borne in mind that there are arguments which are only relatively true, and require to be employed accordingly;—arguments which may tend to strengthen faith, but are not adapted to produce it or to demand its exercise. Take care therefore at once that your arguments are sound, and that they are in their proper place. Your task is, not to display your own ingenuity or the versatility of your mental powers, but to advocate the truth of God, and to uphold the honour of his word.—And, whilst you are careful to avoid weak defences, consider also that it is vain, or worse than vain, to refuse to grapple with substantial difficulties. Some things present serious difficulties to the minds of some men which occasion none at all to the minds of others; and these things

ought to be seriously met (225). It is wholly insufficient to declaim against certain objections raised, for example, on scientific or historical grounds, and to denounce them as presumptuous, irreverent, or absurd. But these objections must be *answered*,—answered by some who can master and penetrate the subject, and who have an advantage over the objectors in being able to perceive the harmony of science with Scripture, and being thus in a condition to expose the real unsoundness of the objections. Remember that a rash opposition to scientific conclusions upon religious grounds may even become an occasion of infidelity. “To deny evidence blindly is always a dangerous thing to venture upon; for the right of denial admitted in one case may soon be applied to another” (226). And it is clearly impossible to convince other men of the truth of what we ourselves believe, by merely denying the truth of something else which they have already adopted, as on sufficient grounds, into the system of their belief.—Once more, place no undue reliance on merely argumentative and historical, or, as they are commonly called, external evidences (227). Do not despise them,—and be assured that, as was observed on a former occasion, they have

their value and their place; only let all that has been said concerning the deep primary sources of infidelity convince you that the great field of contest for the Christian apologist is in the conscience and the heart. It is a matter of chief importance rightly to exhibit that moral truth, and duly to aim at that moral influence, which may be opposed to the fundamental error or fault of the adversary;—to undermine and destroy that disposition or state of heart which is the great predisposing cause of infidelity, rather than to address arguments to the logical understanding while under the perverse influence of an unholy will. Our best confutation of error lies in a disclosure and establishment of the opposite truth. We do well to search for the remote causes of error, rather than simply to combat or deny the error itself;—to exhibit and enforce that portion or aspect of truth which meets those unsatisfied wants, or corrects those fundamentally perverse principles, to which the error may be traced (228). This is true equally with regard to Unbelief and to Superstition. If we would repel the assaults of a vain philosophy which denies the authority of Scripture, we must establish those first principles of truth to which that philosophy stands opposed; and if we

would arrest the progress of papal superstition, which debases and corrodes the substance of Scripture, we must assail that superstition, not in its details merely, but chiefly in its primary principles,—we must affirm, expound, and establish those principles of Christian faith to which that superstition is adverse,—we must attach more importance to a full and energetic assertion of gospel truth than to the most powerful and damaging exposure of unchristian error.—Lastly, on this head, let any one who desires to contend successfully on behalf of the gospel see that his defence of the truth proceeds from an inward conviction and love of that truth, and be careful that his life at the same time displays its power. There is a power which spiritual life possesses even with reference to knowledge and conviction; and there is a blessing to be expected from on high upon the labours of godly men, which they have no right to look for whose hearts are not under the dominion of heavenly grace, and whose labours are not sincerely directed to the glory of God as their chief end. “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts<sup>e</sup>.” The means and instruments to be employed are proof, argu-

<sup>e</sup> Zech. iv. 6.



ment, research, and all the appliances of learning and of science (229); these are not to be dispensed with, not to be despised; but the great point to be desired is that this instrumentality be wielded by the hearts and pens and tongues of spiritual men,—men who are themselves the instruments of the Holy Spirit,—men who have felt the power of the truth, whose souls have been quickened and transformed into the Saviour's image, who themselves “know Him that is true, and are in Him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ<sup>f</sup>.”

But, while some men are called to defend the word of God, others, and perhaps the far larger number, find it their duty to interpret or expound it. I speak now of that scientific interpretation which constitutes *Biblical Criticism and Theology*. Here what ample employment still remains for the ablest and best disciples in the school of Christ! How great the work in this department which is still left to be achieved, and how urgent the demand for its accomplishment (230)! Fearful is the extent to which unsound and irreverent Criticism has lately been employed in the examination and pretended elucidation of the sacred record; and this evil must be

<sup>f</sup> 1 John v. 20.

met, not by blindly and perversely deprecating criticism altogether, but by opposing that which is sound to that which is unsound, the deep to the shallow, the true to the false, the useful to the vain. Let us not shrink from a critical study of God's word. So far as the divine revelation is conveyed in human language, and is involved in human history, this vehicle, by its very selection, has been made subject to philological criticism and to antiquarian research; and it is ours, by the aid of these appliances, earnestly and diligently to inquire what the record is, and what it means: the very faculty and opportunities of sound critical investigation are to be regarded, and reverently employed, as an especial gift of God (231); and if, in this department of inquiry, we are pressed with the existence of difficulties, either imaginary or real, it is our duty in this case, as well as in the case of evidence, to meet these difficulties, and to solve them, by the aid of the same faculty which gave them birth. In this way a large field now lies open before the friends of revelation for the exercise of skill and of patience, of faithfulness, labour, and prayer.—And the same may be said of true Biblical Theology. What is the substance, and what are the bearings, of that revelation

which is conveyed to us in the word of God? What is that inspiration under the influence of which these books were written, and this revelation was made to man? Questions such as these have been long since raised; and they have received answers sometimes substantially true, and sometimes substantially false. But these questions have not been set at rest; it would even seem that, sooner or later, they will be canvassed again with vigour. And our divines must be prepared to take part in solid investigations of this kind, in order to rebut false theories which have been set afloat,—to maintain the truth on these subjects so far as it has already been attained,—and to purify and extend that truth. We must discriminate accurately between things divine and human; and fix precisely the limits and domain of faith (232). What need of caution and care, of intelligent reverence, and of heaven-sent wisdom, have we here (233)! And let me say that there is one leading principle, without due regard to which all labours in theology,—all attempts to grasp or to exhibit the substance or the purport of Scripture,—will be utterly unavailing and futile and wrong. That principle is the simple and unquestionable fact that all portions of divine

revelation point to, or bear upon, Christ and his salvation (234); that, as has been truly said, the cross is the ground-plan of that magnificent structure which has been reared by means of Moses and the prophets, of Evangelists and Apostles (235); and that we can estimate none of its parts and details aright, unless we make due reference to this great comprehensive truth, that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself &c." Theology, without this clue, is hopelessly involved in a labyrinth of confusion and error. And it were a worthy task for the man of noblest powers, of largest opportunities, and of most devoted love to God, to shew solidly, convincingly, and fully, how all the lines of divine truth contained in the sacred volume converge towards this one point, and meet in Christ; a worthy task, in answer at once to much of the spurious theology of an unbelieving age,—to many a superstitious dogma,—and to many a doubt, misgiving, or inquiry, of earnest, but perplexed and wandering, souls.

If the written word be an institution or ordinance divine and sacred, and as such to be reverently guarded and most carefully and wisely used, so also are *the Christian*

*Sacraments,—Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.* These were ordained by Christ himself: and, as the word embodies truth to be received by faith, so the Sacraments point especially to the personality of God our Saviour, as the great and ultimate object of our believing confidence and love. Christian Baptism plainly sets forth to us the personality and agency of that Holy Spirit who purifies the souls of believers, as water washes the body: and in the Lord's Supper we have a striking representation of the personality and work of that adorable Redeemer whose body was crucified and whose blood was shed, as the bread is broken and the wine poured out on the holy table: nor do we doubt that, in the faithful use of these appointed signs, the people of God are made partakers of the grace which is hereby signified. And, if we take an intelligent view of this solemn exhibition of divine personality, and of the acts of God engaged in covenant for our redemption, surely we may discover herein a most wise and suitable antidote to speculative Unbelief and fruitless abstractions on the one hand, and to morbid, fantastic Superstition, on the other. The mind that would rest in mere philosophy is here directed to a personal agent and his

work ; the mind that looks out for a personal object and for facts is here presented with the true, not mocked or deluded with the false. And therefore, on this account as well as on all others, we call for a reverent esteem, and for a devout and faithful use, of these appointed means of grace.—And we call especially upon our divines, and the more learned members of the church, for a right treatment of the doctrine of the Sacraments. Be assured that here is a vital point in your combat with those two great evils to which our attention has been now so long directed. Beware of all rash statements, and of all undue speculation, on these matters. By a neglect of the Sacraments, or by understating the truth concerning these sacred ordinances, you prepare the way for Infidelity ; by unduly exalting them, and attaching to them that kind of worth or influence which has not been lodged in them by the Saviour himself, or by overstating the truth which really relates to them, and especially by the unwarranted addition of human speculations and inventions, you bring in Superstition ; whereas, in the due use of them, and the right apprehension of their meaning and intent, we may find at once a support to true Faith, and a remedy against false belief. Be-

ware then how you propound mere human opinions concerning these sacred ordinances; and listen to the voice of God proceeding from them, as once it spake to Moses out of the midst of the bush, “Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground<sup>h</sup>!” The force and value of these sacred rites is closely connected with their majestic scriptural simplicity. Our wisdom is to celebrate them with all faithful and thankful reverence,—not because we understand how or to what extent they are the means of conveying grace, or wherein lies the necessity of our using them,—but simply because the Lord has commanded us so to do, and out of regard to the scriptural injunctions and commendations by which our use of them is enforced. And we shall only darken counsel by words without knowledge,—we shall open a door to error now of one kind and now of another,—if we proceed to overlay this good foundation with the wood, hay, and stubble of our own philosophy, or the phantoms of our own imagination.

Another institution of great importance with reference to the twofold subject now before us is *the Church*. That “congregation

<sup>h</sup> Exod. iii. 5.

of faithful men in the which the pure word of God is preached and the Sacraments be duly ministered (236),” is itself no less than a distinct and special ordinance of Christ. To think or speak of the Church as a mere abstraction is at once to lose sight of a matter of divine appointment, to let go a portion of gospel truth, and so to take a dangerous step in the direction of Infidelity. On the other hand, to conceive or speak of the Church as merely or primarily an outward and visible body, knit together only by the bonds of outward government and discipline, —a body, it may be, without a soul, capable of existing antecedently to faith, or independently of this living principle,—and then to attribute to such a corporation the dignity and privileges of the body of Christ,—this were to adopt an element of false belief, and in effect to lay the groundwork of most mischievous Superstition. We shall do much towards preventing both evils, by contributing to establish and to propagate the true doctrine of the Church as it lies in Scripture, and by using our endeavours to increase a right and intelligent regard for this sacred institution. And we may boldly say that this is one great task which the circumstances and errors of the times impose upon the divines



of our own day and generation. According to the definition of our Article, where there are no faithful men there is no church of Christ; a society of such men, incorporated for Christian purposes as described in the article, constitutes a single church; and the Church Catholic or Universal consists of the aggregate of such churches,—not merely as an aggregate, but also as being all and each united by faith to Christ as the one foundation and the one source of influence; just as a number of grapes if merely placed together only form a *heap*, but, when united to a single stem, constitute a *cluster*. There is nothing mystical, vague, or illusory in affirming that the church is a spiritual body; as we speak of a literary or commercial body, meaning thereby a number of men associated for literary or commercial purposes, so we speak of a spiritual body, to denote a number of men associated on spiritual grounds, and for the purposes of the spiritual life, according to the institution of Christ. This body contains its own principles of life and preservation, in virtue of the appointment and the watchful care of its head and founder. But just as the animal body gives temporary admission to matter which it does not absorb or work into its own substance, as it wears ap-

pendages, or is burdened with superfluities which it eventually rejects, so also the heterogeneous elements of unbelieving, worldly, ungodly men are for a time associated with those faithful ones who, in their corporate capacity, constitute Christ's holy church. In a word, the church is a dynamic spiritual body, which, in the progress of its growth, attracts to itself foreign substances, some of which it incorporates and transmutes into its own substance, and others it casts off. Let this matter be rightly understood; let the whole question of church polity be fully and fairly investigated; let the principles of real church unity be rightly admitted,—essential, spiritual unity, arising from real union with Christ, and existing together with circumstantial diversities of form and ceremonial (237), diversities adapted to different climates and countries, different races or tribes of men, the different stages of the same people in intellectual or moral advancement, different individuals, and even the different degrees or phases of religious knowledge and spiritual life in the same individuals (238); let the rights and duties of separate churches among themselves and towards the whole body be duly recognised and heartily respected; let the ecclesiastical spirit become

thoroughly a spirit, not of latitudinarian indifference, but of tolerance, gentleness, and moderation, combined with the diligent observance of those fundamental laws of church polity promulgated by an inspired apostle, “Let all things be done unto edifying<sup>i</sup>,—let all things be done decently and in order<sup>k</sup>,—let all your things be done with charity<sup>l</sup>;”—and then, when the Spirit of Christ shall thus manifestly dwell and work in his corporate body, it is not too much to say that a great and important progress will have been made towards the overthrow of infidelity, and a mighty barrier will have been reared against the inroads of superstition. And why should the existence of prejudice, the presence of difficulties, or the necessity for patient thought and persevering labour, deter fit men from the goodly task of defending and propagating that measure of truth on these matters to which Protestant churches have already attained,—of reestablishing those sound principles which perhaps they retain with but a feeble grasp,—and of bringing out into full view those portions of ecclesiastical truth which have either not been seen since the first ages of the church, or, at all events, are at present labouring under an eclipse? How

<sup>i</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 26.<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 40.<sup>l</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 14.

noble an employment,—not indeed to mingle in questions such as these under the bias of party spirit, in the indulgence of hatred and prejudice, or for the advancement of any private ends,—but to labour in this department of God's truth, from love to Him who has purchased to himself an universal church by the precious blood of his dear Son, from love to those for whom Christ died, and with a sincere desire to promote the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom upon earth !

Much might be said concerning the value of sound human institutions both in church and state, and the duty of not only contributing to uphold these ordinances by the force of our own example, but also of doing what in us lies to promote their efficiency in the present day and for ages yet to come. While we regard ancient and useful institutions almost with the love which a child bears towards a parent, we should also use our endeavours to purify and improve them, so that at length we may love them as a parent loves a child. But I pass from this subject of institutions, whether divine or human, to the consideration of another, which must be duly appreciated even with a view to the right understanding of what has been already advanced. Laws, institutions, ordinances, how-

ever excellent or well-established, cannot of themselves produce any positive benefit apart from the personal character of those among whom they exist (239). We must not be satisfied with possessing good institutions, or think that we have done enough when we have upheld them in their dignity, or brought them into efficient operation; but we must labour also to produce good men, remembering that it is only so far as good institutions are brought to bear upon good men that we can expect them to be channels of real spiritual blessing. There may be good institutions indeed for the purpose of reclaiming bad men; but their very excellence consists in an attempt to improve men's personal character. All real excellence is individual and personal, and passes over from the private to the social life. And if we would uphold or propagate true Christian faith, and check the growth of that which is opposed to it, our attention must be mainly directed to *the spiritual renewal and culture of individual souls*. If we would really do good,—if we would see even sacred ordinances attain their proper end,—our duty is to use our efforts for imparting sound Christian knowledge, and for employing the principles of true Christian faith in the formation of personal character (240).

It is to the individual heart and conscience that the word of God primarily speaks; it is to faithful men that the sacraments become channels of blessing; and they are no other than faithful men who compose the vital portion of the church of Christ. Our great desire must therefore be, to be instruments in the hand of God of planting faith in men's private hearts; and we should remember too that it is greatly by means of individuals that God works upon the hearts of individuals. Let no one be satisfied with belonging to a sound religious body; he must do good as a single member of that body. Let no one, however isolated, say that he can do nothing; let him do what he can, and expect a blessing upon his personal efforts in the sphere in which God has placed him.

Now, among all means directed towards the conversion and edification of individual souls, none can be deemed more important than that work of the Christian ministry which consists in *the teaching and preaching of God's word*. Let all who have been called to this office in the church consider seriously how mighty is the instrument which has been placed in their hands for the counteraction of Infidelity, and for repelling Superstition! It is an emphatic part of the apo-

stolic commission, "Preach the word"<sup>m</sup>!" To omit this work, or to perform it negligently, unfaithfully, unskilfully, and badly, is at once to furnish advantage to the adversary in whatever way he may make his assault upon the church; to do it faithfully, wisely, and well, is to oppose one of the most effectual of all barriers against him.—Preach with sincere aim at the glory of God and the salvation of men's souls; not with a leading view to self, to your own reputation or profit, but seeking, as one says, to "make men in love with the lesson, and not with the teacher" (241).—Preach in the spirit of prayer, and in dependence on Him who alone can give power to the word; for, as Augustin says, "He has his pulpit in heaven who preaches to the heart" (242).—Preach plainly and intelligibly, —not with affectation of rhetoric or of learning,—not in elaborate and technical phraseology,—but in common-sense language, adapted to the universal intelligence of society.—Preach to the whole man, to the intellect, to the affections, and chiefly to the conscience; seeking to enlighten and arouse the conscience by the precepts and sanctions of the law, and to calm it by the promises and consolations of the gospel.—Above all things,

<sup>m</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 2.

preach Christ,—Christ crucified,—Christ in all his offices as they are set before us in the Scripture; not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God, and to proclaim the honest and free offer of salvation, without hesitation or reserve, to every child of man.—Preach Christian morals in all their purity and fullness; but beware of exaggeration, of false colouring, of imposing unnecessary burdens, and of making the heart of the righteous sad; and fail not to shew how all true morality according to the gospel springs from the constraining love of Christ,—that love which makes hard things easy and bitter things most sweet, accompanied, as it always is, by the heavenly energy of God the Holy Ghost. — Preach with especial care all seasonable truth, directed against the prevailing sins or errors of the times; as, for example, in the present day, the personality of God and of the incarnate Redeemer,—the nature and reality of sin and guilt, and the value of the atonement made for sin,—the resurrection of the dead, in the Scriptural sense of the expression,—and the truth that we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. —Preach these things, having first learned them inwardly yourselves, by heavenly grace, from the pure record of the word, after a



diligent search in the spirit of humility, of earnestness, of patience, and of prayer :—let your life and conversation be in harmony with your doctrine, that so the force of your own personal example may cooperate with the power of divine truth, and the lustre of your Christian virtues may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things :—and then, whatever may be the efforts of anti-Christian Infidelity, or the boastings and parade of unchristian Superstition, in your day and generation, you, at least, may feel assured that the fault is not resting with yourselves ; and you will have no reason to doubt that, while some men seek to overthrow the gospel, and others to corrupt it, you, through divine mercy, are helpers of men's faith.

With reference to the same evils, much lies before us to be accomplished by means of a sound and efficient *education of the young*. It is of the utmost importance that the children of the poor should be rescued from gross ignorance, and receive that amount of general instruction which may fit them for their stations in life ; and that all who are educated, to whatever class of society they belong, should be trained in accordance with sound Christian principle, as well as made

acquainted with the letter of God's word. When ignorance on common subjects prevails among masses of people, those masses are often distinguished by a depraved moral sense and a want of susceptibility to the influence and impressions of religion, and almost always by a readiness to imbibe the false principles of speculative Unbelief, or to adopt the notions and practices of some debasing Superstition, adapted to sink them below the miserable level at which it finds them (243). Hence the necessity for a religious education of the people, if we would successfully weather the storm of unbelieving error and of superstitious delusion. Hence the necessity of making the young capable of religious instruction, and then of imparting it; the necessity, too, of at once cultivating the habit of faith, and of presenting the great objects of religious faith intelligibly and correctly to the youthful mind.—Beware of a perverse culture of the intellect and of a vicious education of the conscience. Train up the young for both worlds; remembering that among the occupations of this world that character is to be formed which will remain with them in the world to come; that the several stages of our existence are the steps of one continued life; and that we

cannot educate for this world rightly, unless at the same time we are training up a child in the way in which he ought to go in order to enter upon a state of endless felicity when this world shall be to him no more (244). Doubtless it is imperative upon us to instruct children in those branches of knowledge which are needful to employ their powers of body and mind properly, with comfort to themselves and usefulness to those around them, in that state of life unto which it may please God to call them. But we should remember that these are only parts, and subordinate parts, of the knowledge which they need; and we must give them to understand most clearly, that all human attainments, and even all human accomplishments, involve duties to be performed to God and man,—that they are in all respects the gifts of heavenly bounty to their possessors,—and are to be numbered among those manifold mercies, having their centre in the cross of Christ, which are designed to draw them, with the bands of love, into the spirit and practice of glad compliance with the will of their heavenly Father. It is possible, by God's blessing, to impart an education such as this; for the mind and conscience of the young, especially of the very young, are almost

always open to impressions of the truth: and, to say the very least, if we neglect the task of early moral and religious training, combined with the intellectual culture of the young, our prospect of bringing men to right views, right feelings, and right practice in after life is incalculably faint. Even the preaching of the word of God, to persons irreligiously and badly brought up in the midst of a professedly Christian society, is attended with obstacles to which the darkness of heathenism itself can scarcely present a parallel. And if these things be so, how can we doubt that the diffusion of Christian truth, and of all sound and useful knowledge, among the young, is a duty incumbent, not only on parents and teachers, to whom it primarily belongs, but also, in measure, and according to its opportunity, to the Church in its corporate capacity,—to that body of faithful men which is appointed to be at once “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world<sup>n</sup>?” Let the Church be thoroughly assured that if she be not faithfully employed in working with good moral effect upon the world, the world will operate with bad moral effect upon herself (245). There must be aggression, and successful aggression, on the

<sup>n</sup> Mat. v. 13, 14.

one side or the other,—an aggression of light upon darkness, or of darkness upon light.

And who are they who alone are worthy, or personally qualified, to take part in the championship of truth and faith and godliness? Who are they who are really in a position to repel the assaults of Infidelity and to escape the bewilderments of Superstition for themselves, and then to assist their brethren in the world against the power of the same delusions? We answer, men whose own minds are enlightened and established in the truth, and whose whole souls have been quickened into spiritual life; men of sound knowledge, of simple faith, and of earnest prayer; men whose hearts are inflamed with love to Christ, and who are, individually, the humble, but voluntary and conscious, organs of the indwelling Spirit of God. And it is in harmony with many observations which have been made in the preceding Lectures that I now urge, as the last practical conclusion to be presented to your notice, the obligation which lies upon all who profess and call themselves Christians,—and especially upon the members of an University such as this,—to labour assiduously for the due cultivation of their own intellectual powers, and to cherish, with the utmost dili-

gence, the principles and habits of personal piety, real in the sight of God,—earnest, active, and self-denying in the duties and intercourse of life.

Our whole subject calls, we say, for diligent attention to *the culture of the intellect*.—We have seen how the neglect or misdirection of mental power leads men sometimes in one direction, and sometimes in another, opposite to Christian faith. Nor do we hesitate to regard the right control and use of the intellectual faculties as a part, and an important part, of Christian virtue. And on whom is the exercise of this virtue so bound, as on those who are nurtured, or established for life, in a place like this, filled with literary stores, abounding with means and appliances for calm and earnest study, honoured with recollections of ages past, the object of hope to good men for generations yet to come, and for which prayer is continually made that in it “whatsoever tends to the advancement of true religion and useful learning may for ever flourish and abound?”—Here, then, I say—and I would say it most directly and emphatically to the younger students whom I now address—here labour to attain the due force and expansion, together with the right direction, of those powers of reason

and understanding with which you have been so wonderfully endowed;—here seek to acquire, so far as may be, the information of your judgment, and to prepare yourselves for the rejection of what is worthless, and for the acquisition of large stores of useful knowledge, in the course of future years;—here make it your earnest endeavour to gain that perception of the fundamental principles of truth, whether physical or moral, and that power of sound and sober reasoning, which may enable you hereafter to combat the subtle errors of speculative Unbelief, and to strip off the mask from delusive Superstitions. Be assured that nothing can expand and exalt your own intellect so much as an increasing acquaintance with God's laws natural and spiritual, his wondrous works and ways in the regions of matter and of mind;—nothing will so fortify your own minds against a dangerous tendency to suppose, when you see able and learned men wandering in the labyrinths of error, that it is by virtue of their superior ability and learning that they have arrived at the point at which they stand, and that they are worthy to be regarded as the objects of your admiration and to be adopted as your guides:—while, at the same time, before you enter upon any

actual conflict with error and delusion, you will already have done good service to the cause of truth by a practical exhibition of the fact that the spirit of Christianity is not at variance with the enlargement of the intellect, the possession of learning, or the cultivation of science such as is in any measure worthy of the name; and you may perhaps even open a way to the hearts of some misguided men by destroying their fondly cherished conceit that none but men of weak or ill-furnished minds do cordially believe the gospel.—Above all, cultivate, now and always, an accurate knowledge of the facts and principles of religion,—a knowledge just, profound, and comprehensive. Take care that the errors which you reject are rejected, not from ignorance, but from knowledge (246). An ignorant repulse of either Infidelity or Superstition is likely to do more harm than good; and ignorance is peculiarly baneful when it is found in those persons who have had opportunities of knowledge, and whose very profession avows or implies that they possess it. And, besides this, there is great danger lest an unenlightened rejection of unbelief should conduct your own minds to some form of superstitious misbelief; or lest a repudiation of superstitious dogmas or prac-



tices on insufficient grounds should lead you to infidelity (247). Therefore, let religious knowledge, sound Christian philosophy, and the principles of true theology, never be despised or undervalued; but be thoroughly assured of that deep truth, "That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good °."

But it is not by the intellect alone that the battle is to be fought, either in the inner chambers of the soul, or abroad upon the surface of society, in the Church or in the world. Far from it. In both cases we need something higher, holier, more commanding, more resistless; we need the light of heaven and the breath of the Almighty.—As a security to your own minds against the assaults of Infidelity and the delusions of Superstition, as well as against every other form of destructive error, you can safely depend upon nothing less than *the existence and exercise of spiritual life, and the energy of practical personal piety awakened and kept alive by the indwelling Spirit of God* (248). All cultivation and refinement of the intellect, and all acquisitions of knowledge, are mere appliances or instruments, which can be rightly and successfully employed only by the living soul, the soul that has been quickened into a state

° Prov. xix. 2.

of right spiritual apprehension, affection, and desire. There must be a habit of godliness as well as a study of religion,—a cherishing of the truth within the heart no less than a survey of its proofs and harmonies and beauties by the well-directed efforts of intelligence (249); there must be reality together with profession, and power together with the form; and there must be all this, not in a state of dormancy, but in action,—not stagnant or stationary, but progressive, growing, increasing in purity, intensity, and power (250): or else, in proportion to the absence of these things, there is danger lest the intellect of other men, enlisted on the side of error, should contend with a terrible and even fatal advocacy against your own mere enlightenment on the side of truth. So feeble is man's intellect for good, apart from the Spirit of God; so acute and powerful for evil when prompted by the father of lies, and misled by the wiles of the devil.—Nor is it less than the vigour of spiritual life which will enable the Church to contend effectually against the invasions of error from without; nothing less than this will finally make head against the assaults of the adversary, or carry forward a successful aggression upon the domains of darkness in the world. The mere

progress of knowledge,—even of religious knowledge,—will not of necessity stem the tide of Infidelity, or secure a future generation against the inroads of Romish Superstition. No. There is life in these things, and life alone can counteract them. Dead truth will not prevail against a living lie; truth in the intellect is not a match for falsehood in the heart: but we must oppose this living falsehood by living truth,—truth that has its lodgment in souls that are alive to God,—souls to which that truth itself has been the instrument of imparting life, and which in this very way have been qualified to stand up in its defence. Be assured that barren orthodoxy can be no blessing to the Church; if we possess no more than this, we shall soon find that our church is like a ship with a helm indeed, but without a pilot, ready to be driven before the storm, to be dashed in pieces, and scattered on the waves. Why did Protestant truth lose ground on the continent after the period of the Reformation? Why did it, in some quarters, yield to a return of Romish error, and in others, give way to the influence of speculative unbelief? Consult the records of church history, and you will find that these defections succeeded a period of somnolent, dull, and heartless ortho-

doxy; they followed upon a state of degeneracy which consisted, not in the obscuration of scriptural truth, but in the want of spiritual life, the want of faith and energy, and of high morality flowing from love to God and man,—a state of degeneracy in which the souls of professing Christians, instead of continuing to obey the high call which had been given to communion with the living God, had sunk down into the world of sense, and instead of being governed by the influence of those ultimate principles of truth and holiness which warm and invigorate the heart, had taken up their portion in those exercises of the logical understanding which, when alone, tend rather to enfeeble and to chill it. It is possible,—too possible,—that sound sentiments and phraseology on subjects of religion may consist with, and even minister to, coldness and deadness in the inmost soul; and it is easy for men to become, almost unawares, more anxious for orthodox teaching than for holy living. And we deprecate this lifeless orthodoxy. Not that we desire that an active heterodoxy should spring up in its place; not that we undervalue or despise that intellectual apprehension of the truth, or that high scientific cultivation of theology, which have already been

commended : no ; we desire orthodoxy still, but we deprecate its lifelessness ; we call for the love of truth to be matched against the love of falsehood ; the love of God and man against the love of self, the world, and sin ; active wisdom against active subtlety ; all the true energy of godliness and virtue against the hosts and weapons and assaults of evil.

And remember that, as we have already distinctly seen, *this living energy must spring up and be cherished within the deepest recesses of the soul.* Life begins, and finds its sanctuary, in the conscience and the heart ;—a conscience pacified and purified by faith in the adorable Redeemer, and a heart constrained by the apprehension of His inestimable love. It is the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, that alone can effectually keep guard<sup>p</sup> over your minds and hearts ; it is the love of God shed abroad within the soul by the Holy Spirit which alone can rightly animate and prosper your exertions in the cause of truth. Invigorated by this sanctifying principle, and carrying forward this principle into practical effect, see that you combine prayer with your efforts, and then be assured that your efforts cannot be in vain. You will do God's work,

<sup>p</sup> See Phil. iv. 7.

and you will receive God's blessing. Again and again you may be ready to say, as it were, "Oh, my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house;" you may be sensible, as you ought to be, of your own insufficiency and weakness; you may be called to labour in a narrow sphere, and be far removed from all prospect of extensive usefulness;—but, to the poorest in Manasseh and the least in his father's house, —to the student most diffident of his powers, —to the scholar most aware of his own ignorance, —to the Christian minister most deeply sensible of his personal unworthiness, —to all who, how small soever their abilities and opportunities may be, yet, in the spirit which has now been recommended, at the call of God, and under a sense of duty, will do in the cause of truth and holiness what they can, and will commend their labours to the Almighty,—to them we do not hesitate to say that they are the men for whom the wants of the Church at this moment so powerfully call,—they are the men whom the Lord is ready to employ in the cause of the gospel and for the glory of his name, —they are, of all others, the men in whose favour the great Head of the Church is ready

substantially to repeat that miracle of grace and of omnipotence which he wrought with Gideon of old, when “the Lord looked upon him, and said, Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee<sup>4</sup>?”

<sup>4</sup> Judges vi. 14.





# A P P E N D I X.



## NOTES TO LECTURE I.

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### I.—p. 4.

*IT is not without reason that I now call your attention to the nature and relations of those living powers, intellectual and active, which we claim for the immortal part of man.]* “So manifold are the adaptations between the subjective mind and the objective Christianity which is addressed to it, that we know not a better preparation than the study of the mental processes and laws, both for your philosophically appreciating the internal evidences of our faith, and for your exploring, with the eye of a scientific observer, the depths and the recesses of experimental religion . . . . The direct experience of the advanced Christian, whether as verified in his own person, or as adverted to in Scripture, is in striking coincidence with the discoveries of those who make the working of the human faculties the object of their reflex contemplation.” Dr. Chalmers, *Principal's Address*, 1843.

### II.—p. 5.

*That individual self, which we denominate the soul.]* “There is an internal feeling in the human bosom which speaks of something more than merely animal life, and which by sceptical philosophers has been termed *le moi*. We receive this term with all thankfulness; we care not for the term, but the admission of the thing is all important. The admission that there exists within *le moi*, a principle of individual consciousness distinct from animal existence, is sufficient for the Christian philosopher, who well knows that *LE MOI* is neither more nor less than . . . . that which is theologically called *THE SOUL*.” *Body and Mind*, by W. Newnham, Esq., p. 139.

## III.—p. 6.

*While we speak of the various faculties or powers of the soul, we must not conceive of our spiritual being as a mere collection or combination of independent forces; and we should be careful lest, from our employment of separate terms, we slide into the conception of regions or portions of the soul really distinct from each other.]* Since this Lecture was preached, I have met with the following passage in a work recently published, entitled *The Eclipse of Faith, or a Visit to a Religious Sceptic*,—a work distinguished by acute and just reasoning, by great felicity of expression, and, above all, by its tone of enlightened and earnest piety.—“ You do not sufficiently regard man as a complicated unity;—you represent, if you do not suppose, the several capacities of his nature, the different parts of it, sensational, emotional, intellectual, moral, spiritual,—as set off from one another by a sharper boundary-line than nature acknowledges. They all work for immediate ends indeed; but they also work for, with, and upon each other, for other ends than their own. Yet, as they all exist in one indivisible mind, or rather constitute it, they form one most intricate machine: and it can rarely happen that the particular phenomena of our interior nature we happen to be investigating do not involve many others. Throughout his book on “The Soul” we find Mr. Newman employing expressions (though I admit there are others which contradict them) which imply that the phenomena of religion—of what he calls ‘spiritual insight’—may be viewed in clearer distinction from those of the intellect than, as I conceive, they ever can be; and that a much clearer separation can be effected between them than nature has made possible. To hear him sometimes speak, one would imagine that the logical, the moral, and the spiritual, are held together by no vital bond of connection; nay, from some expressions, one would think that the ‘logical’ faculty had nothing to do with religion, if it is not to be supposed rather to stand in the way of it; that the ‘intellect’ and the ‘spiritual faculty’ may each retire to its ‘vacant interlunar cave,’ and never trouble its head about what the other is doing.

Thus he says, in one place, 'all the grounds of Belief proposed to the mere understanding have *nothing to do* with Faith *at all*.' In another, 'The processes of *thought* have *nothing* to quicken the conscience or *affect* the soul.' 'How then can the state of the soul be tested by the conclusion to which the intellect is led?' And accordingly you see he everywhere affirms that we ought not to have any better or worse opinion of any man for his 'intellectual creed;' and that 'religious progress' cannot be 'anticipated,' until intellectual 'creeds are destroyed.' Here one would imagine that the intellectual, moral, and spiritual had even less to do with the production of each other's 'results,' than matter and mind reciprocally have with theirs. These last, we see, in a thousand cases act and react upon one another; and modify each other's peculiar products and operations in a most important manner. How much more reasonably may we infer that the elementary faculties of the same indivisible mind will not discharge their functions without important reciprocal action; that in no case can we have the process pure and simple as the result of the operation of a single faculty! . . . What can be more obvious (and it must be admitted that the most fanatical 'spiritualist' employs expressions, and, what is more, uses methods which imply it) than that, whether we have a distinct religious faculty, or whether it be the result of the action of many faculties, the functions of our 'spiritual' nature are performed by the instrumentality, and involve the intervention, of the very same much-abused faculties which enable us to perform any other function. It is one and the same indivisible mind which is the subject of *religious* thought and emotion, and of any *other* thought and emotion. Religious *truth*, like any other truth, is embraced by the understanding—as indeed it would be a queer kind of truth that is not; is stated in propositions, yields inferences, is adorned by eloquence, is illustrated by the imagination, and is thus, as well as from its intrinsic claims, rendered powerful over the emotions, the affections, and the will. In brief, when the soul apprehends, reasons, remembers, rejoices, hopes, fears *spiritually*, it surely does

not perform these functions by totally different faculties from those by which *similar* things are done on other occasions. All experience and consciousness are against the supposition. In religion, men's minds are employed on more sublime and elevated themes indeed, but the operations themselves are essentially of the same nature as in other cases. Hence we see the dependence of the true development of religion on the just and harmonious action of all our faculties. They march together ; and it is the glorious prerogative of true religion that it makes them do so ; that all the elements of our nature, being indissolubly connected, and perpetually acting and reacting on one another, should aid one another, and attain a more just conjoint action. If there be acceptable *faith*, it presupposes belief of the *truth*, as well as love of it in the heart ; if there be holy habit, it implies just *knowledge* of duty ; if there be spiritual emotion awakened, it will still be in accordance with the laws which ordinarily produce it ; that is, because that which *should* produce it is perceived by the senses or the intellect, is recalled by the memory, is vivified by the imagination. If faith and hope and love often kindle into activity, and hallow those instruments by which and through which they act, it is not the less true that, apart from these—as constituting the same indivisible mind—faith and hope and love cannot exist : and not only so ; but when faith is languid, and hope faint, and love expiring, these faculties themselves shall often in their turn initiate the process which shall revive them all ; some outward object, some incident of life, some 'magic word,' some glorious image, some stalwart truth, suddenly and energetically stated, shall, through the medium of the senses, the imagination, or the intellect, set the soul once more in a blaze, and revive the emotion which it is at other times only their office to express. A sanctified intellect, a hallowed imagination, devout affections, have a reciprocal tendency to stimulate each other. In whatever faculty of our nature the stimulus may be felt,—in the intellect or the imagination,—it is thence propagated through the mysterious net-work of the soul to the emotions, the

affections, the conscience, the will: or, conversely, these last may commence the movement and propagate it in the reverse order. Each may become in turn a centre of influence; but so indivisible is the soul and mind of man, so indissolubly bound together the elements which constitute them, that the influence once commenced never stops where it began, but acts upon them all. The ripple, as that of a stone dropped into still water, no matter where, may be fainter and fainter the further from the spot where the commotion began, but it will stop only with the bank. Ordinarily many functions of the mind are involved in each, and sometimes all in one." *The Eclipse of Faith*, section On a Prevailing Fallacy, pp. 307-309, ed. 1852.

## IV.—p. 8.

*Sensation, by which we receive and recognise impressions from external objects, and perception, or the spontaneous recognition of those objects themselves, and their attributes in relation to us.]* On this subject see Sir William Hamilton's *Notes on Reid*, Note D.\*

## V.—p. 8.

*With the ancient sophists and some modern philosophers.]*  
 "With the exception of Heraclitus, the Epicureans, and the Sophists, none of the more important Grecian schools inculcated the absolute and undivided supremacy of sensation. Plato, it is well known, threw aside sensation altogether, except as an instrument of conveying knowledge to the mind, and made the intellect all in all. Aristotle distinguished between their operations, and assigned to each their respective provinces."—As to the origin of our ideas, the opinions of metaphysicians may be divided into three classes. 1. Those who deny the senses to be anything more than instruments conveying objects to the mind, perception being active. (Plato and others.) 2. Those who attribute all our ideas to sense. (Hobbes, Gassendi, Condillac, the ancient sophists.) 3. Those who admit that the earliest notions proceed from the senses, yet maintain that they are not adequate to produce the

whole knowledge possessed by the human understanding. (Aristotle and Locke.)—Mills, *Essays*, &c. pp. 314—321.

“We may safely allow that sensation gives the first impulse; we may agree with Bacon and Locke that knowledge is built upon experience; but it is the active and independent power of the understanding which regulates and fashions anew the information communicated by the feelings of sensation, and which ascends from the first lessons of experience to the general and immutable principles of virtue and science. By the divine light of reason kindled in the soul, man indicates his high original and his future destiny; develops the faculties and energies with which his Creator has endowed him; and, so far as a humble sense of his dependence on the Fountain of all Intelligence will permit, feels a just pride as he contemplates the moral and intellectual strength of Butler, Pascal, and Newton.” *Ibid.* pp. 347, 348.

VI.—p. 9.

*Sensation is not the whole mind, in a rudimentary condition, &c.]* “The theory which explains most completely and satisfactorily the facts of our own consciousness is, that the mind is a spiritual being enclosed in a material and living organization; and that, for the education of the mind in this state of being, the impressions on the senses are as necessary as food, air, and exercise, are for the development of the bodily organization,—that the senses feed the mind, and excite the action of its own innate natural powers, but that they do not produce those powers.” *Evening Thoughts, by a Physician*; section entitled *The Whole Mind*.—“The human mind is something independent of its circumstances; it is a spontaneous, self-regulating existence,—a distinct personality, the very essence of which consists in activity. Accordingly, the fundamental error, as we think, of all systems of sensationalism, consists in taking for granted that *mind*, until the channels of sense convey to it life and feeling, is a nonentity, or at any rate a mere passive entity; whilst in fact we can no more conceive of it without thought and action than we can of matter without figure and extension.” *An Historical and Critical View*



*of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the nineteenth Century* by J. D. Morell, A. M., part ii. ch. 4. § 1.

“I shall simply take for granted that you are (as most philosophers are) an advocate of innate capacities, but not of ‘innate ideas,’ of innate susceptibilities, but not of ‘innate sentiments;’ that is, I presume, you do not contend that the mind possesses more than the faculties—the *laws* of thought and feeling—which, under conditions of external development, actually give birth to *thoughts* and *feelings*. These faculties and susceptibilities are, no doubt, congenital with the mind—or rather are the mind itself. But its actually manifested phenomena wait the touch of the *external*, and they will be modified accordingly. It is absolutely dependent on experience in this sense, that it is only as it is operated upon by the outward world that the dormant faculties, whatever they are, and whatever their nature, be they few or many,—intellectual, moral, or spiritual,—are first awakened. If a mind were created (it is, at least, a conceivable case) with all the avenues to the external world closed,—in fact, we sometimes see approximations to such a condition in certain unhappy individuals,—we do not doubt that such a mind, by the present laws of the human constitution, could not possess *any* thoughts, feelings, emotions; in fact, could exhibit none of the phenomena, spiritual, intellectual, moral, or sensational, which now diversify it. In proportion as we see human beings approach this condition,—in fact, we sometimes see them approach it very nearly,—we see the ‘potentialities’ of the soul (I do not like the word, but it expresses my meaning better than any other I know) held in abeyance, and such an imperfectly awakened *man* does not, in some cases, manifest the degree of sensibility or intelligence manifested in many animals. If the seclusion from sense and experience be quite complete, the life of such a soul would be wrapped up in the germ, and possess no more consciousness than a vegetable.” *The Eclipse of Faith, or, a Visit to a Religious Sceptic*, section on The Analogies of an External Revelation with the Laws and Conditions of Human Development, pp. 286, 287.

## VII.—p. 9.

*Nor can we assent to a proposition, which has the sanction of high names, to the effect that all our knowledge is to be ascribed to sense and inspiration.]* Bishop Van Mildert, in his *Boyle Lectures*, says, “The first question is, what are the *inlets* of knowledge; what the channels through which the mind is to be supplied with these necessary means of information? Logicians speak of these as various; namely, sense, consciousness, intelligence, reason, faith, and inspiration. But all these seem reducible to the two general heads of *sense* and *inspiration* . . . in other words, to man’s faculties instructed by what the visible world presents to his view, or by what God may be pleased to reveal to him.” Serm. xiv.—And he supports this view by the following quotation from Lord Bacon: “Knowledge is like waters; some waters descend from the heavens, some spring from the earth. So the primary partition of sciences is to be derived from their fountains; some are seated above; some are here beneath. For all knowledge proceeds from a twofold information; either from Divine inspiration, or from external sense.” *Advancement of Learning*, book iii. ch. 1.—It is obvious how entirely I concur in the following remark made by one of my predecessors with reference to this passage in the Lectures of the learned prelate: “I need not point out how unsatisfactory is such a view to those who maintain the existence of moral perceptions entirely apart both from the powers of sense and the aids of inspiration, properly so called, and who studiously distinguish all its other acknowledged powers from the principle of faith, or the religious principle, in the accounts which they give of the structure and capabilities of the human soul.” Michell’s *Bampton Lectures*, Serm. iii.

## VIII.—p. 9.

*As though we possessed, over and above the power of sensible perception, no more than the passive faculty of receiving knowledge directly imparted to us by the Father of our spirits.]* It may be true that all the faculties of a finite mind are, and must be, to a certain extent, passive; but then it is no

less true that in all cases the mind is also distinguished by the possession of spontaneous activity. Sensible perception is, in some measure, active; and throughout the whole mind we discover, together with a wide field of susceptibility or capacity, a vast apparatus of power.—And the mind *ought* to be active in its use of what it has first received as a passive subject. God does nothing in vain; and the very presence of a mental capacity implies the existence of an adequate complement, as the eye is provided with light, and is made for seeing.

## IX.—p. 10.

*The truth is, as we say, self-evident.*] “The main principles of reason are in themselves apparent [i. e. self-evident]. For to make nothing evident of itself unto man’s understanding were to take away all possibility of knowing anything. And herein that of Theophrastus is true, ‘They that seek a reason of all things do utterly overthrow reason’ (*ἀπάντων ζητοῦντες λόγον, ἀναιροῦσι λόγον*).” Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* i. 8, § 5.—“If all our knowledge depended merely upon custom and experience, in that case there would be no more certainty in mathematical than in moral evidence. We may have seen one circle and investigated its properties, but why, when our individual experience is so circumscribed, do we assume the same relations of all? Simply because the understanding has the conviction intuitively that similar objects will have similar properties; it does not acquire this idea by sensation or custom; the mind develops it by its own intrinsic force; it is a law of our faculties ultimate and universal, from which all reasoning proceeds.” Mills, *Essays &c.*, p. 337.

## X.—p. 10.

*The truth is, as we say, self-evident; that is, strictly speaking, the mind, of itself, knows that the proposition is a true one.*] “The very existence of reasoning must depend upon the previous acquiescence of the mind in some first and ultimate notions. We discover the same doctrine in the *innate ideas* of Des Cartes (untenable as his hypothesis may be), in the *eternal truths* of Leibnitz, in the *common*

*sense* of Dr. Reid. Kant makes it the foundation of his system by technically dividing the powers of the mind into reason and understanding; and by assigning to the former the perception of the primary notions, and to the latter the syllogistic process. I would add that it is virtually acknowledged in the *intuition* of Locke, by which self-evident truth is asserted to be perceived. For when we speak of self-evident truth, we allow, in other words, that the understanding, by its own inherent powers, has the capacity of determining instantaneously some notions to be true; the self-evidence of the truth not being in the thing perceived, but in the percipient mind." Mills, *Essays &c.*, p. 345, 346.

XI.—p. 10.

*Truth which is proved has for its foundation truth which cannot be proved,—truth which cannot be proved, but yet may be most certainly known by intuition, by the direct and simple act of mental consciousness.*] "Let us . . . view it [the mind] as acting when a proposition of a purely intellectual character is submitted to it,—any of the propositions, for instance, of geometry.

"On any one of the propositions being brought under its notice, it pronounces a decision regarding it; and the language in which we express the decision is 'it is true,' or 'it is false.' Now, in pronouncing this decision, the mind proceeds on its own laws or principles,—principles which are fundamental, and as incapable of analysis as the simple elements to which chemistry at last conducts us in the analysis of corporeal substances.

"'Considering this,' says Aristotle, 'that the beginning of demonstration cannot be demonstration, nor the beginning of science, science; and since we have said there is no other kind of truth, intuition must be the beginning of science.' All reasoning then, it is acknowledged, carries us back to certain intuitive principles. In saying so, we mean that in the analogies of it we are conducted at last to truths which admit of no demonstration. Properly speaking, reasoning does not carry us back to these axiomatic truths,—it proceeds upon them. It cannot even be said to begin with

them ; for, till reason begins, these axioms have no existence in the mind. Nay, these principles have at no time a separate existence as notions in the mind, at least till it begins to form reflex metaphysical abstractions. The conception of them is one of the most refined and difficult exercises in which the mind can engage, and the correct expression of them is one of the most arduous works about which human language can be employed. The reason proceeds on these axiomatic principles, just as the eye sees by means of rays of light, and neither takes cognizance of those media which are needful for its exercise. It is by a reflex act of the mind, and that a very subtle one, that the philosopher is led to discover what is the nature of the fundamental principles imposed upon, or rather forming part of, the very faculties of the human mind. They are roots or radicals supporting all visible truth, but themselves unseen, and only to be discovered by artificially digging into the depths which they penetrate, and which cover them from the view.

“All modern philosophers of authority have acknowledged that there are such fundamental principles. Kant speaks of them as the categories of the understanding and the ideas of pure reason. Reid calls them the principles of the *communis sensus*, very unhappily translated by a name usually differently applied—common sense. Stewart calls them the laws of human thought or belief. Brown speaks of them as the primary universal intuitions of direct belief. Cousin talks of them as simple mental apperceptions and primitive judgments. Mackintosh, in referring to them, says,—‘They seem to be accurately described as notions which cannot be conceived separately, but without which nothing can be conceived. They are not only necessary to reasoning and belief, but to thought itself.’ Mackintosh elsewhere represents them as ‘the indispensable conditions of thought itself.’ It is to them, as we apprehend, that Whewell refers under the phrase ‘fundamental ideas’ so often employed by him. Sir William Hamilton has completed all past metaphysics on this subject, by shewing

that the argument from the principles of common sense is one strictly philosophic and scientific, and by a critical review of the nomenclature, all proceeding on the same principle which has been employed by upwards of one hundred of the profoundest thinkers in ancient and modern times. It is very interesting to observe how deep and earnest thinkers come at last to a wonderful agreement, even when they appear, to superficial observers, to have no one principle in common." *The Method of the Divine Government, Physical and Moral*, by Rev. James M'Cosh, A.M. book iii. chap. 1. § 4.—Sir William Hamilton, in his Dissertations appended to Reid's Essays, quotes and translates many passages from Aristotle in confirmation of the views here attributed to that philosopher, introducing his quotations by the following remarks. "Aristotle lays it down in general as the condition of the possibility of knowledge, that it do not regress to infinity, but depart from certain primary *facts, beliefs, or principles*,—true, and whose truth commands assent, through themselves, and themselves alone. These, as the foundations, are not objects, of science; as the elements of demonstration, they are themselves indemonstrable. The fountains of certainty to all else, they are themselves preeminently certain; and if denied in words, they are still always mentally admitted. The faculty of such principles is not Reason, the discursive or dianoetic faculty (*λόγος, δίανοια*), but Intellect or Intelligence proper, the noetic faculty, (*νοῦς*). Intellect, as an immediate apprehension of what is, may be viewed as a sense (*αἴσθησις*). Compare Analyt. Post. lib. i. cc. 2, 3, 10, 32; lib. ii. c. ult.; Top. lib. i. c. 1; Metaph. lib. i. c. 7; lib. ii. (A minor) c. 2; lib. ii. (iii. Duvallio) cc. 3, 4, 6; lib. iii. (iv.) c. 6; Eth. Nic. lib. vi. cc. 6, 11 (12); Eth. Eud. lib. v. cc. 6, 8; lib. vii. c. 14; Mag. Mor. lib. i. c. 35." Sir W. Hamilton's *Notes on Reid*, note A. § 6.—With respect to the terminology of the above extract, it will be seen that the faculty which in these Lectures is denominated Reason is here called Intellect or Intelligence proper, and that the term Reason is applied to the dianoetic faculty, or Understanding.

## XII.—p. 10.

*The source of our ideas of power and causation.*] On this subject the following passages from Morell's *History of Modern Philosophy* are worthy of special attention in the present day.—“The most famous portions of Hume's scepticism were the conclusions which he drew from his empirical principles respecting the origin of our ideas. Every notion, according to these principles, which cannot shew some impression, *i. e.* some direct sensation from which it proceeds, is altogether delusive, and must be rejected as worthless by the true experimental philosopher. Amongst these merely imaginary notions, Hume places that of *power*, it being evident that we can learn from experience nothing more than the existence of certain changes, which take place under certain circumstances; and that there is no perceptive faculty in man, by which the link that connects any two given effects can possibly be discovered. . . . Every inquiry on *matters of fact*, as Hume correctly shews, is based upon the notions of *cause* and *effect*; the origin of which notions he discovers in experience, and entirely disowns the supposition that any idea of *power* or *adaptation* is connected with them. Here we conceive there is a double error; for, first of all, *we have* the distinct idea of power (whether it be objectively valid or not), given in the perception of two phenomena succeeding each other; neither can all the reasoning in the world dispossess us of it. And secondly, the notion of cause and effect cannot come from sensible experience, because the idea of *power*, which forms the very peculiarity in all those successions which stand related as cause and effect, is one which lies altogether beyond the reach of the senses. It is not experience which tells us, when a man is murdered, that there must be a murderer; the law which refers such an effect to an *efficient* cause lies deeper in our nature than this, and has about it a *necessity* and a *universality*, which prior experience could never have strengthened, nor the want of it have prevented. A single act brings the law or judgment into operation as readily as a thousand. Reid and Kant both contested the empirical doctrine of Hume on this point. The former

appealed to common sense, and made the law of causality one of our intellectual instincts; the latter argued that the idea of cause and effect is one of the *a priori* forms by which the human mind necessarily views the connection of external things, a doctrine which grounds Reid's instinct in a deeper principle or law of our inward nature."—Speaking of the 'Analysis of the Phenomena of the Human Mind,' by James Mill, our author says, "In this department of his analysis, the peculiar theory which is maintained, *of cause and effect*, lies at the foundation of almost all the other results. Mr. Mill considered it proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, nay, since the days of Brown, to have become almost axiomatic, that cause and effect imply nothing more than uniform precedence and consequence. This, however, must be regarded as far too bold and hasty an assumption, when we consider that the doctrine referred to is denied almost universally by the German metaphysicians; when we hear one of the greatest thinkers of our day calling it '*a fantastical theory which gives a denial to universal belief, and to facts; a theory destructive of all true metaphysics*;' (See Victor Cousin, in his Preface to the 'Remains' of M. de Biran); and when we find even the first natural philosopher of the age describing Brown's theory as one '*in which the whole train of argument is vitiated by one enormous oversight, the omission, namely, of a distinct and immediate personal consciousness of causation in his enumeration of that sequence of events, by which the volition of the mind is made to terminate in the motion of the material objects.*' (See Sir John Herschel's Treatise on Astronomy). We contend... that the conscious effort of our own will gives us the distinct idea of *power* in causation, which then becomes to us the type of those vast ever-working powers of the universe by which we are surrounded, the foundation of our confidence in the uniformity of nature, and the basis of our belief in the great First Cause of all things."—Afterwards we read, with reference to the "System of Logic," by John Stuart Mill (a still more recent work, and one, as Morell truly says, of great and unquestionable merit), — "Another



very decisive proof of our author's sensational tendency is found in his support of Brown's theory of causation (vol. I. book iii. chap. 5). In no work with which we are acquainted is the law of causality so ingeniously and plausibly traced to experience as in this, and in none is the whole theory put in a more forcible and unobjectionable light. Ingenuity, however, though it may mislead for a time, will never succeed eventually in carrying along with it the suffrages of mankind against the fundamental convictions of human nature. Try as we will to sink all idea of a real connection between cause and effect, the belief will eternally recur; and however plausibly the theory may be propounded, yet it will ever be found wanting so long as there is left out in the analysis the one important link to which we have before referred, that of a personal consciousness of *power*. Instead then of resting the evidence of the law of causality upon a simple induction of empirical facts, we should trace its establishment to a process of the following nature:—Every man, when he produces change upon the outer world, is conscious of putting forth a power in volition, which power is exerted upon the external object. If the same power be again put forth in similar circumstances, he knows intuitively that the same change will take place. Hence the notion of *power* put forth by some cause is associated with the perception of *every* effect; and the force emanating from our own will becomes the type upon which we conceive of power, as universally exerted in the production of every other possible phenomenon. Thus the law of causation primarily emanates from our own volition, and being expanded by the aid of experience, at length assumes the form of a universal principle, applicable to all the phenomena of the universe." Morell's *History of Modern Philosophy*, part i. chap. 3. § 2; part ii. chap. 4. § 1.

## XIII.—p. 12.

*An instinctive, original, moral faculty.*] See Butler, Sermon i. Upon Human Nature.—A section in M'Cosh's *Method of the Divine Government*, entitled An Inquiry into the

Nature of Conscience, contains some valuable observations on conscience considered as a faculty, and considered as a law. The following passage relates to conscience considered as a faculty (moral judgment, moral reason):—"Present two sensations produced by external objects to the mind, and it perceives a resemblance or a difference between them, and it does so according to a law of our nature. Present the voluntary acts of an accountable being to the mind, and it decides regarding them that they are right or that they are wrong. We believe the one act of the mind to be as simple and unresolvable as the other.

"Should any party insist on our resolving this intuitive principle, we remind him that in doing so we would only be resolving it back into a farther principle, and that he might on the same ground ask us to resolve that principle also, and, as he thus pushed us, we would at length be carried back to a principle which could not be resolved into anything simpler, and which we must therefore just assume. Now, we assert at once that it is by an unresolvable principle that the mind decides, when voluntary acts pass under its notice, that they are right or that they are wrong. It seems evident to us, on the one hand, that this principle cannot be resolved into any of those intellectual axioms on which the understanding proceeds in acquiring knowledge;—compound and decompound these as we please, they will never lead to the ideas of right and wrong:—nor, on the other hand, can it be resolved into those principles which are connected with the desire of pleasure or the aversion to pain. No composition of such ideas or feelings could produce the idea or feeling expressed in the words 'ought,' 'duty,' 'moral obligation,' 'desert,' 'guilt.' As well, in our view, might we talk of a combination of gases, or of any other corporeal substance, producing an idea, as of mere intellectual ideas, or mere emotions connected with the sensations of pleasure or pain, producing a sense of moral obligation. Even as no composition of colours can produce sound, and no composition of odours produce colours, so, it appears to us, no possible combination of intellectual conceptions, or sensations of pleasure and pain, or

of the desires connected with these, can produce moral approbation and disapprobation.

“ We are thus brought to the conclusion that the mind declares that there is an indelible distinction between good and evil; just as it declares that there is an indelible distinction between truth and error. We believe that the mind, in the one case as in the other, proceeds on its own fundamental principles. Does some one insist on our making this moral idea patent to the reason, and justifying it to the understanding? We reply that the distinction does not come under the cognizance of the reason, any more than the difference of sounds can be brought under the discernment of the eye, or the difference of colours under that of the ear. If the objector become proud and presumptuous, and insist on our yielding to his demand, we ask him to begin with demonstrating the axiomatic principles on which reason proceeds, and, when he has done so, he may be the better prepared to try his skill upon an analysis of moral principle, or rather, after having made the attempt and failed, he will be the better prepared to acknowledge that there may be moral principles, the existence of which reason may discover, but cannot possibly analyze.

“ Call them by what name you please, you come back in all inquiry after truth to principles which reason cannot demonstrate, but on which, on the contrary, all reasoning proceeds. To deny this is to involve ourselves in the absurdity of an infinite series of proofs, each hanging on the other, with nothing to support them or on which to rest, or in a circle of proofs in which there is connection, but no origin or foundation, and no progress. In like manner, in the inquiry into virtue and vice we come back to ultimate principles, on which all morality rests. Just as the former class of principles are anterior in the order of things to all exercise of the reasoning faculties, so the latter are anterior to every given exercise of the conscience.” M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. i. § 4.

“ The reason that the authority of these internal perceptions of moral truth and good is often called in question is

this—that from the great diversity that is found in the opinions of men, and the different judgments that they seem to pass upon the same things, it is too hastily inferred that these original perceptions in various men are various, and cannot therefore be to any the test of universal truth. A Christian, for example, imagines a natural impurity in sensual gratifications; a Mahometan is persuaded that they will make part of the happiness of the righteous in a future state; the Christian reverences his Bible because it prohibits these indulgences; the Mahometan loves the Koran because it permits them. Whence, it is said, is this diversity of opinion, unless the mind of the Christian perceives those things as impure which the mind of the Mahometan equally perceives as innocent? From these equal but various perceptions they severally infer the probability of their various faith; and who shall say that the one judges more reasonably than the other, if both judge from perceptions of which they are conscious? Yet they judge differently; both therefore cannot judge aright, unless right judgment may be different from itself. Must it not then be granted, either that these perceptions are uncertain and fallacious,—or, which may seem more reasonable, since no man can have a higher certainty than that which arises from a consciousness of his own feelings, that every man hath his own private standard of moral truth and excellence, purity and turpitude; that right and wrong are nothing in themselves, but are to every man what his particular conscience makes them; and that the universal idea of moral beauty, of which some men have been affected to be so vehemently enamoured, and which is set up as the ultimate test of truth in the highest speculations, is a mere fiction of the imagination?

“It is not to be wondered that many have been carried away by the fair appearance of this argument, in which nothing seems to be alleged that is open to objection. Nevertheless the conclusion is false, and the whole reasoning is nothing better than a cheat and a lie; the premises on which it is founded being a false fact, with much art tacitly taken for granted. The whole proceeds on this assump-

tion,—that men, in forming their judgments of things, do always refer to the original perception of their own minds, that is, to conscience. Deny this, and the diversity of opinions will no longer be a proof of a diversity of original perceptions; from which supposed diversity the fallaciousness of that perception was inferred. And is not this to be denied? Is it not rather the truth that no man is at all times attentive to these perceptions? that many men never attend to them at all? that in many they are stifled and overcome,—in some by education, fashion, or example; in others, by the desperate wickedness of their own hearts? Now, the mind in which this ruin hath been effected hath lost indeed its natural criterion of truth; and judges not by its original feelings, but by opinions taken up at random. Nevertheless, the nature of things is not altered by the disorder of perverted minds; nor is the evidence of things the less to those who perceive them as they are, because there are those who have not that perception. No man the less clearly sees the light, whose own eye is sound, because it is not seen by another who is blind; nor are the distinctions of colour less to all mankind, because a disordered eye confounds them. The same reasoning may be applied to our mental perceptions: the Christian's discernment of the purity of the gospel doctrine is not the less clear,—his veneration for it arising from that discernment not the less rational,—because a Mahometan may, with equal ardour, embrace a corrupt system, and may be insensible to the greater beauty of that which he rejects. In a word, every man implicitly trusts his bodily senses concerning external objects placed at a convenient distance; and every man may, with as good a reason, put even a greater trust in the perceptions of which he is conscious in his own mind; which indeed are nothing else than the first notices of truth and of Himself which the Father of spirits imparts to subordinate minds, and which are to them the first principles and seeds of intellect." Bp. Horsley, *Sermon on John* xx. 29.

XIV.—p. 14.

*We discover some truths or discern them upon their simple*

*presentation.*] It is to be distinctly borne in mind that there are many things which the mind cannot discover, which yet it is able to discern and recognise as true when duly presented for its acceptance.—“It would greatly serve to prepare you, not for being rightly operated upon by evidence, but which is truly a different thing, for rightly understanding the method of its operation, did you make a just distinction between the power required for the discernment of a truth, and the power required for its discovery. There might be ten thousand minds capable of discerning what only one of the whole number are capable of discovering. Nay, what is more, there might be not one individual of our species who could have made the discovery of what, after that the discovery is made from some quarter foreign to the species, might not only be read but recognised of all men. In the former case, or when man is the discoverer, there is the homage ascribed to him of a sagacity or a genius which signalizes him above all his fellows; in the latter case, or when the discovery breaks in upon the world from some other quarter, it is referred to a superhuman origin,—to a mind of a higher order, possessed of faculties and powers transcendentally above the reach, and beyond the compass, of the unaided faculties of man. And it might make no difference, whether the truth in question was at one time in the possession of mankind, but afterwards lost and obliterated in the process of their degeneracy from the light which they originally enjoyed, or whether it be altogether new to the species. Either to discover what before had been altogether unheard of within the limits of the human family, or to recover what was originally known but had at length been extinguished and is forgotten, might be an achievement utterly beyond the faculties of any man upon earth, and the revelation of which might require the letting in upon our world of a light and an intelligence from above. But what we affirm is that the need of such a discovery from without of a given truth,—and that owing to the want of power in man,—does not necessarily imply the want of power from within for the discernment of such truth, when once it is set be-

fore us. A proposition which we could never have found our way to, we may nevertheless recognise as worthy of all credit and all acceptance, when stated and placed forward to our view. We have no light in ourselves which could lead to the disclosure of it; but when disclosed *ab extra*, there may be a light in ourselves with which to invest it in the characters of truth, and so to constrain the homage of our deep-felt convictions,—not that light of evidence which could open up for us a pathway to the objective, but a light of evidence struck out between the objective and the subjective—requiring therefore the presentation of the object by another, after which it is acknowledged and appropriated by ourselves as an article of faith. Yet it is not, we contend, a faith without reason, but with a reason, which, though only stated and explained by few, may be felt, and most legitimately felt, by many: insomuch that the doctrine thus perceived, and thus admitted into their creed, may take its place amongst the clearest and most confident of all their reckonings.” Chalmers, *Institutes of Theology*, book iii. chap. 6.

XV.—p. 14.

*We are able and disposed to yield to evidence, in proportion to its nature and its strength.*] “La foi n’est pas la crédulité; l’homme le plus crédule n’est pas toujours celui qui croit le mieux; une croyance se perd d’autant plus aisément qu’on l’a plus facilement adoptée; et les convictions les plus fermes sont bien souvent celles qui ont le plus coûté. La crédulité n’est que la servile complaisance d’un esprit faible, tandis que la foi réclame tout le ressort, et toute la vigueur de l’âme.” *Discours sur Quelques Sujets Religieux*, par A. Vinet,—*La Foi, premier Discours*, (sur Jean xx. 29.) —“The mind of man desireth evermore to know the truth according to the most infallible certainty which the nature of things can yield. The greatest assurance generally with all men is that which we have by plain aspect and intuitive beholding. Where we cannot attain unto this, there what appeareth to be true by strong and invincible demonstration, such as wherein it is not by any way possible to be deceived, thereunto the mind doth necessarily assent, nei-

ther is it in the choice thereof to do otherwise. And in case these both do fail, then which way the greatest probability leadeth, thither the mind doth evermore incline. Scripture with Christian men being received as the word of God; that for which we have probable, yea, that which we have necessary reason for, yea, that which we see with our eyes, is not thought so sure as that which the Scripture of God teacheth; because we hold that his speech revealeth there what himself seeth, and therefore the strongest proof of all, and the most necessarily assented unto by us (which do thus receive the Scripture) is the Scripture. Now, it is not required nor can be exacted at our hands, that we should yield unto anything other assent than such as doth answer the evidence which is to be had of that we assent unto. For which cause, even in matters divine, concerning some things we may lawfully doubt and suspend our judgment, inclining neither to one side nor other; as namely, touching the time of the fall both of men and angels: of some things we may very well retain an opinion that they are probable and not unlikely to be true, as when we hold that men have their souls rather by creation than propagation, or that the mother of our Lord lived always in the state of virginity as well after his birth as before, (for of these two the one, her virginity before, is a thing which of necessity we must believe; the other, her continuance in the same state always, hath more likelihood of truth than the contrary): finally, in all things then are our consciences best resolved, and in a most agreeable sort unto God and nature settled, when they are so far persuaded as those grounds of persuasion which are to be had will bear.

“ Which thing I do so much the rather set down, for that I see how a number of souls are for want of right information in this point oftentimes grievously vexed. When bare and unbuilt conclusions are put into their minds, they, finding not themselves to have thereof any great certainty, imagine that this proceedeth only from lack of faith, and that the Spirit of God doth not work in them as it doth in true believers; by this means their hearts are



much troubled, they fall into anguish and perplexity : whereas the truth is, that, how bold and confident soever we may be in words, when it cometh to the point of trial, such as the evidence is which the truth hath either in itself or through proof, such is the heart's assent thereunto ; neither can it be stronger, being grounded as it should be." Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book ii. ch. 7. § 5.

## XVI.—p. 14.

*To assent to testimony concerning facts not present and manifest.]* " Facts are of the nature of first principles, incapable of being made more clear or certain by any attempt at demonstration. Their proof depends, in the first instance, upon the evidence of the senses, which, to those who are in possession of it, affords immediate and irresistible conviction. But to those who are removed, by distance of time or place, from the possibility of thus judging of them, they can be proved only by *testimony* ; and no other proof can reasonably be sought. Facts of a marvellous or extraordinary kind may indeed require a greater *degree* of evidence to render them credible ; but still they are *capable* of evidence ; and, sufficient evidence being given, it is irrational to refuse our assent to them. In the case of revealed religion, we contend that such an extraordinary degree of evidence has been afforded as is fully proportioned to the nature of the facts to be proved ; and therefore that every man is morally obliged to give credit to it, unless he can adduce some real contradictory evidence, by which it may be refuted or at least rendered doubtful." . . . . " It has indeed generally been one of the chief objects among infidel writers to shake our belief in human testimony. But, in so doing, they run counter to the common sentiments of mankind, as well as to the clear intentions of Providence, who hath ordained that we shall chiefly depend upon this most extensive source of information for the greater part of our knowledge, and especially for that which is essential to our well-being. The foundation of our reliance on testimony lies in the very nature and constitution of man. He who so framed us that our faculties are

limited to certain narrow boundaries of time and space, evidently designed that we should mutually depend, in a great degree, upon the faculties of each other; that we should trust, in many cases, to the senses, the memory, and the understanding of others, exercised as we ourselves exercise such faculties for the acquisition of knowledge." Bishop Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xix.

"There are in the world many men, whose declaration concerning any fact which they have seen, and of which they are competent judges, would engage my belief as effectually as the credence of my own senses. A metaphysician may tell me that this implicit confidence in testimony is unworthy of a philosopher, and that my faith ought to be more rational. It may be so; but I believe as before notwithstanding. And I find that all men have the same confidence in the testimony of certain persons; and that if a man should refuse to think as other men do in this matter, he would be called obstinate, whimsical, narrow-minded, and a fool. If, after the experience of so many ages, men are still disposed to believe the word of an honest man, and find no inconvenience in doing so, I must conclude that it is not only natural, but rational, expedient, and manly, to credit such testimony; and though I were to peruse volumes of metaphysic written in proof of the fallibility of testimony, I should still, like the rest of the world, believe credible testimony without fear of inconvenience. I know very well that testimony is not admitted in proof of any doctrine in mathematics, because the evidence of that science is of a different kind. But is truth to be found in mathematics only? is the geometrician the only person who exercises a rational belief? do we never find conviction arise in our minds, except when we contemplate an intuitive axiom, or run over a mathematical demonstration? In natural philosophy, a science not inferior to pure mathematics in the certainty of its conclusions, testimony is admitted as a sufficient proof of many facts. To believe testimony, therefore, is agreeable to nature, to reason, and to sound philosophy." Beattie, *Essay on Truth*, part i. chap. 2. § 8.

"Dr. Chalmers entered upon the consideration of our

faith in testimony, which he classed with those original and indestructible beliefs which can as little be weakened by assault as they can be fortified by foreign aid. The futility of all attempts to impose upon nature's own simple method of sustaining herself in her primary convictions was most philosophically exposed." *Life of Dr. Chalmers*, vol. III. pp. 61, 62.

## XVII.—p. 15.

*To submit to authority in the announcement or proposition of truths, independently of any internal and direct perception of them by ourselves.]* "To believe on sufficient authority is no less certain an indication of a sound understanding, than to believe on the evidence of sense or of abstract reasoning; and,...since we can receive no knowledge of Divine Truths but from Divine Instruction, Faith, or a reliance on the authority of God, is the proper and the only medium through which such truths can be communicated to the understanding. God hath given us senses to convey to our minds ideas of the material world. He hath given us ability to discern (though not fully and completely) the relations, fitnesses, forms, qualities, and other attributes, of whatever the visible world presents to our view. He hath also gifted us with an internal sense of consciousness, by which we make considerable progress in the study of ourselves, and deduce from the phenomena of the human mind, as from the phenomena of the external world, many useful truths, of a practical as well as of a speculative nature. From these and various other faculties of body and of mind we derive all our physical and metaphysical knowledge, every thing, indeed, which properly constitutes human science. Moreover, it hath pleased God to bestow upon us such a measure of intellect as renders us capable of receiving whatever knowledge of a higher kind, relating to himself, and to the spiritual or invisible world, He shall see fit to *superadd* to the knowledge which we acquire through the medium of our senses, and the exercise of our reflecting powers. This simple theory of the human mind, while it leaves to man ample scope for advancement in knowledge by the proper use of those powers,

reserves at the same time to the Almighty his inalienable prerogative of being the direct Instructor of mankind in their highest and noblest concerns. When, therefore, it is said (as it sometimes is, with an evil intention of exalting man's dignity, to the disparagement of that of his Creator) that God hath endued us with natural faculties sufficient to enable us to fulfil all the purposes of our being, the position, though true, must be understood in a limited and qualified sense, as denoting, not that our natural faculties are sufficient to guide us into all truth without *His* help and instruction, but that they render us capable of receiving His instructions, and particularly of distinguishing that which He communicates from that which is purely the result of our own investigation. To judge then accurately between matters of Science and matters of Faith, is one of the highest and most important functions of the human understanding: and to decide properly upon their respective weight, is one of the most certain characteristics of a sound and unperverted judgment." Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon. xvi. (But see also Note VII, supra.)

XVIII.—p. 15.

*In matters of common life, from childhood to old age, we continually act, and are compelled to act, upon this principle.]*  
 "Even in common life faith is the compass by which men steer their practice, and the main spring of action, setting all the wheels of our activity on going; every man acteth with serious intention, and with vigour answerable to his persuasion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours. What moveth the husbandman to employ so much care, toil, and expense in manuring his ground, in ploughing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it, but a persuasion that he shall reap a crop, which in benefit will answer all? What stirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vast and dangerous seas, adventuring his stock, abandoning his ease, exposing his life to the waves, to rocks and shelves, to storms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates, to sweltry heats and piercing colds, but a persuasion that wealth is a very desirable thing, and

that hereby he may acquire it? What induceth a man to conform to strictest rules, diet and abstinence, readily to swallow down the most unsavoury potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby shall recover or preserve health, that highly valuable good? From the same principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the scuffling in the world easily derivable. In like manner is Faith the square and the source of our spiritual activity, disposing us seriously to undertake,—earnestly, resolutely, industriously, and constantly to pursue,—the designs of virtue and piety, brooking the pains and hardships, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occur in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commission of sin.” Barrow, *Sermons on the Apostles’ Creed*, Serm. iii.—See the same thought expanded in Archdeacon Hare’s *Victory of Faith*, Serm. iv.; “Power of Faith in Man’s Natural Life.”—See also Rogers’s *Essays*, vol. 2. Essay 4, “*Reason and Faith, their Claims and Conflicts*,” pp. 255–257: (pp. 6, 7 of the smaller ed.)

XIX.—p. 16.

*Independently of the exercise of faith, it is utterly beyond the reach of every man living.*] We ought not to regard this as a defect in the constitution of the human mind, or even as indicating our inferiority compared with creatures, if such there are, of a more pure and piercing intelligence. On the contrary, it seems rather, upon a consideration of all the powers of the soul collectively surveyed, that the exercise of faith is a high and ennobling privilege,—that, to say the least, it serves an important purpose in our course of moral discipline,—and that it may even have place in the history of beings of a higher order than that in which man was placed at his creation. Nor can we have any reason to doubt that, even if man had continued in his originally upright and perfect condition, he would still have been obliged, in many instances, to trust to divine authority for information concerning many particulars of truth and duty. “On a coutume de poser la raison et la foi; il faudrait

dire plutôt que l'une complète l'autre, et qu'elles sont deux piliers, dont un seul ne pourrait sans l'autre soutenir la vie. On plaint l'homme de ce qu'il ne peut tout savoir, ou plutôt tout voir, et de ce qu'encore il est obligé de croire : mais c'est le plaindre d'un de ses privilèges. La connaissance directe ne met pas en réquisition les forces vives de l'âme ; elle est un état passif qu'aucune spontanéité n'honore ; mais dans l'acte de la foi (car c'est un acte et non un état) l'âme est en quelque sorte créatrice ; si elle ne crée pas la vérité, elle la rapproche de soi, se l'approprie, la réalise ; une idée devient un fait, un fait sans cesse présent." Vinet, *Discours, La Foi, Premier Disc.*—See also Rogers's *Essays, Essay on Reason and Faith*, vol. 2. pp. 260–267: (pp. 10–17 smaller ed.)

“That God, when he created man, endued him with faculties sufficient for all the purposes of his existence, it were impious to doubt ; but to suppose that He gave him faculties by which he was to become independent of the divine aid or control, is a supposition without warrant or foundation. Nay, it is not only unsupported by authority or proof, but is contrary to what we might reasonably expect, from considering the relation that subsists between the creature and the Creator. Were man, indeed, destined only for this world, then, to walk by sight, to concern himself only about the things here present to his view, and to be utterly regardless of what relates to the invisible world, might be his wisdom and his duty. But if the Almighty created him to be an heir of immortality and a partaker of his everlasting kingdom, is it not reasonable to suppose that he would afford him such instruction relative to that future and invisible world as the objects here before him are incompetent to supply ? Can it be imagined that a benevolent and all-wise Creator would suffer his creature, man, to remain in ignorance of the divine will, or to fail, through want of due light and information, of attaining the great end of his being, and the most perfect happiness of which his nature is capable ? From these and other similar considerations we are almost necessarily led to suppose that the Almighty would reserve in his hands such a direct *authority* over us, and such means of interposing in our concerns, as

should continually remind us of our subjection to Him, and convince us that we are dependent on His will for every thing we can hope for or enjoy." Bishop Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xvi. Hooker says that, from St. John viii. 44, "it may be very probably thought that the happiness even of angels depended chiefly upon their belief of a truth which God did reveal unto them." *Fragments of an Answer to the Letter of certain English Protestants*, Appendix to Book v. No. 1, ed. Keble.

## XX.—p. 16.

*The discursive or logical faculty, which has of late been often denominated the Understanding as distinguished from the Reason.*] This well known distinction, with its philosophical history, has been clearly stated by Morell, in his "*Philosophy of Religion*," chap. 2. *On the distinction between the Logical and the Intuitional Consciousness.*—See Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection, On the difference in kind of Reason and the Understanding.*—Tholuck, *Die Lehre von der Sünde*, &c. Beilage 6, *Ueber Vernunft und Verstand in ihr Verhältniss zur Offenbarung.*

## XXI.—p. 17.

*The Understanding is, in short, a secondary or instrumental faculty.*] This instrumental faculty may be regarded as the handmaid of all the other powers of the intellect. Coextensive with the powers by which we obtain a knowledge of the primary elements or first principles of truth, is that intelligence by which we deduce one truth from another, by which we abstract and generalize, compare our ideas and study their relations so as to obtain at once a connected and practical survey, together with a ready command, of all the riches of our minds. Hence our power of retaining ideas, in the way of *Memory*; and of reproducing, reviewing, and combining, or, as it were, of embodying and grouping them, in the way of *Imagination*. Great practical importance attaches to the healthful exercise, and the due subordination and control, of these mental powers.—The office of the Imagination "is to be assistant both to the Understanding and to the Will...Its assistance to the Un-

derstanding is principally in matters of invention, readily to supply it with variety of objects whereon to work; as also to quicken and raise the mind—with strong delight in its proper object.....The office to the Will is to quicken, allure, and sharpen its desire towards some convenient object. And therefore in that great work of men's conversion unto God, he is said to allure them, and to speak comfortably unto them, to beseech and to persuade them; to set forth Christ to the soul as altogether lovely." Reynolds *On the Soul*, pp. 18-20.

XXII.—p. 19.

*The objects of Faith are above this reason, but not contrary to it.*] The distinction between that which is *above* reason and that which is *contrary* to it, has been often clearly and amply stated. See a collection of extracts to this effect, from ancient and modern writers, in Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.*, Beilage 6. The following passage from Neander's Church History may serve as a useful comment on the allusion which Tholuck there makes to the views of Thomas Aquinas on this matter.—“As Thomas Aquinas, on the one hand, maintained that the doctrines of revelation are above reason, and, with a moderation the more to be admired because it proceeded from a mind so acute and profoundly speculative by nature, endeavoured to fix the boundaries of rational demonstration; so, on the other hand, he stood forth the opponent of a party who held that an irreconcilable opposition existed between faith and reason. Those who affirmed this, were certainly not the advocates of an abrupt supernaturalism, but rather of a pantheistic and rationalistic infidelity, which came from Spain, having originated in the school of Averrhoes; and now, under the pretext of this irreconcilable opposition between revelation and reason, between theological and philosophical truth, was endeavouring to propagate itself. Under such an opposition might be concealed a negative tendency; negative, in that it afterwards bowed to the authority of the church, holding that from the church alone could be received those higher truths which contradicted natural



reason. Thomas maintained, in opposition to this tendency, that the truths of faith could not possibly contradict the fundamental axioms recognised as necessary truths by natural reason; for if they could, then, since God, the author of our nature, implanted these truths in that nature, it would follow that God contradicted himself. Besides, our minds would be hindered, by conflicting ideas, from making any progress in the knowledge of truth; a condition of being such as could not possibly proceed from God. That which is natural cannot be altered, so long as nature remains the same. But contradicting convictions cannot subsist together. Therefore, it would be impossible for a conviction to be imparted to man by God, which contradicts natural knowledge. To confirm this, he cites, with a profound sense of the spirit of the passage, Rom. x. 8. That, however, which is *above* reason, is by many wrongly held to be *contradictory* to reason. From all this it follows that the objections brought against the truths of faith can possess only a shadow of truth; they must be sophistical. And so reason, though she cannot, it is true, demonstrate the truths of faith which are above reason, may detect and expose the shallowness of the arguments brought against them. As grace does not destroy nature, but completes it, so natural reason must be subservient to faith, as also the natural inclinations should be subservient to Christian love." Neander's *Church History*, (Torrey's translation), vol. 8. sect. 4.

"Philosophy and religion are neither of them absorbed by the other. They mutually nourish each other, without ever becoming converted the one into the other, or overlaying one the other as identical. If man had only reason, he would fall from negation to negation, into the last circle of nonentity. If he had only faith, he would be carried away without remedy beyond all reality, to the furthest realms of infinity. But from the conflict of these two opposite forces results the regular movement of humanity, in like manner as from the two forces which act upon every star results the orbit which it describes in its annual revolutions." Quinet, *On the State of Christianity in Germany*.

To these extracts, I may be permitted to append, however well known, Lord Bacon's *Student's Prayer*,—"To God the Father, God the Word, God the Spirit, we pour forth most humble and hearty supplications; that He, remembering the calamities of mankind, and the pilgrimage of this our life, in which we wear out days few and evil, would please to open to us new refreshments out of the fountains of his goodness, for the alleviating of our miseries. This also we humbly and earnestly beg, that human things may not prejudice such as are divine; neither that from the unlocking of the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light, any thing of incredulity, or intellectual night, may arise in our minds towards divine mysteries. But rather, that by our mind thoroughly cleansed and purged from fancy and vanities, and yet subject and perfectly given up to the divine oracles, there may be given unto faith the things that are faith's. Amen."

XXIII.—p. 20.

*This faculty has been appointed to weigh and examine the evidence which claims the assent of faith.*] "It was a foul aspersion cast upon our religion by its ancient opposers that it did require ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, a mere belief, void of reason; challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof. This suggestion, if true, were, I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms: but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our religion, being repugnant to the nature and tenor thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use and practice. Never any religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding itself on men's credulity, none ever so freely exposed itself to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scan and sift its pretences; yea, provoked them for its own sake and their own, upon most important considerations (as the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage) to a fair, discreet, careful examination thereof. Other religions have for their justification in-

sisted upon the examples of ancestors, customs and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsical, and of small validity in any case) declining all other test and verdict of reason: but our religion confideth in itself, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person." Barrow, *Sermons on the Apostles' Creed*, Sermon ii, *On the Virtue and Reasonableness of Faith*.—"It is, in the first instance, the part of reason to sit as supreme arbiter on the evidences of a professed message from heaven to earth; it is, in the second instance, the part of reason to ascertain the sense of this alleged revelation,—but that, you will remember, on the same principles of grammar and criticism which determine the sense of any ordinary author. After this, reason resigns her office; but not till she has pronounced it to be most reasonable that after the bearer of an alleged communication from heaven has produced the satisfying credentials of his mission, nothing remains for it but the unqualified submission of our faith to all the doctrine and all the information wherewith he is charged." Chalmers, *Prelections &c., Notes on Hill's Lectures in Divinity*, book iv. chap. 2. § 1.

## XXIV.—p. 21.

*We must believe before we can be logically acquainted with the objects of our belief.*] "Daher dürfen wir uns denn auch nicht berechtigt halten, zu verwerfen, was wir mit unserer Vernunft nicht haben erreichen können. Vielmehr müssen wir beständig eingedenk seyn, theils, dass überhaupt in der Religion nicht das Erkennen und Begreifen das Erste ist, sondern der Glaube und das Gefühl, dass also der Begriff den Glauben voraussetzt (wie Anselm sagt, am Schlusse des ersten cap. seines Proslogiums, neque enim

quæro intelligere, ut credam, sed credo ut intelligam; nam et hoc credo, quia, nisi credidero, non intelligam); theils, dass die religiöse Erkenntniss sich nicht in reine Vernunft-erkenntniss auflösen lässt, sondern immer nach Grund und Wesen von ihr verschieden bleibt; theils, dass es immer Grenzen der wissenschaftlichen Aneignung giebt, mögen sie nun eine Folge seyn von der nur allmählig fortschreitenden Ausbildung der Wissenschaft, oder, was unserer Betrachtung hier am nächsten liegt, von unserm Verhältnisse zu Christo und zur Offenbarung." Twisten, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik*, Erster Theil, § 31.

XXV.—p. 24.

*These active living powers we denominate the Will.*] "Because wishes, desires, and volitions presuppose intellectual conceptions and emotions, it is rashly concluded that they are nothing but intellectual conceptions or emotions. No doubt they are intimately connected with the intellectual states of mind on the one hand, and emotional attachments on the other, but they contain a something which can be resolved into neither the one nor the other, nor into both combined.—Appealing to consciousness, we assert that there is a class of mental states embracing wishes, desires, volitions, which cannot be analyzed into any thing else. These mental states or affections are very numerous, and occupy a place in the human mind second to no other. They differ from each other in degree, and possibly even in some minor qualities, but they all agree in other and more important respects, and so are capable of being arranged under one head . . . . We hold the Will to be a general attribute of the mind, and its operations manifested under various forms. It says of this object, it is good—I desire it; it is evil—I reject it. In its feeblest form, it is simply wish, or the opposite of wish; and according as it fixes on the object as more or less good or evil, it rises till it may become the most intense desire or abhorrence. When inconsistent objects present themselves, and the mind would choose both if it could, there may for a time be a clashing or contest. Where there is no clashing of desires, or where one of the contending desires has

prevailed, and the object is declared to be better or best, and where it is also ascertained to be attainable, then the will assumes this form,—I choose this ; I resolve to obtain it. This, the consummating step, is commonly called volition, to distinguish it from simple wish and desire. And we hold that it is the same attribute of the mind which says, this object is good, I wish it, and desire it ; and which says, on there being no competing good, or no good esteemed as equal to it, I choose it.—It is of the utmost moment, even in a psychological point of view, to distinguish between the emotions and the will . . . We stand up for the existence of a higher faculty in mind, and which, no doubt proceeding upon emotion, uses it all the while merely to rise to the exercise of its own independent functions.” M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. I. § 1.—“ To speak of feelings or convictions *creating* the will is simply an absurdity. The Will is another name for that real but mysterious power of mind which, in a moment, can, at its bidding, emit an energy that leads to voluntary action or endurance. Feeling and convictions could never create this power, although it is quite true that they may influence the movements of it. This being premised, the fallacious conclusion intended to be drawn from such a representation becomes manifest. The argument implied in it is this. Our feelings and convictions create the will ; therefore the will, which is a creation of their own, cannot possibly have had any previous influence upon them. But, how does the case really stand ? The will is a mighty energy of a nature quite its own, which restrains or impels the whole man at its behest ; created, moreover, not by feelings and convictions, but by the Author itself of the human mind. Our feelings and convictions act upon this power and set it in motion ; but then it at once reacts upon them, and, guided by intelligence, moulds them, to a vast extent, at its pleasurè. Take a separate volition, and it is quite true that this is determined by some feeling or emotion of the mind ; but we must be cautious not to confound an individual volition with *the Will*, viewed as the abiding fact or principle of our

spontaneity. A single volition is to the will, as a whole, what a single wave is to the ocean. Because the wind creates every wave that heaves upon the surface, is it therefore true that it created the ocean itself? And so, because a feeling or a conviction may occasion a separate volition, is it therefore true that it originates the voluntary power of which this volition is but a movement?" Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part ii. chap. 4. § 1.

## XXVI.—p. 25.

*The Will is not the servant of necessity, that is, of any foreign restraint or force determining its choice.*] “*Ligatus, non ferro alieno, sed mea ferrea voluntate. Velle meum tenebat inimicus, et inde mihi catenam fecerat et constrinxerat me. Quippe ex voluntate perversa facta est libido; et dum servitur libidini, facta est consuetudo; et dum consuetudini non resistitur, facta est necessitas.*” Augustin, *Conf.* 8, 5.—“This is the essential attribute of a will, and contained in the very idea, that whatever determines the will acquires this power from a previous determination of the will itself. The will is ultimately self-determined; or it is no longer a will under the law of perfect freedom, but a nature under the mechanism of cause and effect. And if by an act to which it had determined itself it has subjected itself to the determination of nature (in the language of St. Paul, to the law of the flesh), it receives a nature into itself, and so far it becomes a nature: and this is a corruption of the will and a corrupt nature.” Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection, On Spiritual Religion*.—“Augustin und Jacobi sind meine Lehrer, wenn ich als *Zustand* unterscheide die *Wahlfreiheit*, nach welcher Gutes und Böses dem Menschen vorgelegt ist und er danach sich entscheidet, die *Freiheit der Kinder Gottes*, nach welcher der Mensch, seiner Bestimmung gemäss, ohne zwischen gut und böse zu *wählen*, welches schon ein theilweises Wohlgefallen an demselben voraussetzt<sup>a</sup>, nur das Gute will, wie Gott. Das letztere war der Zustand des Menschen vor dem Falle, er kehrt wieder in den gefallenen

<sup>a</sup> But surely we may say that a man chooses between good and evil without necessarily implying that he has any propensity to evil.

Menschen, je nachdem derselbe in das Bild des Sohnes Gottes verklärt wird. Dass ein solcher Zustand der Freiheit der Kinder Gottes das endliche Ziel geschaffener Wesen seyn müsse, können nur beschränkte Kantianer läugnen, die keine vollendete Seligkeit glauben können, sondern im ewigen Durste nach Licht ihr Leben finden. Dass ich dies aber mit Recht *Freiheit* nennen könne, dafür will ich mich nicht bloss auf die Bibelsprache berufen, sondern auf den allgemeinen Sprachgebrauch, nach welchem jede freie Entwicklung des Organismus Freiheit genannt wird. Der Baum ist frei, wenn nichts seine Wurzeln verletzt und seinen Wachsthum hemmt; das sittliche Wesen ist frei, wenn nicht die Sünde sein Leben in Gott unterbricht, was seine eigentliche Bestimmung ist. So war denn auch der Urmensch eben so frei als Gott, indem er, was seiner Bestimmung gemäss war, nur das Gute, nur Gottes Willen wollte. So war er wirklich wie Gott. Aber der Stimme der Versuchung wiess ihm auf einem andern Wege eine Gleichheit mit Gott nach, auf dem Wege der Autonomie, auf einem Wege, welcher bewürkte, dass der Mensch gerade verlor was er von Gottähnlichkeit hatte. Tiefsinnig ist es daher, und eine hohe Wahrheit, wenn Augustinus diese Wahlfreiheit, in die der Mensch sich begab, um zur Autonomie zu gelangen, ‘noxia libertas’ nennt, und ‘perversa imitatio Dei’ (Aug. de Genesi ad literam, l. viii. c. 14). Das Princip nun für die Zustände der Freiheit, nenne ich *Selbstbestimmung*, und was Jacobi darüber sagt ist mein Glaube. ‘Es besteht diese Selbstbestimmung nicht in einem ungereimten Vermögen sich ohne gründe zu entscheiden; eben so wenig in der Wahl des Bessern unter dem Nützlichen, oder der vernünftigen Begierde; denn eine solche Wahl, wenn sie auch nach den abgezogensten Begriffen geschieht, erfolgt doch immer nur mechanisch;—sondern es besteht diese Freiheit, dem Wesen nach, *in der Unabhängigkeit des Willens von der Begierde*’ (Jacobi’s Werke, Th. 4, 8. s. 27.) Freilich habe ich hiemit nur eine negative Erklärung gegeben, allein diese Selbstbestimmung ist Leben und Kraft, und Leben und Kraft widerstreben jeder Erklärung; hier ist der Begriff

ohne die Anschauung ein Unding, und nur mit der Anschauung gegeben worden. Es ist diese Selbstbestimmung das Vermögen in jedem Augenblick eine andre Richtung zu haben (absolute Spontaneität), zwar bestimmt und geleitet werden zu können durch Gründe, die in der Aussenwelt liegen, nie aber von ihnen beherrscht und gezwungen zu werden." Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde*, &c. cap. 1.

See the Doctrines of Liberty and Necessity argued in Morell's *History of Modern Philosophy*, part ii. chap. 4. § 1. from which I extract the following passage. "Intelligence creates conceptions, laws, rules of action; sensibility supplies inducements and impulses; will creates effort, activity, the emission of voluntary power. Between the faculty as cause, and the product as effect, there is no intermediate step. It is no more requisite to ask *why* will produces effort and choice, than to ask *why* intelligence gives rise to ideas or sensibility to impulses. The supposition that voluntary effort and choice can spring causatively from an inducement or external motive, is the old error of sensationalism invading the theory of the will, that, namely, of substituting the *occasion* for the *producing cause*. The understanding and the feelings both present inducements to the will; and because the will follows some or other of them, it is supposed to be *necessarily* determined; but this is a false conclusion. These inducements are but the *occasions* of our volition; the power which produces them is that original spontaneity, that independent source of action, which we term *The Will* or *the Me*, and which can react upon all the arguments of reason and all the impulses of emotion. The will, as an abiding fact in our constitution, contributes a large element to the formation of every motive, and when the motives are presented, it gives the whole *nisus*, by which volition or choice is effected.

"Whenever or wherever power is put forth, there must be not only an *occasion*, but also an effort or a spontaneous movement as its *cause*. Hence all power originates in *mind*, the only spontaneous principle,—and that either the mind



of God or the mind of man; and the very same argument which pretends to prove that man is not free, because he chooses from reasons or inducements, would also prove that God is not free, because He never acts without a plan. If we once give up the idea of spontaneity, as the spring of effort or choice, and account for that effort by the inducement alone, nothing can save us from the admission of an enormous and iron fatalism, to which God and man are alike subjected.

“ We allow, then, that volitions must necessarily follow from motives; that there is in fact a fixed relation between them; but those motives are subjective states of mind, such as dispositions, affections, passions, &c., which our intellectual and active nature are adapted by their very constitution to develop or to restrain. When, therefore, the necessarian enunciates the great truth, that no man could have acted differently from what he did under the given motives, all that he really expresses, if he be not a fatalist, is the common-place and most obvious fact, that emotions are the active principles of our nature, and that we always act in accordance with their impulse. If he denies that we have any control over these inward motives, then all his exhortations to the cultivation of the intellect and the feelings are nought but folly, and there is no refuge but in complete circumstantial fatalism. *We affirm, then, that in principle there are only two possible hypotheses respecting liberty and necessity; the one is fatalism, the other is free-will, in the sense in which we have employed it.*

“ There is one thing, which we freely grant to be necessary on every hypothesis, namely, the *relation* existing between our emotions and our volitions; and the philosophical necessarian, keeping his eye upon that point, has stamped all volition as constrained, because it is always excited by a uniform and definite law of our nature: but as well might he call our *actions* constrained also, because they necessarily follow whenever the volition dictates and impels. When we see an action (unless it be a purely mechanical one), we know that it arises from a volition: and in the same way, when we observe or are conscious of

a volition, we know that it arises from an emotion as its real proximate exciting cause; but behind both these lies the solid basis of human liberty, grounded upon that intelligence and native activity, which are the indestructible attributes of all moral and responsible creatures.

“Self and nature . . . are both of them powers, which act and react upon each other. Some men, unquestionably, are more under the influence of external things than others, while some, on the contrary, have what we term a *strong will*; that is, they possess a great capacity and habit of acting from fixed design rather than from shortsighted and more impulsive motives; but, in either case, the real course pursued is the resultant of these two forces. Men who look most to the outward force will form an exaggerated idea of its magnitude, and incline to the sensational form of philosophical necessity; while men who turn their thoughts most within perceive the will operating so decisively upon external things, that at length they imagine it to be well-nigh or entirely supreme. The sensationalist, accordingly, will ever tend to the doctrine of necessity, since the idea of nature occupies the largest share in his philosophy; the idealist will just as naturally tend to that of free-will, since the notion of self, in this case, becomes far the more predominant. A mere glance at the history of philosophy will shew that in nine cases out of ten the sensationalist and the necessarian, and the idealist and the libertarian, have respectively coincided with each other. We look upon both these classes of philosophers, however, so long as in their view of human nature they fall short of complete fatalism on the one hand, and subjective idealism on the other, as being generally advocates of the very same principles of voluntary action; the only difference lies in the relative share of influence which is assigned to self and not-self in the formation of our character and our dispositions.

“The truth of the matter may be stated in a very few words. Mind is essentially an active principle; but, without reason, its activity would be blind and aimless, following the impulses which flow in upon it from without. In

proportion as reason becomes stronger, more vast, and more commanding, just in that proportion shall we find it regulating and directing our emotions. But our emotions are the real motives which excite volition, and volition impels to action; so that it is in the possession of reason that we discover the great regulating principle by which our natural activity is either restrained or directed, and by which we are enabled both to sketch out the designs of our life, and to pursue them in spite of all the obstacles which may stand in our path."

I may add that the "intelligence" or "reason" here spoken of as the "regulating principle," includes, according to the observations made in this first Lecture, the moral faculty and faith; and it may be noticed, in accordance with what is said in Lecture II, that we are "enabled" by these powers to guide our life aright only by the concurrence of the indwelling Spirit of God.

## XXVII.—p. 26.

*Wishes, desires, and volitions, follow in the track of the emotions and affections; and these, in their turn, are excited, in a certain definite way, by an enlightened and duly regulated intellect.]* Volitions are determined by the dictates of the understanding and the bent of the affections: the practical logical understanding,—proceeding upon principles perceived either by sense, experience, intuition, or faith,—influences the affections, and then the affections impel the will to action, that is, produce a volition. But the will, in its habitual state, has an influence over the exercises of reason and of the understanding. Accordingly, as will appear in the next Lecture, religious faith influences the affections, i. e. is the spring or principle of love to God and man.

## XXVIII.—p. 26.

*In this freedom or self-activity of the will, this inherent power of obeying or resisting the dictates of a lawful guide, we find the foundation of human responsibility, and the elements of human virtue.]* "The fact that man's mind is self-acting, and in particular that the will is self-acting, has its power

or law in itself, is one of the conditions of responsibility. A mind led to feel and think by circumstances *ab extra* could not be a free agent or accountable. The other two conditions of responsibility seem to be *conscience* and *intelligence*. There must be conscience to distinguish between the right and wrong, and authoritatively declare which is the one and which is the other. There must also be such an amount of intelligence as to enable the mind, in the complex acts of life, to separate that which is moral from that which is indifferent. These three then seem to be the essential elements or conditions of *responsibility*. Every human being, in a sane state of mind, is in possession of all the three. The maniac, in some cases, has lost the first, and has no proper power of will. The idiot, and in some cases the maniac, is without the third, or the power of discovering what is really embraced in a given phenomenon. Without the one or the other of these necessary adjuncts, there is no room for the right exercise of the second—that is, the conscience; and the party, therefore, is not responsible. In the case of the maniac, as soon as intelligence and the power of the will are restored, the conscience, which is the most indestructible faculty in the human soul, is in circumstances to renew its proper operation.” M’Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. i. § 1. —“The pleasures that accompany the exercise of desires are necessary to encourage and to stimulate them, but the regulation of them belongs to a higher principle; and in none of them is the excellence of our moral and intellectual nature to be placed. It is only when the understanding guides and harmonizes them together, so as to direct their course and to prescribe the limits both of their employment and gratification, making natural regard to our interests triumph over sensual appetite, and duty superior to both without extinguishing either, that man fulfils properly the course appointed him by Providence.” Mills, *Essays*, pp. 273, 274.—“To shew that responsibility rests upon personal choice, it will be necessary to distinguish between the effect of *mere volition* and the agency of *free-will*. The one may be purely automatic, the other must result from the

exercise of the reasoning powers;—the one is generally attended by mere consciousness, and follows as a necessary result from it, while the other is aided by conscience, and is accompanied by a conviction that we might have determined differently, though reason and reflection combine to say that we ought not.” Newnham, *Body and Mind*, p. 205.

## XXIX.—p. 26.

*A real and effectual power of self-control.*] The will of man is no blind impulse; it is an intelligent power; it is (properly) ruled and guided by intelligence. And wonderful indeed are those provisions of our mental and moral constitution by which the intellect and the will are appointed to act and react upon each other. In a state of perfection, the intellect guides the will, and guides it rightly, while the will readily obeys; disorder ensues, when either the intellect misleads the will, or when the will refuses to accept the wise and legitimate guidance of an enlightened intellect. And, on the other hand, when all proceeds according to the established harmony of our nature, then the will prompts and stimulates the intelligence to the lawful exercise of its powers, and the intellect receives the impulse; whereas disorder exists when the will fails to arouse the intellect to action, or when the will perverts the intellect by constraining it to abuse its powers in order to make its reports according to its own arbitrary bidding.—The very existance of our emotions implies an exercise of the mind whereby certain objects have been apprehended as adapted to excite these corresponding feelings; and not only so, but it is clearly within the province of our intellectual and moral faculties to control and moderate these sensibilities of our nature, to give them law and direction, and to impress upon them their due character: and, as the emotions are the springs of desire and volition, it becomes at once evident to how great an extent the will is made subject to intelligence, to the moral faculty, and faith.—“Appetite is the Will’s solicitor, and the Will is Appetite’s controller; what we covet according to the one, by the other we often reject; neither is any other desire pro-

perly termed Will, but that where Reason and Understanding, or the show of Reason, prescribeth the thing desired." Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book i. chap. 7. § 4.—"That which moveth man's will is the object or thing desired. That which causeth it to be desired is either true or apparent goodness. The goodness of things desired is either manifest by sense, gathered by reason, or known by faith." *Ibid.* *Fragments of an Answer &c.*, book v. Appendix No. 1. ed. Keble.

## XXX.—p. 27.

*It is not the strong will, or the steady purpose, which, as such, is good and praiseworthy.]* See Coleridge, *Stateman's Manual*, Appendix B.—Archdeacon Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, Note S. a.

## XXXI.—p. 27.

*As the intellect pervades and rules the will, so also the will has been appointed in its turn to act upon the intellect.]* "Es ist mit Vernunft und Verstand wie mit Hand und Fuss; ist der Wille verkehrt, so lassen sie sich zu allem Ungöttlichen missbrauchen; namentlich lassen sie sich vom Hochmuth weit über ihre Gränzen treiben. Und weil nun Luther diese Abhängigkeit unserer Erkenntniss von den Willensneigungen kannte, so verdamnte er nur die Vernunft des Unwiedergeborenen, als in welchem die Willensneigungen noch nicht geheiligt sind, erhob aber die des Wiedergeborenen." Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.*, Beilage 6.—On the interaction of the intellect and the will, see Dr. Chalmers, *Notes on Hill's Lectures on Divinity*, book ii. chap. 3.—"The defect of intellectual power, and the 'having no turn or taste for subjects of this sort,' are effects and consequences of the alienation of the will, that is, of the man himself." Coleridge, *Demosius and Mystes*.—"The human understanding does not consist of a dry light, but receives an infusion from the will and the affections; so that what a man would most wish to be true, that he most readily believes. And thus he rejects what is difficult, from impatience of inquiry; what is sober, because it narrows his hopes; the deeper things of nature, from superstition; the

light of experience, from arrogance and pride, lest the mind should seem to be occupied with things low and fluctuating; paradoxes, on account of the opinion of the multitude: in fine, passion imbues and infects the understanding in innumerable ways, and in such as are sometimes imperceptible." Bacon, *Novum Organon, Idola Tribus*, 5.—“ We find the will operating in every faculty we exercise. The power of attention is nothing more or less than the will exerting itself in modifying or prolonging the trains of thought.” Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part ii. chap. 4. sect. 2.

## XXXII.—p. 27.

*Amidst the whole range of our intellectual powers none are more powerfully affected by the state of the will than are the moral faculty and faith.]* There exists a most intimate alliance between right feeling and a clear perception of moral and religious truths. If Reason be blind in these matters, the fault may frequently be traced, more or less directly, to the Will; and it may be absolutely said, that it is not human reason, considered simply as the faculty which God has given us, but it is the reason of fallen and unregenerate man, reason neglected or perverted by the will, that is rightly to be regarded as the great antagonist of Christian light and principle.—Indeed, so closely is the action of the Will allied to Faith, that there can exist no true faith without it. Faith is an intellectual act; but it is at the same time voluntary. When demonstration compels assent, such assent is not rightly denominated faith: we do not believe without adequate evidence, but still that evidence is not such as to overpower the determination of our will, or to force our assent against our inclination and our choice. And hence it is that, under certain conditions, men are responsible to Him who made them for their opinions and belief; and that religious faith, in particular, is rightly regarded as a voluntary act, for which we are held accountable.—“ La Foi n'est pas l'adhésion forcée et passive d'un esprit vaincu pas les preuves; c'est une force de l'âme aussi inexplicable dans son principe qu'aucune des qualités natives qui distinguent l'homme entre ses

semblables,—force qui ne se contente pas d'accepter la vérité, mais qui s'en saisit, qui l'embrasse, s'identifie avec elle, et se laisse porter par elle vers toutes les conséquences qu'elle indique et qu'elle commande." Vinet, *Discours, La Foi, Premier Disc.*—"La vérité a ses titres en elle-même; elle est sa preuve à elle-même; elle se démontre en se montrant: et le cœur est le miroir de la vérité; mais ce miroir, mal posé, ne réfléchit pas la lumière, jusqu'à ce qu'une main divine l'ait tourné du côté du soleil; le cœur a besoin d'être *incliné*; ce qui re oit en nous la vérité, ce qui au dedans de nous connaît, croit, et aime, ce n'est pas le cœur tel qu'il est, c'est le cœur *incliné*, et tout d'abord le cœur humilié, le cœur 's'offrant par l'humiliation aux inspirations' comme s'exprime Pascal lui-même." Vinet, *Études sur Blaise Pascal*, 5.—"Der Gedanke denkt, das Gefühl schaut und genießt das Göttliche: im Gefühl nähert sich das Göttliche unmittelbar unserm Herzen; im Gedanken erfassen wir es mittelbar. Aber der Gedanke soll jene seltern Höhepunkte des Gefühls für das Leben vermitteln, und den Willen leiten. So geht aus dem Glauben das Erkennen, aus dem Erkennen das Wollen hervor; dem Glauben ist indessen das Wollen auch schon vorausgegangen. Der Wille ist eben so sehr Erzeuger als Erzeugniß des Glaubens." Gelzer, *Religion im Leben*, Ethische Aphorismen xix.—See Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book i. chap. 7. § 7.—Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xviii.—Hare, *Victory of Faith*, Sermon ii, *Faith a Practical Principle*.

## XXXIII.—p. 28.

*It is in the full harmony of all these powers, existing in their several relations, that we find human Virtue, or the moral goodness of this complex being, man.*] "The excellence of man—so complexly constituted in his nature—must consist in the harmonious action and proper balance of all the constituents of that nature; the equilibrium he sighs for must be the result of the combined action of forces operating in different directions; of his reason, his faith, his appetites, his affections, his emotions; when these operate in due proportion, then and then only can he be



at rest. It may indeed transcend any calculus of man to estimate exactly the several elements in this complicated polygon of force; but we are at least sure that if any one principle be so developed as to supersede another, no safe equipoise will be attained." Rogers's *Essays*, vol. II. *Essay on Reason and Faith*, pp. 268, 269 (smaller ed. p. 18.)

## XXXIV.—p. 29.

*Conscience, not the moral perception and judgment which declares, This is right and that is wrong, but the law within the heart which says, What is right, that you are bound to do, what is wrong, that you must avoid.]* "If we confound conscience with the moral faculty, or moral sense, or by whatever name it may be called, which points out the first principles of right and wrong, we are in danger of encouraging a common and pernicious error. I mean, the error of setting up conscience as the teacher and infallible guide of duty and rectitude. Are we not told in the faithful records of all ages, that the most atrocious and horrible crimes have been perpetrated with a quiet mind under the plea of conscience?" Mills, *Essays*, &c. p. 297.—"Conscience is a word with which sundry tricks have been played by the new school of sophists at Oxford, until it has come to be held that Conscience is to pronounce on the moral fitness of particular outward acts; whereas that fitness can only be determined by the calm and patient exercise of the practical understanding, examining the materials supplied by experience and observation, and applying the laws of the reason to them, with a due regard to the demands of the affections, and, in certain cases, to the imaginative part of our nature." Hare, *Mission of the Comforter*, note W.

*The law within the heart.]* See Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book i. chap. 8, § 3, &c.; and especially, Bp. Butler, *Sermons upon Human Nature*, Sermon ii, iii.—"Every work both of nature and of art is a system: and as every particular thing, both natural and artificial, is for some use or purpose out of and beyond itself, one may add, to what has already been brought into the idea of a system, its conduciveness

to this one or more ends. Let us instance in a watch. Suppose the several parts of it taken to pieces, and placed apart from each other: let a man have ever so exact a notion of these several parts, unless he considers the respects and relations which they have to each other, he will not have anything like the idea of a watch. Suppose these several parts brought together, and any how united: neither will he yet, be the union ever so close, have an idea which will bear any resemblance to that of a watch. But let him view those several parts put together, or consider them as to be put together in the manner of a watch; let him form a notion of the relations which those several parts have to each other,—all conducive in their respective ways to this purpose, shewing the hour of the day; and then he has the idea of a watch. Thus it is with regard to the inward frame of man. Appetites, passions, affections, and the principle of reflection, considered merely as the several parts of our inward nature, do not at all give us an idea of the system or constitution of this nature; because the constitution is formed by somewhat not yet taken into consideration, namely, by the relations which these several parts have to each other; the chief of which is the authority of reflection or conscience. It is from considering the relations which the several appetites and passions in the inward frame have to each other, and above all the supremacy of reflection or conscience, that we get the idea of the system or constitution of human nature. And from the idea itself it will as fully appear that this our nature, i. e. our constitution, is adapted to virtue, as from the idea of a watch it appears that its nature, i. e. constitution or system, is adapted to measure time. What in fact or event commonly happens is nothing to this question. Every work of art is apt to be out of order: but this is so far from being according to its system, that, let the disorder increase, and it will totally destroy it. This is merely by way of explanation, what an economy, system, or constitution is. And thus far the cases are perfectly parallel. If we go further, there is indeed a difference, nothing to the present purpose, but

too important a one ever to be omitted. A machine is inanimate and passive; but we are agents. Our constitution is put in our own power. We are charged with it; and therefore we are accountable for any disorder or violation of it." Bp. Butler, *Preface to Sermons*.—In the Sermons, where Butler points out the supremacy of conscience, it is to be observed that under the term Conscience he includes both the moral faculty, sense, or judgment, and the moral emotion or law.

"There are in the human mind universally two great fundamental notions of right and wrong, which are as absolute in their nature, and as impossible of being obliterated, as any fundamental axioms of man's universal belief. The fact that men of different nations, in different ages, and in different states of mental development, have held the most conflicting notions as to what belongs to the category of right, and what belongs to that of wrong, is no evidence whatever against the universality of those fundamental notions themselves; nay, it rather proves that they always exist, although the moral judgment may not be enlightened enough to apply them to all the practice of life. These notions, moreover, are accompanied with a moral emotion, which, while it gives us a profound admiration for what is purely disinterested, acts as an *imperative*, that becomes more and more powerful, in proportion to the greater development of the moral faculty; ever inciting us to the avoidance of evil and the constant pursuit of good." Morell, *History of Moral Philosophy*, part ii. chap. 4. § 2.—"The sense of freedom which man enjoys was intended to be regulated by *conscience*, including under that term the absolute law of right, and the categorical imperative to fulfil it." *Ib.*, *Philosophy of Religion*, chap. 4.

"Some law is supposed out of the province of conscience, which the moral reason must first assent to;—Conscience, by the exercise of the understanding, compares our conduct with this law;—by her power over the heart awakens the sentiment of aversion or love, and the feelings of pleasure or pain which accompany her decisions.—If we call the whole of this process the *moral*

*faculty*, and identify this term with conscience, we appear to attribute to conscience the first principles of morals, and thus combine a variety of operations, which upon analysis are separable from each other, into one confused mass; if we call it by the more objectionable name, the operation of *moral sense*, we run the risk of conveying the notion that the whole is feeling. . . . The view of conscience as a mental state seems inaccurately stated by Bp. Butler, who, by identifying it with the moral faculty, makes it of itself create the standard of rectitude to which its reflections must be applied (?); and imperfectly described by Mackintosh, who, by reducing it to mere feeling, would leave it without reflection altogether: but that part of the definition proposed by the latter author, which relates to *the object* of conscience, is excellent both for clearness and correctness; this object is stated to be ‘the mental dispositions leading to voluntary actions, and the voluntary actions which flow from these dispositions.’ Other desires and affections and principles have their distinct aims, but conscience keeps in view mental dispositions only, and their consequent actions; it reviews the whole of these, extending to the entire character and conduct.” Mills, *Essays*, &c. pp. 295, 296, 299, 300. The following is the definition of Mackintosh to which reference is here made.—“The truth seems to be, that the moral sentiments in their mature state are *a class of feelings which have no other object but the mental dispositions leading to voluntary action, and the voluntary actions which flow from these dispositions.*” Sir James Mackintosh, *Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy*, sect. 6.

“*Συνείδησις* possesses always, in addition to the knowledge of the law, the consciousness in itself of being able and bound somehow or other to observe that law.” Ols-hausen on *Romans* ii. 15.

“It is always to be borne in mind, however, that the simple possession of conscience, with its accompanying emotions, does not render any individual virtuous. We are made virtuous, not by the possession of the faculty which judges of virtuous action, or of the emotions which

echo its decisions, but by the possession of the virtuous actions themselves. This may seem an obvious truth when stated; but it has been strangely overlooked by many persons, who conclude that man is virtuous because he is possessed of such a power and of its responsive feelings. These persons do not reflect that the faculty and its accompanying sentiment are ready to condemn the possessor of them, when he is without the affections and actions in which virtue truly consists." M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. 1. sect. 4.

## XXXV.—p. 29.

*That moral obligation which conscience so distinctly apprehends.]* For Conscience is not itself the ground of obligation, nor does it of itself create that ground: it only discerns the obligation, which God himself ordains. And while we recognise in the law of right and goodness an expression of the will of the Most High, we may be satisfied not merely that a thing is right because God wills it, but also that God wills it because it is right.

## XXXVI.—p. 34.

*By his voluntary choice of evil at the instigation of the Tempter.]* Man is the cause of his own ruin; for as he was not created with an element of evil adhering to his nature, so neither was he forcibly plunged into it. Temptation indeed came from Satan; but the Evil One does not force the will to sin, as the Holy Spirit does not overpower it for good. Whatever was the strength of the temptation presented to our first parents, it was man that destroyed himself: and it may be observed, in general, that any theory of the origin of evil which avowedly, or by necessary consequence, makes God the author of sin, is at once unfounded and blasphemous.—“Out of the liberty wherewith God by creation endued reasonable creatures, there ensued sin through their own voluntary choice of evil, neither by the appointment of God, nor yet without his permission ... Amongst the Jews two hundred years before Christ there were, as it seemed [seemeth?] men which fathered sin and

iniquity upon God's ordinance : under the Apostles there is some show that the like was broached. The Valentinians, the Marcionites, and the Manichees being persuaded, as the truth is, that one and the same God cannot wish, love, or approve, both virtue and vice, both good and evil, ascribed willingly the one to that God most just and righteous, whom we all worship ; but vainly imagined that the other hath grown from some other God of equal power and of contrary disposition. Of late the Libertines have reduced both unto God again ; they have left no difference between good and evil, but in name only. They make all things in God's sight to be alike ; God the worker, man but his instrument ; and our perfection to consist only in casting out that scrupulosity, conscience, and fear, which we have of one thing more than another. Of all which heretical devices the fountain is that secret shame wherewith our nature in itself doth abhor the deformity of sin, and for that cause study by all means how to find the first original of it elsewhere. But forasmuch as the glory of God hath been defended, first by Jesus the son of Sirach (xv. 12) against blasphemers in his time ; by St. James (i. 13) against the wicked of the Apostles' days ; against the Valentinians afterwards by Irenæus (ix. 47, 48) ; by Tertullian against the Marcionites ; against the Manichees by St. Augustin ; and against Libertines last of all by Calvin, [in two Tracts published 1544, 1547. See his collected Tracts in Theology, Genev. 1597, p. 501, 540] ; to whose industry alone we owe the refutation of this impiety ; we may well presume that of this the whole Christian world is agreed, all denying God to be the author of sin." Hooker, *Fragment of an Answer &c.*, Appendix No. 1, to book v. (ed. Keble).—An anonymous writer has well remarked, "There are those who blasphemously affirm that they are so constituted as to be obliged to commit sin. But if you are in a right moral frame you will on the contrary maintain that you are 'fearfully and wonderfully made ;' that whilst you are capable of transgression, arising from that freedom which is an essential element in moral and intelligent beings, you were intended for and adapted to holy

occupations; that all sin is a wrong development of the powers of your nature; that the very capability of rising to what is high involves of necessity a tendency to sink [rather, a capability of sinking] to what is low; that the one cannot exist without the other; and that it is at once the duty and the glory of man to act out legitimately the attributes of his nature. There are few things but are capable of perversion. The very elements around us may be so misapplied as to become the destroyers instead of the supporters of life."

## XXXVII.—p. 34.

*Sin is not merely a negation, or a natural defect &c.]*  
 "Was ich jetzt klar einsehe, ist dies, dass das Böse nicht Negation ist, sondern Opposition, und dass der kräftige Bösewicht desto teuflischer, weil er das höchste Mass zum Guten verliehener Kräfte in eine dem Guten widerstrebende Richtung brachte. Die Richtung, welche durch die ganze Wesenleiter gehen sollte, ist, wie Du es richtig andeutest, physisch und sittlich in Gott zu seyn; der Böse entfernt sich von diesem Gesetz; seinem Anstreben nach will er nicht weniger in Gott seyn, sondern gar nicht, er will sein eigener Herr und Meister seyn. Freilich hat das Böse nicht wie das Gute eine Urwurzel, aus der es quillt, freilich haftet es nur am Guten, ist eine relative Vernichtung jenes Guten an dem es haftet, aber die Richtung des Willens zu dieser Vernichtung und Abkehr hin ist doch eine reelle, eine nicht negirende, sondern opponirende." The-  
 luck, *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.*, cap. 1.

## XXXVIII.—p. 34.

*The root of sin is in the will.]* "The Christian grounds his philosophy on assertions; and yet his assertions have nothing in them of theory or hypothesis, but are in immediate reference to three ultimate facts; namely, the reality of the law of Conscience,—the existence of a responsible Will,—and, lastly, the existence of Evil, of evil essentially such, not by accident of outward circumstances, not derived from its physical consequences, nor from any cause

out of itself. The first is a fact of consciousness ; the second a fact of reason necessarily concluded from the first ; and the third a fact of history interpreted by both." Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection, Elements of Religious Philosophy*. — "That the law is a law *for you* ; that it acts on the will, not in it ; that it exercises an agency from without, by fear and coercion,—proves the corruption of your will, and presupposes it. Sin, in this sense, came by the law ; for it has its essence, as sin, in that counter-position of the holy principle to the will, which occasions this principle to be a law." *Ib. Aids to Reflection, On Spiritual Religion*, Comment on Aphorism xv.—"Es ist das Christenthum die einzige Lehre in der Welt, welche dem Menschen wie die Tiefe seines Falls, so den Adel seiner Geburt in seiner ganzen Grösse lehrt. Es ist das Christenthum die einzige Lehre in der Welt, welche auf eine gründliche Art in der zersprengten goldenen Kette, welche einst den unsterblichen Geist des Menschen an den Ewigen schloss, das Glied nachweist, das zerrissen, und das Mittel es wieder anzuschliessen. Und dieser Punkt, da der heilige Faden zerriss, und da er wieder angeknüpft werden muss, wo ist er anders als in der Willensneigung des Menschen? Das Willensvermögen ist die Wurzel des geistigen Lebens des Menschen, davon Erkenntniss und Gefühl nur Aeste und Zweige. Fragen wir nun die Urgeschichte Gottes um Kunde über das Räthsel aller Zeiten, so ist schon am Anfange aller Jahrhunderte das Räthsel gelöst. 'Ihr werdet seyn wie Gott!' spricht die Stimme der Versuchung." Tholuck, *Die Lehre von der Sünde, &c.*, cap. 1.—"Das Sündige an der Vorstellung kann . . . nur die Lüge, das Sündige an der Begehrung nur das Gelüsten sein. Das gleichartige Princip der Lüge und des Gelüstens aber ist die Selbstsucht, die allein in ihrer ersten Entstehung und Ursachlichkeit unerklärbar bleibt und doch alles erklärt. Durch diese Selbstsucht ist eine falsche Leidentlichkeit und eine falsche Thätigkeit gegeben, nämlich ein träges Zurückbleiben hinter dem von Gott geoffenbarten Zwecke und Gesetze, und ein stolzes Voraneilen im Genusse der Güter und der Selbstheit. Die Frucht hievon ist die



Sünde, d. h., diejenige Verkehrung der Göttlichen Ordnung, die sich das persönliche Wesen zu Schulden kommen lässt, und durch die es zugleich von Gott abfällt, mit sich und dem Nächsten zerfällt, und ein Unrecht begehet, welcher gesühnt werden muss." Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 105.

## XXXIX.—p. 34.

*Man fell from the state of his original uprightness when his Will disobeyed his Conscience commanding what was right according to the will of God.]* The holy will of God was proclaimed, and known to have been proclaimed, as the creature's rule and law: self-will, breaking loose from this law, while the intellect was giving credence to a lie, revolted and rebelled. Self chose to be as God, knowing good and evil, that is, discriminating for itself independently of divine teaching, or even determining to be acquainted with evil by a forbidden intimacy, as it had already become acquainted with good by a gracious dispensation. The fall of man consisted in this severance of his will from the will of his Creator. This is the essential nature of sin,—that original sin which has infected the whole race of mankind. And this sin is deadly. True indeed it is that sin may be regarded as bearing witness to the high destination of the human soul, since, even in sinning, man is aiming, but perversely, at apparent good: but yet sin,—opposition in the creature to the will of the Creator,—is fatal to the well-being of the soul, inasmuch as it is of itself the seed of all disorder and misery, and also as it places the sinner in the relation of an offender, guilty and condemned, in the sight of the moral Governor of the universe. We are wrong if we suppose that by sin human nature has merely contracted a disease, to which man is himself competent to administer a cure by experience, and by the use of his own powers, in due course of time.

## XL.—p. 34.

*Let us not exaggerate this evil; an evil, if rightly understood, already of appalling magnitude.]* See Chalmers, *Iusti-*

*tutes of Theology*, vol. I. *Subject-matter of Christianity*, chapters 2, 3, *Of the Moral State of Man as found by observation,—as affirmed in Scripture.*—“While the view [here] presented of human nature has been sufficiently dark and melancholy, it has at the same time been discriminating, which the doctrine set forth by divines has not always been. In maintaining the total depravity of man’s nature, they have been afraid to make the least admission as to those qualities and features of man’s character which are undoubtedly pleasing and praiseworthy in themselves; and they take great pains to explain away those numerous passages of God’s word which ‘accord to human virtues those praises which could not be accorded to them in a system which denies all moral value in the actions of men.’ (Vinet). In particular, we have seen, first, that the conscience retains in the human mind its original claims of authority: the law is broken, but it is still binding. Then, secondly, there is room in the depraved heart of man for the play and exercise of all the high talents and susceptibilities with which man was originally furnished. Thirdly, there are yet in the human mind many amiable and benevolent qualities. Fourthly, there are actions of moral honesty and integrity, and even of religion so called, performed in obedience to the conscience. But, over against these truths we have to place an equal number of others. As, first, while the conscience asserts its claims, these claims are not attended to. Secondly, the powers and sensibilities of the mind are abused and perverted. Thirdly, the affections are not under the control of right principle, and, in particular, are not directed to God as they ought to be. Fourthly, the actions, whether of morality or religion, performed in obedience to the conscience, are performed in obedience to a perverted conscience; and so there is something defective in these actions themselves, while, the general state of the agent being depraved, we cannot approve of the agent in these acts.

“It is of the utmost importance that the doctrine now expounded be distinguished from the miserably low and grovelling views of those who would represent all and each

of mankind as utterly selfish and dishonest. This is an opinion, learned not in the school of religion, but in the school of the world." M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. 2, § 9, *General Review of Man's Existing Moral Nature*.

XLI.—p. 35.

*Conscience testifies to this state of disorder, it is restless and uneasy.*] "There is a conscience within every breast, there is the sense of a moral and a righteous governor who planted it there. There is a consciousness of deficiency from that pure and perfect virtue which is required by His law, and so a consciousness of sin. The inward conviction of depravity, the agonies of remorse, the forebodings of vengeance, these do not need to be put into us by a revelation from heaven; they are feelings which man has already, and wherewith he might meet the disclosures of revelation. They were not unknown in ages of darkest heathenism, and are still to be met with by the bearers of the gospel among the savages of far distant lands. In short, there is a universal theology of nature which has familiarized all men to the fearful sense of guilt and of danger; and instead of this feeling having to be awakened by Christianity, it forms one of the prior and ready-made securities for Christianity obtaining an earnest hearing from men, that it comes charged with overtures by which to appease the feeling which before its appearance in the world had often been painfully awakened in the human bosom.

"It is here altogether worthy of being remarked that, though previously informed by nature of our guilt, this does not supersede the necessity for the same information being further given us by Christianity. It may both be true that by the light of nature alone we may arrive at a certain sense and a certain sensibility towards sin, and yet that when further told of it by Christianity the sense and the sensibility may become tenfold more alive than before. This corresponds with the phenomena of human consciences in ordinary life. Take the case of a man hurrying on to some guilty indulgence, and perhaps entered upon a course of it. His conscience is far from being entirely asleep in

insensibility ; it gives him occasional disturbances,—it embitters the course of pleasure upon which he is embarked. He is not at ease, pursued by a sense of worthlessness, which, however, may not be nearly adequate to the enormity of those offences into which he is fallen. There is a film of shade and of dimness between the eye of his conscience and the wickedness it is employed in contemplating ; in virtue of which, though he does apprehend the guilt of his own misconduct, he apprehends it but dully and lazily, carrying along with him, therefore, but a languid sense of his own worthlessness, and a sense of it that easily glides away from his heart when the fascinations of sin have entered it, and which can at all times be overborne amid the impetuosity and uproar of those guilty passions that war against the soul.

“ Now, suppose in this state a discovery made of all this turpitude to others, that human tongues begin to reproach and human eyes to flash upon him, or let me suppose either the calm remonstrance of a friend, or the indignant remonstrance of the person he has deceived and injured, to be sounded in his ear. This is the superaddition of an external testimony to that of his own conscience respecting his guilt ; and what I say is, that, upon this taking place, conscience becomes tenfold more awake and alive than before. As if by the falling of scales from its eyes, it now sees most vividly what before it saw but obscurely. The telling from without is responded to by a loud and fearful echo from within. The light brought to it, although *ab extra*, now penetrates his bosom, and then lightens up all the recesses where there was a heavy though not a total darkness before. What the man then saw but faintly and imperfectly, he now sees in fierce and fearful lustre. The light that now gleams upon him from without has, as if by sympathetic touch, illumed the candle of his own conscience within ; and such is the power of mere external testimony, that it not merely overwhelms this victim of depravity with shame, but with all the agonies and horrors of self-condemnation before unfelt.

“ This remarkable power of external testimony to kindle a

respondent light within the man's own breast has not been enough adverted to." Chalmers, *Prelections, &c., Notes on Hill's Lectures in Divinity*, book iv. chap. 1.

## XLII.—p. 38.

*The depraved will impairs the intellect.*] "As the will becomes more depraved the understanding becomes darker, and the two act and react with a fearful operation of mischief the one upon the other." Chalmers, *Moral and Mental Philosophy*, chap. 1.—"Es liegt in der Natur der sündlichen Willensneigung, dass sie sogleich in der Erkenntniss Lüge und Irrthum, wie im Leben Uebel wird. Wenn also der Mensch den Abfall beging mit dem Hinblick auf eine andere, grössere Seligkeit, so war diese Vorstellung nicht aus jener reinen, ursprünglichen Erkenntniss hervorgegangen, sondern aus der schon verblendeten." Tholuck, *Die Lehre von der Sünde, &c.* cap. 1.—See this subject,—the effects of the Fall on the human intellect, through the depraved will,—treated at some length by Vinet, *Nouveaux Discours sur Quelques Sujets Religieux*, Disc. 1, *La Folie de la Vérité*.—It should always be remembered that it is reason, not simply as the faculty which God has given us, but reason as impaired by the Fall, and hence corrupt and perverse, which the Reformers so severely and justly denounced as an insufficient guide in matters of religion. See Twisten, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirche* § 31 a, Vernunftgebrauch. So also Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.; Beilage VI.* (Ueber Vernunft und Verstand, &c.) speaking of Luther's estimate of the power and value of human reason, shews at large that "wenn der treffliche Kirchenlehrer die Vernunft erhob, so erhob er sie nur insofern sie sich in ihren gebührenden Schranken hält; und wenn er sie hart tadelt, so tadelt er sie nur insofern sie über die ihr gebührenden Schranken durch den Hochmuth und die Verkehrtheit des Willens hinausgetrieben wird."

## XLIII.—p. 39.

*The corruption of the Conscience.*] "It is not in our power to disclaim our nature as sentient beings; but it is in our

power to disclaim our nature as moral beings. It is possible—(barely possible, I admit)—that a man may have remained ignorant or unconscious of the moral law within him; and a man needs only persist in disobeying the law of conscience to make it possible for himself to deny its existence, or to reject and repel it as a phantom of superstition.” Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection, Elements of Religious Philosophy*.—See Olshausen, *Commentary on Romans* i. 19.—“ Nous falsifions dans nos consciences la règle de vérité qui doit gouverner nos mœurs, afin de ne voir pas quand nous faisons mal; et voici en quelle manière. Deux choses sont nécessaires pour nous connoître nous-mêmes et la justice de nos actions: que nous ayons les règles dans leur pureté, et que nous nous regardions dedans comme dans un miroir fidèle. Car en vain le miroir est-il bien placé, en vain sa glace est-elle polie, si vous n’y tournez le visage, il ne sert de rien pour vous reconnoître; non plus que la règle de la vérité, si vous n’en approchez pas pour y contempler quel vous êtes. C’est ici que nous errons doublement; car nous altérons la règle, et nous nous déguisons nos mœurs à nous-mêmes.” Bossuet, *Sermon sur la Haine des Hommes pour la Vérité*.—“ Chacun se fait une loi à sa mesure..... Chacun semble lui demander grâce pour quelque inclination favorite, pour quelque vice réservé..... En arrière de la conscience, et dans un fond ténébreux de l’âme, chacun entretient, peut-être à son insu, quelque autel idolâtre.” Vinet, *Discours sur Quelques Sujets Religieux, La Grâce et la Loi*.—“ On honore la conscience! En vérité je le crois. Il serait difficile de ne pas l’honorer jusqu’à un certain point. Elle ne le pardonnerait point. Aiguillon invisible planté à côté de l’âme, le moindre mouvement irrégulier porte l’âme contre cette pointe cachée, et la blesse douloureusement. Mais si la conscience, après l’exil de Dieu du sein de l’âme humaine, y demeura encore, c’était pour l’avertir incessamment de Dieu; et qui est-ce qui reçoit cet avertissement? On reconnaît l’autorité de la conscience; on dit souvent qu’on l’a entendue; mais on ne remonte pas plus haut. Chose vraiment inconcevable! séparée de la pensée de Dieu, la conscience n’est dans notre

nature qu'une bizarrerie, une énigme, un non sens; et bien! c'est sur ce pied-là que l'admettent la plupart des hommes; vous en verrez même à qui l'idée des jugements de Dieu, et d'une responsabilité finale, est complètement étrangère, qui la repoussent du moins, et qui toutefois parlent couramment de la conscience comme de leur guide intérieur; oubliant que si la conscience n'a pas de qui se réclamer, à qui appeler, si elle ne relève pas de Dieu, elle n'a rien à dire et rien à commander." Vinet, *Discours, &c., L'homme privé de toute gloire devant Dieu*, Disc. 2.—Hence it is that, while we are always wrong in acting against the dictates of conscience, yet we are not necessarily right in following those dictates: because conscience itself may be disordered; and because our whole course of action may be without due reference to the will of God.

## XLIV.—p. 41.

*Burdened and sin-worn humanity may ask these questions, but all its wisdom and philosophy must fail to return an answer.*] “Es est in menschlicher Vernunft ein Stücklein göttlicher Lehre, nemlich die Gesetzlehre, oder Lehre von äusserlicher Zucht. Weil denn dieselbigen Weltweisen meynen, dieses Stücklein sey allein die ganz göttliche Weisheit, und sie wissen diess Stück aus natürlichen Verstande; so verachten sie der Propheten und Apostel Schrift, lesens nicht, und bleiben also in Blindheit, wie die Heyden. Ich habe auch einen Doctor in der Theologie gekennet, der gesprochen hat, Wenn gleich der Propheten und Apostel Bücher verloren wären, so könnte man die Kirche Gottes genugsam lehren und regieren aus dem Buch Ethicorum Aristotelis. Dieses sind, wahrlich, schreckliche und lästerliche Worte, und beweisen öffentlich, dass zur selbigen Zeit der Unterscheid der Gesetzlehre und des Evangelii, oder der Verheissung vom Vergebung der Sünden, sehr verdunkelt gewesen. Damit wir aber recht verstehen lernen, was göttliche Lehre ist, und welcher der göttliche heimliche Rath sey, der über und ausser aller Engel und Menschen Weisheit ist, welchen Gott durch die Propheten und Apostel hat schreiben lassen; sollen wir allezeit Unter-

scheid der Gesetzlehre und des Evangelii im Herzen tragen, und wissen, dass wir diese Weisheit, dass uns Gott gnädig seyn wolle, um seines Sohnes willen, wolle uns gewisslich erhören, und uns ewige Seligkeit geben, wolle uns auch in diesem Leben regieren, und nach seinem Rath Hülfe thun in allerley Nöthen, nicht anders lernen können, denn so wir der Propheten und Apostel Bücher lesen, oder hören lesen. Durch diese Schrift und Predigt will Gott erkannt seyn, und kräftig seyn. Ja, wenn du anhebest zu beten, so sollst du an diesen wahrhaftigen Gott gedenken, der diese seine Lehre und Wort den Propheten und Aposteln gegeben und befohlen hat: und hat ihr gewisse Zeugnisse gegeben mit Auferweckung der Todten, und andern Wunderwerken."

... Wahr ist es, dass menschliche Weisheit, freye Künste, etc., edle Gaben Gottes sind, zu allerley Sachen gut und nützlich; derothalben man ihr auch in diesem Leben nicht entbehren kann. Wir können aber nimmermehr gründlich daraus berichtet werden, was vor Gott Sünde und Gerechtigkeit ist, wie wir der Sünden los, vor Gott fromm und gerecht werden, und aus dem Tode zum Leben kommen mögen. Da gehöret eine göttliche Weisheit, und die recht güldene Kunst zu: die findet man in keiner Juristen oder Weltweisen Bücher, sondern allein in der Bibel, die des Heiligen Geistes Buch ist." Luther, *Kleine Exegetische Schriften*, Theil ix, 1342, 1343, 1383. ed. Walch.

See also Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon. xiv, on *The Inability of Man to frame a Religion for himself*.



## NOTES TO LECTURE II.

### XLV.—p. 42.

*The world has never been utterly unable to receive this witness.]* The inability has been in the will, not in the want of adequate intellectual faculties. At the same time, we are unable to invent or to discover the remedy for sin, by the exercise of even the best and noblest of our faculties, how much soever those faculties may be disciplined, purified, or heightened, and with whatever vigour we may apply them to the task.—It is equally unrighteous and unwise to form an estimate of our intellectual and moral powers below the level of truth and fact, and to charge human nature, under any of its aspects, with such imbecility and corruption as does not properly belong to it. More especially, it is not right, and therefore it can never be expedient, to undervalue what may be truly denominated natural religion. Whatever was the way in which the idea of God was first imparted to the soul, we have no reason to affirm that it was obliterated and abolished by the fall. Until some further process of corruption shall have taken place, it is too much to say that there can be no such thing as natural religion in the case of sinful man.

### XLVI.—p. 42.

*Man's natural idea of the Deity is, to say the least, imperfect and obscure.]* “The relics of God's image in us are so buried in sense, that no intellectual conceit of his goodness can be fashioned without his especial providence [outward revelation], and the best that can be fashioned by his providence must be revived by his Spirit [inward illumination].” Jackson, *On Unbelief*, section 2, chap. 15.—“If

true religion is to beam upon us, our principle must be that it is necessary to begin with heavenly teaching; and that it is impossible for any man to obtain even the minutest portion of right and sound doctrine without being a disciple of Scripture. Hence the first step in true knowledge is taken, when we reverently embrace the testimony which God has been pleased therein to give of himself. For not only does faith, full and perfect faith, but all correct knowledge of God, originate in obedience. And surely in this respect God has with singular providence provided for mankind in all ages." Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, book i. chap. 6. § 2.

XLVII.—p. 43.

*Even if, by the progress of our intellect, we attain to a conception of one living and personal God, &c.]* See Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon XV, on "The Insufficiency of Natural or Moral Philosophy to instruct us in Religious Truth:" and Sermon XVI, "The Insufficiency of Metaphysics; and the necessity of taking Faith for our Guide."

XLVIII.—p. 44.

*Even cultivated Nature.]* Culture or habit can work only with the instrumentality of existing principles upon the material of existing faculties. And, how far soever the refinement of the intellect may raise man above the influence of his coarser appetites and passions, and may elevate him (sometimes perhaps too much) above the regions of sense, still, the real evil, far more deeply seated in the Conscience and the Will, remains untouched.

XLIX.—p. 44.

*Man is of himself unable to rise in the scale of moral excellence and consequent felicity beyond a state of internal discord, with a sense of unsatisfied want, and of feebleness and wretchedness without prospect of relief.]* "God hath suited every creature He hath made with a convenient good to which it tends, and in the obtainment of which it rests and is satisfied. Natural bodies have all their own natural

place, whither, if not hindered, they move incessantly till they be in it; and they declare, by resting there, that they are (as I may say) where they would be. Sensitive creatures are carried to seek a sensitive good, as agreeable to their rank in being, and, attaining that, aim no further. Now in this is the excellency of man, that he is made capable of a communion with his Maker, and because capable of it, is unsatisfied without it: the soul, being cut off (so to speak) to that largeness, cannot be filled with less. Though he is fallen from his right to that good, and from all right desire of it, yet not from a capacity of it, no, nor from a necessity of it, for the answering and filling of his capacity.

“ Though the heart once gone from God turns continually further away from Him, and moves not towards Him till it be renewed, yet, even in that wandering, it retains that natural relation to God, as its centre, that it hath no true rest elsewhere, nor can by any means find it. It is made for Him, and is therefore still restless till it meet with Him.

“ It is true, the natural man takes much pains to quiet his heart by other things, and digests many vexations with hopes of contentment in the end and accomplishment of some design he hath; but still the heart misgives. Many times he attains not the thing he seeks; but if he do, yet he never attains the satisfaction he seeks and expects in it, but only learns from that to desire something further, and still hunts on after a fancy, drives his own shadow before him, and never overtakes it; and if he did, yet it is but a shadow. And so, in running from God, besides the sad end, he carries an interwoven punishment with his sin, the natural disquiet and vexation of his spirit, fluttering to and fro, and *finding no rest for the sole of his foot*; the *waters of inconstancy and vanity covering the whole face of the earth*.

“ These things are too gross and heavy. The soul, the immortal soul, descended from heaven, must either be more happy or remain miserable. The highest, the uncreated Spirit, is the proper good, *the Father of spirits*,

that pure and full Good which raises the soul above itself; whereas all other things draw it down below itself. So then, it is never well with the soul, but when it is near unto God, yea, in its union with Him, married to Him: mismatching itself elsewhere it hath never any thing but shame and sorrow. *All that forsake Thee shall be ashamed*, says the prophet, Jer. xvii. 13; and the Psalmist, *They that are far off from Thee shall perish*, Psal. lxxiii. 27. And this is indeed our natural miserable condition, and it is often expressed this way, by estrangedness and distance from God.”—

“The same sentiments are to be found in the works of Pagan philosophers and moralists. Well then may they be made a subject of reflection in our days. And well may the pious deist, if such a character now exists, reflect that Christianity alone both teaches the way, and provides the means, of fulfilling the obscure promises of this great instinct for all men, which the philosophy of boldest pretensions confined to the sacred few.” *Leighton and Coleridge*, Coleridge’s *Aids to Reflection*, Moral and Religious Aphorisms, Aphorism 47.

“Magnus es, Domine, et laudabilis valde; magna virtus tua, et sapientiæ tuæ non est numerus. Et laudare Te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturæ tuæ; et homo circumferens mortalitatem suam, circumferens testimonium peccati sui, et testimonium quia superbis resistis; et tamen laudare Te vult homo, aliqua portio creaturæ tuæ. Tu excitas, ut laudare Te delectet; quia *fecisti nos ad Te, et inquietum est cor nostrum donec requiescat in Te.*” Augustin. *Conf.* Lib. 1. cap. 1.

L.—p. 44.

*Natural religion, so far from being able to point out a remedy for the evil which has befallen us, can, at the best, but make the mischief more apparent; instead of furnishing a solution of our difficulties, its office is rather to proclaim those difficulties, and to raise the inquiry, hopeless though it be, Where shall our help be found?*] “Far be it indeed from any one professing the Christian character to despise or depreciate those lessons of ethics and morality, which the

wisest heathens of antiquity, according to the scanty knowledge which they possessed, or the most respectable infidels of modern times, have inculcated for the improvement of society, and the amelioration of our individual habits. But it is not to depreciate the efforts, sincere and well intended as in charity we must often admit them to have been, of such instruction, if we assert, that their lessons must immediately shrink into insignificance, when compared with the stupendously sublime motives, the exquisitely pure sensations, and the unbounded moral capabilities of spiritual improvement afforded by revelation. We give them their due when we admit their tendency to make the course of this world, for which alone they were intended, go more smoothly and happily : but it is no want of candour to deny their efficacy in preparing us for an eternity upon which they do not speculate, or in assisting our endeavours in the pursuit of a transcendental holiness of which they never entertained a conception. Christianity is not, as it has been sometimes represented to be, a mere repetition of the best part of heathen morals enforced by a less questionable authority ; but it is a code of doctrine of which the unconverted heart never cherished the remotest idea, and with which it has consequently no sympathy : affording a new area for the exercise and development of our spiritual nature, as much exceeding all that the carnal mind can imagine, as infinity and eternity surpass in extent and duration the contracted and evanescent objects of the globe which we at present inhabit." Shuttleworth, *Sermons on some of the leading principles of Christianity*, Sermon iii.

"It is worthy of all observation, that every addition which Christianity makes to the clearness and authority of natural religion, so far from reducing, in fact aggravates the more, our need of a revelation in all those matters which constitute the peculiarities of the gospel. It is a mistake to imagine that, had it stopped short with a republication of the doctrines of natural theology, it would have done something in the way of positive addition and advantage for our species. It would but have added to

their helplessness and despair. It would have made known to us, in a more vivid and alarming light, the disease under which we labour, and in so doing would have made our ignorance of the remedy more intolerably painful. Along with the brighter views which it gave of the obligation and extent of the law, of the august and inviolable sanctity of the lawgiver, of the authority of that moral government under which we sit, of the awful and unchangeable sanctions by which it was upholden,—along with these it would not darken, but rather supply new and convincing evidence to the fact, that from heaven's rectitude we had universally fallen, and that heaven's jurisprudence had by one and all of us been violated. We should not therefore say of this second part of the Christian revelation merely that it was additional to the first. The first, in fact, has more in it the character of a proposition of an enigma, and the second brings the solution to it. The first gives us more emphatically to feel our danger and our difficulties, the second brings the way of deliverance before us. There is a necessity for revelation; but it is a mistake to imagine that what it reveals to us of natural religion does away one half of the necessity. It may be said, in the first instance, rather to thicken the perplexity of an inquirer, and to deepen still more the obscurity of the prospect which lies before him. The first without the second would have been a message of terror and denunciation to the world. It is the second which reconciles all difficulties; and besides adding the light of its own manifestation to all that we previously knew of the things of an invisible world, it resolves all the doubts and hushes all the fears which the first has awakened." Chalmers, *Lectures on Butler's Analogy*, part ii. chap. 1.

LI.—p. 46.

*Atonement . . . while it is indeed a result and manifestation of the divine goodness, is, in itself, an act of homage to God's unchangeable and holy law.] A right apprehension of the real nature of sin teaches us to regard the justice or holiness of the Most High as something more than a modifi-*

eration of His love ; it shews us that awful attribute in its distinctness and its independence ; and it is only at the cross of Christ that we learn that this attribute, which can never be *confounded* or *identified* with love, is yet made to *blend* and *harmonise* with it in the work of man's redemption. If a sense of guilt were a mere feeling or persuasion in the mind of man,—and that too a false and groundless one,—then all that could be needful would be some display of the divine attributes, at variance with the erroneous impression, and adapted to remove it, so as to reassure the timid and to cheer the downcast. But if guilt be real,—if the sin of man be an inroad on the divine government,—then, in order to its removal, there must be a real and corresponding transaction in the administration of that government,—there must be (so far as we can understand) Atonement.

## LII.—p. 48.

*It is one thing to say that the Spirit operates according to established laws, and another thing to affirm or to imply that all spiritual influence resolves itself into law.]* If we maintain that for the renewal of the soul nothing more is needed than the presentation of gospel truth and motives to its corresponding faculties,—that when the goodness and mercy of God are fully declared to us, then, according to the laws of our nature, we as it were instinctively love God in return,—that we naturally advance towards the open arms of God when He is outwardly revealed to us as a reconciled Father, the attraction of this spectacle alone being sufficient to inspire us with the feelings of affectionate and dutiful children,—this is assuredly not merely to take a low view of divine grace, but it is avowedly to overlook, if not to deny, our need of a real spiritual influence, that is to say, of the Holy Ghost dwelling and working within us. Nothing of this kind, however, is implied, when we call attention to the fact that the Holy Spirit operates according to the laws of our intellectual and moral constitution.

We have no reason to believe that our nature could

have even preserved its original integrity independently of Divine succour, or the gracious influence of the indwelling Spirit of God ; and if it could not, of itself, retain the excellence which it originally received, much less can it, by its own effort, recover that which it has lost.

By opposing or neglecting the motions of the Spirit, man repudiates and forfeits them ; by cherishing and obeying the heavenly impulse, we obtain a larger measure of this grace, and are enabled to know and do the will of God more perfectly. And this is in strict accordance with that principle of God's moral government which has been so plainly declared by our Saviour, " Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance ; but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Mat. xiii. 12.—" Grace ... whensoever it least shineth, ministereth always if not sufficient light to guide in the way of life, yet competent to give men that introduction, which clearer light would make complete, but that too much love of one kind of darkness or other hath been the world's perpetual impediment, and to some a cause, not only of having the offer of [more ?] grace withdrawn clean, but the very former possession of less also taken from them." Hooker, *Fragment of an Answer &c.*, book v. Appendix No. 1. ed. Keble.

### LIII.—p. 51.

*By the law, declared without, and brought home to the heart by an influence within, the Spirit teaches sinful man to lay his mouth in the dust, and to confess that God is righteous who taketh vengeance.*] "C'est que le vrai chemin dans la connaissance religieuse n'est pas de Dieu à l'homme, mais de l'homme à Dieu ; c'est qu'avant que de se connaître il ne saurait connaître Dieu ; c'est que c'est la vue de sa misère et de ses péchés qui le conduit à l'expiation, et l'expiation qui lui révèle dans leur plénitude les perfections de son Créateur ; c'est, pour répéter le mot célèbre d'Augustin, ' qu'avant d'être descendu dans l'enfer de son propre cœur, l'homme ne saurait s'élever au ciel de Dieu.'" Vinet, *Discours, Un Caractère du Christianisme*.—" Was



ich . . . anstelle als . . . die Angel alles menschlichen Wissens, ist die Delphische Inschrift *Nur die Höllenfahrt der Selbsterkenntniß macht die Himmelfahrt der Gottes-Erkenntniß möglich*; und keine Weisheit ist verwerflicher als die, welche die Augen uns aussticht, damit wir in unser eignes Innere nicht schauen. Wenn ich aber Dir sage, Lerne dich erkennen, so meine ich damit nichts anders als Dich zu fragen, Was liebest Du? denn was Du liebest, das bist Du." Tholuck, *Die Lehre von der Sünde, &c.* Abschnitt 1. Cap. 1.—"Die Wiedergeburt kann nur bewürkt werden durch die voraus gegangene gründliche Erkenntniß unsers Verderbens, und die danach im eignen Innern vermittelt subjectiver Aneignung gewiss gewordene objective Erlösung." *Ib.* Abschnitt 2. Cap. 2.—"La clarté qui pourra nous éclaircir le passé pourra seule aussi nous illuminer l'avenir; celui qui pourra expliquer le mal pourra seul promettre la guérison; c'est sous les ruines de notre ancienne demeure qu'il faut chercher les foundations de la nouvelle." Vinet, *Discours, L'Homme privé de toute Gloire devant Dieu*, Disc. 1.—See also Pascal, *Pensées*, Seconde Partie, Article 5.

## LIV.—p. 54.

*This is Revelation in the full and proper sense of that expression.]* Revelation is the unveiling of mysteries.—"God's revelation of Himself is the drawing back of the veil or curtain which concealed Him from men; not man finding out God, but God declaring or discovering Himself to man; all which lies plainly in the word." Trench, *On the Study of Words*. sect. 6.—"The prerogative of God extendeth as well to the reason, as to the will of man . . . Divinity is grounded only upon the word and oracle of God, and not upon the light of nature . . . The doctrine of religion, as well moral as mystical, is not to be attained, but by inspiration and revelation from God." Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, book 2.—"Every human endeavour to find the truth, manifesting itself in following the traditions of a school, seems to be blamed here (Col. ii. 18); and revelation alone, which is not man's at all, but God's

only, seems to be represented as the rightful source . . . But human philosophy is only blamed in so far as it sets itself on a par with, or in opposition to, the revelation of God." Olshausen, *Commentary on Col.* ii. 8.

LV.—p. 54.

*It is the declaration of a mystery, that is, of fact or truth which our natural faculties, even if exalted to their utmost pitch, are unable to discern or discover.]* "It especially concerns the Protestant, that the great truth be not forgotten, that revealed religion, as distinguished from natural, must come to men from without, and present a system of truths which he is to receive, not frame for himself. For it is one of the distinctive features of Protestant theology, as distinguished from that of Rome, which has always been Pelagian in its tendencies, that it takes a deep view of the corruption of human nature through the fall, and the consequent inability of man, while destitute of divine grace, to arrive at the true knowledge of God. It is the Romanist, holding, as he does, that original sin consists merely in a deprivation of the gift of original righteousness, superadded, as a separable thing, to Adam's nature,—and that, with this exception, man is now in as upright a state as he was previously to the fall,—who is likely to undervalue the importance of an external revelation, and to substitute for it, when given, the religion of the natural heart. In fact, writers have undertaken to prove, and not without success, that the peculiar tenets of Romanism have arisen, not from adhering too closely to the external record, but from following, in opposition to it, the dictates of unenlightened reason. (See Whately's 'Errors of Romanism traced to their Origin in Human Nature.')" Litton, *The Church of Christ in its Idea, Attributes, and Ministry*, book i, part ii, chap. 1.

LVI.—p. 54.

*The Christian revelation . . . . . is the declaration of that great mystery of godliness, the redemption of mankind by Christ.]* See Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 23, *Offenbarung und Erlösung*.—"The true and ultimate end

of a righteous man is Almighty God, as most glorious in Himself, and most good unto us; or the seeking of His glory, that He may be honoured by us, and of our own salvation, that we may be glorified by Him. The fruition of Him as the highest and first, and the greatest and last, the chiefest object for the mind to rest in by knowledge, and the heart by love,—this must needs be the best of all ends. The proper means for the obtaining of this end is the knowledge of God in Christ, as in His word He hath revealed Himself, to be known, worshipped, and obeyed; for there only doth He teach us the way unto Himself; and true wisdom is the pursuing of this means in order unto that end.” Bp. Reynolds, *on Hosea* xiv. 9.—Ols-hausen, *on Col.* ii. 3, “In whom [marg. or, *wherein*] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge,” has the following remarks: “The connection of ἐν ᾧ with Θεός here is by no means to be recommended, because Θεός is not the principal substantive, but only defines the principal idea of the μυστήριον more accurately; the latter forms, ever since i. 25, the centre of the argumentation. *In fact*, it again coincides, it is true, with the other mode of connecting the words; for God in Christ is Himself His mystery (i. 27), the mystery in which all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, i. e. of both practical and theoretical knowledge, are hidden. That mystery is no abstract doctrine separated from its author, no dogmatical formula, but the living God Himself, who in Christ entered into humanity; without knowledge of God, therefore, neither is there any knowledge of this mystery nor any eternal life (Matt. xi. 27, John xvii 3). Consequently, in Him alone are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge to be sought; not, as the heretics in Colossæ insisted, in all sorts of sham wisdom, apart from Christ. But in the phrase, ἐν ᾧ εἰσι πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ ἀπόκρυφτοι, it is not intimated that they, as being absolutely hidden, can and may never be taken up—(St. Paul, in ver 2, actually uttered the very hope that they might come to the knowledge of the mystery, and with it of its purport, i. e. of its treasures),—but that *human* strength is not sufficient for it,

that, in one word, no one knows God, but he to whom He manifests Himself (Mat. xi. 27). God veils Himself to the prudent and wise of this world, whose wisdom is in themselves, and proceeds from themselves alone; they know nothing of Him; their knowledge is mere show; God reveals Himself only to 'babes and sucklings,' and to the humble, by imparting Himself to them as their portion. For the rest, this passage sufficiently refutes all those dreamers and fanatics, who thought they were bound to expect a still higher and more comprehensive revelation of God than that in Christ is, namely, an age of the Holy Ghost."

## LVII.—p. 55.

*As without Christ we cannot know God in his relation to ourselves, so without revelation we can obtain no knowledge of Christ.]* In vain shall we attempt to evolve the true knowledge of God out of the instincts of the human soul; as if the soul were capable, not only of seeking after God, but also of finding Him, independently of his shewing Himself to it, objectively, by revelation. All truth of the highest order is presented to the mind; it is not derived out of itself by its own action, but perceived by it. And so divine truth,—the love that God hath to us,—is presented by revelation; not deduced by the mind from its own reflections, or found by mere self-culture.—Revelation supplies the knowledge of God in Christ, and supplies it fully; all that is moreover needed is a full reception of this revelation on our part. Our scientific knowledge, on account of its imperfection, admits and claims development; revealed truth, perfect at its source, demands only adequate reception. There is no development of that which has been completely and finally revealed; there can be only a subjective advancement or progress, in ourselves. As in nature, so in revelation, God at once conceals and manifests himself; the revelation is the same to all, but it is so made, that God, in His relations to the sinner, is still hidden from the careless, the scornful, and the proud, while he is made known to the diligent, the teachable, and the humble.

## LVIII.—p. 57.

*This revelation.....is written in a book.*] “It appears that, universally, however true it may be, and doubtless is, that the laws of thought and feeling enable us to derive from external influence what it alone would never give, yet that influence is an indispensable condition, as we are at present constituted, of the development of any and of all our faculties.—As this seems the law of development universally, it is so of the spiritual and religious part of our nature as well as the rest; and in this very fact we have abundant scope for the possibility and utility of a revelation,—if God be pleased to give one,—even of elementary moral and spiritual truth; since, though conceding the perfect congruity between that truth and the structure of the soul, it is only as it is in some way presented to it from without that it arrives at the conscious possession of it. And what, after all, but such an *external* source of revelation is that Volume of Nature, which, operating in perfect analogy with the aforesaid conditions of the soul’s development, awakens, though imperfectly, the dormant elements of religious and spiritual life? So far from its being true in any intelligible sense that an external revelation of moral and spiritual truth is impossible, it is absolutely necessary, in *some* form, as a condition of its evolution; so far from its being true that such revelation is an absurdity, it is in strict analogy with the fundamental laws of our being. Whether, if this be so, the *express* external presentation of such truth in a book constructed by divine wisdom, and expressed in human language,—the last being the most universal and most appropriate instrument by which man’s dormant powers are actually awakened,—may not be a more effective method of attaining the end than any of man’s devising, whether instinctive or artificial; or than the causal influences of external nature, well or ill decyphered; all this is another question. But *some* such external apparatus—applied to the faculties of men—is essential, whether it be in the Volume of Nature, or in the ‘Bible,’ or in a *book* of Mr. Newman or Mr. Parker.” *The Eclipse of Faith, On a Book-Revelation*, pp. 287, 288.

## LIX.—p. 57.

*This sacred volume,—the vehicle of a revelation, which is no dead letter, but a spiritual thing, a living communication from the infinite mind of Deity to the finite mind of man, we therefore thankfully receive, with reverent regard, as the charter of our salvation.]* If we are asked for the criteria of revelation, or how we may know that Scripture is the word of God, we appeal to evidence at once external and internal.—We do not hesitate to affirm that there is a self-evidencing quality in the matter of the revelation recorded in the Bible, adapted as it is to human wants and exigencies, and free as it is from contradiction of the intuitions and principles of right reason. And if any should be disposed to question the value or the propriety of this internal evidence, let it be remembered that the objections raised by unbelievers are often directed against the inherent features, or what they suppose to be the inherent features, or qualities, of revealed religion. They must not complain of our taking into account the nature of the system, which is in fact what they themselves do, in their own way, and for their own purposes.—To some men this internal evidence is at once and abundantly sufficient. But it does not stand alone. There is other evidence, of an external kind, which is, in the estimate of many, the primary, if not the only, proof in support of the divine authority of Scripture. And of this it is enough to say that it is abundantly adequate to its purpose; it is evidence as strong as the nature of an historical record admits, and as is consistent with the nature and design of a religious dispensation.—Both kinds of evidence have been amply supplied; and it is perhaps our wisdom and duty to rest the authority of the word of God on neither the one nor the other exclusively, but to regard and to exhibit it as reposing securely on them both. We do not regard the Bible as divine merely on account of its external credentials, nor merely on account of its agreement with conscience; but because, being presented to us by competent authority and with adequate credentials, from without, it at the same time corresponds to our

moral sense within,—our moral sense, including our felt want on account of the consciousness of transgression.

## LX.—p. 57.

*This acceptance of Scripture has been long since scoffed at under the name of Bibliolatry.*] “Conrad Philip Henke wrote *Lineamenta Istitut. Fidei Christ. histor. critic.*, Helmst. 1793, ed. 2, 95. In the preface to this work he enumerates three kinds of superstition which he must combat; 1. Christolatry, 2. Bibliolatry, 3. Onomatolatry. Hagenbach, *History of Doctrines*, § 275 (19.)—Bibliolatry is a favourite term, although not new, with Mr. Francis William Newman.

## LXI.—p. 58.

*We reject the licentious doctrine that the Bible proposes a spiritual problem which must be solved by the human mind in the exercise of its own inherent powers.*] It is utterly incorrect to say that Scripture professes to reveal only that moral and spiritual truth which may and must be apprehended in the first place by our own inward consciousness, and which therefore cannot be the subject of an authoritative revelation from without. On the contrary, Scripture reveals a fact which we cannot know independently of outward testimony; and it is observable that this fact presupposes and appeals to the conscience and the mind of man,—and of man in his actual condition, not in his primitive perfection, but in his state of sinful disorder. Scripture rightly presupposes sin and guilt, while it is engaged in announcing a remedy for sin, and guiding conscience in the way of peace. Its office is therefore far beyond that of merely exciting inquiry; if it excites inquiry, it also supplies the answer.

“*Animus humanus, nisi per fidem donum Spiritus habuerit, habebit quidem naturam Dei intelligendi, sed lumen scientiæ non habebit.*” Hilar. *De Trin. lib. ii. 35*; quoted by Hooker, *Fragment of an Answer &c.*, book v. Appendix 1. ed. Keble.

“Unto the word of God, being in respect of that end for which God ordained it perfect, exact, and absolute in itself, we do not add reason as a supplement of any main or de-

feet therein, but as a necessary instrument, without which we could not reap by the Scriptures' perfection that fruit and benefit which it yieldeth." Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book iii. ch. 8. § 10.

"In theology, when once we have got beyond the precincts of natural religion, authority is our best guide;—inspired authority standing foremost, that of tradition acting occasionally as its interpreter. With the truth affirmed by such authority, philosophy has little to do, except expounding the ideas on which it rests, and testing the validity of the evidence by which it is upheld; for beyond this it can only reserve to itself the power of pronouncing a veto upon any dogma which contradicts our natural faculties." Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part ii. ch. 6. sect. 2.

"Hüte sich nur jedermann dafür, dass er nach Gott nimmermehr forsche mit seinen eigenen Sinnen und Gedanken; sondern lerne sich schlechts heften und halten an das Wort, und demselben nach richte und schliesse, so kann er nicht fehlen. Nun hörest du je darinne nichts anders denn Gläube an mich, dass ich dir um Christi willen die Sünde vergebe und gnädig sey, und lass dich darauf täufen; sey Vater und Mutter gehorsam, und thue was dein Amt oder Stand fodert; so hast du alles und Gott selbst dazu." Luther, *Auslegung des 14, 15, und 16 Capitel Joannis*, cap. 14. v. 10, ed. Waleh, viii. 103.

#### LXII.—p. 58.

*And with equal determination we reject also that despotic principle which affirms the coordinate authority of tradition, or sanctions the pretensions of an infallibility supposed to reside in any community of men.*] "The professedly Christian world is divided upon it [the great question relating to the authority of Scripture, towards which the minds of men are pressing with an unusual intentness] into three parties, comprehending all similar varieties of opinion.

"The first of these parties,—constituted of the Romish church and its disguised favourers,—affirms the subordination of the authority of Scripture to that of the priest;



this is a doctrine of slavery and of ignorance, which the mere progress of knowledge and of civil liberty must overthrow, if it be not first exploded by other means.

“The second party comprises the sceptical sects of the Protestant world, which agree in affirming the subordination of Scripture to the dogmas of natural theology, in other words, to every man’s notion of what religion *ought to be*. These sects, having no barrier between themselves and pure Deism, are continually dwindling by desertions to infidelity, nor will be able to hold their slippery footing on the edge of Christianity a day after a general revival of serious piety has taken place.

“The third party, comprehending the great majority of the Protestant body, bows reverently, and implicitly, and with intelligent conviction, to the absolute authority of the word of God, and knows of nothing in theology that is not affirmed or fairly implied therein. The differences existing within this party, how much soever they may be exaggerated by bigots, will vanish as the mists of the morning under the brightness of the sun, whenever a refreshment of pious feeling descends upon the church.” Taylor, *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, sect. 4.

LXIII.—p. 58.

*These things are written, &c.*] The Christian revelation is contained in holy Scripture, not in Scripture and Tradition taken together,—nor in Scripture together with the independent notices of our own minds, or of the human mind in general,—but in the record as it stands, and in the deductions which are necessarily or lawfully made from it. Man is not in any way a judge of Scripture, so as to determine what it shall contain; he is only its interpreter, so as to ascertain what it does contain. And when we have found the sense of Scripture, we bow to its authority, because we herein recognise the voice of God himself. This was the principle which guided the primitive church, and, after having been long dormant, was again called into activity by the Protestant Reformers. It was indeed a fundamental principle of the Reformation from the very first; no after-

thought, as some persons are disposed to represent it. And when a writer of the present day says that, in past ages, the Church sank down into the gulf of Popery with the Bible in her hand, and then asks us how the Bible can be a sufficient explanation of her recovery out of Popery, we answer, Because the church sank down with the Bible in her hand *shut*, but she rose with it *open*; or, to say the very least, when she sank down into the gulf of Popery she was *blind* to the contents of Scripture, but she came up *seeing*.

LXIV.—p. 59.

*This sacred record contains that outward or objective revelation which the Holy Spirit employs as a means or instrument in his subjective operation on the soul of man.*] “The Spirit, in revealing truth to the mind, reveals to it nothing that is beside or beyond the record; still it is Bible instruction that we receive under the teaching of the Spirit; though, if I may so express myself, it is the Bible in illuminated characters.” Chalmers, *Lectures on Butler’s Analogy*, Conclusion.—“Die Gabe des Geistes ist selbst durch das vorausgehende Wort Gottes vermittelt, sowie dieses wieder nur sittlich und lebendig, und nur in göttlicher Art durch den Geist der Wahrheit angeeignet werden kann; ein Wechselverhältniss, welches niemals aufhört, dergestalt, dass die christliche Erkenntniss nie und nirgends aus schlechthin innerlichem Quelle geschöpft werden kann, und jede Berufung auf das innere Licht bei Verachtung des äussern Wortes auf leere Schwärmerei hinausläuft. S. Calvin Instit. Rel. Chr. 1, 9 wo er über die Stellen Jes. 59, 21, 2 Tim. 3, 16, Joh. 16, 13, gegen die vielen irrigen Freunde der Innerlichkeit commentirt.” Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 37.—“In reading of God’s word, he not always most profiteth that is most ready in turning of the book, or in saying of it without the book; but he that is most turned into it, that is most inspired with the Holy Ghost, most in his heart and life altered and changed into that thing which he readeth.” Homily *On the Reading of holy Scripture*, part i.

## LXV.—p. 61.

*For the reception of the gospel by faith there must exist a previously formed disposition and desire.]* “Whom [i. e. the Spirit of truth] the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him.” John xiv. 17. “The counterpart to the disciples is the κόσμος (the world), by which term we are here to understand those human souls who exist in the natural element of life; these cannot receive the Spirit, because they are unable to see and to know him. Hence the latter is the condition of the former, although it might have been supposed that, inversely, the reception must precede the knowledge. This is true respecting the most profound form of knowledge; but nevertheless a preliminary knowledge is necessary in order to the reception of the Spirit. Such knowledge awakens the slumbering desire within. The world can no more receive the blessing of the Spirit until that desire which is the condition of reception is aroused, than a perfectly closed eye can admit the material light.” Olshausen, *in loc.*—“The qualifications previously necessary to illumination are two or three moral ones, implied in that infant temper which our Saviour required in those who would be his disciples,—humility, impartiality, and a thirst and love of truth.” Lucas on Happiness, quoted by Knox, *Christian Philosophy*, section xiv.—See also Barrow, *Sermons on the Creed*, Sermon ii.

## LXVI.—p. 62.

*That which is seed in the intellect becomes a living plant only in the heart.]* Various answers have been given to a question which has been sometimes eagerly discussed, whether true Christian faith be an act of the intellect or of the will, or of both combined. Now, the truth of God respecting our salvation, together with the object which that truth proposes, can be effectually apprehended only by man's whole soul. At the same time, that belief which is the foundation of Christian faith is an act, of itself, purely intellectual. But we must remember that, according to the constitution of our nature, the will possesses a control over the operations of the intellect, especially by its power of

withholding or enjoining attention; and that, in our fallen state, the will often exercises an undue and domineering influence over the faculty by which it ought to be informed and guided. In order, therefore, that faith may exist in full vigour, and may discharge its proper office, there must be a concurrent act or permission of the will; so that faith, while it is an exercise of the intellectual powers, is yet voluntary. No man can believe, in the full and proper sense of the expression, without the concurrence of his will; while yet the assent of the will, if it be unintelligent and blind, is not worthy of being denominated faith. As an act of belief, faith resides in the intellect, but not without or against the will; as an act of trust and confidence, faith is more directly an act of the will itself. Faith of the intellect alone is, in a moral point of view, worthless; faith of the heart alone is imperfect, and may be positively hurtful; no other than faith of the intellect and of the heart combined is to be regarded as complete. The excellence of Christian faith considered as belief, does not consist in assenting to things incredible, so that the more incredible is the object the stronger and better is our faith; but this faith is a belief of things credible,—credible upon adequate authority, even although antecedently improbable to the untaught mind. And there must be an acquiescence of *the will* in the *subject-matter* of divine revelation, no less than an exercise of the intellectual powers for the discernment of its nature and its proofs. There must be the eagle wing to soar up to heaven as well as the eagle eye to gaze upon it. Assent may be forced upon the intellect by overwhelming evidence; but such assent, even though it should relate to the whole circle of religious truth, would not constitute true Christian faith. The devils believe, and tremble; they believe, because they cannot help believing, without and against their will. Men may believe in the adaptation of certain means to some given end; but we cannot properly say that they have faith in those means unless at the same time they have a will for the attainment of the end.

While, however, we recognise the fact that a right

state of heart is needful for the due exercise of faith (see note XXXII.) we must also observe that much pernicious error has been lately broached, proceeding upon the false assumption that religious faith is *altogether* a spiritual or moral act, being in no respect an intellectual exercise, and in fact entirely independent of the intellect, so that belief is one thing and faith another. This error has been ably exposed by a recent writer; who has clearly shewn, in a passage from which I make the following extracts, that *while there may be belief without faith, there yet can be no faith without belief.* “No doubt there has often been such a thing as ‘dead orthodoxy,’—a creed of the ‘letter,’—a religion exclusively dependent on logic, and having nothing to do with the feelings, belief that is not sublimated into faith; a system of arteries and veins infiltrated with some coloured substance, like the specimens in an anatomical museum, but in which none of the life-blood of religion circulates. But surely, it does not follow that because there has been belief without faith, there is or can be any faith independent of *some* belief, or an acceptable faith without a *true* belief.”.....The fallacy “lies in the attempt to make a distinction in *fact*, as well as in *theory*, between the ‘intellectual’ and ‘emotional’ parts of our nature. It is very well for the spiritual and mental analyst to consider separately the several principles which constitute humanity, and which act, and react, and interact, in endless involution. That there may be acts of belief that terminate chiefly in the intellect, and may be wholly worthless, who denies?..... But, though it is very possible that a true belief may not involve true faith, does the converse follow, that therefore true faith is essentially different from it, and independent of it? All history shews, that when religion is practical at all,—that is, issues in faith,—such faith is as the truth or falsehood believed; the emotional and active conditions of the soul are coloured, as usual, by knowledge and intellect. These again are not independent of the will and affections, as we all familiarly know: and hence the fallacy of supposing that no man is to be thought better or worse for his ‘intellectual creed.’ His ‘creed’ may be his

‘crime;’ and surely none ought to see this more clearly than the writers who deny it; for why their eternal invectives against ‘dogmas,’—and especially the tolerably universal dogma that men are responsible for the formation of their opinions,—except upon the supposition that men *are* responsible for framing and maintaining them. If they are not, men should be left alone; if they are, they are to be thought of as ‘worse and better’ for their ‘intellectual creed.” *The Eclipse of Faith, or A Visit to a Religious Sceptic*, section 3, Belief and Faith, pp. 109, 110, 113, 114.—“The purer and perfecter our religion is, the worthier effects it hath in them who stedfastly and sincerely embrace it, in others not. They that love the religion which they profess, may have failed in choice, but yet they are sure to reap what benefit the same is able to afford; whereas the best and soundest professed by them that bear it not the like affection, yieldeth them, retaining it in that sort, no benefit..... Whatsoever good effects do grow out of their religion who embrace instead of the true a false, the roots thereof are certain sparks of the light of truth intermingled with the darkness of error; because no religion can wholly and only consist of untruths.” Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book v. chap. 1. §§ 4, 5.

## LXVII.—p. 62.

*To the humble and earnest soul, the Spirit not only outwardly proclaims the gospel, but gives inward power to believe it.]* “Religiöses Leben erkennt sich nur durch und aus sich selbst. Demnach stehen Urtheile wie diese: Was das innere des Schrifteinhalts betrifft, so versteht davon, wer den heiligen Geist nicht empfängt, kein Iota (Luther),—der Process der Schrifterkenntniss schliesst sich mit dem Zeugniss des h. Geistes (Joh. Gerhard u. And.),—mit den Forderungen der Wissenschaftlichkeit des exegetischen Verfahrens vollkommen im Einklange.” Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 47. Anm. 1.—“‘Faith, of the operation of God,’ Col. ii. 12. i. e. faith, which the operation of God calls forth. This passage is one of the most decided and open of those in the New Testament in which faith is referred to the operation of God. In man, as God’s crea-

ture, every good thing is without exception precisely God's work; the prerogative of resistance, and therefore of sin, is alone man's property. Faith is not something which man himself can make and call forth at will; it is God's work in him." Olshausen, *in loc.*

## LXVIII.—p. 62.

*The soul, thus prepared and empowered, embraces the truth of God, and places its whole trust and confidence in the Redeemer whom that truth reveals.]* "Die einzige Religion, die in dem bisher beschriebenen Sinne darauf Anspruch macht und hat von göttlicher Offenbarung her zu rühren, ist die christliche, oder die Lebensweise, welche in dem Bewusstsein von der Erlösung der Welt und von dem persönlichen Erlöser, Jesus Christus, beruhet. Wonach sich von selbst ergiebt, dass 'Religion des guten Lebenswandels,' oder, 'Praktischer Glaube an Unsterblichkeit und Vergeltung' oder 'die von Jesu gestiftete Gottesverehrung und das gereinigte Judenthum' sehr unvollkommene Bezeichnungen dessen sind, was an Christenthume als das Eigenthümliche festgehalten werden muss." Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 29.—See Hare's *Mission of the Comforter*, Sermon ii., "A living faith implies an immediate conscious personal relation; &c."—Also, Hare, *Victory of Faith*, Sermon v., "In its higher manifestations, as trust in Him in whom we believe, faith requires, not merely a living personal God, but a God on whose love we can rely; &c."—"Fides est fiducia constans misericordiæ Dei erga nos, in corde vivens, et efficaciter agens, qua projicimus nos toti in Deum, et permittimus nos Deo, qua certo freti non dubitemus millies mortem oppetere." Luther, *Præf. Method. in Ep. ad Romanos*.—"The right and true Christian faith is, not only to believe that holy Scripture, and all the foresaid articles of our faith, are true; but also to have a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises, to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ: whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments." *Homily of Salvation, Third part*.—See also Hare, *Victory of Faith*, Sermons i. and ii.; Olshausen, *Comment-*

ary on Romans iii. 21–31; to the effect that true faith is at once in the intellect and in the heart.—“The old observation cannot be too often impressed upon the recollection, that it is not by the understanding alone, but by the will and understanding acting in unison, that Christianity is either accepted or rejected.” Shuttleworth, *Sermons on some of the leading principles of Christianity*, Sermon xix.—“Der Glaube ist die Einheit des Gefühls und der Erkenntniss, der Empfänglichkeit und Freithätigkeit in Sachen der Religion . . . Das Glauben ist weder ein schauendes noch ein wissendes, sondern ein gefühlsmässiges Erkennen, und steht doch an Gewissheit und Befriedigung gegen kein Wissen oder Schauen zurück, weil es in Bezug auf seine Gegenstände vielmehr alles Wissen und Wahrnehmen von sich abhängig zu machen weiss . . . Der Glaube ist eine Erkenntniss mit und aus Anerkennung, und nie ohne Liebe, also auch nie ein blosses Dürfen oder Können, sondern auch ein Wollen und Sollen. Und von diesem Punkte aus lässt sich desto leichter verstehen wie im Christenthume ein Gehorsam des Glaubens statt finde. Wenn nun die Schule des Basilides . . . den Glauben die Zustimmung der Seele zu dem Uebersinnlichen nannte . . . so vernachlässigte sie doch dabei noch das andre, welches Augustin mit den Worten *creditur testi* ausdrückt, nämlich dass der Glaube Annahme eines Zeugnisses und Empfänglichkeit für das sich Kundgebende, dem Bewusstsein bezeugende und verbürgende Object sei. *Fides credit aliquid credendo alicui, i. e. Deo testi* . . . . Muss man aber und will den an sich Christlichen Begriff in die Idee zurückführen, oder zu idealen Allgemeinheit erweitern, so ist auch nöthig, den religiösen Glauben überhaupt für ein fühlendes, praktisches Erkennen zu erklären, welches ein Vertrauen zu dem sich im Bewusstsein bezeugenden Gotte und Gottesreiche enthalte.” Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 8. Anmerk. 3.—On the necessity for the exercise of the intellect in order to faith, see Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, vol. II. Appendix C. On Rationalism, by Sara Coleridge.



## LXIX.—p. 63.

*With a recognition and cordial acceptance of the historical personal Redeemer, as the object of our unlimited trust and confidence.]* It should never be forgotten that the very idea of revelation, and of faith whereby it is received, involves the idea of a personal God and Saviour;—that faith not merely believes what God reveals, but believes it because it is He who does reveal it;—and that, in order to real and vital faith, the heart must be at one not only with the truth which has been revealed, but also with Him who has made the revelation. Hence it is that faith is so often denominated in Scripture, not only ‘belief of the truth’ but ‘belief in God,’ or ‘belief in Christ.’ The truth which, as Christians, we believe, is God’s truth; we cannot really embrace the truth which announces salvation without holding sacred intercourse with Him who is our Saviour; a reception of the gospel into our minds and hearts is at once an act of fellowship with the Most High. “That which we have seen and heard,” says St. John, “declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” 1 John i. 3.

Happily, this important feature of true Christian faith has been forcibly displayed by many sound scriptural divines of the present day, following in the footsteps of enlightened predecessors. I cannot forbear citing one of the latest of these testimonies, contained in the following words of a member of our own University. “If the faith which comes by hearing, and which, according to the order of things declared in Scripture, initiates the believer’s union with Christ, were a mere thinking upon Christ, as it has been called, or a mere belief of the doctrines of Christianity, it might plausibly be described as a product of unassisted reason, a natural mode of intercourse between the spirit of man and the Divine Spirit. But the faith which is the result of the Holy Spirit’s working with the word is not a mere thought, a mere belief, of this kind: it is an internal apprehension of Christ, a trust in Him as the only Saviour, and, as such,

is nothing less than a gift of God, a supernatural mode of access to Him. For it is founded upon conviction of sin; and the preliminary work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is, according to our Lord's own statement (John xvi. 9), conviction of sin." Litton, *The Church of Christ in its Idea, Attributes, and Ministry*, book i. part. ii. chap. 3. sect. 2.—It has also been well said by another writer, "It never is the belief of bare propositions that saves the soul; propositions, however weighty, must guide us to the Person who is the essence of the testimony; and they are made use of for this end by the same Holy Spirit who enlightens our carnal understanding to see the real truth. The belief of the testimony, or record, concerning the Son of God, our Saviour, is the porch of the building, through which we pass into the audience-chamber, and meet the living Inhabitant, full of light, and life, and love." Bonar, *The Gospel pointing to the Person of Christ*, chap. 1.

## LXX.—p. 63.

"Nor will the firmest belief, &c. . . . the mercy and truth of a reconciled God."] Bp. O'Brien, *Sermons on Faith*, Sermon i.

## LXXI.—p. 64.

*Spiritual renewal.*] "The moral renovation of human nature does not consist in or involve the destruction of any essential constituent element of that nature. For the proof of this assertion, we may refer to a work familiarly known in this place, and appreciated amongst us at its due worth, the Sermons of Bishop Butler. In prosecuting their main design, which is to prove that the moral constitution of man indicates the path of virtue which his Creator intended him to tread, those Discourses incidentally unfold this valuable and important truth, that none of the grand original affections of our nature (apart from the objects on which they fasten) are intrinsically evil. Hence we are of course left to infer that the operations of divine grace, instead of eradicating any of those affections, will communicate to them a right direction, and turn them into a channel where they will subserve the

interests of virtue.....It is, however, important to observe that this proposition applies (there can be little doubt that Butler intended it to apply) only to the original affections, as distinct from the subordinate feelings, of human nature. Many are the native growths of the corrupt heart which must be regarded, whether we view them in the light of reason or scripture, as purely and intrinsically evil, fit only to be cast out and trodden under foot of the enlightened conscience." Goulburn's *Bampton Lectures*, Lect. II.—“Whereas reason and will do concur in all honest and good actions, the one admonishing what men ought to do, or not to do, the other pursueth and praetiseth the same; it is most certain that human reason after his fall is oppressed with great ignorance and error, and therefore most commonly judgeth corruptly; and will also [is wont] to be carried to the worst in the execution of all things. The knowledge of God then purifying the heart is doubtless the origin and fountain of all virtues which is [are] pleasant and acceptable unto God. It is that which illuminateth and informeth reason rightly, and, correcting corrupt will, reneweth a man after God in justice and true holiness.” Bp. Woolton, *Christian Manual*, p. 52, Parker Society ed.

## LXXII.—p. 65.

*The gospel . . . calls forth love.*] “Der christliche Glaube ist eine Kraft der Liebe zu Gott. Was ist der Funke, welcher den heiligen Zunder der Liebe unter den Menschen in Flammen setzt? es ist—Liebe. Liebe weckt Liebe. Ist das nun unbestreitbar, so seht ihr auch ein, dafern ein Mensch Gott lieben soll, kommt aller Dinge es darauf zuvörderst an *was glaubt er von seinem Gott?* Ist doch ganz unmöglich zu begreifen, wie es hat Menschen geben können, die gemeint haben, die Liebe zu Gott habe mit dem Glauben nichts zu schaffen. Was ist beim Kinde, was beim Gatten, das Fundament aller Liebe zu den Eltern, zu dem Gatten, ist's nicht das, was man von ihnen *hält*, was man von ihnen *glaubt*, wessen man sich von ihnen versieht, *was man ihnen zutraut?* Und es sollte nicht die Liebe des Menschen zu dem Wesen, das Himmel und Erde trägt

davon bedingt werden, was wir von ihm glauben, was wir ihm zutrauen, wessen wir uns zu ihm versehen? . . .

Es ist solcher Glaube eine Kraft der Liebe zu Gott, damit ist er nun aber auch eine Kraft der Liebe zu den Menschen.”—Tholuck, *Predigten*, Band iii, Pred. 15.

LXXIII.—p. 66.

*And “we love Him because He first loved us.”] “Lieben kann man nur das Wesen das uns kennt und liebt. Wer einen pantheistischen Gott ohne Selbstbewusstseyn und ohne Bewusstsein von seinen armen Geschöpfen lieben kann, ist ein Schwärmer, das heisst, er hat keinen bestimmten Gegenstand seiner Liebe, sondern hangt nur an den Glauben seiner Einbildung.” Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde, und vom Versöhner*, Beilage 2.—“To be an effective principle of action, Love requires some support in reciprocal affection, some personal qualities to form the foundation of attachment, a Being at least as its object, who can be interested, offended, or pleased. To any one who considers our nature, it cannot appear surprising that all attempts to fix human affections on the cold abstractions of philosophy should have so signally failed.” Bp. O’Brien, *Sermons on Faith*, Sermon x.*

LXXIV.—p. 69.

*Faith is no speculative, dreamy, sentimental habit of the soul; it is eminently practical.] “Der Glaube ist eine Kraft auch für die That,” &c. Tholuck, *Predigten*, Band iii, Pred. 15.*

LXXV.—p. 71.

*As the depraved will and the debased affections entangle or impair the intellect in matters of religion, so the renovated will and the rectified affections liberate and restore it.] Not unfrequently the intellect, in subservience to the will, refuses to admit the truth; but, even when the intellect admits it, while yet the will rejects it, there is not that habit of the soul which can be properly denominated faith. On the contrary, the more completely our feelings and desires are in harmony with the truths which God has*

revealed for our acceptance, the more ready and the more clear is our intellectual apprehension of those truths so as to believe them. It is thus with regard to all moral and spiritual truth upon which revelation more or less throws light,—the truth, for example, which relates to the existence and personality of man's spiritual enemy,—or to the eternity of future punishment,—the spirituality and extent of the divine law,—the obligation of the positive institutions of religion,—or, in general, to the great central object of our faith, the Saviour and his salvation.—“L'intelligence est la récompense d'une foi vive et animée par la charité. *Fides mundet te, ut intellectus impleat te*, dit St. Augustin (Tract. 36 in Joan.)” De Saey, *Prov.* i. 5.

## LXXVI.—p. 72.

*Even in matters not directly religious or moral, a connection may frequently be traced between strength of intellect and the presence of Christian principle.]* “Never yet did there exist a full faith in the Divine Word (by whom light as well as immortality were brought into the world), which did not expand the intellect, while it purified the heart; which did not multiply the aims and objects of the understanding, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions.” Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Introductory Aphorisms, Aphorism xiii.—For a statement of reasons why physical science flourishes especially under the influence of Christianity, see Hare, *Victory of Faith*, Sermon vi.

## LXXVII.—p. 72.

*The faith of the Gospel is, beyond all question, the most powerful promoter of social and public welfare.]* In the following passage, Ullman clearly shews that, as regards the welfare of society, we must look primarily,—not to laws and institutions,—not to education or civilisation,—but to the influence of true religion.—“Fragen wir, welche dieses Lebensmacht sey [sc. welche, in sich selbständig und schöpferisch, in der That Kräfte der Erneuerung und Wiedergeburt für den Einzelnen und für die Gesamtheit in sich schliesst, und aus deren Fülle wir das schöpfen können was wir für unsere Thätigkeit bedürfen], so sind es zwei Dinge,

auf welche unsere Zeit besonders hinzuwiesen pflegt: das Eine ist das, was man unter *Gesetz, Einrichtung, Institution* begreift; das Andere das, was man humane *Bildung, Cultur, Civilisation* nennt. Wer wüsste nicht, dass Unzählige entweder von besseren gesetzlichen Einrichtungen oder von den Fortschritten der Civilisation oder von beidem zusammen alles wesentliche Heil der Menschheit erwarten? Aber wenn es sich weiter fragt, ob sie das mit Recht thun, so können wir darauf nur mit Nein antworten. Gesetz und Civilisation sind ja ohne zweifel Güter von hoher Bedeutung, aber sie verlieren ihren Werth, ja sie verkehren sich im Gegentheil, wenn man ihnen Wirkungen zuschreibt, die sie hervorzubringen nicht im Stande sind. Alles *Gesetz*, auch das sittliche, kann nur das Böse zurückdrängen und eine Richtschnur für das Gute geben; es bringt zum Bewusstseyn der Sünde, aber es befreit nicht von deren Macht, es heilt nicht von deren Schuld und Zerrüttung; es belebt nicht, sondern es tödtet. Ein Inbegriff gesetzlicher Einrichtungen aber vermag wohl das gemeinsame Leben dann, wenn schon eine gediegene Substanz desselben da ist, entsprechend zu organisiren, nimmermehr aber das Leben selbst seinem Inhalte nach zu erzeugen. Das, was die Grundlage des wahrhaft menschenwürdigen Lebens ausmacht, die Persönlichkeit in ihrem inneren Wesen, wird vom Gesetz und der Institution gar nicht eigentlich berührt, geschweige dass davon eine durchgreifende Erneuerung auf dem Gebiete des persönlichen Lebens ausgehen könnte. Etwas anders verhält es sich in dieser Beziehung mit dem, was wir in den Worten *Civilisation* und *Cultur* zusammenfassen. Diese Macht tritt bestimmter auch an die Persönlichkeit heran, sie will dieselbe bilden und entwickeln, und thut diess nach einer Seite hin auf zum Theil bewundernswürdige Weise; aber indem es hierbei, wenn sie *Cultur* nur des *Humanismus* ist, ihr Wesen ausmacht, lediglich *das* aus dem Menschen herauszubilden, was schon in ihm liegt, liefert sie bei consequentem Verfahren zuletzt nichts Anderes als eine höchste Vollendung und Verfeinerung des *natürlichen* Menschen, d. h. des Menschen der, wie vollendet auch sein Wissen und

Können seyn mag, alles Wissen und Können in letzten Instanz nicht anwendet im Dienste selbstverleugnender Gottes-und-Menschenliebe, sondern im Dienste der Selbstliebe, die sich des eigenen Wohlseyns, vielleicht auch nur des eigenen Wohllebens, erfreuen will. Sie schafft uns einen Menschen, in dem der Egoismus nicht gründlich zerstört, sondern im guten Falle nur verklärt, einerseits also gezähmt und verfeinert, und darum minder zurückstossend, andererseits aber auch mit allen Mitteln der Befriedigung ausgestattet, und darum nur um so gefährlicher und verderblicher ist. Der Civilisationshumanismus lebt in der Illusion von der intellectuellen und ethischen Genugsamkeit und Vortrefflichkeit des Menschen, wie er von Natur ist; er kennt nicht die Macht der Sünde, und ihres Principis, der Selbstsucht; er weiss nicht, dass die Natur gebrochen werden, dass der Mensch, der, vom Fleische geboren, nur Fleisch ist, wiedergeboren werden muss aus einem höheren Geiste, wenn in ihm zur Herrschaft kommen soll die Liebe, welche nicht das Ihre, sondern das der Andern, sucht, und das Leben, welches nicht bloss Genuss, sondern Friede und Freude in Gott, ist. Wenn aber diese Richtung nicht einmal die Vorstellung hat von einer Wiedergeburt, von einer wahrhaft gründlichen Erneuerung aus der Selbstsucht und Sünde heraus, wie könnte sie die Kraft dazu in sich tragen, und wie vermöchte sie, was eben so bedeutend ist, weil es jeder wahren Wiedergeburt mangeln muss, die Schuld der Sünde aufzuheben, da sie deren Gewicht nicht erkennt, noch weniger aber ernstliche Anstalt macht zur gründlichen Tilgung derselben und zur Wiederherstellung der Gemeinschaft mit dem Heiligen?

Dazu liegt das Vermögen nur in einer Macht, welche, ihrer inneren Beschaffenheit nach, über den Bereich des Menschlichen erhaben und in sich vollkommen selbständig, in das menschliche Leben mit göttlich reinen, schöpferischen, Schuld und Sünde tilgenden Kräften hereintritt, und dieses Leben nicht bloss nach Einer Seite hin, sondern in seiner Ganzheit und von seinem innersten Mittelpunct aus, mit einem neuen Geiste durchdringt, ihm ein ganz neues

Princip einpflanzt. Eine solche Macht finden wir im *Christenthum*, und *nur* in ihm. Das Christenthum macht sich keine Illusionen über den Zustand des natürlichen Menschen; es beschliesst alle Menschen ohne Ausnahme unter die Sünde; es kennt die ganze Schuld und die tief zerrüttende Macht des Bösen in der Menschheit und im Einzelnen; aber es weiss auch von einer heiligen Liebe Gottes, welche erbarmend will, dass Allen geholfen werde, und zuvorkommend das Verlorene sucht, um es versöhnt und geheiligt in ihre beseligende Gemeinschaft zurückzuführen. Und von dieser Liebe weiss das Christenthum nicht bloss, wie von einer Sage, Satzung, oder Lehre, sondern es besitzt sie als persönlichste Wirklichkeit in dem Sohne, der Mensch geworden, der, in alle Noth des Menschenlebens eingehend, Sünde und Elend auf sich genommen und eine ewige Versöhnung gestiftet hat, der in der reinen Fülle seines göttlichen Lebens ein vollkommen neuer Lebensanfang geworden ist, und in jedem wahrhaft gläubigen einen neuen Lebensanfang begründet, indem er durch seinen Geist und seine persönliche Einwohnung den alten Menschen der Selbstsucht und Sünde tödtet, und einen neuen Menschen der selbstverleugnenden Liebe und der Gerechtigkeit aus Gott im Leben ruft. Hier haben wir nicht bloss ein Abstractum von Gesetz, welches zügelt und ordnet, sondern persönliches Leben, welches wiederum persönliches Leben erzeugt; nicht bloss einen Inbegriff menschlicher Culturmittel, welche die Kräfte des Menschen entwickeln, um dem Ich der Selbstliebe die ganze Welt dienstbar zu machen, sondern eine göttlich gestiftete Versöhnung und Erlösung, welche wirklich Neues schafft, und eine Liebe hervorbringt, die, weit über die Natur und das Ich hinausgehend, nicht herrschen, sondern selbstverleugnend dienen will. Hier haben wir Sündenvergebung und Sündentilgung, Friede Gottes und Kräfte des ewigen Lebens, Opfer und Dienst der Liebe, wie sie die geistig und leiblich leidende Menschheit jederzeit bedarf. Hier endlich haben wir Beziehung und Wirkung ebenso auf das innerste Centrum des Lebens, wie auf dessen ganzen Umfang, ebenso auf den Einzelnen, um ihn zur wahren gott Ebenbildlichen Persön-



lichkeit herzustellen, wie auf das Ganze, um demselben, ohne Einmischung in das Specielle der Gesetzgebung und Staatsgestaltung, doch die Principien einzupflanzen, aus denen allein zu jeder Zeit eine vollkommen menschenwürdige Staatsgestaltung hervorgeht." *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrgang 1852, Erster Heft. (Ullmann, Zeitbetrachtung; Vorrede zum fünfundzwanzigsten Jahrgange der Studien und Kritiken.)

## LXXVIII.—p. 72.

*The supporter of law.*] *Law has its foundation in moral right; and the basis of all true morality is religion.*—“Der Staat als eine gesetzliche Ordnung, die zugleich der freien Entwicklung des persönlichen Lebens den entsprechenden Raum gibt, hat seinen Bestand zunächst zwar in der Sphäre des *Rechtes*: und darum müssen freilich auch die Rechtsordnungen mit höchster Sorgfalt festgestellt und gepflegt werden; aber zugleich ist klar und bedarf heute keines Beweises mehr, dass er, gerade wenn er die Basis für das geordnete Zusammenleben freier Persönlichkeiten bilden soll, noch ein *Höheres*, über die Sphäre des Rechts Hinausliegendes zur Voraussetzung hat, durch welches dem Recht erst die volle Gewähr, der Freiheit ein gediegener Lebensinhalt gesichert wird. Dieses Höhere ist das *Sittliche*, welches sein Lebenswurzeln wieder hat im *Religiösen*. Wollen wir, dass diese sichtbare Welt gut bestellt sey, so muss sie befruchtet und gelenkt werden durch die Gedanken und Kräfte einer unsichtbaren Welt. Wollen wir in der That eine unverbrüchliche Ordnung, so können wir sie nur finden, wenn das, was sie zuletzt verbürgt, nicht Product menschlich willkürlicher Uebereinkunft, sondern Ausfluss eines ewigen heiligen Willens ist. Wollen wir wahrhaft freie Menschen, so müssen wir freie Seelen wollen, und freie Seelen sind nur die von innen heraus frei gewordenen, die gewissenhaften, also zugleich in Gott und seinen Ordnungen gebundenen. Wollen wir endlich, dass Ordnung und Freiheit in gesunder Durchdringung zu wirklicher Grösse des öffentlichen Lebens führen, so steht diess nur zu erreichen durch hingebende Opferbereitschaft der

Staatsglieder, und diese Opferbereitwilligkeit, soll sie eine echte und dauernde seyn, fließt allein aus derjenigen Liebe, welche den lebendigen Glauben zu ihrer Quelle hat. Ueberallher sind wir.—das bedarf keiner weiteren Ausführung, —vom Politischen auf das Sittliche und durch dieses auf das Religiöse hingewiesen. Dieses Fundament muss feststehen, sonst kann keine Kunst und keine Macht, keine parlamentarische und keine diplomatische, kein Frankfurt und kein Dresden, ein gesundes Staatsleben zu Stande bringen. Ist aber dieser letzte, das ganze Leben tragende, Grund verstört, so hängt Alles an seiner Wiederherstellung, und *eine politische Regeneration*, die diesen Namen verdient, *wird nur in dem Masse gelingen, in welchem eine religiös-sittliche Regeneration ihr vorangeht und sie auf jedem Schritte begleitet*. Handelt es sich aber um Wiederbegründung der zerrütteten inneren Lebensfundamente, so wird dafür, weil nur selbst Lebendiges Leben zu erzeugen vermag, erfolgreich nur von Solchen gewirkt werden können, die auch für ihre Person aufrichtig und überzeugungsvoll auf dieser Basis stehen, und in dem Geiste wirken, welcher dem, was hergestellt werden soll, innerlich entspricht. Die Grundzüge dieses Geistes finden wir in der richtige Stellung zu Gott, so wie in allem dem, was aus dieser Quelle für das Werken in Leben fließt: in der Weisheit, die, im Hinblick auf Gott nüchtern geworden, nur das Wesenhafte anstrebt; in der massvollen Selbstbeschränkung, die nicht glänzende Formen, sondern echten Lebensgehalt will; in der gewissenhaften Treue und Gerechtigkeit, die, selber fest auf ihrer Ueberzeugung und bei ihrem Worte stehend, zugleich jedem Andern gerecht wird, und nach allen Seiten mit gleichem Masse misst; in der selbstverleugnenden Liebe, die nicht das Ihre sondern das Gemeinsame sucht, und für dessen Heil auch jederzeit zu Opfern freudig und bereit ist." *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrgang 1852, Erstes Heft. (Ullmann, Zeitbeurtheilung; Vorrede zum fünfundzwanzigsten Jahrgange der Studien und Kritiken.)

## NOTES TO LECTURE III.

LXXIX.—p. 76.

*WHILE we admit the credibility of the gospel narrative, and believe, or think that we believe, all Christian truth, there is still room for the inquiry, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?*] Whether it be possible that a real and correct belief of gospel truth can reside in the intellect and yet stop short of its due effect upon the heart, is a question which may perhaps be difficult, but one which is at all events needless for our present purpose. Only let us be thoroughly assured that the belief or faith which does stop short of a loving reliance on Him who is its great and legitimate object, while it does not bring true peace to the conscience, fails also to enable us to work the works of God, and to prepare us for his presence in heaven.

LXXX.—p. 79.

*The various phases of this gigantic evil.*] For a chronological survey of the annals of Infidelity, see Bp. Van Mildert's *Boyle Lectures*.—"What is the history of infidelity but a history of changes? Where is the resemblance between the writings of its modern and those of its ancient disciples? What Celsus and Porphyry attempted to maintain against primitive Christianity, none at present would think of advocating; while the positions and reasonings of recent infidels would have been subjects of ridicule among their earliest brethren. 'The doctrines which Herbert and Tindal declared to be so evident that God could not make them more evident, were wholly given up as untenable by Hume; and the scepticism of Hume sustained no higher character in the mind of D'Alembert. Mere

infidelity gave up natural religion, and Atheism mere infidelity. Atheism is the system at present in vogue. What will succeed it, cannot be foreseen. One consolation, however, attends the subject; and that is this: no other system can be so groundless, so despicable, or so completely ruinous to the morals and happiness of mankind' (Dwight on Infidel Philosophy)." Bp. Mc Ivaine, *Evidences of Christianity*, Lect. I.—Infidelity "has passed through various stages, each distinguished by higher gradations of impiety; for when men arrogantly abandon their guide, and wilfully shut their eyes on the light of heaven, it is wisely ordained that their errors shall multiply at every step, until their extravagance confutes itself, and the mischief of their principles works its own antidote." Robert Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered*.

## LXXXI.—p. 82.

*The Rationalist undertakes to judge for himself, or by mere human aid, what are the truths which revelation ought to propound, and then brings the actual revelation to the standard which he has set up.]* "Le rationalisme moderne a fait plus que de vouloir l'exercice des facultés de la raison; il a prétendu qu'à elle seule appartenait de décider ce qui convient à l'homme de croire ou de ne pas croire en matière de foi, de faire ou de ne pas faire en matière de morale, et que si par habitude, l'on doit encore du respect à la révélation, ce n'est que lorsque cette dernière consentira à ne rien prescrire de ce que la raison jugerait bon de ne pas recevoir." Amande Saintes, *Histoire du Rationalisme en Allemagne*, Liv. i. chap. 1.

## LXXXII.—p. 83.

*Under the rationalistic system ..... there is, for the most part, a rejection of all the vital and distinctive doctrines of the gospel.]* "Le rationalisme n'est point l'incrédulité systématique aux vérités de la religion; loin de là, il a, au contraire, la prétention parmi tant d'autres, de donner au sentiment religieux le plus haut développement, et il offre, en effet, dans beaucoup de pages de ses adeptes les plus

distingués de quoi remuer les ames les plus engourdies. Mais, il est loin d'atteindre son but, puisque, outre qu'il se constitue l'arbitre suprême du Christianisme, il ne s'approprie, en réalité, aucune de ses doctrines vivaces, les seules qui aient prise sur le moral de l'homme ; son action, si on l'observe bien, ne se fait sentir d'ordinaire qu'à la partie sensitive de l'homme, elle est loin de pénétrer jusqu'aux profondeurs de son être." Amade Saintes, *Histoire du Rationalisme en Allemagne*, Liv. i. chap. 1.

## LXXXIII.—p. 85.

*According to this theory.....there has been no inspiration, and therefore there is now no revelation whatever in the proper acceptation of the term.*] “Neglecting that vast and important element of our knowledge, which is derived from empirical observation, the philosophers of that school [German Idealism] have endeavoured to lay down their *a priori* axioms, and then to draw after them in one immense chain of logical sequence the whole mass of human learning, whether of a moral or a demonstrative character. They have not been willing to tolerate anything whatever that is merely experimental, or even that includes an inductive process. Whether it be politics, art, natural science, or even history itself, all must be deduced from rational principles, and built up by inductive reasoning ; so that we are even told what the past state of the world must have been, and what logically it must hereafter be.

“This, then, being the spirit of their philosophy, it is not to be wondered at that religion should be drawn into the same stream of logical inference, and pared down into perfect consistency with it ; nor should it be an object of surprise that they have approached Christianity itself in the same spirit with which they have approached every thing else. Intolerant of moral evidence, of experience, of testimony, they have swept away indiscriminately, in one torrent of logical argumentation, the historical, the inspired, the miraculous ; that is, the whole objective element of Christianity ; and have left nothing behind to supply their place, except the *a priori* religious conceptions

of the human mind." Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part iii. chap. 9. sect. 3.

## LXXXIV.—p. 85.

*These men are not rationalists; they are so-called spiritualists.*] See the system of spiritualism described and exposed in Rogers's *Essay on Reason and Faith*, Essays, vol. II. pp. 308–321; or, in the smaller ed. of the single essay, pp. 56–68.—Also, *The Eclipse of Faith*, passim.—See also a note on the German Intuitionist Theology, in M'Cosh *on the Method of the Divine Government*, book iv. chap. 2, sect. 4.

## LXXXV.—p. 88.

*In this spiritualism there is nothing original or new.*] M. Merle D'Aubigné has exhibited some remarkable features of identity between the doctrines of the modern spiritualists, and those which were held by 'the Illuminated' at Geneva in the time of Calvin; and especially he has pointed out a coincidence between the very language employed by Servetus, and that which prevails in the writings of Mr. Francis Newman and others of his school.—"These pretensions, says this writer, in the third of his *Three Discourses on the Authority of the Scriptures*, are not new. Already have the mystics of the middle ages announced that after the dispensation of *the Father*, (the Old Testament,)—the dispensation of *the Son*, (the New,)—they themselves were about to commence the dispensation of *the Spirit*. At other times they said, that after the period of Paul, then of James, they were about to enter into the period of John; and the fantastic Swedenborg, who is connected with the doctrines which we combat, announced, in 1770, 'the new church, the spiritual completion of the Christian church, to form the new Jerusalem.'"—He then relates the course of *Chatillon (Castellio)* at Geneva, and gives a view of the doctrines he propounded. "He separated Scripture from the Spirit; and, according to him, the Spirit could enlighten man without the Scripture. He thought that the aspect of everything would be changed in the train of the revolution which he demanded—for it

was a revolution which he wished to produce. 'The Spirit,' said he, 'will eclipse the light of Scripture, as day eclipses the light of a lamp.' . . . To these mystical tendencies the young *savant* added some which were rationalistic." . . . He proceeds to describe the doctrines of *Bernardino Ochino*, the friend of Chatillon, who next became conspicuous at Geneva. " 'The Holy Spirit,' said the great orator, 'enlightens believers immediately, and independently of the word of God in the holy Scripture.' He even went further; and once, when preaching on the means of knowing divine inspirations, and of following them, he said, 'Thus, then, it is the Spirit of God who should be our rule, and it is necessary to be more prompt in obeying him than all men and angels, and even than the words of Christ (imo e che alle parole di Christo).' Let us here notice one of the greatest dangers of the system which we oppose. If it be not in Scripture, but in ourselves, that we must seek the standard of truth and holiness, what will happen? While it is religion which should mould our sinful heart, our sinful heart will mould religion, and we shall then hold a paganism perhaps more fine, but as dangerous as that which the polluted heart of man produced in ancient times."—In the next place this writer describes the subjectivity of *the Socini*, who succeeded Ochino at Geneva; and he then gives a sketch of those views of *Servetus*, which, as it will be seen, bear a remarkable similarity, in many respects, to the teaching of our modern spiritualists. "He (*Servetus*) attacked the authority and necessity of the Holy Scriptures, and pretended that, in the train of the emancipation which he projected, the Holy Spirit would resume in the church the place which belongs to Him. 'The true church of Christ,' said he, 'can exist without the Scriptures. Preaching, interpretation, the living voice of the church, is worth more than dead Scripture.' 'The doctrine of Christ,' said he further, 'is entirely spiritual; are we not ashamed, then, thus to appeal to a letter which kills?' *Servetus*, quite captivated with himself, and imagining that he was the restorer of Christianity, set himself above the Romish and

the Protestant churches, and for the system of these two he substituted a third, his own, which, according to him, combined in itself all that remained of truth in the two other churches, while entirely avoiding their errors. He inveighed strongly against orthodoxy, pretending that it was only a kind of intellectualism. 'Faith,' said he, 'is a *confiding, not an understanding, it is a living energy, a continuous action*<sup>a</sup>.' He concealed these deleterious doctrines by language which was in appearance spiritual, and which blinded the eyes of the simple. In attacking dogmatic Christianity, he presented himself as the advocate of the voice within. He spoke much of emanations, and wished the ideal of Christ to be impressed upon our whole nature. 'By faith,' said he, 'Christ takes a form in us; his essential likeness, his true idea, his luminous form is impressed upon our soul.' Peter, in his second Epistle, had already demanded more,—he had said, that Christians are 'partakers of the divine nature;' but it was, according to him, by the great and precious promises of the word that that participation was bestowed. In spite of all his pretensions to a lofty spirituality, it is manifest to all who have read the writings of Servetus, that, as always happens when respect for the testimony of God is wanting, faith was for him essentially a theoretic trust,—it was philosophic ideas covered over by a spurious spirituality." —D'Aubigné goes on to shew the evil effects which these principles produced upon morality, as instanced by Coppin and Gruet; and quotes several testimonies against them from the minor works of Calvin.—See also Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, book i. chap. 9, entitled, "All the principles of piety subverted by Fanatics, who substitute revelations for Scripture."

## LXXXVI.—p. 95.

*The hypothesis of Strauss, in accordance with a system which had been long since marked out by an infidel writer of*

<sup>a</sup> Compare Newman, *Phases of Faith*, p. 230. "Belief is purely intellectual, Faith is properly spiritual."



*our own country.*] “There is yet another writer (Woolston) to be noticed, ... who made an attempt to destroy the credit of the Gospel history by the bold and singular hypothesis, that the whole is merely *Allegory* or *Fable*; maintaining that it is utterly incredible as *a matter of fact*, and was never intended by the Evangelists themselves to be understood in any other than a mystical or parabolical sense. This he affirms to have been the opinion of the most celebrated Fathers of the Church, and to be the only tenable ground for the defence of the gospel. As in the preceding instance [i. e. of Collins] the credit of Prophecy was assailed, so in this the testimony of Miracles was particularly designed to be overthrown; and in support of the Author’s hypothesis are introduced (as might well be expected from such a monstrous position) the most palpable perversion of plain circumstantial narratives, together with the grossest slanders and most indecent ribaldry that ever stained the page of controversy.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon x.—See also Sermon xix.

“That [tendency of scepticism] which assumes the form of a distrust for testimony is far more widely extended in Germany than it is in our own country. The validity of reason is there seldom denied; in many instances, indeed, its province is made far too extensive, so that the historical element of Christianity is entirely absorbed in the rational. Such is the real nature of Strauss’s hypothesis, of which we hear so much in the present day. The testimony upon which the historical authenticity of the Gospels rests is there, by a combination of ingenious artifices, weakened and depreciated, the most competent witnesses are passed over as not strictly trustworthy, the outward fact is made more and more symbolical of moral sentiment, until, at length, the history is all transformed into mythology, and the moral element left, as the sole content of the written word.” Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part iii. chap. 9. sect. 3.

On this subject see Trench’s *Notes on the Miracles of our Lord*, Preliminary Essay, chap. 5. § 7; and see that whole

chapter for an account of the various infidel "Assaults on the Miracles."

LXXXVII.—p. 97.

*If in this way anything has been proved, then the proof is valid against all history.]* It would be altogether a mistake to suppose that, in treating the Gospel narrative after the manner of Strauss, we should be only pursuing the same path of criticism as that by which we reject the legends usually mixed up with the early history of ancient nations. Speaking of the early Roman history, Dr. Tait says truly "Its doubtful legends have their counterpart in the spurious Gospels, or the Rabinical traditions of the History of Abraham, and ... in trusting to the real sacred books to the rejection of these fables, we are already, through God's mercy, resting on that sure basis of historical truth with respect to Christianity and the older revelation, on which the great Roman historian wishes to place us, as to his subject, by his laborious research." *Suggestions to the Theological Student*, Discourse iv.

LXXXVIII.—p. 98.

*Deism,—a class of Anti-Christian principles well known as having prevailed in England chiefly in the last century.]* For a succinct account of the English deists, and their principles, see Bp. Van Mildert's *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon x. —These deistic writers were the forerunners of the German Rationalists.

LXXXIX.—p. 100.

*This is Pantheism.]* "Among a numerous and increasing class of the higher and middle ranks, there is an inward withdrawing from the life and personal being of a God, a turning of the thoughts exclusively to the so-called physical attributes, to the omnipresence in the counterfeit form of ubiquity, to the immensity, the infinity, the immutability;—the attributes of space with a notion of power as their substratum,—a Fate in short, not a moral creator or governor." Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Conclusion.—

“Pantheism is the form in which infidelity prevails on the continent of Europe in the present day; and by its illusions it satisfies many of those appetencies of the mind which would shrink from gaunt and grim Atheism. It pictures a fantasy with which the imagination may hold communion, and not of such a holy brightness as to drive back the spirit with an oppressive sense of demerit. Indeed, sin can be regarded as no barrier in the way of intercourse with the divinity of this system, for the evil is just one of his own developments.” M’Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, Note, on the Religious History of Mankind.—“Die eigentliche und alles verschlingende Gefahr wahrhaft liegt in dem sich nähernden entscheidenden Kampfe für das wahre Dasein des Christenthums selbst, des Sittengesetzes, des Glaubens an einen persönlichen Gott; ein Kampf, gegen welchen ganz unbedeutend erschienen müssen alle Streitigkeiten zwischen verschiedenen christlichen Gemeinschaften, und wogegen zurücktreten müssen die untergeordneten Gegensätze zwischen Katholicismus und Protestantismus.” Neander, *Deutsche Zeitschrift*, Mai, 1850, p. 163.—See Garbett’s *Sermon on Modern Philosophical Infidelity, or the Personality of God*. See also Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde und vom Versöhner*, Absehn. I, Cap. 1; and Beilage 2;—and Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 16, notes 2 and 3.

## XC.—p 104.

*The Atheist is sometimes satisfied with taking merely a negative position.*] See Chalmers, *Institutes of Theology*, book i. chap. 3. § 18.—“I fear, however,” says Mr. Michell, in his *Bampton Lectures*, “that, as in the parallel case in Ethics, the practical view will exhibit the (so called) neutral position of the Atheist as nothing short of a positively antagonistic power.” Sermon iii.—For an account of Atheistic systems, see Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 1.—A full account of modern atheistical principles and systems may be seen in Morell’s *History of Modern Philosophy*.

## NOTES TO LECTURE IV.

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XCI.—p. 112.

*THE corrupt will is sometimes directly engaged in blinding men's eyes to the truth of Christianity; a secret wish that the gospel may not be true making way for the persuasion that it is false.]* “It is not only the difficulty and labour which men take in finding out of truth,—nor again, that, when it is found, it imposes upon men's thoughts,—that doth bring lies in favour; but a natural, though corrupt, love of the lie itself.” Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay I. Of Truth.—“Ils haïssent la vérité, parce qu'ils voudroient premièrement que ce qui est vrai ne fût pas vrai; ensuite ils voudroient du moins ne le pas connoître; et parce qu'ils ne veulent pas le connoître, ils ne veulent pas non plus qu'on les avertisse . . . *Cum esse volunt mali, nolunt esse veritatem quâ damnantur mali*, August. In Joann. Tract. xc.” Bossuet, *Sermon sur la Haine des Hommes pour la Vérité*.—“Is it bigotry, if I fear that the unbelief which prejudices and prevents the experiment [namely, of giving Christianity a fair trial] has its source elsewhere than in the uncorrupted judgment; that not the strong free mind, but the enslaved will, is the true original infidel in this instance? It would not be the first time that a treacherous bosom-sin had suborned the understandings of men to bear false witness against its avowed enemy, the right though unreceived owner of the house, who had long warned that sin out, and waited only for its ejection to enter and take possession of the same.” Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Aphorisms on Spiritual Religion.—“If the manner in which Plutarch explains and contemplates the opposition between superstition and unbelief shews, when applied to the phenomena

of his time, an inadequate and partial view of this subject, this must be attributed to that fundamental view, belonging to the essence of the Platonic philosophy, according to which every thing is referred back to the intellectual element, to knowledge in religion,—and the deeper practical ground of religious conviction and of the religious life,—their connection with the moral bent of the affections,—is overlooked. Hence he considers the main source of both superstition and unbelief to be intellectual error,—in the former of a positive, in the latter of a negative, kind; only, in the case of superstition, there is, moreover, a movement of feeling, which arises out of those erroneous notions of the gods, whence they become only objects of fear. But he does not seem to have found that a *πάθος* lies at the ground of many shapes of unbelief, as well as of superstition; and both disorders of the spiritual life have their proper seat in the direction of the moral affections, in the disposition; that the *πάθος* is therefore usually the original, the intellectual error the derivative and symptomatic, cause of the evil. Thus Plutarch ascribes it merely to a false notion of the gods, that they are represented by the superstitious as angry, and threatening punishment; but he is not prepared to understand such a stage of religious development well enough to perceive that there is a bottom truth, by virtue of which the gods can be represented *only in the relation* to the religious consciousness of one who feels himself estranged from God. Hence he erred also in supposing that nothing more was necessary for the recovery of the superstitious man, than to lead him, simply by the intellectual operation, *to the knowledge* of the gods, and of the fact that good only, and nothing that is evil, proceeds from them; not perceiving that the representation of the gods above alluded to, might itself be nothing else than a reflex of the superstitious man's own state of mind, and therefore to be got rid of only by an immediate operation on the nature of the man himself." Neander, *History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Introduction, Torrey's Translation.—In connection with this subject, great weight is due to a remark made by John Foster, in his *Intro-*

*ductory Essay to Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*,—that unbelievers “often appear to regard the arrayed evidences of revealed religion, not with the simple aversion which may be felt for error and deception, but with that kind of repugnance which betrays a recognition of adverse *power*.”—“Nec ignoro plerosque, conscientia meritorum, nihil se esse post mortem magis optare quam credere; malunt enim exstingui penitus quam ad supplicia reparari.” Minucius Felix, *Octavius*.—“When young persons who have been religiously educated become depraved in their moral feelings and licentious in their conduct, the vitiation of the imagination and of the social affections tends to obscure that *internal evidence* of the truth of Christianity which, to a mind not depraved or perverted, is alone sufficient to command belief. And, as the injunctions of the Bible and its awful sanctions are the principal restraints upon the passions, there is a strong motive for wishing to invalidate its authority; this motive may so far divert the attention from the *direct evidence* of revelation, and so fix it upon objections and difficulties, that at length a very sincere kind of infidelity may be produced, which may continue to infatuate the understanding to the last moment of life.” Taylor, *Elements of Thought*, part ii. —See Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* book v. chap. 2. §§ 1, 2. (“How should the brightness of wisdom shine, where the windows of the soul are of very set purpose closed?”) —Barrow, *Sermons on the Apostles' Creed*, Sermon i., Of the Evil and Unreasonableness of Infidelity.—Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xix., On the Preparatory Dispositions necessary for receiving the truths of Revealed Religion; and Sermon xxiv.—Bp. Shuttleworth, *Sermons on some of the leading Principles of Christianity*, Sermon ii. (on John vii. 17).—Saurin, *Sermon sur la Suffisance de la Révélation*, Première Partie.

XCH.—p. 114.

*Truth, when imprisoned in the intellect, dying in its prison-house.*] “Nimirum divinarum veritatum ad hominum salutem comparatarum hæc est ratio, ut non tantum sciri, sed ad vitæ quoque praxin transferri, debeant, ut ipse Ser-

vator docet, Joan. xiii. 17. Hoc si homines intermittant, cognitio ista illis non tantum nihil prodest, sed facile etiam contingit, ut ex justo Dei judicio, veritate amissa, in errores gravissimas, ipsumque atheismum, præcipites ruant." Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 2.

## XCIII.—p. 115.

"How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?"] i. e. rather than that which cometh from God, regarding it in the first place, or as a matter of chief importance. It is greatly to be feared that many persons have been betrayed into a profession of unbelief by vanity, or by a love of distinction to be obtained by the affectation of superior genius and ability; their desire of being distinguished for intellectual qualities outweighing their love and respect for what is right and good, and, above all, not being held in check by the fear and love of God.—"Ce seroit mal connoître le cœur humain, de s'imaginer que les passions qui le portent vers des objets sensibles, sont les plus puissantes sur lui. Ces passions détachées des sens et de la matière, ce désir de se distinguer, cet amour de la renommée, cette gloire de passer pour un génie supérieur, et qui s'affranchit des erreurs vulgaires; ce sont là des passions vives et touchantes, et c'est là, pour l'ordinaire, le grand mobile qui anime ces Incrédules. Une preuve sensible que c'est ce qui les fait agir, c'est qu'ils aiment à se répandre et à publier leur incrédulité." Saurin, *Sermon sur la Suffisance de la Révélation*, Première Partie.—"Et voilà, en effet, un des principaux écueils de la foi Chrétienne: l'amour de la gloire qui vient des hommes. On a plus facilement, et plus tôt, vaincu tous les autres obstacles que celui-là. Quand l'âme troublée par le sentiment de ses péchés, et soucieuse de son avenir, se tourne du côté de la religion, elle rencontre en son chemin de nombreux ennemis de son salut. L'orgueilleuse raison est là qui lui oppose l'obscurité des dogmes Chrétiens, et l'invite à rejeter ce qui ne se peut comprendre; l'indolence la détourne de la conquête d'un royaume qui *veut être forcé*, et que les violents seuls empor-

*tent*; la sensualité lui fait peur d'une vie austère et chaste; mais quand tous ces conseillers perfides ont été successivement écartés, plus dangereuse encore, plus sûre d'être écoutée, la gloire humaine se présente." Vinet, *Discours, La Recherche de la gloire humaine*.—"Of this circumstance [that too many take their religion entirely upon trust] infidels avail themselves to represent Christianity as an irrational system which no man would adopt if he took the pains to examine its pretensions. By such an insinuation the pride of superficial believers is readily alarmed; and rather than submit to the imputation of ignorance and weakness, they too often give the most certain proof of both by rejecting what the ablest and strongest understandings have always been the most ready to receive." Bishop Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Serm. i.—See also Rogers, *Reason and Faith*, Essays, vol. II. pp. 315-320; the single Essay, smaller ed. pp. 63-67.—The following narrative by Spondanus (ad an. 1201) from Matthew Paris, conveys a significant lesson, whatever may be our opinion concerning the facts of the case related. "Rem memoria dignam, qua discant sublimissima quæque ingenia sapere ad sobrietatem, narrat Matthæus Paris (Hist. Angl. in Joan. an. 1201), ex relatione sibi facta ab episcopo Dunelmense qui vidit. Ejusque summa est, Theologum illum, Simonem nomine, cognomento Churnai (Polydorus Thurnaium habet, Polyd. Hist. Angl. lib. 15 in fin.) ingenio capacissimum, et memoria tenacissimum, cum per decennium scholas artium nobilissime rexisset, indeque se ad Theologiam conferens adeo intra paucos annos profecisset, ut quæstiones subtilissimas et inauditas facillime solveret; accidisse quadam die, cum frequentissima auditorum corona difficillimas de Trinitate propositas quæstiones perquam dilucide, eleganter, et catholice ingenti omnium stupore enodasset, hortarenturque publice familiares ut eam disputationem literis commendaret; eundem his insolentiori fastu abreptum, oculis in cælum elatis in hæc verba temere prorupisse, 'O Jesule, Jesule, quantum in hac quæstione confirmavi legem tuam et exaltavi; profecto si malignando et adversando vellem, fortioribus rationibus et argumentis



scirem illam infirmare, et deprimendo improbare:’ hocque dicto, elinguem penitus obmutuisse; adeoque sapientiam ejus infatuatam esse, ut quamvis, ultione divina aliquantum mitigata, linguæ usus utcumque redditus fuerit, vix tamen postea intra biennium, filio ejus magna sollicitudine edocente, prima literarum elementa cognoscere, et Orationem Dominicam, Symbolumque Apostolorum, memoria discere, ac balbutiendo pronuntiare potuerit.” Dangerous and fearful indeed is the vanity of the mere speculatist or disputant even when engaged in defence of gospel truth!

## XCIV.—p. 115.

*The influence of the will, or the state of man’s heart, in producing anti-Christian principles, is often, and perhaps for the most part, indirect.]* In accordance with our mental and moral constitution. See Mill’s *Logic*, book v. chap. 1. (Of Fallacies), § 3.

It may be right to observe, in this place, that we must not so conceive of the moral sources of Infidelity as to deny or to forget that there may be men more sensual, and otherwise more wicked, among those who profess to receive the gospel, than are many of those who reject it.

## XCV.—p. 118.

*While there are some cases in which an uneasy conscience seeks refuge in unbelief, it is likely that there are many more in which unbelief has its stronghold in a conscience that rejects the charge of sin, and therefore repudiates as false the gospel which propounds its remedy.]* “Infidelity is always blind; but the difference lies here, that in some cases malice is covered over with blindness to such a degree that the individual, through a kind of stupidity, is without any perception of his own wickedness. This is the case with those who, with a good intention, as they speak, or in other words a foolish imagination, impose upon themselves. In some cases, malice has the ascendancy in such a manner that in spite of the checks of conscience the individual rushes forward into wickedness of this sort with a kind of madness.” Calvin *on 1 Cor. ii. 8.*—“Comme

lorsqu'on nous met un voile sur les yeux, dit S. Augustin, *nous ne voyons ni ce voile ni tous les objets qui nous environnent*, ainsi lorsque nous tombons dans le péché, et que nous y demeurons volontairement, après avoir perdu la connoissance de ce qui nous étoit le plus utile pour notre salut, nous perdons celle du peché même. ("Si tibi tegatur carnis oculus, nec aliud vides, nec id unde tegitur vides." Aug. in *Psalm.* 37). De Sacy, *Prov.* iv. 19.

XCVI.—p. 118.

*Pride of intellect on the one hand, and mental sloth or negligence on the other.*] Men make God a liar, says Tholuck, "nur . . . aus Trotz oder aus Feigheit." *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.*, Abschn. 1. Cap. 2.—"Il faut toujours marcher droit devant soi entre la présomption et la paresse. *Inter superbiam et desidiam*, August. Ep. 81 ad Eudox." De Sacy, *Prov.* iv. 27.

XCVII.—p. 118.

*Man's intellect is proud, when it as it were practically says, If I cannot master every subject, yet at all events no subject shall confound or baffle me.*] "Stolz ist nur die andere Seite von Herrschsucht; Stolz ist die im Innern genährte Herrschsucht, die es aber nicht im Aeussern zum Herrschen bringt. Kann ich nicht herrschen, heisst es dann, so soll auch niemand mich beherrschen. Stolz ist also *Widerwille*, ein Wille der sich keinem andern unterwerfen will, und der gerade darin seine Macht sucht dass er nicht gehorchen müsse." Gelzer, *Religion im Leben*, Dritte Rede.

XCVIII.—p. 118.

*There are various ways in which this mental pride becomes a fruitful source of anti-Christian Infidelity.*] On pride of intellect as a source of unbelief, see Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xvii; and the notes to that Sermon.—Bp. Mc Ilvaine, *Evidences of Christianity*, Lecture I.—Dr. Chalmers, *Principal's Addresses*, 1846; and *Sketches of Moral and Mental Philosophy*, chap. i. § 37.—"Certainly there be some that delight in guddiness, and count it a

bondage to fix a belief; affecting free-will in thinking, as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits, which are of the same vein, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients." Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay I.—"Eodem etiam spectant (licet diverso modo) eorum commentationes, qui veritatem Christianæ religionis ex principiis et auctoritatibus philosophorum deducere et confirmare haud veriti sunt; fidei et sensus conjugium tanquam legitimum multa pompa et sollemnitate celebrantes, et grata rerum varietate animos hominum permulcentes; sed interim divina humanis impari conditione permiscentes." Ib. *Novum Organum*, lib. i. App. 89.—"With the development of intellect has arisen a conscious self-sufficiency, an over-weening love of personal importance, an impatience of control, a dislike of submission to wholesome restraint, an undervaluing of authority; a setting up of lawless inclination as the supreme rule of ultimate appeal; a sacrifice of relative, social, and governmental ties upon the altar of individual caprice, and of a fashionable ultra-liberalism, which spurns at control, disdains the reference to first principles which can alone ensure correct conduct, and plunges at once into that anti-social system in which man lives to *himself*, becomes the lawgiver to *himself*, and refers to *himself* and his wishes as the standard of right and wrong. Thus a growing contempt of authority may be said to be the characteristic of our age. But this is an evil which, though it confessedly detracts from that which otherwise would have been unmixed good, yet by no means destroys that good, nor perverts it as to render evil predominant." Newnham, *Body and Mind*.

## XCIX.—p. 119.

*In the minds of many unbelievers, and in many a system of infidel philosophy, the root of the evil lies in an assumption or demand that all divine truth must be discovered from within; that it must be originally perceived in the depths of man's own consciousness or intuitive reason.]* On this part of

our subject see an Essay by Dr. Vaughan, entitled, *German Philosophy and Christian Theology*, Essays, vol. II. pp. 248—323, 1849. “The doctrines of revelation,” says this writer truly, “are all embodied in facts; and a philosophy which refuses to concern itself with external facts of any sort, and looks for its truth to the purely metaphysical processes of the reason, is, in its very mode and spirit, anti-Christian. Christianity bids us look for our highest instruction from without; German Idealism insists that it must come from within, and denounces the man who presumes to question that position as little less than a traitor both to philosophy and humanity.” p. 297. “The ‘absolute intuition’ of Schelling, and the ‘absolute logic’ of Hegel, are only different modes of asserting the same distinctive principle of the German philosophy, viz. the principle which regards the human mind as the instrument which, by beginning with itself, and by searching outwards from itself, may attain to all possible knowledge, not only of itself, but of the universe and the infinite. All the religions in the world, according to these systems of philosophy, are only so many forms of thought, which have been generated, in different ages and in different circumstances, by the religious sentiment in man.” p. 270. —See also Twesten, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik*, § 31, Vernunftgebrauch; where the principle is established that “Die Vernunft ist *das Organ*, mittelst dessen wir uns die Offenbarung aneignen ..... Wir haben nur diess festzuhalten, dass sie in Verhältniss zur Offenbarung nicht als Princip, sondern als Werkzeug,—nicht als das Licht, sondern als das Auge—zu betrachten ist; und zwar ein Auge was des Arztes bedarf, für welches es aber kein kräftigeres Heil- und Erregungsmittel giebt, als eben das Licht der Offenbarung selbst. Daraus folgt aber, dass sie sich nicht zur Norm und Richterin aufwerfen darf, sondern sich dem geoffenbarten Worte Gottes subordiniren muss.” —“On the lofty heights of metaphysical speculation, clouds and darkness hover, which it is not permitted to the limited powers of the most exalted intellect to disperse..... Those who have reflected most on such sub-

jects will perhaps assent to the opinion that if we would discover truth we must pursue it in some lower region, in which the light of our moral feelings and faculties may be allowed to direct and cheer our path."....."Ancients and moderns, deists, atheists, and Christians, men of immoral and moral life, of pious and impious feelings, have built up philosophical systems equally unintelligible. And some of these have been established upon principles of which it would be very difficult to shew the fallacy, yet upon which no man, not even the inventor of the system, would or could act for a single moment. In seeking to become more, we pay the penalty of our folly, and become less, than man"....."Hume declared that he was afraid to think, on account of the conclusions to which he might come, and the barriers of separation he might create between himself and the rest of mankind. This feeling should have taught him that the pursuit of truth, properly conducted, could never lead to such a separation, and *that there was other and stronger evidence than abstract reasoning alone.* Reid was unable to refute Berkeley's principles till he appealed to the common belief and conduct of mankind." Mills, *Essays, &c.*, pp. 22, 102, 103, second ed.—The following remarks on the principles of a certain modern poet may not be without some value in this place. This poet "was undoubtedly a man of genius—of very high genius—but of a peculiar and unhealthy kind. It is needless to disguise the fact, and it accounts for all,—his mind was diseased: he never knew, even from boyhood, what it was to breathe the atmosphere of healthy life, to have the *mens sana in corpore sano.* His sensibilities were over-acute; his morality was thoroughly morbid; his metaphysical speculations illogical, incongruous, incomprehensible,—alike baseless and objectless. The suns and systems of his universe were mere nebulae: his continents were a chaos of dead matter; his oceans 'a world of waters, and without a shore.' For the law of gravitation,—that law which was to preserve the planets in their courses,—he substituted some undemonstrable dream-like reflection of a dream, which he termed intellectual beauty. Life, according to

him, was a phantasmagorial pictured vision, mere colour on the sun-set clouds; and earth a globe hung on nothing, —self-governing, yet, strange to say, without laws. It is gratuitous absurdity to call his mystical speculations a search after truth; they are no such thing, and are as little worth the attention of reasoning and responsible man as the heterogeneous reveries of nightmare. They are a mere flaring up in the face of all that Revelation has mercifully disclosed, and all that sober Reason has confirmed. Shelley's faith was a pure psychological negation; and cannot be confuted, simply because it asserts nothing: and, under the childish idea that all the crime, guilt, and misery of the world resulted from—what? not the depravity of individuals, but from the very means, civil and ecclesiastical, by which these, in all ages and nations, have been at least attempted to be controlled,—he seemed to take an insane delight in selecting, for poetical illustration, subjects utterly loathsome and repulsive; and which religion and morality, the virtuous and the pure, the whole natural heart and spirit of upright man, either rises up in rebellion against, or shrinks back from instinctively, and with horror." *Sketches of the Poetical Literature of the last half century*, by D. M. Moir, Lecture v.—See also Vinet, *Discours, Les Religions de l'Homme et la Religion de Dieu*.

C.—p. 120.

*Hereby all information from experience is at once repudiated,—all regard to the historical past, and all due respect for its teachings, are made to disappear.]* On this subject see *The Age and Christianity*, by Robert Vaughan, D.D., Lectures I, iii, and II, iii.—It has been well observed that "To claim a distinct personal enlightenment independent of a written word, is to violate the highest attribute of man, his social dependence, and to destroy the idea of a church, that communion of saints, which is bound together by the historic verities of Christianity; it is, in truth, but another phase of the isolating tendency of our age, which would obliterate the name of government, and the claims of national life." Westcott, *Elements of the Gospel*

*Harmony*, chap. 5.—To the last reflection in the foregoing passage we shall do well to subjoin another. “ Il en est de l’âme engagée dans la vie de la religion ou dans celle de la pensée, comme du navire lancé sur les flots, et cherchant, à travers l’Océan, les rivages d’un nouveau monde. Cet Océan, c’est la société, religieuse ou civile. Elle nous porte comme l’Océan, masse fluide sur laquelle le navire trace des sillons à son gré et ne prend pied nulle part. L’Océan porte le navire, mais l’Océan peut l’engloutir, et l’engloutit quelquefois. La société nous engloutit plus souvent encore, mais enfin elle nous porte, et nous ne pouvons arriver sans être portés par elle ; car elle est semblable à l’Océan, qui, moins fluide que l’air et moins dense que la terre, nous cède justement assez et nous résiste justement assez pour soutenir, sans l’entraver, notre marche vers la vérité. Notre but n’est pas au fond de l’abîme, il est aux limites de l’Océan. En sillonnant ces eaux profondes, gardons-nous de disparaître dans leurs profondeurs. C’est assez de céder à l’élément qui nous soutient la carène de notre navire. On peut sombrer sur l’Océan de la société comme sur l’Océan de notre globe, et il n’est pas besoin de dire sur lequel des deux les naufrages sont plus fréquents. Le navire que chacun de nous est chargé de gouverner et de sauver, c’est l’individualité, ou la liberté morale. Elle ne se sauve, au point de vue religieux, que dans le système du pur Evangile.” Vinet, *Études sur Blaise Pascal*, V.

CI.—p. 122.

*Our mind, to refer to a well-known saying, ought not to be like the ant, &c.]* “ Qui tractaverunt scientias, aut empirici aut dogmatici fuerunt. Empirici, formicæ more, congerunt tantum et utuntur ; rationales, araneorum more, telas ex se conficiunt : apis vero ratio media est, quæ materiam ex floribus horti et agri elicit, sed tamen eam propria facultate vertit et digerit. Neque absimile philosophiæ verum opificium est ; quod nec mentis viribus tantum aut præcipue nititur, neque ex historia naturali et mechanicis experimentis præbitam materiam, in memoria integram, sed in intellectu mutatam et subactam, reponit. Itaque ex ha-

rum facultatum (experimentalis scilicet et rationalis) arc-tiore et sanctiore fœdere (quod adhuc factum non est) bene sperandum est." *Novum Organum*, lib. i. Aph. 95.

CII.—p. 123.

*Hence the attempts which have been made to solve the mysteries of being, to pry into the essences of things, and explain the phenomena of existence, &c.] See The Age and Christianity, by Dr. Vaughan, Lecture VI. i. ii.*

CIII.—p. 123.

*In every department of ordinary knowledge, there are truths which we apprehend, without being able to comprehend them, that is, to understand them fully.] "We 'apprehend' many truths which we do not 'comprehend.' The great mysteries of our faith,—the doctrine, for instance, of the Holy Trinity,—we lay hold upon it (ad prehendo), we hang on it, our souls live by it; but we do not 'comprehend' it, that is, we do not take it all in; for it is a necessary attribute of God that He is incomprehensible; if He were not so, He would not be God, or the being that comprehended Him would be God also. But it also belongs to the idea of God that He may be 'apprehended,' though not 'comprehended' by His reasonable creatures; He has made them to know Him, though not to know Him all, to 'apprehend' though not to 'comprehend' Him.—We may transfer with profit the same distinction to matters not quite so solemn. I read Goldsmith's *Traveller*, or one of Gay's Fables, and I feel that I 'comprehend' it. I do not believe, that is, that there was any thing in the poet's mind or intention, which I have not in reading reproduced in my own. But I read *Hamlet* or *King Lear*: here I 'apprehend' much; I have wondrous glimpses of the poet's intention and aim; but I do not for an instant suppose that I have 'comprehended,' taken in, that is, all that was in his mind in the writing; or that his purpose does not stretch in manifold directions far beyond the range of my vision; and I am sure there are few who would not shrink from affirming, at least if they at all realized the force of*



the words they were using, that they ‘comprehended’ Shakespeare; however much they may ‘apprehend’ in him.” Trench, *On the Study of Words*, Lecture V.

## CIV.—p. 124.

*That which is commonly, though improperly, called mystery in matters of religion.*] Something obscure, or which cannot be thoroughly comprehended or understood.—*Μυστήριον*, in the sense in which it is employed in the New Testament, is a truth which is secret until it be revealed, but which may be and is made known or disclosed by revelation. So Rom. xi. 25, ‘I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery,’—this which was once a secret, undiscoverable by any powers of your own,—but of which you are now no longer to be ignorant. “*Μυστήριον* does not mean something which in itself cannot be known, but something which (as being the free counsel of God) cannot be discovered by man. In like manner, the calling of the Gentiles is also denominated a *μυστήριον*.” Olshausen *in loc*.

## CV.—p. 125.

*It has been truly said, “with every increase of diameter in the sphere of light, there is an increase of diameter in the circumambient darkness.”*] Chalmers, *Prolections, &c., Lectures on Butler’s Analogy*, part i. chap. 7. § 83.

## CVI.—p. 125.

*Choosing rather to give the reins to wanton and presumptuous speculation, it not unfrequently loses itself in a labyrinth of error.*] Concerning the danger of mere speculation in religious matters, or the mischief of treating the substance of revelation as a subject only for the exercise of intellect, see Vinet, *Discours, L’Étude sans Terme*. “Jetons un regard sur le vaste champ de la speculation religieuse, &c. &c. . . L’application exclusive de l’intelligence à la religion, non seulement ne nous avance pas vers la vérité, c’est à dire vers la vie, mais elle tend à nous en éloigner toujours plus. . . L’Évangile peut, comme tous les faits, fournir la matière d’une science: mais avant d’être une

science, c'est un fait, c'est un action de Dieu. Cette action, il s'agit moins d'en rendre compte que de la subir." —For some good remarks on the wantonness of theological speculation, see also Chalmers, *Prelections, &c., Notes on Hill's Lectures*, book iii. chap. 8, and book ii. chap. 6.—“Es giebt eine Wahrheit, eine heilige Wahrheit, die auch nicht da ist, um bespeculirt, sondern um genossen zu werden.” Tholuck, *Lehre von der Sünde, &c.* Abschn. i. Cap. 1.—“Fladdergeister, so gern speculiren von hohen Dingen, wollen ein Loch durch den Himmel bohren, und ersehen alles, was Gott selbst ist und thut, und lassen dieweil Christum fahren, als dürften sie sein nichts dazu.” Luther, *Auslegung des 14, 15, und 16 Capitels Johannis*, cap. 14, v. 10, ed. Walch. viii. 98, 99.—“There is perhaps no better argument for the practical nature of Christianity than the fact that it owed neither its origin, nor the restoration of its purer principles, to a system of philosophy. —At the same time, its more profound speculative import, and considerable importance in a scientific aspect, are clearly proved by this, that it has always met with either a hostile or a friendly treatment at the hands of philosophers, who have endeavoured either to destroy it, or to introduce into it their own speculations.” Hagenbach, *History of Doctrines*, § 272.—The question is, shall Philosophy be the handmaid of Faith, or Faith the handmaid of Philosophy? Rightly, Philosophy is subservient to Faith. To reverse this order is to introduce confusion. And this confusion tends first to the oppression and annihilation of Faith which has been wrongfully made to take the lowest place, and then to the enfeeblement, degradation, and destruction of the upstart philosophy itself.

## CVII.—p. 125.

*Truth is regarded as not proved until it is thoroughly explained.]* It has been well said that “he who will believe nothing but that which he can explain may well be required to explain everything which he believes.” See *Personality of the Tempter, and other Sermons*, by Dr. Vaughan (of Harrow), Sermon ii.—On the demand which

is sometimes made that religion be free from mysteries, see Vinet, *Discours, Les Mystères du Christianisme*.

## CVIII.—p. 125.

*Hence flowed a large portion of those forms of unbelief, usually called heresies, which appeared in the second and third centuries.*] “Eo tempore philosophica studia maxime vigeabant; et suis argutiis, seu (ut ipsi putabant) demonstrationibus, in sua sententia ita confirmati erant, ut nihil verum existimarent, quod ab eorum conceptis jamdudum opinionibus cogitationibusque discreparet.” Cent. Magdeb. Cent. II. cap. 5.—See Neander, *Church History*, vol. I. Introduction; together with the account of the Gnostic sects in vol. II.—“Platonism, with a corrupt mixture of oriental learning, was much esteemed even by the Fathers of the church.....The doctrines of the church were imperceptibly corrupted. Believers receded more and more from the simplicity of Christian truth; while the hands of infidels were strengthened by the sanction which thus seemed to be given to that philosophy which it was their intention to introduce as a substitute for the gospel. Thus did Christianity suffer considerably from the indiscretion of its advocates, as well as from the insidious designs of its adversaries.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon vii.

## CIX.—p. 125.

*To this source we trace that Infidelity of the middle ages which is well known to have been consequent upon the cultivation of the Scholastic philosophy.*] “About the beginning of the seventh century a new turn was given to the pursuits of philosophy; and the system of Aristotle, which had hitherto been little regarded, or only in part admitted into the mixed philosophy of the preceding ages, began to be exclusively studied, and applied to the subject of revealed religion.

“The Saracens appear to have been the first who revived the Aristotelian system; which, however useful and excellent in its *logical* department, contains, with respect to its *physical* and *metaphysical* tenets, many positions not

easily reconcilable with Scripture. This philosophy gradually penetrated the darkness of western Europe, and became the favourite study of all who distinguished themselves in the revival of letters. It ruled with almost undivided sway in the literary world from the eleventh to the sixteenth century; during the greater part of which period, questions the most frivolous became the chief object of attention; the reins were given to presumptuous speculation; and the introduction of dialectic and metaphysical subtleties into the hallowed recesses of theology gave rise to many novel and dangerous opinions.

“From this system sprang the celebrated Scholastic philosophy of those times; the application of which to subjects of divinity was probably introduced for the chief purpose of defending the various corruptions and superstitions of the church of Rome, whose indefatigable advocates found no weapons so well adapted to that purpose as those which this newly-revived philosophy supplied.

“Among these Scholastics, however, were men of distinguished talents, and who in a more enlightened age might probably have obtained the highest honours in the learned world. But their labours were too generally characterised by a rage for abstruse researches and for perverse disputation, which threw an air of obscurity and perplexity over the simplest and most important truths. Many of their writings on religious subjects are remarkable also for a spirit of rash conjecture, or bold and presumptuous assertion, ill becoming the interpreters of God’s word; whilst in almost all are to be found such cavillings and such equivocations, as tend to confound truth with falsehood, and give uncertainty to the clearest positions both of reason and of scripture. Vanity, rather than the love of truth, encouraged their pursuits; which, affording scope for an ostentatious display of intellectual talents, gave occasion to contests for mere literary fame; wherein men ‘sought honour one of another, and not the honour which cometh of God only.’

“It is, indeed, characteristic of the Schoolmen that, far from reverencing the simple truths of religion, or attain-

ing to any clearer knowledge of them by these innumerable controversies, they were employed chiefly upon what the apostle calls 'foolish questions' which 'gender strifes;' fond of logomachies; and setting little value upon any but the most intricate and unedifying disquisitions. At the same time, their knowledge of the Aristotelian philosophy, to which they were so immoderately attached, was but imperfect; being derived chiefly through the medium of corrupt translations from the Arabic into the Latin language, and blended with the fanciful opinions of Arabian commentators. It is easy to conceive what pernicious effects such learning as this must produce, when applied to the study of the Scriptures, and to the subject of sacred truth; what an intermixture of 'philosophy falsely so called' with the doctrines of revelation; what hazardous researches into divine mysteries; and what an arbitrary exercise of human judgment in things pertaining to the kingdom of God. Arguments of a solid and convincing kind were discarded, in order to shew the ingenuity of the disputant in framing defences of more subtle and exquisite contrivance. Thus the mind lost its relish for plain unadulterated truth, and could only be gratified by such delusive and sophisticated reasonings as pampered the imagination without improving the understanding.

"The consequences of indulging this unnatural and destructive appetite were such as might reasonably be expected. Perplexity became the chief object in almost every discussion. The love of truth gave way to doubt and disputation; what was said to-day was unsaid to-morrow; and men were 'ever learning' without being 'able to come to the knowledge of the truth.'

"Nay, more: to such length did some of these Schoolmen proceed, that, when accused of advancing tenets repugnant to the Scriptures, instead of repelling the accusation, they had recourse to the dangerous position that opinions might be *philosophically true, yet theologically false*; a position obviously mischievous in its principle, and opening a door for the admission of Infidelity into the very bosom of the church. We accordingly learn from the

historians of those times, that several persons of great eminence in the church, as well as in the state, were known to be deeply tinctured with Infidelity, and even with atheistical opinions. Many are recorded to have made ‘shipwreck of their faith;’ and few, perhaps, among those who were of the highest reputation for learning were entirely uninfected with the spirit of libertinism which so generally prevailed. How, indeed, could it be otherwise, when a contentious philosophy was allowed to dispute the palm with theology, and to assume the character of an overbearing superior, rather than that of an humble handmaid to divine truth?

“Such was the Scholastic theology of the middle ages. The inroads which it made upon the Christian faith, and the advantage it gave to the enemies of the gospel, are to be estimated, however, not so much by its immediate effects as by its remoter consequences. By introducing heterogeneous principles of physics and metaphysics into the study of revealed religion, and by giving rise to a pernicious habit of regarding every truth, whether derived from the senses, from reasoning, or from Scripture, as a fit subject for disputation, it engendered that monster Scepticism, to whom, in these latter days, the great adversary of mankind has so many obligations. The sacred oracles were laid prostrate at the feet of dogmatical and presumptuous vanity; and the boundaries of reason and revelation were broken down.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon. vii.

“We find, about the period of the Reformation, a revival of almost every philosophical sect, with selections and combinations of their several tenets, no less various and discordant than those which prevailed in ancient Greece and Rome. Some busied themselves in restoring the genuine philosophy of Aristotle, hitherto debased by impure mixtures of oriental or Cabalistic inventions. Others revived the Platonic system, and maintained its exclusive claim to truth, with a pertinacity and vehemence unbecoming the advocates of mere human speculation. The contest carried on between the students of

Plato and Aristotle, and the excessive homage paid by each to their respective oracles, are scarcely to be paralleled in the history of polemics. Into these two parties the learned world was chiefly divided: though some were at the same time employed in reviving the Pythagorean, Ionic, Stoic, and Epicurean systems; while others consumed their time and talents in new-modelling these various theories and adapting them to their own devices.

“It is not to be imagined that speculations like these, unrestrained (as, in too many instances, they appear to have been) by any reverence for principles of a higher nature, could be pursued without great injury to the cause of revealed religion. The names of several distinguished scholars in the very heart of the papal dominions [popes Leo X, John XXIII, and Clement VII, Cardinal Bembo, Ficinus, Politian, Pomponatius, Portius, Aretin, Poggio, Bruno, and many others, who make a conspicuous figure in the annals of atheism; *note, in the Appendix*] stand recorded as awful warnings to all who embark on the wide ocean of philosophy, without some principle of a higher nature to direct them in their course.” *Ib.*, Serm. viii.

CX.—p. 126.

*It demands, not more truth, but greater evidence of truth, or evidence of some other kind than that which it possesses.]*

“So I fared,  
 Dragging all precepts, judgments, maxims, creeds,  
 Like culprits to the bar; calling the mind,  
 Suspiciously, to establish in plain day  
 Her titles and her honours; now believing,  
 Now disbelieving: endlessly perplexed  
 With impulse, motive, right and wrong, the ground  
 Of obligation, what the rule, and whence  
 The sanction; till, demanding formal proof,  
 And seeking it in everything, I lost  
 All feeling of conviction, and, in fine,  
 Sick, wearied out with contrarities,  
 Yielded up moral questions in despair.”

Wordsworth, *Prelude*, book xi.

## CXI.—p. 126.

*It asks, in effect, for demonstration, even where demonstration never can be given.]* A clear trace of that fundamental evil which consists in demanding that all truth should be discovered by the mind itself; since, in all demonstration, the mind seems, at least, to take part in the discovery of the truth proved.

“Every man may be allowed to say that he will not believe without sufficient evidence; but none can, without great presumption, pretend to stipulate for any particular kind of proof, and refuse to attend to any other, if that which he may think he should like best should not be set before him. This is indeed the very spirit of infidelity.” Bp. Horsley, *Sermon on John xx. 29, On the Incredulity of Thomas*: see the whole Sermon.

## CXII.—p. 127.

*The trial of our faith, arising from the nature of Christian evidence, is no greater than the trial of our moral principles, arising from the presence of temptation.]* “The difficulties in which the evidence of religion is involved, which some complain of, is no more a just ground of complaint than the external circumstances of temptation which others are placed in, or than difficulties in the practice of it after a full conviction of its truth.” . . . “Speculative difficulties may make even the principal part of some persons’ trial.” Bp. Butler, *Analogy of Religion*, part ii. chap. 6.—“We are subjected to a mental as well as to a moral trial, or rather, morality is extended to reason as well as to life; and perhaps we might expect that Scripture should furnish us with a proper training for both. ‘Believe, and then thou shalt find beneath the imaginary offence a full source of profit’ was a worthy saying of Origen’s (Philoc. l. 23), never more truly applicable than in this age of unexampled restlessness. The outward moral temptation is now, perhaps, less formidable than heretofore, from the form of our civilization, while the inward struggle waxes fiercer and fiercer, as men seek not so much to live freely as to know fully, forgetting too often that love is the



source of wisdom; for ‘the chasms (and discrepancies) in the divine history afford room for the exercise of faith,—a faith whose root is to be found, not in science, not in demonstration, but in simple and self-subduing submission of our spirits’ (Neander, *Life of Christ*, Introd.)—The difficulties of Scripture are useful morally.” Westcott, *Elements of the Gospel Harmony*, chap. 5.

## CXIII.—p. 127.

*Distinct from pride of intellect, as a general cause of Infidelity, is mental sloth or negligence.*] See Barrow, *Sermon on the Apostles’ Creed*, Sermon i, *Of the Evil and Unreasonableness of Infidelity*, II. §§ 1, 2.—Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon iv.—Pascal, *Pensées*, Seconde Partie, Article 2.

## CXIV.—p. 129.

*Unbelief may frequently be traced to the want of intellectual earnestness and labour.*] “It is an assured truth, and a conclusion of experience, that a little or superficial knowledge of philosophy may incline the mind of man to atheism, but a further proceeding therein doth bring the mind back again to religion. For, in the entrance of philosophy, when the second causes, which are next unto the senses, do offer themselves to the mind of man, if it dwell and stay there, it may induce some oblivion of the highest cause; but when a man passeth on further, and seeth the dependence of causes and the works of Providence, then, according to the allegory of the poets, he will easily believe that the highest link of nature’s chain must needs be tied to the foot of Jupiter’s chair. To conclude therefore: let no man, upon a weak conceit of sobriety, or an ill-applied moderation, think or maintain that a man can search too far, or be too well studied, in the book of God’s word, or in the book of God’s works, divinity or philosophy; but rather *let men endeavour an endless progress, or proficiencie, in both; only let men beware that they apply both to charity, and not to swelling; to use, and not to ostentation; and again, that they do not unwisely mingle or confound these learnings together.*” Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, book i.

chap. 1.—So again, “I had rather believe all the fables in the Legend, and the Talmud, and the Alcoran, than that this universal frame is without a mind. And therefore God never wrought miracle to convince atheism, because his ordinary works convince it. It is true, that a little philosophy inclineth man’s mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bringeth men’s minds about to religion: for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity.” *Ib.*, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 16. Of Atheism.

## CXV.—p. 131.

*Those inconsistencies and contradictions by which they often overthrow their own arguments, or the arguments and systems of each other.*] These inconsistencies and contradictions have been well exposed, in few words, by Bp. Van Mildert in his *Boyle Lectures*, Sermons xxii., xxiv. — See also Dwight, *System of Theology*, Sermon xxx. part ii. Michell’s *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon iii. Rogers’s *Essay on Reason and Faith*, *Essays*, vol. ii. pp. 304–308, or in the separate essay, smaller ed., pp. 52–56.

## CXVI.—p. 131.

*Let us not perversely exalt an occasion into the rank of a primary or producing cause.*] “There is much difference betwixt an *occasion* and a proper *cause*; these two are heedfully to be distinguished. Critical and exact historians, as Polybius and Tacitus, distinguish betwixt the ἀρχή and the αἰτία, the beginning occasions, and the real causes, of a war; and so we ought in this case of errors carefully to distinguish them. The most excellent and innocent things in the world, such as the Scriptures of truth, the liberty of Christians, the tranquillity and peace of the Church, may, by the subtlety of Satan working in conjunction with the corruptions of men’s hearts, become the *occasions*, but can never be the proper culpable *causes*, of errors.” Flavell, *Discourse of the Occasions, Causes, Nature,*

*Rise, Growth, and Remedies of Mental Errors*, Twentieth Observation.

CXVII.—p. 132.

*One such occasion is clearly to be found in that spirit of persecution, and of overbearing and aggressive intolerance, which has too often attended the possession of ecclesiastical power, especially as developed amidst the usurpations of the papacy.*] “The Romish church cannot but be considered as having greatly strengthened the hands of all the enemies to Revealed Religion, by insisting upon the necessity of a blind and implicit Faith in the authority of the Church, independently of any rational inquiry into the grounds of such Faith, or even any reference to the Scriptures themselves. Accordingly it appears that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, no countries abounded so much with false Philosophy and Atheism as Italy, the seat of the papal dominion. From hence, as from a centre of blasphemy, issued forth the most pestilential opinions, destructive of the very first principles of religion.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon ix.

“More especially must we consider the establishment of the *Inquisition*, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, as one of the greatest blots in the history of the Church; since, however it might avail towards producing a semblance of unanimity, or a forced acquiescence in the unjust usurpations of the Romish church, its tendency to generate secret disaffection to Christianity itself (which was thus used as an engine or pretext of cruelty and oppression) cannot be doubted.” *Ib.* Sermon vii.; after allusion to the pernicious effects—of the worldly policy of the Church of Rome in encroaching on the power of the state,—of forced conversions,—and of the crusades.

“The history of France, during the last two or three centuries, unfolds to us the process by which that country has well nigh sunk its faith in God and immortality. The age of the Reformation caused to resound through the French provinces, as it did through the whole of Europe, the war-ery of intelligence and liberty against spiritual despotism. Persecution and bloodshed followed. and the

holiest precepts of religion were often violated by those who stood forth as its firmest champions. The effect of this upon the minds that stood by to gaze upon the contest could not long be of an equivocal nature. Their faith in the Christianity they professed was shaken at once by the arguments of the Reformer and the practice of the Catholic, the former appealing to their intellectual, the latter to their moral, nature; and they learned, unhappily, to despise the one, before their belief was replaced by the other. The results of this soon became evident in the rise of men who, like Voltaire, sported with the most solemn truths of human belief; in the establishment of the atheistical school of the French Encyclopædists; and, what was still more decisive, in the sympathy with which their works were greeted by thousands throughout the country." Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part ii. chap. 6. sect. 2.

CXVIII.—p. 134.

*We cannot hesitate to reckon among the occasions of Infidelity....bitter controversies....fierce contentions and disputes on points of religious faith or discipline.]* Among the "causes of Atheism," Lord Bacon gives the first place to "divisions in religion, if they be many," adding, "for any one main division addeth zeal to both sides; but many divisions introduce Atheism." *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 16, Of Atheism.—This observation is in exact accordance with a remark already made by *Hooker*, "With our contentions their irreligious humour [i. e. the humour of Atheists] is also much strengthened. Nothing pleaseth them better than these manifold oppositions upon the matter of religion, as well for that they have hereby the more opportunity to learn on one side how another may be oppugned, and so to weaken the credit of all unto themselves; as also by this hot pursuit of lower controversies among men professing religion, and agreeing in the principal foundations thereof, they conceive hope that about the higher principles themselves time will cause altercation to grow." *Eccles. Pol.* book v. chap. 2. § 2.—Buddens writes on this subject very judiciously. Having classed the "sectæ

in quas orbis Christianus scinditur” among the occasions, rather than among the direct causes, of infidelity—(nonnulla, quæ equidem inter causas directe et per se atheismum progignentes, non sunt connumeranda, occasionem tamen eidem quandoque præbere possunt, scopulorumque instar sunt, ad quos, qui ceteroquin ad istam impietatem proni sunt, facile naufragium faciunt),—he remarks in a note, “Si religio Christiana, inquitur àthei, aut illi, quibus sectarum inter Christianos multitudo offendiculo est, Deum auctorem agnosceret, haud dubio magna inter eos, qui eam sequuntur, foret consensus. Immo cum, per istam sectarum diversitatem, fructus doctrinæ Christianæ mirum in modum impediatur, sapientiæ divinæ foret conveniens, sectas istas et divisiones impedire, si Deus ipse religionis istius curam gereret, vel eam mortalibus præscripsisset, et quæ reliqua sunt ejusdem generis. Sed et huncce facile evitare scopulum possent, si rursus cogitarent, hominum hoc, non ipsius religionis, esse vitium. Immo si indolem hominum, qua intellectum, qua voluntatem, recte considerarent, aliter se rem habere non posse, facile intelligerent. Deus autem ea, quæ per hominum conditionem aliter evenire nequeunt, per miraculum eo minus impedire obstrictus est, quod nunquam aut prædixit, aut promisit, nullas in religione Christiana fore dissensiones. Immo fore dissensiones et discordias, culpa tamen hominum, ipse Servator diserte nos condocuit, Luc. xii. 51. Sunt vero Deo causæ justissimæ sapientissimæque, cur eas permittat. Manifestandi enim hac ratione sunt qui Deo vera fide adhærent, eumque sincere colunt: 1 Cor. xi. 19. Legenda quæ de hac re disserit Joannes Clericus, De l’Incrédulité, part ii. cap. 4. pag. 186 seqq., qui et per integram hancce partem secundam, alia ejusdem generis offendicula recenset, atque removet.” Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 3.

“The influence of Melanethon survived that of Luther, and placed some check on the mischiefs of controversy in his time. But subsequently to his decease the evil adverted to became more conspicuous than before. It is, in consequence, to be marked as a leading fact in the modern his-

tory of Germany, that, to the bad passions and intolerant proceedings of Protestants towards each other, which ensued from that time, we must attribute, not only the complete check that was everywhere given to Protestantism, but the revival of that Romanism on the one hand, and the origin of that anti-Christian philosophy on the other, between which the reformed churches now have to maintain their ground amidst no ordinary peril." Vaughan, *Essay on German Philosophy and Christian Theology*.

## CXIX.—p. 134.

*It has been observed that Infidelity has been especially rampant at the conclusion of religious wars.]* "Il y a même des temps où ce mépris amer de la nature humaine, cette dénégation de toute valeur morale dans l'homme, devient une croyance générale et presque un instinct populaire. Cela se voit surtout à la suite des grandes et cruelles déceptions de la société; lorsque, ayant, sur la foi de ses guides, donné son adhésion à de séduisantes théories, garanties par d'imposantes paroles, elle découvre qu'elle a été trompée, et, dans le dégoût qui suit l'enivrement, enveloppe dans un mépris égal toutes les professions de foi, toutes les protestations de bienveillance, de justice, et de dévouement. La profanation des mots amène le mépris des choses; et, en morale aussi bien qu'en religion, l'incrédulité est le contre-coup nécessaire de l'hypocrisie. A la suite des guerres de religion vient d'ordinaire le scepticisme religieux; et les guerres d'opinion, après une énorme dépense de maximes, de déclamations et de serments, finissent par enfanter le scepticisme moral." Vinet, *Discours, L'homme privé de toute gloire devant Dieu*, Premier Disc.

## CXX.—p. 134.

*We may expect that the cause of Infidelity will always be promoted by that discord which may arise from a licentious abuse of the principles of the Reformation, no less than by that unholy pressure of ecclesiastical despotism which made the Reformation needful.]* "The growth of Deism in our own country under the usurpation of Cromwell affords a

proof that religious Fanaticism and contempt of lawful authority may promote the increase of Infidelity, no less than Tyranny and Superstition; and the boldness of Infidels throughout Europe at that period is the best illustration that can be given of the advantage which the deep and designing adversaries of the Faith never fail to take of any departure from its pure and genuine principles.— Neither should it be overlooked, that in scarcely any age of the church was *religious controversy* carried to a greater height than in the seventeenth century; and that the numberless schisms and contentions occasioned by this polemical spirit (and especially by the Fanatics who, in this country, succeeded in subverting the government both in church and state) tended to bring Christianity itself into disrepute among the lukewarm and inconsiderate, and afforded Infidels a favourable opportunity of representing its principles as altogether precarious and ill-founded. To this we may reasonably ascribe a great portion of that Infidelity which prevailed in this country after the Restoration; when men, disgusted and shocked at the atrocities which had been committed under the mask of Religion, were but too readily persuaded to despise Religion itself, and to discard all reverence for piety as the cant of hypocrisy and rebellion.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon ix.—“ When she [the church] was delivered from the persecuting power of Rome, she only experienced a change of trials. The oppression of external violence was followed by the more dangerous and insidious attacks of internal enemies. The freedom of inquiry claimed and asserted at the Reformation degenerated, in the hands of men who professed the principles without possessing the spirit of the Reformers, into a fondness for speculative refinements; and consequently into a source of dispute, faction, and heresy. While protestants attended more to the points on which they differed than to those in which they agreed; while more zeal was employed in settling ceremonies and defending subtleties, than in enforcing plain revealed truths; the lovely fruits of peace and charity perished under the storm of controversy.” Robert Hall,

*Modern Infidelity considered*, init.—In Germany also idle controversies within the church prepared the way for rationalism. “For nearly half a century it [the Wolfian philosophy] fascinated multitudes by its order, and by its appearance of completeness; but it rested more on mere ideas and verbal definitions than upon exactness and certainty. In common with every system so constructed, it ended in a formal dogmatism, which, however brilliant, is never submitted to by the human mind for more than a season. Its pedantic assumptions were open to attack fully as much as the Pietism against which it was wielded; and the result of the conflict between these antagonists was not so much the conversion of the educated mind of the country to the side of either, as the diffusion of a mocking and sceptical spirit almost everywhere.” Dr. Vaughan, *Essay on German Philosophy and Christian Theology*.

## CXXI.—p. 134.

*Among the occasions of Infidelity, we must, I fear, reckon also certain weak and injudicious methods of defending truth which have sometimes been adopted by Christian apologists.]* “Inter reliqua, quæ occasionem atheismo præbere possunt . . . illorum adhuc commemorandum institutum est, qui dum novas existentie Dei demonstrationes, sive ad ingenii subtilitatem ostentandam, sive alias ob causas, excogitant, aut obscuras, aut minas solidas proferunt, quibus veritatem, quam defendendam susceperunt, produunt, et omnium ludibrio exponunt, et non tantum atheos in errore suo confirmant, sed alios haud raro in eundem inducunt.” Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 3.

## CXXII.—p. 139.

*The low standard of piety and virtue which has from time to time prevailed throughout the church has given great occasion to the enemy to blaspheme.]* There can be no doubt that the low state of morals in Christendom gave great advantage to the French infidel philosophers of the last century; although at the same time it must be confessed that the “philanthropy” which, as Mr. Macaulay says,



was accidentally associated with their irreligion, was more apparent than real. Still their invectives had great weight when directed against professed Christians whose lives were at variance with the spirit and precepts of the gospel; and there is force in the remark that “the really efficient weapons with which the philosophers assailed the evangelical faith were borrowed from the evangelical morality.” Macaulay, *Review of Ranke’s History of the Popes*.—“De corruptis Christianorum moribus, vitæque doctrinæ parum respondente, tot extant doctorum piorumque virorum querele, ut iis colligendis multa volumina non sufficerent. Neve de aliis dicam, notum quot *pia* hinc enata sint *desideria*, in quibus et vulnera hæc tanguntur, et de remediis consultatur. Multum vero istam vitæ rationem ad atheismum promovendum facere, nemo temere dubitaverit. Si enim homines ad atheismum sua natura proni animadvertant, ingentem esse illorum inter ipsos etiam ecclesiæ doctores numerum, qui vita sua moribusque, quæ de religionis veritate et præstantia, deque virtutibus, quibus fidem suam Christiani demonstrare debent, ingenti zelo dicunt, ipsimet refutant, facile in eam inducuntur opinionem, omnes Christianos esse turpissimos hypoeritas; imprimis vero ecclesiæ doctores dogmatibus quæ aliis inculcant non adhibere fidem, nec ea vera esse credere. Ad minimum non potest non mera videri superstitio, si quis actibus quibusdam externis Deum colat, certasque de eo opiniones foveat, et acriter oppugnet, interim tamen vitiis quibusvis strenue indulgeat.” Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 3.

CXXIII.—p. 139.

*The strength which Infidelity has derived from the bad, defective, and injudicious education of the young.*] See Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 2.

CXXIV.—p. 142.

*The perversion and abuse of literary studies and of scientific research have sometimes acted as occasions of unbelief. It has been made a subject of just complaint, that while men of*

*one science do not intrude upon the provinces of other sciences, men of all sciences intrude upon theology.*] See Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 2.—“In the vast and ever extending, as well as every day more prolific, field of human knowledge, there is a growing and more clamant necessity than hitherto for more frequent divisions and subdivisions of mental labour, and when each in his own section prosecutes his own task very much out of sympathy and out of sight from all the rest, free of disturbance, and safe from the inroads of the other labourers in other places of the field. Nor am I aware of any general disposition on the part of scientific men to make incursion beyond their own domain, on the separate but rightful and proper domain of any of their fellows; or, if they do, sure I am that an enlightened public would not listen to the voice which they lifted there as a voice of authority. The mere astronomer would not be heard on a question of geology; nor would the mere anatomist, known to be such and nothing more, be heard in a question of geometry or economics. But each would be deferred to as supreme in his own department. Now, all we lay claim to is, that even our science, the science of theology, shall have the benefit of this very obvious principle. Instead of which, like an unprotected common, it lies open to incursions from every quarter of human speculation, and this without one condescending regard on its own distinct evidences,—its own independent literature,—its own massive and most erudite authorship,—its own argumentations and appeals both to the felt exigencies of the human conscience, and to that historical testimony of past ages which, in every other question regarding the facts and narratives of antiquity, would be held as wholly irresistible. All this goes for nothing with the infidels and demi-infidels who pour in upon us from all the sciences, and who have turned our theology into a sort of play-ground, on which, broken loose from law and logic, they shall hold their saturnalia. And the injustice we complain of is, that should any of these have earned a brilliant reputation in their own department, as La Place and M. Comte in France, or the psychologists of

Germany, their adverse testimony, or even contemptuous insinuation, will countervail the authority of men who have earned, and rightfully earned, as brilliant a reputation in ours, and that too on the field of an investigation which has formed the business of their lives—the Clarkes, the Butlers, the Lardners, and the Paleys of our own land. For the disparagement of theology, every principle of equity has been inverted; and while philosophy has done us no harm by the strength of its arguments, it has, in the person of some of its most renowned masters, the enemies of our faith, wielded a most dangerous fascination, by which to poison and unsettle the minds of thousands and tens of thousands in general society.” Chalmers, *Principal's Address*, 1846.

CXXV.—p. 144.

*The effects and consequences which Infidelity is adapted to produce.*] The evil effects of speculative unbelief upon personal character, personal happiness, and public welfare, are succinctly stated by Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 4. § 5.—See also Barrow, *Sermons on the Apostles' Creed*, Sermon i. § 3. Robert Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered*. Bp. Mc Ilvaine, *Evidences of Christianity*, Lecture x.—“As Atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty.” Bacon, *Essay* xvi.—“It can do nothing but darken, degrade, and destroy. It extinguishes all the lights of the spiritual world, and spreads around a night and chaos, out of which all foul and monstrous shapes of evil are born. What does unbelief make of the world? A barren and cheerless waste, where no sound of divine footsteps is heard; no angels ascend and descend; no living hand clothes the fields, and feeds the birds of the air, and regulates the events of life: but where one dull play of mechanism succeeds another, and where instead of an inner spirit of life, a dead law of nature sets all things in motion, and there is no room for a special providence of love mysteriously to control all. Thus it changes the world into a great field of the dead, and makes of nature, the garden of the Lord, an immense

automaton,—of history, that grand development of a manifold counsel of God, a fortuitous concourse of accidents,—of man, the pupil of a divine training, a creature without other rule of life than chance and self-will,—and of prayer, an absurd and useless ceremony. It disrobes the world and the life of man of every great and exalting aspect; it annihilates even the vestiges of heaven that are yet upon the earth, and bars the outlet to every higher region.” Dr. F. W. Krummacher, *Elijah the Tishbite*, part iii. § 5.

## CXXVI.—p. 148.

“*Outrage upon outrage, &c.*”] Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon xi.—See Alison’s *History of Europe during the French Revolution*.—“The new unbelief was as intolerant as the old superstition.” Macaulay, *Review of Ranké’s History of the Popes*.—“Atheism, when it spreads among a people in the form of an active and positive opinion, vauntingly professed and eagerly disseminated, is something very different from ordinary irreligion, or reckless and profligate impiety; and it will be found to display each well-known characteristic of a virulent religious creed. It is, in truth, nothing else than a heresy; and the proselyting atheist, how much soever his pride may resent the imputation, is a mere zealot,—yes, and a zealot surpassing others in blind malignancy. Is the bigot religionist dogmatical, acrimonious, impudent? Is he a demagogue, and a noisy preacher of monstrous paradoxes? Just such is the Atheist. And if the one readily seizes the occasion to act the persecutor, and to dip his hands in blood, so, as we have found, does the other.” Isaac Taylor, *Fanaticism*, chap. vii.

## CXXVII.—p. 148.

*What is the aspect of speculative unbelief upon human hope?*] There is a melancholy passage at the conclusion of Gibbon’s *Autobiography*, which may assist us in arriving at a true answer to this question. “The present is a fleeting moment, the past is no more; and our prospect of futurity is dark and doubtful. This day may *possibly* be my last: but the laws of probability, so true in general, so

fallacious in particular, still allow about fifteen years. I shall soon enter into the period which, as the most agreeable of his long life, was selected by the judgment and experience of the sage Fontenelle. His choice is approved by the elegant historian of nature, who fixes our moral happiness to the mature season in which our passions are supposed to be calmed, our duties fulfilled, our ambition satisfied, our fame and fortune established on a solid basis. In private conversation that great and amiable man added the weight of his own experience; and this autumnal felicity might be exemplified in the lives of Voltaire, Hume, and many other men of letters. I am far more inclined to embrace than to dispute this comfortable doctrine. I will not suppose any premature decay of the mind or body; but I must reluctantly observe that two causes, the abbreviation of time, and the failure of hope, will always tinge with a browner shade the evening of life." Such are the last words of the "*Memoirs of my Life and Writings*," by the well-known author of "*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*."—A testimony not dissimilar to this has been borne in more recent times by the poet Goethe,—a man who reached the pinnacle of literary fame, but was destitute of that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. It is mournful to hear him, in his old age, confess that, in the course of seventy-five years, he had never enjoyed real comfort for four weeks together! "Im Grunde,—so äusserte er sich einst im Gespräche,—ist mein Leben nichts als Mühe und Arbeit gewesen; und ich kann wohl sagen, dass ich in meinen 75 Jahren keine vier Wochen eigentliches Behagen gehabt. Es war das ewige Wälzen eines Steins, der mir immer von neuem gehoben sein wollte." Gelzer, *Religion im Leben*, Dritte Rede.

CXXVIII.—p. 149.

"*I give my body to the dust,*" &c.] A well-known saying of Hobbes.

## NOTES TO LECTURE V.

CXXIX.—p. 151.

*WE proceed now to institute a similar inquiry concerning Superstition.*] “Never have we more urgent need of a settled principle of philanthropy than when we set foot upon the ground of religious delusion. Nowhere, so much as there, is it necessary to be resolute in our good will to man, and fixed in our respect for him too, even while the strictness of important principles is not at all relaxed.” Isaac Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 1.

CXXX.—p. 151.

*The obscure etymology of the word.*] “Superstitio ist dem Worte nach das Zuviel der Religion, die zusätzliche Religion (supersistere). Denn zunächst fragte das Alterthum nach der eingeführten Religion, über welche die pontificischen Behörden Auskunft gaben. Diejenigen, die dem mos approbatus allerlei häusliche, fremde, und neue Verehrungen und Sühnungen hinzu thaten, waren superstitiosi, im Gegensatze der religiosi, qui faciendarum prætermittendarumque rerum divinarum secundum morem civitatis dilectum habent, nec se superstitionibus implicant. So Festus. Die unmittelbare Beziehung auf superstites bei Cicero, Servius, und Lactanz ist irrig. Sondern derselbe Begriff liegt in Superstition, welchen Plutarch, freilich nach falscher Etymologie, in *θηρησκεία* legt, *ἱεροουργία κατὰ κορον καὶ περίεργος*. Die Griechen drücken dasselbe durch *ἔθελοθηρησκεία* aus. Das aber, dass das Zuviel des Aberglaubens nicht bloss in Wahrheit und an sich ein Zuwenig sei, sondern auch eben aus einem Unglauben ursprünglich hervorgehe, haben die Alten nicht eingesehen. Vergl.

daher den Plutarch De Superstitione 1, in. mit dem Apostel Röm. i. 21, 23, 25." Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 14 not.—“Non enim philosophi solum, verum etiam majores nostri superstitionem a religione separaverunt. Nam qui totos dies precabantur et immolabant, ut sui sibi liberi superstites essent, superstitiosi sunt appellati; quod nomen postea latius patuit.” Cic. de Nat. Deor. 2, 28.—“Superstitiosi vocantur, non quia filios suos superstites optant (omnes enim optamus), sed aut ii, qui superstitem memoriam defunctorum colunt, aut qui, parentibus suis superstites, colebant imagines eorum domi, tanquam Deos Penates.” Lactant. *Instit.* 4, 28.—“Superstitio est timor superfluus et delirus; aut ab aniculis dicta superstitio, quia multi superstites per ætatem delirant et stultæ sunt; aut, secundum Lucretium, superstitio est superstantium rerum, i. e. cœlestium et divinarum, quæ supra nos stant, inanis et superfluus timor.” Servius *ad Virg. Æn.* viii. 187.—“Nonius . . . censet . . . *superstitionem* ex hoc habere proprietatem, quod superstitiosi præ cultura Deorum supersedeant cætera, hoc est, negligunt . . . . Maxime placet . . . ut *superstitio* sit a *supersto*, quatenus valet idem ac supersum, unde superstes, qui superest. Ita superstitio erit, quando in cultu ultra modum legitimum aliquid *superest* sive quando cultus modum rectum *superstat* atque excedit. Imo, hoc etymon magis etiam probo quam Tullii, Nonii, vel Lactantii.” Vossius, *Etymologicon*.—“Superstition may be defined as *superstantium* (cujusmodi sunt cæremonie et signa externa, quæ nisi in significando nihili sunt et pæne nihil) *substantiatio*.” “Virium et proprietatum, quæ non nisi de substantibus prædicari possunt, formis superstantibus attributio, est superstitio.” Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Notes on Comment on Aphorism 24, and on Aphorism 4.—“Superstitio—supersto. urspr. das Stehenbleiben über, bei, etwas, das Betroffensein, die Angst, daher im besond. von der Angst vor dem Göttlichen.” Freund., (i. e. a standing still over or at anything, in a state of amazement, or with a feeling of awe or dread; hence especially, religious awe.)

## CXXXI.—p. 152.

*Superstition is imperfectly described when it is represented as consisting merely in a wrong or mystical view of the connection of causes and effects.]* “Ein phantastisch-verkehrte Religionsmeinung die auf unser Denken und Handeln Einfluss hat;—im engern Sinne des Wortes, ein verkehrtes Urtheil über den Causalzusammenhang der Dinge nach einer mystischen Ansicht der unsichtbaren Welt.” Ammon, *Handbuch der Christlichen Sittenlehre*, § 88.

## CXXXII.—p. 152.

*Defective also are the views of some Romish writers, who, following Augustin, make the essence of Superstition to consist in the worship of created objects, or in intercourse with evil spirits.]* See this subject discussed by Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zweiter Zeitraum, Drittes Buch, (Th. ix. ss. 314–318), in his remarks on Thiers, *Traité des Superstitions*, and on Pierre Le Brun, *Histoire Critique des Pratiques Superstitieuses*.

The following is the passage of Augustin to which reference is made in the text:—“Superstitiosum est quiddam institutum est ab hominibus ad facienda et colenda idola, pertinens vel ad colendam sicut Deum creaturam partemve ullam creaturæ, vel ad consultationes et pacta quædam significationum cum dæmonibus placita atque foederata, qualia sunt molimina magicarum artium, quæ quidem commemorare potius quam docere adsolent poëtæ. Ex quo genere sunt, sed quasi licentiore vanitate, haruspicum et augurum libri—&c. &c.” Augustin, *De Doctrin. Christ.* lib. ii. c. 20, et seqq.—“It is surely impossible not to perceive under how entire a misapprehension of the genius of our religion the world at that time lay, when we find even Augustin himself speaking with approbation of the performance of the eucharistic sacrifice for the purpose of removing a murrain among cattle, supposed to have been produced by the operation of evil demons, (*De Civ. Dei*, lib. xxii. cap. 8); or again gravely recounting a miraculous vision sent by the Almighty for no better purpose than that of discovering the interred bones of Gervasius



and Protasius, after their concealment during the space of two centuries, and affording a divine sanction to a superstitious, not to say an idolatrous, species of worship. (*Conf.* lib. ix. cap. 8). Let the reader only cast his eye over the eighth chapter of the 22nd book of the 'De Civitate Dei' just now referred to, or the still more strange legends gravely related by Sulpicius Severus, at about the same period, and he cannot but admit that, however abundant in other respects the age of which we are now speaking may have been in works of true piety and in fervour of religious feeling, still that at all events strong judgment and calm good sense were not to be numbered among its excellences." Bp. Shuttleworth, *on Tradition*, pp. 61-65, ed. 1838.—This passage follows another in which the bishop had briefly described the superstitious character of the age in which Augustin lived. "Before the close of the fourth century," says he, "a vast portion of the abuses of the simple spirit of Christianity, which human invention, in the vain attempt to improve the best gift of Providence, has superadded to primitive revelation, and which have subsequently been matured into Popery in its worst form, had become almost completely established. Monkery, accompanied by a spirit of asceticism more worthy of the fakirs of Hindostan than of the followers of Christ; the adoration of relics; exorcisms; prayers for the dead; the *sacrifice*, as it now began generally to be called, of the eucharist; with an unsuspecting belief in the most monstrous legends; form henceforward the leading characteristic of the period. The spiritual worship of God, as taught in Scripture, and approximation to Him through faith in the one great Sacrifice, once offered, had now given place to unmeaning external ceremonies and rites, which, whilst professing to be part of the forms of Christian worship, had, notwithstanding, much nearer resemblance to the superstitious usages of heathenism than to the pure soul-stirring devotion of the gospel. The spirit of Christianity, indeed, still existed, but it existed under the superincumbent weight of a portentous mass of superstition."—He afterwards remarks, "We find Augus-

tin, in terms which surely no Protestant would acknowledge as orthodox, describing the celebration of it [the eucharist] at his mother Monica's funeral, for the benefit of the soul of the deceased. At so early a period had human invention overgrown and superseded the original enactments of Scripture! 'Cum, ecce corpus elatum est. Imus et redimus, sine lacrymis. Nam neque in eis precibus, quas tibi fudimus, *cum tibi offeretur pro ea sacrificium pretii nostri*, juxta sepulcrum posito cadavere, priusquam deponeretur, sicut illic fieri solet, nec in eis precibus, flevi.' (*Conf. lib. ix. cap. 4.*)" lb. p. 121.

CXXXIII.—p. 152.

*A better definition is that which may be found in Aquinas.]*  
 "Vitium secundum excessum religioni oppositum, eo quod cultum afferat vel ei cui non oportet, vel eo modo quo non oportet." Thom. Aquin. 2. 2. qu. 92, art. 1.—Doubtless, this definition is correct as far as it goes; and so is that of Buddeus, "Superstitio.....quo nomine nihil aliud quam præpostera atque perversa colendi Deum ratio intelligitur." *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 8, § 1. But these definitions do not contain a full account of the matter.

The following is the Romish view of superstition, as stated by Peter Dens: "Quid est superstitio? I. R. Est vitium, quod exhibet cultum divinum creaturæ seu Diis falsis, vel Deo vero, sed modo incongruo: hinc II. Dividitur in 'superstitionem cultus falsi Numinis' et in 'superstitionem incongrui cultus veri Dei.' Superstitio cultus incongrui subdividitur in 'superstitionem cultus perniciosi et cultus superflui.' III. Cultus perniciosus continet ordinarie culpam mortalem; v. g. offerre hoc tempore sacrificia Moysaica, fingere falsa miracula: huc indirecte referri potest temeritas exponendi falsas Reliquias; sed hoc intellige de expositione ad publicum et solemnem cultum populi, non vero de privato cultu vel reverentia; vel dum solum per modum ornatus collocantur in pyramide. IV. Notandum, Reliquias, licet Romæ sint approbatæ, exponi non posse publicæ venerationi, nisi cum consensu et approbatione Episcopi istius Diocesis. V. Cultus superfluus

veri Dei non nisi culpam venialem constituit, soletque committi circa numerum, colorem, situm, tempus &c.; v. g. si quis velit facere orationes numero pares, quasi is numerus magis foret religiosus. VI. An igitur Rubricæ Ecclesie incidunt in hoc vitium, præscribendo in officiis divinis quemdam colorem, situm &c.? R. Neg. quia præscribuntur ad piam quamdam significationem, vel ad decorem cultus Dei: sic pie admodum recitantur quinque Orationes Dominicæ ad recolenda pio affectu 5 Christi vulnera; sic recte pro Martyribus adhibetur color ruber sive sanguineus. VII. Superstitio ‘cultus falsi Numinis’ subdividitur a S. Th. 2. 2. q. 92, art. 2 in ‘idololatriam, divinationem, et vanam observationem:’ aliqui adjungunt quartum membrum divisionis, scilicet ‘magiam;’ sed eam S. Thom. q. 96, art. 2 comprehendit sub superstitione vanæ observationis. Sub præfatis membris variæ species particulares continentur.” Dens, *Theologia Moralis et Dogmatica*, tom. 4, N. 181, De Superstitione.

## CXXXIV.—p. 153.

*The idea of Superstition again coincides with that of religion, inasmuch as both alike have for their object God and the invisible world, considered in relation to ourselves.]* There is therefore truth in the following definitions, although they are still, more or less, defective. “Superstition is when things are either abhorred or observed with a zealous, or fearful, but erroneous, relation to God. By means whereof, the superstitious do sometimes serve, though the true God, yet with needless offices, and defraud Him of duties necessary; sometimes load others than Him with such honours as are properly his.” Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book v, chap. 3, § 2.—“Aberglaube, d. i. gesetzwidrige Zersetzung und Vermischung der Grunderkenntnisse des Geistes von Gott und der Welt mit den Thatsachen des sinnlichen Bewusstseins.” Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 14 (i. e. an unlawful separation of the mind’s fundamental perceptions of God and of the world, and mixing them up with the facts of sensuous consciousness).—“The essence of superstition consists in the belief of the existence of

*some supernatural power*; not, however, the agency of the God of the Christian revelation.....but a power the character of which is *mischievous*, its attributes *unknown*, not *founded on reason*, inimical to science, unacknowledged by revelation, opposed to the happiness of man, introducing disorder into the mental functions and moral conduct, submitting the understanding and the heart to a blind and irrational impulse, prompting to evil or paralysing the power of doing well, and leading to distrust in the providence of God and to disbelief in his promises." Newnham, *Essay on Superstition*, chap. 2.—"Every individual mind being a kind of labyrinth, it is not wonderful, not only that each nation has adopted a variety of fictions, but that almost every man has had his own god. To the darkness of ignorance have been added presumption and wantonness, and hence there is scarcely an individual to be found without some idol or phantom as a substitute for Deity. Like water gushing forth from a large and copious spring, immense crowds of gods have issued forth from the human mind, every man giving himself full license, and devising some peculiar form of divinity, to meet his own views. It is unnecessary here to attempt a catalogue of the superstitions with which the world was overspread. The thing were needless; and the corruptions themselves, though not a word should be said, present abundant evidence of the blindness of the human mind." Calvin, *Institutes*, b. i, c. 5. § 12.

## CXXXV.—p. 154.

*Superstition is the habit of religiously believing what God has not revealed . . . . In matters relating to religion and the unseen world, it believes fictions in the place of truth; its creed is adopted, and its observances are practised, without adequate authority.]* "Omnis superstitio, non Dei mandato, sed figmentis, vanisque ingenii humani commentis, nititur." Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 8.—"Götzen sind nicht allein Säulen und Bilder, sondern alle Meynung, welche ein gottloses Gemüth für sich von Gott erdichtet, ohne Grund der Schrift." Luther, *Kurze Auslegung über den Propheten Jesaiam*, cap. 2. v. 8, 9 (VI, 55, Walch.)—"All

professed religions have seized on some one or other of the features of God, and their votaries have been determined in the choice which they have made by the prevailing sentiments of their hearts, and the habits in which they have been trained. In those eastern countries in which the mass of the people have been consigned to a slavish subjection to authority, the popular religions have represented the supernatural power as exercising an iron despotism, and exacting a deep prostration. The dreamy and meditative spirits of the same region again have cherished abstractions which widen and are dissipated more and more, till they are lost in an illusive and ethereal nonentity. Among the more active and spirited and liberty-loving nations of Western Asia and Eastern Europe, the popular faith became more individual, and personal, and anthropomorphic, and they approached their gods with a greater feeling of familiarity. Each divinity among the Greeks had a special character and special objects of interest, and the Pantheon embodied all the popular virtues and vices of the country. In less civilized countries, where the inhabitants ranged over wide forests and rugged mountains, and the tribes were generally at fierce war with each other, the presiding divinities were painted in colours of blood or in robes of darkness. And let us observe how in each of these pictures there is the seizing of some real feature of the character of God, though fearfully distorted, and brought out with horrid prominence. Vulgar minds would ascribe all this to the priesthood, forgetting that the priesthood itself, so different in many nations, is the product, and not the cause, of the tastes, the desires, and cravings of our nature, which it may yet, however, by reaction, greatly foster and augment. The question demands an answer, why, of all people, the ancient Hebrews should be the only nation which succeeded in embracing all that is great and lovely, to the exclusion of all that is degrading and offensive? Ingenious minds may speculate as they please; but sound reason will ever most fondly rest on the belief in a supernatural communication as alone able to explain the phenomenon." M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine*

*Government*, book iv. chap. 1. § 3, Character of God as revealed in Scripture.—“Die innere Abgötterey ist die erste, da man ihm einen falschen Gedanken von Gott machet, ihn anders abbildet, einen andern Dienst erdenket, als er selbst haben will. Derohalben so treibet die ganze heilige Schrift darauf, dass der wahre Gott auch wahrhaftig erkannt werde. Es liegt also alles am ersten Gebot. Die Wurzel der Abgötterey ist der falsche Gedanke, da man sich Gott falsch vorstellet, gleichwie es anjetzt bey uns ist, da man so viel Weisen erfunden, damit Gott gedienet wird.” Luther, *Anmerkungen über den Propheten Hoseam*, cap. 2. v. 5.—“Ueber das ist das Fleisch und Vernunft (so dem Geist in den Heiligen widerstrebet, in den Gottlosen aber ganz gewaltig herrschet und waltet) so geschickt, dass sie von Natur Lust und Liebe hat zu den pharisäischen und abergläubigen Werken; sie denket lieber von Gott nach ihren Gutdünken denn nach seinem Wort, thut mit viel grösserm Ernst und Andacht die Werke so sie selbst erwählet, denn die so Gott geboten hat.” *Ib.*, *Ausführliche Erklärung der Epistel an die Galater*, cap. 5. v. 14. See also Luther’s *Tischreden*, cap. 5, Von der Abgötterey.

## CXXXVI.—p. 155.

*One of the ancients.*] Plutarch, in his treatise *On Superstition*.

## CXXXVII.—p. 156.

*Tertullian may be said to have written with far greater insight into the nature of Superstition than Augustin, &c.*] “Tertullianus,—der ohne eigentlich ein philosophischer Kopf, wie jener [Augustinus], zu seyn, doch öfters, wenn ihn seine Einbildungskraft nicht unwölkt, mit seinem gesunden und scharfen Verstande weiter sieht, als der erstere mit allen seinen Spitzfindigkeiten, sagt von abergläubischen und unnützen Gebräuchen (*vacuæ observationis*) bey dem Gebete, sie würden *ohne einen Befehl des Herrn oder der Apostel verrichtet*, und setzt hinzu ‘Denn solche Dinge werden nicht zur Religion, sondern zum Aberglauben, gerechnet, indem sie erkünstelt und gezwungen sind, mehr eine

vorwitzige als vernünftige Pflicht ausmachen, und schon deswegen hintertrieben werden müssen, weil *sie den Christen dem Heyden ähnlich machen* (De Oratione, c. 12). Das heisst wirklich weit bestimmter vom Aberglauben gesprochen: und wenn Tertullianus die Christen darinne mit den Heyden vergleicht; so ist es das willkürlich, ohne Anweisung der Stifter ihres Glaubens, aus einer unglücklich übertriebenen Sorgfalt und spielenden Geschäftigkeit Ersonnene, nicht das Abgöttische allein, oder gar ein Verbrüderung mit den Teufeln, was die Verwandtschaft solcher beiderseitigen Religionsübungen ausmachen soll." Schröck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zweiter Zeitraum, Drittes Buch, (Th. ix. s. 318.)

CXXXVIII.—p. 156.

*The forms and developments of superstition.*] For a succinct account of the rise and progress of idolatrous worship, see Selden, *De Diis Syris*, cap. 3.—Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 8.—Millar, *History of the Propagation of Christianity and the Overthrow of Paganism*, chap. 2.

CXXXIX.—p. 159.

*Superstition considered . . . as having regard to demons and other supernatural agents less than divine, and with regard also to occult operations and influences supposed to have an influence upon human destiny.*] See *Demonology and Witchcraft* by Sir Walter Scott.—Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 9.—Luther gives a detailed and curious account of superstitious practices prevalent in his day, in the shape of charms and witchcraft, in his *Auslegung der Zehen Gebote Gottes*, Das erste Gebot, (vol. iv. 1704–1726, Walch).—See some excellent remarks on Astrology and Divination in M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book ii. chap. 2. sect. 4. Method of Interpreting the Divine Providence.

CXL.—p. 161.

*The fault was not (and in fact this would have been no fault at all) that due importance was attached to the externals of religion.*] "The form of religion may indeed be where there is little of the thing itself; but the thing itself

cannot be preserved among mankind without the form." Bp. Butler, *Charge to the Clergy of Durham*.—"There is a superstition in avoiding superstition; when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received." Bacon, *Essay 17, Of Superstition*.—"Seeing vices have not only virtues but other vices also in nature opposite unto them, it may be dangerous in these cases to seek but that which we find contrary to present evils. For in sores and sicknesses of the mind we are not simply to measure good by distance from evil; because one vice may in some respect be more opposite to another than either of them to that virtue which holdeth the mean between them both. Liberality and covetousness, the one a virtue and the other a vice, are not so contrary as the vices of covetousness and prodigality; religion and superstition have more affiance, though the one be light and the other darkness, than superstition and profaneness, which both are vicious extremities. By means whereof it cometh also to pass that the mean which is virtue seemeth in the eyes of each extreme an extremity; the liberal hearted man is by the opinion of the prodigal miserable, and by the judgment of the miserable lavish; impiety for the most part upbraideth religion as superstitious, which superstition often accuseth as impious, both so conceiving thereof because it doth seem more to participate each extreme, than one extreme doth another, and is by consequent less contrary to either of them, than they mutually between themselves. Now if he that seeketh to reform covetousness or superstition should but labour to induce the contrary, it were but to draw men out of lime into coal-dust. So that their course which will remedy the superstitious abuse of things profitable in the church is not still to abolish utterly the use thereof, because not using at all is most opposite to ill using, but rather if it may be to bring them back to a right perfect and religious usage, which albeit less contrary to the present sore, is notwithstanding the better and by many degrees the sounder way of recovery." Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* book v. chap. 65. § 20.—"C'est être superstitieux de mettre son espérance dans les formalités



et dans les cérémonies ; mais c'est être superbe de ne pas vouloir s'y soumettre." Pascal, *Pensées*, Seconde Partie, Art. 17, 50.—"It is not peculiar to the gorgeousness of Romanism that it should be valued superstitiously. The baldness of Protestantism may be so valued. False reliance may have respect to the simple, even as to its opposite. We may substitute the purer form in the place of the more corrupt, without bringing the purer spirit to the uses of it." Dr. Vaughan, *The Age and Christianity*, Lecture VI.—See also the judicious and valuable article, entitled, "*Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished, and some retained*," appended to the Preface to the Book of Common Prayer.

## CXLI.—p. 162.

*Superstition lies not here ; although here may indeed be one of its readiest points of contact with what is holy, just, and good.*] "Superstition without a veil is a deformed thing ; for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed. And as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances." Bacon, *Essay* 17, Of Superstition.—"Alle Abgotterei vom Nachahmen des rechten Gottesdienstes ihren Anfang hat, und sich mit einem Schein göttlichen Wortes und der frommen Exempel, die Gottes Befehl gehabt haben, geschönen will." Luther, *Tischreden*, Cap. 5. § 13.—See some excellent remarks on superstition considered as attaching itself to the use of religious ordinances, in the concluding portion of bishop Shuttleworth's *Tractate on Tradition*.

## CXLII.—p. 162.

*We find the churches of the west, as early as the time of Constantine, rapidly sinking into superstition.*] See Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2, Buch 1, Wachstum der Cæremonien und des Aberglaubens unter den Christen, (Th. 5, ss. 128—132.)

## CXLIII.—p. 162.

*The practical part of religion was corrupted before the*

*theoretical ; and it is worthy of remark, &c.]* See Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2, Buch 5, Geschichte des Christl. Aberglaubens. (Th. 20, ss. 107-113.)

CXLIV.—p. 163.

*Soon, however, it became evident that under this weight of decoration there was lurking a real and distinct element of superstition ; &c.]* “In eundem hic censum merito et illi veniunt, qui in solo cultu Dei externo spem omnem salutis collocant, de interno, seu animo a vitiorum sordibus per veram pœnitentiam purgando, parum solliciti. Placet namque plerisque mortalium ista colendi Deum ratio, eo quod cum pravis, quibus indulgent, cupiditatibus, eam consistere posse, sibi persuadent. Quia tamen revera et hic perversus præposterusque Numinis cultus est, non alio, quam Superstitionis nomine est insigniendus, quamvis aliis ‘religio superficialia,’ eodem tamen sensu, dicatur.” Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 8. § 6 ; and see the note, containing a quotation from Puffendorff, concerning this *religio superficialia seu histrionica*, as distinguished from the *solida*.—“Though mankind have, in all ages, been greatly prone to place their religion in peculiar positive rites, by way of equivalent for obedience to moral precepts ; yet, without making any comparison at all between them, and consequently without determining which is to have the preference, the nature of the thing abundantly shews all notions of that kind to be utterly subversive of true religion ; as they are, moreover, contrary to the whole general tenor of Scripture ; and likewise to the most express particular declarations of it, that nothing can render us accepted to God, without moral virtue.” Bp. Butler, *Ana-logy of Religion*, part ii. chap. 1.—“Eigentlich fasst zwar der Aberglaube, nach der ursprünglichen Zusammensetzung und Bedeutung dieses Wortes (Aberglaube, oder unächter Glaube), alles in sich, wodurch die wahre, von Gott selbst vorgeschriebene, Religion verdorben und verfälscht wird. Allein der Sprachgebrauch bringt es schon längst mit sich, dass man darunter mehr die eigenmächtige und irrige Ausübung der Religion,—die Einfälle der Menschen womit

sie die Verehrung Gottes nach ihrem Gutdünken verändert, ausgeschmückt, wohl gar auf menschliche und andere sinnliche Gegenstände gedreht, und sich dabey einer ausserordentlichen göttlichen Anweisung und Billigung versichert gehalten haben,—kurz, die ganze Ausartung des praktischen Christenthums in ein vielfaches äusserliches Cærimoniel, in eine Menge neuersonnener Andachtsbezeugungen, versteht, die nicht allein aus den Lehren und schriftlichen Quellen dieser Religion keineswegs fliessen, sondern auch geradezu mit ihrem Grundsätzen streiten. Dieser Aberglaube war in den ersten Jahrhunderten durch die ascetische Lebensart und Gottseligkeit zuerst recht ausgebrochen; obgleich noch mancher andere versteckte Saamen desselben schon damals einige Früchte trug. Wie unaufhaltsam, und warum er sich dergestalt seit Constantin dem grossen, in mancherley Gestalten unter den Christen ausgebreitet habe, ist in dem ersten Buche dieses Zeitraums ausführlich gezeigt worden (Th. 5. s. 121 fg.). Aber in der zweiten Hälfte des vierten Jahrhunderts, und im Anfange des fünften, stieg er noch ungleich höher.“ Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zweiter Zeitraum, Drittes Buch. (Th. 9. ss. 170, 171).—“By *formalism* in religion, we of course mean a disposition to confide unduly in forms. It is the error which places institutions before truths, church ceremonies before spiritual culture. It elevates observances, which, at best, are no more than means having reference to religion as an end, into the place of religion. It teaches a man to be scrupulous in the tithing of ‘mint and rue, and all manner of herbs,’ but leaves him in negligence concerning the weightier matters, ‘judgment and the love of God.’ Bodily exercise is substituted for spiritual conflict; outward prostration for the inward agony. It does not look to what a man *is*, so much as to what he may have *done*,—have done in matters having no necessary relation either to piety or morality. It is an error which... may assume the shape of a deadly fanaticism; or it may exist in shades so faint as to be scarcely perceptible.....Even the Hebrew people, with a Being of infinite perfection so far revealed

to them, are before us as constantly in danger of sinking from the spirit to the mere letter of their observances. It is one of the facts bespeaking the divine origin of the Hebrew Scriptures that they should have laid bare this evil with such largeness of force. Coupled with the most minute provisions in respect to forms, were the most enlightened cautions as to their worthlessness, except as they should lead to something higher. In the time of the prophets, accordingly, this species of false religion was restricted to comparatively narrow limits; but we see it deeply rooted, and fully developed, in the sect of the Pharisees at the time of the Advent. That was the age of a corrupt civilization; and formalism is the natural product of such times. It is characteristic of this stage in social history, that men should be self-indulgent, calculating, devoid of faith and earnestness, and that religion should in consequence become very much a sort of court ceremonial, or a piece of decent conventionalism." Dr. Vaughan, *The Age and Christianity*, Lecture VI.—“At the time when our blessed Lord began to announce his mission as the Messiah, the pernicious sentiment respecting the efficacy of ceremonial obedience had an almost universal prevalence over the minds of the Jews. It was not merely the sentiment of the ignorant vulgar; but it had the sanction of ecclesiastical authority to give it credit and countenance. The key of knowledge was kept in the hands of men whose interest it was to conceal it from the people. Hence they became ignorant of the more spiritual and substantial parts of religion, and flattered themselves with the most delusive hopes, in the midst of the most flagrant breaches, and even the most corrupt misrepresentations, of the divine commands. The more plain, which were also the more interesting, parts of the law, were veiled and misconstrued, debased and mutilated, by the scribes and elders; whose false glosses had obscured the very fundamental principles of divine worship and moral obligation; and who, by calling off the attention of men from weighty matters to trifling and indifferent circumstantials, had, as

our Lord himself informed them, made the word of God of none effect through their traditions (Mark vii. 13). Their own whimsical speculations, or arbitrary positions, had usurped the seat of inspired doctrine: they were more assiduous to amuse the imagination with the dreams of the Rabbins, than to impress the heart with those principles which have the best tendency to promote a holy and upright conduct, amidst the various situations and trials of life. For these reasons our Lord upbraided them for the indiscriminate regard which they paid to undoubted revelation and dubious tradition; and in consequence of their intermixing the most absurd and trifling ceremonies with the more solemn and authorized acts of religious service, he said to them, ‘In vain do ye worship God, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men’ (Mark vii. 7).” White’s *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon iii.—“Superstition such as that of the Pharisees was, by whom divine things indeed were less, because other things were more divinely esteemed of than reason would; the superstition that riseth voluntarily, and, by degrees which are hardly discerned, mingleth itself with the rites even of very divine service done to the only true God, must be considered of as a creeping and encroaching evil; an evil the first beginnings whereof are commonly harmless, so that it proveth only then to be an evil when some further accident doth grow unto it, or itself come unto farther growth. For in the church of God sometimes it cometh to pass as in over battle\* grounds, the fertile disposition whereof is good; yet because it exceedeth due proportion, it bringeth forth abundantly, through too much rankness, things less profitable; whereby that which principally it should yield being either prevented in place, or defrauded of nourishment, faileth. This (if so large a discourse were necessary) might be exemplified even by heaps of rites and customs now superstitious in the greatest part of the Christian world, which, in their first original beginnings, when the strength of virtuous, devout, or charitable affection bloomed them, no man could justly have condemned as evil.” Hooker, *Ecol. Pol.* book v. chap. 3. § 4.

\* i. e. too rich.—See Keble’s note, from Todd’s Johnson’s Dict.

## CXLV.—p. 165.

*That "false system" which "assumes the great business of pardon and reconciliation with God to be a transaction that belongs to priestly negotiation."]* "When, either by the refinements of rationalism—a gross misnomer,—or by superstitious corruptions, the central facts of Christianity have become obscured, no middle ground remains between the apathy of formality and the extravagance of enthusiasm. The substance of religion is gone, and its ceremonial only remains,—remains to disgust the intelligent and to delude the simple. This momentous principle is strikingly displayed in the construction of the Romish worship. That false system assumes the great business of pardon and reconciliation with God to be a transaction that belongs to priestly negotiation." Taylor, *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, sect. 2.

## CXLVI.—p. 165.

*This heathenish theory of the power of the priest was virtually exalted to the rank of a Christian doctrine; assuming continually greater prominence and importance, until at length it reached its culminating point when the papal supremacy was made an article of faith.]* See the celebrated Bull *Unam Sanctam*, by Boniface VIII., (Extravagantt. Commun., lib. i. tit. 8. De Majoritate et Obedientia, cap. 1.),—which concludes with the words, "Porro subesse Romano Pontifici omni humanæ creaturæ declaramus, dicimus, diffinimus, et pronunciamus omnino esse de necessitate salutis."

## CXLVII.—p. 166.

*It is needless here to touch upon a controversy which was once keenly agitated, whether or not, and if at all how far, Romish superstition is to be referred directly to a pagan origin.]* See some good remarks on the controversy between Conyers Middleton and Warburton concerning the affinity of heathen and Romish superstition, in Schroeck's *Kirchengeschichte*, Zweiter Zeitraum, Drittes Buch (Th. 9. ss. 320—323.)

## CXLVIII.—p. 166.

*What are those causes and occasions of Superstition which*

*exist in human nature and come to light on the surface of man's history.]* See Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, chap. x. § 1.—Wisdom of Solomon, chap. xiii. and xiv., with the remarks of Calvin, *Institutes*, book i. chap. xi. § 8.—Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 17, Of Superstition.—Vinet, *Discours sur quelques Sujets Religieux*, Disc. 1, Les Religions de l'Homme et la Religion de Dieu.

CXLIX.—p. 166.

*Superstition takes its origin sometimes in a disturbed and restless conscience.]* “At the root of a great proportion of the [heathen] superstition lay ... a need, seeking for its satisfaction, which could be found only in Christianity,—the need of redemption,—of a healing of the deep-felt schism within,—of reconciliation with the unknown God after whom the conscious or unconscious need was seeking.” Neander, *History of the Christian Church*, Introduction.—“Except by taking into our calculation a conscience, and an evil conscience, we cannot comprehend human nature or human actions. Those who have left this important part of man's existing character and nature out of account have failed to give any rational account of his conduct, more particularly in reference to religion; and, as they felt their incompetency, they have burst out into empty declamations against superstition and fanaticism, and have lost their own temper in ridiculing human infirmity. We cannot explain human folly under certain of its modifications,—we cannot explain human folly even by human passion,—we cannot understand the particular mode and intensity of human wickedness,—we are puzzled at every step till we call in a perverted moral sense. It is by the help of this, the most singular part of man's nature, that we are enabled to account for all other singularities and anomalies of his spiritual constitution.” Mc Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 9.—“To impiety, and to it alone, the saying of Statius (*Theb. lib. 1.*) properly applies, ‘Fear first brought gods into the world.’” Calvin, *Institutes*, book i. chap. 4. § 4.

CL.—p. 167.

*There is a dread of punishment, or of other evil conse-*

quences, &c.] “Nature rejects the paradox, or rather the absurdity, of a government without sanctions, and hence, though aggravated and distorted by ignorance and superstition, the religion of terror is not only prevalent throughout the world, but has a foundation in the just apprehensions of the human spirit. It is not confidence in a propitious, but it is the dread of an offended, God, which forms the prevalent religious feeling of our species;—as is manifest in the sacrifices and bloody rites of Paganism, and in the delusive opiates of Popery, which have been alike devised to quell the misgivings that are felt in the hearts of all men.” Chalmers, *Institutes of Theology*, book ii. chap. 3. § 17.—“Fear, . . . if it have not the light of true understanding concerning God, wherewith to be moderated, breedeth superstition. . . . Fear is a good solicitor to devotion. Howbeit, sith fear in this kind doth grow from an apprehension of Deity endued with irresistible power to hurt, and is of all affections (anger excepted) the unaptest to admit any conference with reason; for which cause the wise man (Wisd. xvii. 12) doth say of fear that it is a betrayer of the forces of reasonable understanding; therefore except men know beforehand what manner of service pleaseth God, while they are fearful they try all things which fancy offereth. Many there are who never think on God but when they are in extremity of fear; and then, because what to think or do they are uncertain, perplexity not suffering them to be idle, they think and do as it were in a phrensy they know not what.” Hooker, *Eccles. Pol.* book v. chap. iii. § 1.—Cicero distinguishes superstition (*superstitio*) “in qua inest timor inanis deorum” from religion (*religio*) “quæ deorum pio cultu continetur;” *De Nat. Dcor.* I. 42.—See also Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Introductory Aphorisms, Aphor. 29.—

Here is that real ground of the fear of death, which the unbelieving poet knew how to describe, without being able to account for it:

Metus ille . . . . Acheruntis . . . .  
Funditus humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,  
Omnia suffundens mortis nigrore, neque ullam



Esse voluptatem liquidam puramque relinquit.

Lucr. *De Rer. Nat.* iii. 37-40.

See also Shakspeare's celebrated Soliloquy of Hamlet.—  
It was reserved for the gospel to tell us of one who took part of flesh and blood "that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Heb. ii. 14, 15.—  
Thus alone is "metus ille foras præceps Acheruntis agendus."

It may be added, that a superstitious fear of unknown or undefined evil may be traced partly to the want of an enlightened and well founded peace with God, as well as partly to ignorance of natural phenomena and the like. Hence it is that Superstition can look forth from the clouds, and terrify mankind with her frown; for this is the "gravis religio" to which the words of Lucretius may be properly applied as that

"Quæ caput a cœli regionibus ostendebat,  
Horribili super aspectu mortalibus instans."

*De Rer. Nat.* i. 65, 66.

"When, with a frown that froze the peopled earth,  
Thou dartedst thy huge head from high,  
Night waved her banners o'er the sky,  
And, brooding, gave her shapeless shadows birth.  
Rocking on the billowy air,  
Ha! what withering phantoms glare!  
As blows the blast with many a sudden swell,  
At each dead pause, what shrill-toned voices yell!  
The sheeted spectre, rising from the tomb,  
Points to the murderer's stab, and shudders by;  
In every grove is felt a heavier gloom,  
That veils its genius from the vulgar eye:  
The spirit of the water rides the storm

And, through the mist, reveals the terrors of his form."

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition*, l. 2.

CLI.—p. 170.

*Superstition, especially that which concerns itself with sup-*

*posed supernatural agencies for the prevention of evil or for the attainment of good, may exist in the man of a thoroughly worldly mind.]* It is remarkable that many distinguished men, especially among those who have been extensively engaged in warfare, or who have been addicted to gross immorality, have either appeared to be, or perhaps have really been, very superstitious. Thus for example, Alexander the Great, (Curt. lib. iv. cap. 6; lib. vii. cap. 7); Nero, (Suet. Ner. cc. 34, 41, 47), Julian, (see Gibbon, *Decline and Fall*, chap. 23; and Neander, Julian.); and in more modern times Wallenstein, and Napoleon Buonaparte.—“*Magna gratia opus est ut cum omnibus amoribus, terroribus, erroribus suis vincatur hic mundus!*” Augustin. *De Corrept. et Grat.* c. 12. n. 35.

CLII.—p. 171.

*The passion of fear, blindly shrinking from its object . . . . . is always ready to pave the way for superstition.]* Doubtless, ignorant or unfounded fear is one source of superstition under certain aspects; but we take an exceedingly imperfect view of the subject if we suppose, with Hume, that this kind of fear accounts for all the superstition in the world. The following passage can be accepted as descriptive of *some sources* of superstition, but not as pointing out *all* “the true sources” of this evil.—“The mind of man is subject to certain unaccountable terrors and apprehensions, proceeding either from the unhappy situation of private or public affairs, from ill health, from a gloomy and melancholy disposition, or from the concurrence of all these circumstances. In such a state of mind, infinite unknown evils are dreaded from unknown agents; and, where real objects of terror are wanting, the soul, active to its own prejudice, and fostering its predominant inclination, finds imaginary ones, to whose power and malevolence it sets no limits. As these enemies are entirely invisible and unknown, the methods taken to appease them are equally unaccountable, and consist in ceremonies, observances, mortifications, sacrifices, presents, or in any practice, however absurd or frivolous, which either folly or

knavery recommends to a blind and terrified credulity. Weakness, fear, melancholy, together with ignorance, are therefore the true sources of superstition." Hume, *Essays*, Essay 10, Of Superstition and Enthusiasm.

CLIII.—p. 171.

*Pride, or the vain elation of the fleshly mind, &c.*] "In saying that some fall away into superstition, I mean not to insinuate that their excessive absurdity frees them from guilt; for the blindness under which they labour is almost invariably accompanied with pride and stubbornness. Mingled vanity and pride appear in this, that when miserable men do seek after God, instead of ascending higher than themselves, as they ought to do, they measure Him by their own carnal stupidity, and, neglecting solid inquiry, fly off to indulge their curiosity in vain speculation. Hence they do not conceive of Him in the character in which He is manifested, but imagine Him to be whatever their own rashness has desired. This abyss standing open, they cannot move one footstep without rushing headlong to destruction. With such an idea of God, nothing which they may attempt to offer in the way of worship or obedience can have any value in His sight, because it is not Him they worship, but, instead of Him, the dream and figment of their own heart." Calvin, *Institutes of Religion*, book i. chap. 4. §. 1.—See Col. ii. 18—23, and Calvin and Olshausen in loc. "Superstition among the Greeks receives the name of ἐθελοθηρησκεία, the term which St. Paul here makes use of. He has, however, an eye to the etymology of the term, for ἐθελοθηρησκεία denotes a voluntary service, which men choose for themselves at their own option, without authority from God. Human traditions, therefore, are agreeable to us on this account, that they are in accordance with our understanding; for any one will find in his own brain the first outlines of them." Calvin. But see both commentaries above cited, on the whole passage.—"A desperate and sullen pride has always marked the oriental (polytheistic) austerities; and in India we see unmasked that

which in Europe has disguised itself under Christian modes of expression." Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 5.

CLIV.—p. 171.

*The same may be affirmed of sensuous tendencies, unenlightened and uncontrolled.]* Hence the early worship of the heavenly bodies, fire, &c. by unenlightened men, "divinitatem temere sensu metientes," Selden, *De Diis Syris*, Prolegomena c. 3, De Deorum multitudinis Origine et Processu, q. v.—Hence also the idolatrous veneration of martyrs and relics, the superstitious use of the sign of the cross, &c. &c.

In connection with this subject, the following remark is deserving of attention. "Es ist richtig angemerkt worden, dass die abergläubische Verehrung der Heiligen, von *wenig bekannten* Christen dieser Art ihren Anfang genommen; dass sie nach und nach erst zu den *Aposteln*, später zu *Engeln*, und am letzten zu der *Jungfrau Maria* übergegangen sey. Allein es lassen sich auch die Ursachen davon nicht schwer angeben, warum man gleichsam eine so umgekehrte Ordnung beobachtet habe. Sehr viele Gemeinen hatten ihre *eigenthümliche Märtyrer*, welche Mitglieder derselben gewesen waren, und vor ihren Augen den Tod ausgestanden hatten; deren Gräber daselbst jedermann kannte; deren Gedächtnisstage jährlich begangen wurden; von welchen man, aus einer vorzüglichen Zuneigung, immer mehr Rühmliches und Wunderbares erzählte oder erdichtete; deren Leichname und andere Ueberbleibsale am leichtesten zu erhalten waren; kurz, auf welche sich die Gemeinde viel einbildete, und mit denen sie stets in einer ausnehmenden Verbindung zu bleiben wünschte. Nichts war also natürlicher, als dass diese Heiligen zuerst hervorgezogen wurden; sie mochten auch übrigens ausserhalb der Gemeinde, der sie zugehörten, gänzlich unbekannt seyn. Erst nach und nach bekam die Kirche *allgemeine Heiligen*; oder Märtyrer von sehr ausgebreitetem Ruhm und Ansehen, die, durch Lehrer von gleichem Range ungemein empfohlen, bey den grössten

Gemeinen verehrt, und in ihre Märtyrerverzeichnisse eingerückt worden waren. Eben so ist es auch begreiflich, wie die Heiligenverehrung, da sie überhaupt vom Sinnlichen ihren Ursprung nahm, erst von den Menschen zu den seeligen Geistern des Himmels hinaufgestiegen sey." Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2, Buch 3. (Th. 9. ss. 211, 212.)

## CLV.—p. 171.

*Sensual propensities, sinfully indulged.*] "The restraints of passion, the denial of appetite, the calm perseverance of virtuous conduct, are severities which the generality of mankind have neither tempers resolute enough to practise, nor imaginations pure enough to comprehend. But the observance of the forms, and the infliction of the austerities, of superstition, all men can practise. They require not a permanent, but a temporary, mortification; they exhaust not the imagination by demanding its constant employment on those high and mysterious subjects to which the mind approaches with dread, but adapt themselves to those occasional seasons of despondence or apprehension, when men seek to make their peace with God; and while they persuade the sinner that by this voluntary punishment he has expiated his error and his crimes, they bid him return again into the world, and relapse into the indulgence of all his desires." White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ix.—It is evident that sensualism has had a great share in the construction and maintenance of the Mahometan superstition.

## CLVI.—p. 172.

*Misguided zeal.*] "Zeal, unless it be rightly guided, when it endeavoureth most busily to please God, forceth upon Him those unseasonable offices which please Him not. For which cause, if they who this way swerve be compared with such sincere, sound, and discreet, as Abraham was in matter of religion, the service of the one is like unto flattery, the other like the faithful sedulity of friendship (2 Chron. xx. 7)." Hooker, *Ecccl. Pol.* book v. chap. 3. § 1.

## CLVII.—p. 172.

*Sensuous tendencies,.....self-love &c.*] “Ausser dem natürlichen Triebe der Menschen, an Vorschriften die sie nicht selbst entworfen haben, zu künsteln, um ihre Eigenliebe wenigstens durch einigen Antheil daran zu befriedigen, kam auch die Liebe zum Sinnlichen hinzu. Diese fand Nahrung genug in der heidnischen und jüdischen Religion: und ob ihr gleich solche in der christlichen, nach der ächten Natur und Richtung derselben, entzogen wurde, so arbeitete sie doch bald daran, sich dieselbe auch hier zu verschaffen. Da ihr die christliche Freyheit, einige äusserliche Zeichen der Erkenntniss und Verehrung Gottes anzunehmen, zu Statten kam, so entstanden nach und nach, je nachdem die Gemeinen zahlreicher, und ihre Mitglieder begüteter wurden, auch mehrere und anschnlichere Cæremonien des Gottesdienstes.” Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2, Buch i, Wachsthum der Cæremonien und des Aberglaubens unter den Christen. (Th. 5. s. 129.)

## CLVIII.—p. 173.

“*The two peculiar features*” &c.] “The two peculiar features of man’s existing condition are evil passions and an evil conscience. No superstition can become popular which does not provide or admit something to meet the craving demands of both. Hence the grossness of Paganism, with its horrid and cruel sacrifices; witness the licentiousness and the tortures practised around the same Indian temple. Bacchus and Venus are to be found in the same mythologies with Baal and Pluto, and, under various names, and with lesser individual differences, have been worshipped over the larger portion of the Pagan world. Even in Rome, which professed an abhorrence of the levity of the Greeks, there were, according to Valerius Maximus, so many as 7000 Bacchanals, among whose mysteries both prostitution and murder occupied an important place. Hence the love of war, with the stringent formalities that distinguished Mohammedanism in the days of its youth and vigour. The apostate Christian church seems to unite in itself all the elements found separately in every other

superstition, and to be catholic and all-embracing, not in its truth, but in its errors. We agree with De Maistre in thinking that ‘there is not a dogma in the Catholic Church, nor even a general custom belonging to the high discipline, which has not its roots in the extreme depths of human nature, and consequently in some general opinion more or less altered here and there, but common in its principles to all nations’ (Du Pape). In the bosom of that church there have been embraced at the same instant unbridled scepticism and profligacy, grasping ambition, and the most profound deceit, with the asceticism of the anchorite, and the blind faith of the devotee. These things may seem inconsistent, and so they are; but their inconsistency is to be found in human nature, the character of which they exhibit, as the unwholesome food which the diseased stomach demands points out the nature and craving power of the malady with which it is afflicted.” Mc Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, illustrative note.—On this subject see Abp. Whately, *On the Errors of Romanism having their Origin in Human Nature*.

## CLIX.—p. 176.

*The exorbitant and licentious indulgence of this power of the mind.]* May not the imagination be well regarded as the play, or sport, of the human faculties, sometimes of one, and sometimes of another, or of several at once, rather than as a distinct faculty of itself? And then the fault is, that the mind is at play, when it ought to be at work.

## CLX.—p. 177.

*In default of the cultivation and use of the mental powers, and of the knowledge to be thus procured, man, in his present state, is almost unavoidably exposed to superstition more or less gross and universal.]* It has been a matter of common observation, that superstition is promoted by mental sloth and indolence, with the ignorance which necessarily accompanies this evil habit.—“It is, in a great measure, owing to the prevailing and habitual indolence of the human mind, that millions of men, from one generation to an-

other, continue to be deluded by childish and wicked superstitions." Taylor, *Elements of Thought*, part i. chap. 2. —"Inertness, not less than vice, stamps upon its victim the seal of perdition. The whole order of nature, and all the institutions of society, and the ordinary course of events, and the explicit will of God, declared in his word, concur in opposing that propensity to *rest* which belongs to the human mind; and combine to necessitate submission to the hard yet salutary conditions under which alone the most extreme evils may be held in abeyance, and any degree of happiness enjoyed. A task and duty is to be fulfilled, in discharging which the want of energy is punished even more immediately and more severely than the want of virtuous motives." Taylor, *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, sect. 5.—"Examine the journals of our zealous missionaries, I will not say among the Hottentots or Esquimaux, but in the highly civilized, though fearfully uncultivated, inhabitants of ancient India. How often, and how feelingly, do they describe the difficulty of rendering the simplest chain of thought intelligible to the ordinary natives, the rapid exhaustion of their whole power of attention, and with what distressful effort it is exerted while it lasts! Yet it is among these that the hideous practices of self-torture chiefly prevail. Oh, if folly were no easier than wisdom, it being often so very much more grievous, how certainly might these unhappy slaves of superstition be converted to Christianity! But, alas, to swing by hooks passed through the back, or to walk in shoes with nails of iron pointed upward through the soles,—all this is so much less difficult, demands so much less exertion of the will, than to reflect, and by reflection to gain knowledge and tranquillity!—It is not true that ignorant persons have no notion of the advantages of truth and knowledge. They confess, they see and bear witness to, these advantages in the conduct, the immunities, and the superior powers of the possessors. Were they attainable by pilgrimages the most toilsome, or penances the most painful, we should assuredly have as many pilgrims and self-tormentors in the service of true religion, as now



exist under the tyranny of Papal or Brahman superstition." Coleridge, *Aids to Reflection*, Introductory Aphorisms, Aphor. 18 and Comment.—“The light of religion is not that of the moon, light without heat; but neither is its warmth that of the stove, warmth without light. Religion is the sun whose warmth indeed swells, and stirs, and actuates the life of nature, but who at the same time beholds all the growth of life with a master eye, makes all objects glorious on which he looks, and by that glory visible to others” Coleridge, *Statesman's Manual*, sub fin.—“Superstition neither knoweth the right kind, nor observeth the due measure, of actions belonging to the service of God; but is always joined with a wrong opinion touching things divine.” Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book v. chap. 3. § 2.—See White's *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ii; where it is shewn that want of intellectual culture greatly contributed to the success of Mahometanism, and that “while ignorance was extending her dominion over the Christian world, superstition, her genuine offspring, followed close behind.”—“Of that liberal piety which is founded as well in the understanding as in the heart; which examines where it approves, and which displays the sincerity of its approbation by rectitude of intention and purity of conduct, the generality of mankind, from their contracted habits of thought, as well as their laborious stations in life, are in a great measure incapable. . . . It accords better with their wishes and their prejudices to confine the practice of religion to those austerities and forms which require little mental purity or intellectual exertion to perform.” *Ib.*, Sermon ix.—“The importance of mental development is further demonstrated by its influence upon religious belief; for it is manifest that without active intelligence this would soon degenerate into superstition. If the creed should involve practically a system of irrational agency and supernatural influence [by which I understand, agency and influence contrary to the perceptions or conclusions of right reason]; if it were independent of the thoughts and affections; if its observances were grounded on the apprehension of some unknown future evil, to avert which certain

forms of devotion are to be employed; if it were to become the result of passion rather than of conviction; if the Deity were represented as an object of dread rather than of love, as threatening punishment rather than as abundant in mercy, as clothed with anger rather than as delighting in the happiness of his creatures, as requiring the homage of feeling rather than as rejoicing in the sacrifice of well employed talents [the consecration of all our living powers to his service];—if religion were portrayed as a gloomy abstraction rather than as the perfection of the understanding and of the affections applied to the conduct of every day and every hour; and, finally, if it were made to consist in a series of privations, without hope and joy in this world—then indeed it would become a superstition, which would enthral the best powers of the mind, and chain them down to the utmost limits of Christianity, from which none of its goodly proportions could be seen or appreciated.” Newnham, *Body and Mind*, pp. 199, 200.—“ Wenn der Eifer des reinsten Herzens nicht durch einen hellen Verstand geleitet wurde, so war nichts leichter als dass er Mittel Gott zu gefallen wählte, die Ihm, nach demjenigen zu urtheilen was die göttlichen Schriften darüber lehrten, vielmehr missfallen mussten. Gänzliche Absonderung von der menschlichen Gesellschaft, Verwerfung aller irdischer Güter und Vergnügungen, Enthaltung von aller ordentlichen und gemeinnützlichen Arbeit, freywillige und gehäufte Martern des Körpers, sind einige von den frühesten Beispielen, die hieher gehören.” Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2. Buch iii. (Th. 9. ss. 174, 175.)

Concerning ignorance as a source of the ancient heathen superstition,—of the ignorance and superstition which existed in Christendom before the Reformation,—and of popular ignorance remaining after the Reformation considered as affording a great footing for popery, and therefore a means of holding its ground if not of even regaining its ascendancy,—see Foster’s *Essay on Popular Ignorance*.

CLXI.—p. 177.

*There are cases in which the exercise of intellect itself may*

*become a source of superstition; speculation and philosophy ... have often led to this result.*] Hence the Gnosticism of Egypt, with truth for its professed object, could nourish superstition.—“Credulity is not simply the error of contracted minds; it exists at both extremities of the scale of intellect, and will be found, under varying modifications, in the individual who is credulous because he is unable to see and to comprehend and embrace many points of a subject, —and in him who is conspicuous for his large measure of surpassing belief, because he looks down from an eminence on the immensity of the subject before him, and from estimating the small portion which he can comprehend, gives the reins to imagination over that larger hidden territory which eludes the utmost grasp of finite mind.” Newnham, *Essay on Superstition*, chap. 20.

## CLXII.—p. 180.

*Or to satiate their avarice by the gains of their imposture.*] Church history unhappily abounds with instances of this mischievous practice. See some remarks on the subject in Neander's *History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Fifth Period, Second Division, section 3, (vol. VIII. pp. 49—53, Torrey's Transl.)

## CLXIII.—p. 181.

*By the charms of poetry and music, &c.; ... by tales of the marcellous, &c....supported by the claim of veneration for antiquity.*] “Has fabulas et errores et ab imperitis parentibus discimus, et, quod est gravius, ipsis studiis et disciplinis elaboramus, carminibus præcipue poetarum, qui plurimum quantum veritati ipsa sua auctoritate nocere..... His atque hujusmodi figmentis et mendaciis dulcioribus corrumpuntur ingenia puerorum; et iisdem fabulis inhaerentibus, ad usque summæ ætatis robur adolescent, et in iisdem opinionibus miseri consenescent; cum sit veritas obvia, sed requirentibus.” Minuc. Fel., *Octavius*.—“Pervicax ... vulgus est, et morum a majoribus traditorum ita tenax, ut dogmata longe absurdissima, modo a patribus sint accepta, veritati ipsi plerumque antevertat.” Selden,

*De Diis Syris*, Prolegom, c. 3.—Speaking of Julian and his times, Gibbon says, “The crowd of sophists, who were attracted by the taste and liberality of their royal pupil, had formed a strict alliance between the learning and the religion of Greece; and the poems of Homer, instead of being admired as the original productions of human genius, were seriously ascribed to the heavenly inspiration of Apollo and the Muses. The deities of Olympus, as they are painted by the immortal bard, imprint themselves on the minds which are the least addicted to superstitious credulity. Our familiar knowledge of their names and characters, their forms and attributes, *seems* to bestow on those airy beings a real and substantial existence; and the pleasing enchantment produces an imperfect and momentary assent of the imagination to those fables, which are the most repugnant to our reason and experience. In the age of Julian, every circumstance contributed to prolong and fortify the illusion; the magnificent temples of Greece and Asia; the works of those artists who had expressed, in painting or in sculpture, the divine conceptions of the poet; the pomp of festivals and sacrifices; the successful arts of divination; the popular traditions of oracles and prodigies; and the ancient practice of two thousand years.” *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 23.

## NOTES TO LECTURE VI.

CLXIV.—p. 187.

“*SO far as any good effects proceed from superstition, they flow, in fact, not from the false belief itself, but from those elements of truth and fragments of religion which some superstitious system embodies or involves,—from those sacred embers which still glow beneath the rubbish of error and delusion.*”]

“Amidst that rubbish of superstition, the product of fear, ignorance, and vice, which had been accumulating for ages, some faint embers of sacred truth remained unextinguished; the interposition of unseen powers in the affairs of men was believed and revered, the sanctity of oaths was maintained, the idea of *revelation* and of *tradition*, as a source of religious knowledge, was familiar; a useful persuasion of the existence of a future world was kept alive, and the greater gods were looked up to as the guardians of the public welfare, the patrons of those virtues which promote the prosperity of states, and the avengers of injustice, perfidy, and fraud.”

(*Note.*) “The testimony of Polybius to the beneficial effects which resulted from the system of Pagan superstition in fortifying the sentiments of moral obligation, and supporting the sanctity of oaths, is so weighty and decisive, that it would be an injustice to the subject not to insert it; more especially as it is impossible to attribute it to the influence of credulity on the author himself, who was evidently a sceptic. It is scarcely necessary to remark that all the benefits which might in any way flow from superstition, are secured to an incomparably greater degree by the belief of true religion.

“But among all the useful institutions (says Polybius)

that demonstrate the superior excellence of the Roman government, the most considerable, perhaps, is the opinion which people are taught to hold concerning the gods; and that which other men regard as an object of disgrace, appears, in my judgment, to be the very thing by which this republic is chiefly sustained. I mean superstition, which is impressed with all its terrors, and influences the private actions of the citizens and the public administration of the state, to a degree that can scarcely be exceeded. The ancients, therefore, acted not absurdly, nor without good reason, when they inculcated the notions concerning the gods, and the belief of infernal punishments; but much rather are those of the present age to be charged with rashness and absurdity, in endeavouring to extirpate these opinions; for, not to mention other effects that flow from such an institution, if among the Greeks, for example, a single talent only be intrusted to those who have the management of any of the public money, though they give ten written sureties, with as many seals, and twice as many witnesses, they are unable to discharge the trust reposed in them with integrity. But the Romans, on the other hand, who in the course of their magistracies and embassies disburse the greatest sums, are prevailed on by the single obligation of an oath to perform their duty with inviolable honesty. And, as in other states a man is rarely to be found whose hands are pure from public robbery, so among the Romans it is no less rare to discover one that is tainted with this crime.'” *Hampton’s Polybius*, vol. III. book vi.

“Though the system of paganism is justly condemned by reason and scripture, yet it assumed as true several principles of the first importance to the preservation of public manners; such as a persuasion of invisible power, of the folly of incurring the divine vengeance for the attainment of any present advantage, and the divine approbation of virtue; so that, strictly speaking, it was the mixture of truth in it which gave it all its utility, which is well stated by the great and judicious Hooker in treating

on this subject. 'Seeing therefore it doth thus appear (says that venerable author) that the safety of all states dependeth upon religion; that religion, unfeignedly loved, perfecteth men's abilities unto all kinds of virtuous services in the commonwealth; that men's desire is, in general, to hold no religion but the true; and that whatever good effects do grow out of their religion who embrace, instead of the true, a false, the roots thereof are certain sparks of the light of truth intermingled with the darkness of error; because no religion can wholly and only consist of untruths; we have reason to think that all true virtues are to honour true religion as their parent, and all well ordered commonwealths to love her as their chiefest stay.' *Eccles. Pol.* book v." [ch. 1, § 5; see also §§ 3, 4.] R. Hall, *Modern Infidelity Considered*.—The passage quoted in pp. 185, 186 is from Mc Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book iii. chap. 3. sect. 4.

CLXV.—p. 190.

*The results and consequences of Superstition, &c.*] See Buddeus *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. x. sect. 2.—Concerning the debasing and demoralising character of ancient heathen superstition, in particular, see Foster's *Essay on Popular Ignorance*. The effects of Mahometan superstition are described by White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ix. Respecting the evil influence of the Brahminical superstition upon the character and condition of its votaries, see Carwithen, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon viii.—The bad effects of Romish superstition have been often described; see, for example, Newnham, *Essay on Superstition*, chap. 1.

CLXVI.—p. 191.

*It has been a matter of common observation that Superstition debases and impairs the intellect.*]

Hence, to the realms of Night, dire Demon, hence!

Thy chain of adamant can bind

That little world, the human mind,

And sink its noblest powers to impotence.

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition*, l. 1.

## CLXVII.—p. 191.

*The obstructions which superstition has opposed to the cultivation of natural philosophy.*] “Neque illud præmittendum est, quod naeta sit philosophia naturalis per omnes ætates adversarium molestum et difficilem; superstitionem nimirum, et zelum religionis cœcum et immoderatum. Etenim videre est apud Græcos, eos, qui primum causas naturales fulminis et tempestatum insuetis adhuc hominum auribus proposuerunt, impietatis in deos eo nomine damnatos: nec multo melius a nonnullis antiquorum patrum religionis Christianæ exceptos fuisse eos, qui, ex certissimis demonstrationibus (quibus nemo hodie sanus contradixerit) terram rotundam esse posuerunt, atque ex consequenti antipodas esse asseruerunt.” Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Aphorism. 89.

## CLXVIII.—p. 191.

*Its bad effects upon dogmatic theology, &c.*] “Der ganze eigenthümliche Glaube der Christen zieht sich in dem zusammen, was Gott durch Christum veranstaltet hat, und noch in einem andern Leben zu thun verspricht, um sie weise, gut, und glücklich zu machen. Aber in dieser neuausgesonnenen Ordnung christlicher Gottseeligkeit giengen die Christen den Weg ihrer eigenen Einfälle; selbst die von dem Stifter ihrer Religion angewiesenen Mittel der Veredlung, wie Gebet und Abendmahl, gebrauchten sie schon lange zweckwidrig; auch ihre Besorgnisse und Erwartungen von Gott in dieser und jener Welt waren willkührlich.” Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 3. Buch I. Abschn. 6, Geschichte des Christ. Aberglaubens (Th. 23. s. 127).—“It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the Council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles, and such engines of orbs, to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things; and in like manner that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtle and intricate axioms and theorems, to save the practice of the church.” Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 17, Of Superstition.



## CLXIX.—p. 193.

*Superstitious conceptions of the nature and attributes of God.*] “Certainly superstition is the reproach of the Deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose, ‘Surely,’ saith he, ‘I had rather a great deal that men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born; as the poets speak of Saturn.’” Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 17, Of Superstition.

## CLXX.—pp. 194, 195.

“*Depraved and insane invention.....and mounted into gods*”.....“*They were alternately.....some foreign counter-action.*”] Foster, *Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance*.

## CLXXI.—p. 195.

*The demoralising influence of superstition has been abundantly displayed, partly in the substitution of outward observances for repentance, godliness, and virtue,—or the practical habit of making religion consist in positive rites,—and partly also, which is still worse, by the employment of those things as a fancied atonement or satisfaction for transgression.*] “Das Unglücklichste dabey war eben dieses, dass man ein Heiliger des Mönchslebens seyn, die reichlichsten Almosen austheilen, die freygebigsten Schenkungen den Kirchen und Klöstern zufließen lassen, sich unaufhörlich der Fürbitte der Heiligen empfehlen, sehr häufig fasten, ununterbrochen beten, täglich die Kirchen besuchen, der Feyer des heil. Abendmahls beywohnen, oder nur zuschauen, und andere solcher Andachtsübungen mit brennendem Eifer vornehmen; gleichwohl aber nicht allein unverbessert oder lasterhaft bleiben konnte; sondern sich auch dadurch seine Besserung immer mehr erschwerte. Denn theils hielt man sich, wegen jener scheinbaren Merkmale der Frömmigkeit, bereits vor so gut als man nur werden könne; theils—das Traurigste von allem—stand für jede, auch die gröbste, Ausschweifung, ein Weg der Büssung und Aussöhnung mit Gott offen, der öfters nur einen Theil des Vermögens kostete, oder die Gegenwart bey gewissen Cæremonien er-

forderte." Schroeck, *Kirchengeschichte*, Zeitraum 2. Buch 5. Geschichte des Christ. Aberglaubens. (Th. 20. s. 109 )—And see Calvin, *Institutes*, book i. ch. 4. § 3, 4.

CLXXII.—p. 196.

*These obscurances becoming, in effect, a palliative to the consciences of ungodly men, and subserving the evil purpose of a licence for the commission of fresh crimes.]* "It is curious to observe how superstition lands us practically in the same consequences as the atheism and the pantheism which it so much abhors. The mind which discovers God only so far as its feelings are moved and its fears awakened will feel itself beyond restraint when there is no such excitement. Hence the abject and craven superstition, which prompts to trembling and despair when the man feels himself to be in circumstances of terror, is quite compatible with the most unbridled indulgence and unblushing criminality in other circumstances, when the mind is freed from the pressure of alarm. The man who sees God only at certain times, and in certain places, as in temples or in groves, will feel as if he were beyond God's cognizance and control in all other positions. Hence we find the earnest (we cannot say spiritual) worshipper at the altar cheating in the market-place, and indulging the basest propensities of his nature when he thinks himself under the clouds of concealment. Borrow is not relating any thing contrary to human nature, when he tells us of the gipsy mother, who said to her children, 'You may go and steal, now that you have said your prayers.'" McCosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book ii. chap. 2. sect. 5.

CLXXIII.—p. 196.

*Bishop Van Mildert has truly said, &c.] Boyle Lectures, Sermon VIII.*

CLXXIV.—p. 197.

*It has been well said by one who has spoken in this place.]* In the note which refers to this passage, for pp. 145, 146, read pp. 45, 46.

CLXXV.—p. 198.

*Superstition perverts the moral sense by readily confound-*

*ing the distinction between right and wrong in connection with its own views on questions of religious discipline and worship.]*

“Let any plain honest man, before he engages in any course of action, ask himself, Is this I am going about right, or is it wrong? Is it good, or is it evil? I do not in the least doubt but that this question would be answered agreeably to truth and virtue, by almost any fair man in almost any circumstance. Neither do there appear any cases which look like exceptions to this; but those of superstition and of partiality to ourselves. Superstition may perhaps be somewhat of an exception; but partiality to ourselves is not,—this being itself dishonesty.” Bishop Butler, *Sermons upon Human Nature*, Sermon iii.

## CLXXVI.—p. 198.

*Superstition easily coalesces with impure sensuality.]* Witness the licentiousness of the Hindoo and Mahometan superstitions, and the notions which they encourage concerning the future state of happiness.

## CLXXVII.—p. 199.

*An English historian, speaking of a profligate French monarch.]* Tytler, *Universal History*, book vi. chap. 27,—speaking of Henry III. of France.

## CLXXVIII.—p. 201.

*Social and political decay.]* “Superstition hath been the confusion of many states; and bringeth in a new primum mobile, that ravisheth all the spheres of government. The master of superstition is the people; and in all superstition wise men follow fools; and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order.” Bacon, *Essays Civil and Moral*, Essay 17. Of Superstition.

## CLXXIX.—p. 201.

*It appears highly probable that the superstition of Christians,—although certainly not (as Gibbon would have us believe) the religion of Christ,—was one great cause of the decline and fall of the Roman empire.]* Some “may allege, and may

make it appear credible, that the general decay of intelligence, and the decline and fall of the empire, although hastened by other causes, were mainly brought about by the spread of a religious system that quelled all the active and energetic passions, that suffused throughout the social body an effeminate and desponding temper, that overlaid both business and pleasure with gloomy and idle superstitions, and which in a word transferred to priests and monks the influence that heretofore had been exercised by soldiers and statesmen. A great part even of this allegation may be made good; but as those who have advanced it have generally been impelled by a feeling more hostile to Christianity than to superstition, the distinction necessary to be observed between the two they have designedly neglected; and thus have thrown a capital fallacy into their argument." . . . "In rebutting the inference of sceptics, we readily grant that the refined superstition favoured by the church, from the third century and onwards, had a very powerful influence in bringing on the degeneracy of the nations, and in accelerating the fall of the Roman empire. But then, we ask, was this superstition Christianity? when the affirmation is proved, we may feel ourselves interested in the question." Taylor, *Spiritual Despotism*, sect. 5.—It has been truly remarked that primitive Christianity withstood persecution under the Roman emperors, but corrupt Christianity was not equally hardy under Mahomet. "Temporal ease and security under the banners of a victorious prophet were preferred to that scandal and inconvenience to which the religion of a lowly and crucified Saviour now subjected its professors." White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ii.

CLXXX.—p. 201.

*We are familiar with accounts of the sluggish and evil influences connected with a superstitious reception of the Mahometan doctrine of fate.*] The conquerors of superstitious Christendom were themselves overcome by superstition in their turn. "In the present day, the countries submitted to its yoke [i. e. to Mahometanism] are for the most part

as debased in political, civil, and literary knowledge, as they are in religion: so that we are scarcely surprised at their ignorance and infatuation. The time has been, however, when the people who submitted to this yoke were far from being despicable or undistinguished in letters as well as in arms; and when Mahometanism had its subtle, its acute, and even learned advocates, while the Christian world was almost enveloped in ignorance and darkness." Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon vi.

## CLXXXI.—p. 201.

*And in the history of modern Europe, &c.]* "Our firm belief is that the North owes its great civilization and prosperity chiefly to the moral effect of the Protestant Reformation; and that the decay of the southern countries of Europe is to be mainly ascribed to the great Catholic revival." Macaulay, *Review of Ranke's Lives of the Popes*.

## CLXXXII.—p. 202.

"*Superstition,*" *it has been truly said, &c.]* M'Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book ii. chap. 2. sect. 5.

## CLXXXIII.—p. 204.

*In the heart of superstition there is a demon of ferociousness and cruelty.]* "The history of false religion and superstition shews abundantly that idolatrous, fanatical, and absurd doctrines tend to ferociousness and cruelty of manners." Bp. Hampden, *Lectures on the Study of Moral Philosophy*, Lecture i.

"Wake the lion's loudest roar,  
 Clot his shaggy mane with gore,  
 With flashing fury bid his eyeballs shine;  
 Meek is his savage, sullen, soul to Thine!  
 Thy touch, thy deadening touch has steeled the breast  
 Whence, through her April shower, soft Pity smiled;  
 Has closed the heart each godlike virtue blessed,  
 To all the silent pleadings of his child.  
 At thy command he plants the dagger deep,  
 At thy command exults, though Nature bids him weep!

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition*, l. 1.

## CLXXXIV.—p. 204.

*The horrid rites of oriental heathenism.]*

“ By thee inspired, on India’s sands  
 Full in the sun the Brahmin stands,  
 And, while the panting tigress hies  
 To quench her fever in the stream,  
 His spirit laughs in agonies,  
 Smit by the scorplings of the noontide beam.  
 Mark, who mounts the sacred pyre,  
 Blooming in her bridal vest :  
 She hurls the torch ! she fans the fire !  
 To die is to be blest :  
 She clasps her lord to part no more,  
 And, sighing, sinks, but sinks to soar.”

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition*, I. 3.

The ascetic discipline, which has found its way into Europe, and is nourished in the church of Rome, is stamped with features of cruelty no less than of folly.

“ Veiling from the eye of day,  
 Penance dreams her life away ;  
 In cloistered solitude she sits and sighs,  
 While from each shrine still, small, responses rise.  
 Hear, with what heart-felt beat, the midnight bell  
 Swings its slow summons through the hollow pile !  
 The weak, wan, votarist leaves his twilight-cell,  
 To walk, with taper dim, the winding aisle ;  
 With choral chantings vainly to aspire  
 Beyond this nether sphere on Rapture’s wing of fire !”

Ib. III. 2.

## CLXXXV.—p. 204.

*Remarkable has been the influence of Superstition in producing controversies, divisions, and strife.]* “ The weak-minded, the superstitious, and the ignorant become, in questions of faith, as dangerous guides as the hypocrite and impostor. False views and estimates of the divine attributes grow up in moments of excitement or terror ; strange conceits for the obtaining of God’s favour, or for averting his wrath, grow successively into fashion, and divide mankind into sects, till the passions become heated

to the verge of delirium, and men begin to defend from theory dogmas which they had originally adopted from mere impulse." Bp. Shuttleworth, *On Tradition*.—"If, in surveying the history of the sixth and seventh centuries, we call to our remembrance that purity of doctrine, that simplicity of manners, that spirit of meekness and universal benevolence, which marked the character of the Christian in the Apostolic age, the dreadful reverse which we here behold cannot but strike us with astonishment and horror. Divided into numberless parties on account of distinctions the most trifling and absurd, contending with each other from perverseness, and persecuting each other with rancour, corrupt in opinion and degenerate in practice, the Christians of this unhappy period seem to have retained little more than the name and external profession of their religion." White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ii.

## CLXXXVI.—p. 205.

"*But one body and one spirit*" ..... "*with one mind and one mouth glorify God.*" ] *Prayer for Unity*, in the Form of Prayer for the Accession of the Sovereign.

## CLXXXVII.—p. 208.

*Fierce are the controversies that have arisen on superstitious questions, properly so called, in connection with the doctrine of the holy Eucharist.*] "Aus der Geschichte der Abendmahlslehre, welche bisher vorgetragen worden ist, wird man bereits geschlossen haben, dass keine von den Vorschriften Jesu in diesem Zeitalter mehr verändert, nicht leicht eine andere durch so viele Spitzfindigkeiten verunstaltet worden sey, als eben diese. Dennoch ist alles dieses nur ein kleiner Theil des unübersehlichen Wustes von Fragen, Räthseln, Kunstwörtern, Distinctionen, und Streitigkeiten, durch welche eine der allereinfachsten und liebenswürdigsten Lehren Jesu nicht allein ganz unkenntlich, sondern auch eben so unbrauchbar geworden ist. Zwar beobachtet Peter Lombard auch hier seine bekannte Mässigung, (L. IV. Sententt. Distinct. VIII.—XIII.), obgleich schon bey ihm des Unbiblischen und Willkühr-

lichen, des auf blossen kirchlichem Ansehen Beruhenden, des Ueberfeinen und Unnützen, mehr als zu viel ist. Denn anders kann man doch die Fragen über die Arten der Verwandlung im Abendmahl; über das Beymischen des Wassers zum Weine; über das, was gebrochen wird, ob es der Leibe Christi, oder das Brodt, oder gar nichts sey? und dergleichen mehr, nicht nennen. Aber seine Commentatoren und Nachahmer haben von ihm selbst Gelegenheit genommen, ihn in solchen Künsteleyen bey weitem zu übertreffen. Der erste unter denselben, Alexander von Hales, hat sich auf mehr als hundert Folio- blättern in Fragen über das Abendmahl und in ihrer Auflösung erschöpft (Summæ Pars IV. Quæst. XXIX.— LIII.)..... Vergleicht man mit denselben die von einem andern, noch mehr bewunderten Commentator Lombards, vom heil. Thomas, vorgetragenen, so findet man zwar nicht wenige von jenen wieder auftreten, aber auch einige diesem eigene, und überhaupt etwas mehr Sparsamkeit in solchen Luftstreichen; im Grunde jedoch für die schriftmässige Lehre vom Abendmahl nicht mehr als bey Hales (S. Thomæ de Aquino super Quartum Librum Magistri Sententiarum, Distinct. VIII.—XIII.— ..... Summæ P. III. Quæst. LXXIII.—LXXXIII.)” Schroeck, *Kirchen- geschichte*, Zeitraum 3. Buch 2. Abschn. 6, Fragen über das Abendmahl. Schroeck gives copious examples of these frivolous questions, occupying several pages of his history, and too long for insertion here. (Th. 28. ss. 106—111.)

CLXXXVIII.—p. 209.

*The violent dispute which raged between the Dominicans and Franciscans at the council of Trent concerning the manner in which the supposed Transubstantiation is effected; a dispute which was found to be incapable of adjustment, &c.]*  
 “Lorsque l'on vint à vouloir exprimer la maniere dont Jesus Christ est present dans le Sacrement, et la Transubstantiation, c'est à dire, comment du pain se forme le corps de Jesus Christ, et du vin son sang, l'on ne put s'accorder sur cette matiere, sans voir naître de grandes disputes entre les Ecoles des Dominicains et des Franciscains. dont



les subtilitez causerent beaucoup d'ennui aux Prelats, et peu de fruit pour tous, parce qu'ils ne pouvoient s'entendre eux-mêmes.....Ces deux Ecoles également prevenues en faveur de leur opinion soutenoient, que leur sentiment etoit clair, aisé, et intelligible, et trouvoient dans l'opinion contraire une infinité d'absurditez à combattre.....On dressa pour exprimer ces mysteres differentes minutes conformes aux sentimens de chaque parti, et d'autres aussi, où l'on avoit pris quelque chose de l'un et de l'autre. Mais elles ne purent contenter personne, et principalement le Nonce Evêque de Verône, qui avoit la principale direction en cette matiere. Ainsi on resolut dans la Congregation generale d'user de moins de paroles qu'il seroit possible dans l'exposition de la doctrine, et de se servir d'expressions si generales, qu'elles pussent s'accommoder aux sentimens de deux partis; et le soin en fut remis à quelques Prelats et à quelques Theologiens sous la direction du même Nonce." Paul Sarpi, *Histoire du Concile de Trente*, L. iv. cc. 13, 14. (Courayer.)—The following is Courayer's note on the passage: "Ce qu'ils s'objectoient en effet les uns aux autres ne montrait que trop quel etoit reciproquement le peu de solidité de leurs systèmes, mais sans etablir la bonté de celui qu'ils y substituoient. Quoi de plus chimerique effectivement que ce que disoient les Franciscains, que dans le ciel la quantité retenoit la nature de la quantité, mais que dans le Sacrement elle avoit celle de la substance; que ces deux manieres d'être etoient vraies, réeles, et même naturelles quant à la substance; que la substance du pain et du vin n'est point aneantie, et ne fait que changer de lieu sans dire neanmoins ce qu'elle devient; qu'un même corps peut être en deux lieux differens en même temps; et autres absurditez de cette nature qu'il est du moins aussi aisé de sentir que de refuter? Le sentiment des Dominicains n'étoit gueres moins absurde. Car comment concevoir que Jesus Christ soit dans l'Eucharistie non pas comme venant d'un lieu où il etoit auparavant, mais par une production subite, qui fait que sa substance se trouve où etoit auparavant celle du pain; que cette dernière soit aneantie par sa conversion en celle du corps

de Jesus Christ; qu'il ne reste du pain et du vin que les accidens qui demeurent sans aucun sujet; que la matiere et la forme du pain et du vin soient changées en la matiere et en la forme du corps et du sang de Jesus Christ, quoique les qualitez dont depend ce qu'on appelle la forme soient toujours les mêmes? Si quelque autre religion nous debitoit de pareils paradoxes nous les traiterons de songes et de chimeres. Mais parce qu'on les a honorez du nom de foi, nous nous soumetons à un jargon que tout le monde debite, et dont persone n'a pas la moindre idée." *Histoire, &c.* Londres, 1736.

## CLXXXIX.—p. 210.

*That spirit of intolerance which has often followed in the train of superstition.]* "Sein getreuter Begleiter ist der Fanatism und Bigottism, der ein Paroxysm des Aberglaubens, oder eine aus ihm fliessende, leidenschaftliche, Bewegung des Gemüthes ist." Ammon, *Handbuch der Christlichen Sittenlehre*, Theil 3. Abschn. 1. § 88.—"The nations who have embraced Mahometanism are distinguished by a spirit of hostility and hatred to the rest of mankind. Wherever it has established itself, the relations of situation, of language, and of national policy have been controlled by the influence of religious enmity. The regulations which it prescribes for the conduct of the private life have a tendency to separate the Mussulman from all communion with other men, and all participation of the offices of humanity: and, in every period of its history, the pride or the jealousy which it has inspired, seems to have represented the rest of mankind as enemies with whom, while they opposed the prophet's power, it was impious to converse, and whom it was even meritorious to destroy." White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ix.—Witness also the intolerance of Rabbinical Judaism, and of Popery wherever it is dominant.—"The more implicitly we bow to authority, the less tolerant we become to those who choose not to bow as obediently as ourselves. The mind always seizes with a kind of convulsive grasp those truths for which it can give no very satisfactory account, as though

the tenacity with which they are held would go to make up the deficiency in their evidence; and on this ground it is that those who are most ignorant, to prevent the appearance of absurdity, commonly find it necessary to be most dogmatical. On the other hand, an abundance of knowledge and a strength of evidence, as they define more clearly the bounds of the known and the unknown, tend perpetually towards toleration; a fact, which should make every ray of fresh light, that is cast from any quarter upon religious truth, of additional value to us." Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, Introduction, sect. 2.

## CXC.—p. 211.

*The fanatical attempt to advocate the cause of religion by the sword, whether in the case of the Mahometan who fought under the banner of the false prophet, or in that of the Christian who marched in the Crusades, was founded in deep superstition.*] "The fanaticism of the Crusades cannot be deemed anything more than an outburst of that exalted and imaginative superstition which had become ripe in every country of Europe. The military sentiment, moreover, had then reached a pitch which demanded opportunity to spend itself." . . . "Peter the Hermit was indeed author of one Crusade, but could never have excited another. St. Bernard, who, with supercilious brevity (Ep. 363) alludes to his predecessor as an extravagant fanatic, not merely kindled the Crusade of 1148, but gave so powerful a sanction to the desire of conquering the Holy Land that, without unfairness, the luckless expeditions which occupied the next century may, in great part, be charged to his influence."—"Here we find the very substance of fanaticism quite stripped of whatever one would call fanatical, and graced too by whatever appears wise and devout. The seraphic, the politic, and the accomplished Bernard,—chief patron and mover of the madness of religious military ambition." . . . "Mohammed doubts not a moment the lawfulness of propagating the true faith by the sword;—the very same plenary conviction runs through the pages of St. Bernard. The prophet of Mecca says,

Fight for God, and he will pardon all your sins, and infallibly give you the delights of Paradise. The monk of Clairvaux, on behalf of the church, and in her name, assures to every Crusard a full remission of all sins, and the blessedness of a martyr, beyond doubt, if he fell in the holy war. To be slain, says the saint, is to benefit yourself;—to slay, is to benefit Christ! (Ep. 363. Ep. 423. Liber De Laude Novæ Militiæ, ad Milites Templi.)” Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 7.

Lo, steel-clad War his gorgeous standard rears!

The red-cross squadrons madly rage,

And mow through infancy and age;

Then kiss the sacred dust, and melt in tears.

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition* III. 2.

CXCI.—p. 211.

*Superstition can hardly exist in the mind of an individual, and certainly not in the bosom of a church, without producing the foul spirit of stern intolerance and relentless persecution.]*  
 “It was the severe remark of a Pagan historian (Ammian. Marcell. lib. 22. cap. 5) concerning the Christians of the fourth century ‘that their enmity towards each other exceeded the fury of the beasts against man.’ In the succeeding ages this evil gradually increased, till at length the unworthy professors of Christianity had universally let loose the savage spirit of persecution upon each other, without restraint, and without remorse. That charity and universal benevolence which the great Author of their religion so often enjoined, and so well exemplified in his own life and character, were by his degenerate followers either forgotten or disregarded. Varieties of opinion, which were rather nominal than real, and shades of difference which are scarcely perceptible to the acutest observer in the present age, were deemed sufficient to make void the spirit, and awful commands, of the gospel, the sacred privileges of humanity, and the tender ties of relationship. The blind fury of superstitious zeal extinguished the tenderest sentiments of nature; the majesty of the laws was trampled on and violated with impunity; the cities of the

east were deluged with blood." White, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon ii.—“The corruptions of the Jewish and Christian systems imparted a virulence to fanaticism, such as the contemporaries of Socrates and Plato would have shuddered to think of. The arrogant misanthropy of the Jew,—the relentless intolerance of the Mohammedan,—and most of all the insatiate bigotry of the papist, were forms of evil, new to the world when they severally appeared, and gave an appearance of reason to the calumnies of philosophers who affirmed that the western nations had discarded the ancient mythology to their cost.” Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 4.

## CXVII.—p. 211.

*Superstition has invariably appeared, not only as the firmly, but as the most productive source, of spiritual despotism, &c.* “Fear holds the first place among the passions excited by the idea of unseen power. Fear has at once a more extensive operation, and a stronger power, where it does operate, than any other religious emotion. Hence it will be generally true that the religion which in its doctrines and usages is the most superstitious, will be the one that throws the greatest authority into the hands of the clergy. Other kinds of religious excitement affect certain tempers only; but there are very few minds that, while a dark superstition prevails around them, can entirely free themselves from its terrors. The most profane and the most sceptical, the rudest and the most philosophic spirits, have been seen at times subdued by religious fears, and so yielding themselves to the guidance of the priest. As well the mummeries as the solemnities of an elaborate superstition subserve the purposes of spiritual domination.....An enthusiastic religion, or a fanatical one may also [i. e. as well as a superstitious one] become a fit engine of ghostly tyranny; but yet in a far less complete manner. Superstition enfeebles its victims; enthusiasm, and still more fanaticism, imparts to them a factitious strength; and therefore the priest has something personally to fear in availing himself of the force they yield: the fanaticism of

the people can promote his ends only so long as he has the skill to direct it; his skill failing, it may rend himself. The priest of superstition rides an ass; the priest of fanaticism a tiger." Taylor, *Spiritual Despotism*, sect. 2. — "Our Lord's mode of popular instruction shews clearly what is supposed and expected on the part of man in listening to divine teaching.....The apostles, in like manner, not only appeal in particular instances to the good sense of their followers, but manifestly presuppose its competency to the management of religious as well as secular affairs. 'I speak as unto wise men; judge ye what I say.'.....But despotism speaks a very different language; and it is its characteristic to leave no room for discretion; it will push law and precept into every corner of life, and obtrude specific directions where common reason and ordinary motives need no aid. Despotism grudges to treat men as men; but must always deal with them either as children, or as wild beasts; it will always prescribe and measure out every movement; it will pronounce upon the little as well as the great; and is not content unless it makes itself felt and heard every moment and in every place." *Ib.* sect. 4.— "So long as the great duty of Christian ministers is to teach and enforce *principles of belief*, which all are alike to enjoy and to imbibe, and which, when once received, are (at least so far as the teacher is concerned) an unalienable possession, these teachers stand upon a ground of reasonable equality with the people. But the relative position of the two parties is at once and essentially changed, when the priest pretends to have something, and something mysterious, *to bestow* from day to day as well as something *to teach*; and when he may at discretion bestow or *withhold* the inestimable and indispensable boon. This essential change of position we find to have taken place long before Constantine comes upon the stage. Spiritual despotism had already laid the broad foundation of its power when the blood of Cyprian stained the sands without the walls of Carthage."....."Every superstition, as well as that relating to the sacraments, had the same tendency to throw into the hands of the clergy a power which con-

tinually widened the interval between the people and their ministers; and in observing the rapid growth of some of these errors, it is hard to resist the belief that they were wittingly promoted and craftily sustained by the clergy, with an express view to the enlargement and consolidation of their influence. The natural growth of superstition is like ivy on the wall; but the superstitions of the early church ran like the gourd upon the ground,—and we must needs suppose that their spread was hastened by artificial means. Of this sort were—the oblations for the dead—the festivals of the martyrs—the doctrine (and the practices consequent upon it) concerning demoniacal possession,—and the principles and spirit of asceticism,—each of which, as might easily be shewn, secured for the priest, in one manner or another, a discretionary power, and a cringing reverence.” *Ib.* sect. 5.—“That complicated system of observances and superstitious notions which had reference to the condition of souls in the unseen world was an integral part of the great scheme of despotism, and was employed to sustain and extend it, in every way which the idle or well-founded fears of the people made practicable, or which their corrupt inclinations invited. The viaticum and extreme unction,—the prayers for the dead, and masses for the delivery of souls,—the intercession of saints,—the practice of canonization,—and the pronouncing of anathemas,—were all so many expressions or practical exhibitions of the invisible jurisdiction of the church.” *Ib.* sect. 7.

CXCIII.—p. 214.

*No question can remain as to its unfavourable aspect upon human happiness in this world and the next.]* On the tendency of Pagan superstition to produce misery, see Foster’s *Essay on Popular Ignorance*.—“In every man there is this duality,—a nature which must have a religion, and a nature that will not have a *pure* religion. The probable result of this antagonism must be obvious. Compromise is made between the two forces: man everywhere has a religion, but nowhere, from his own providing, has he a truly spiritual religion. His nearest approach to it is in a morbid

asceticism; his more common error is to account the observance of forms as the practice of piety. The evils which follow are not merely negative. The real pleasure inseparable from a spiritual life is lost. But this is not all. The servile comes into the place of the free. Gloom and terror, not unfrequently, in the place of light and happiness. The pleasure derived from the architecture, the music, and the pageantries connected with religion may be real, without being at all religious. The emotions of taste may be mistaken for those of piety; and a troubled conscience may find solace in the deception; but, in general, the most agreeable experience of the formalist is the relief felt when his task is done." Vaughan, *The Age and Christianity*, Lecture 6. — "Selig . . . . das Gefühl ist, freier und bewusster Weise von Gott abzuhängen, . . . . unselig das Gefühl bloss nothwendiger und unfreier Abhängigkeit." Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 14.

## CXCIV.—p. 214.

*It has nothing to give in answer to the demands of the human soul for peace and rest and solid satisfaction.]* "Superstitious men are so restless that nothing can satisfy them; they are fickle and unsteady, and sometimes resort to one remedy and sometimes to another; and indeed Satan deceives them in such a manner, that at first he holds out to them the appearance of peace and quietness, which they think that they have fully obtained, but afterwards shews them that they have not reached it, and distresses and harasses them more and more, and compels them to seek new grounds of confidence. Thus our minds cannot obtain rest and confidence but in God alone." Calvin, *Commentary on Isaiah* xix. 4.

## CXCV.—p. 215.

*All peace with God, all spiritual life and blessedness, flow into the soul, through the channel of humble and lively faith, from Him who has said, in truth and love, Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.]*

"Lord of each pang the nerves can feel,  
Hence with the dark and racking wheel.



Faith lifts the soul above this little ball !  
 While gleams of glory open round,  
 And circling choirs of angels call.  
 Canst thou, with all thy terrors crowned,  
 Hope to obscure that latent spark,  
 Destined to shine when suns are dark ?  
 Thy triumphs cease ! through every land,  
 Hark, Truth proclaims, thy triumphs cease !  
 Her heavenly form, with glowing hand,  
 Benignly points to piety and peace.  
 Flushed with youth, her looks impart  
 Each fine feeling as it flows ;  
 Her voice the echo of a heart  
 Pure as the mountain-snows :  
 Celestial transports round her play,  
 And softly, sweetly die away.  
 She smiles ! and where is now the cloud  
 That blacken'd o'er thy baleful reign ?  
 Grim darkness furls his leaden shroud,  
 Shrinking from her glance in vain.  
 Her touch unlocks the day-spring from above,  
 And lo ! it visits man with beams of light and love."

Rogers, *Ode to Superstition*, III. 3.

Since the delivery of this Lecture, my attention has been drawn to the following lines from an unknown source, probably from some poem or essay in verse which has Superstition for one of its leading subjects.—I cannot forbear transcribing them, as being so completely in harmony with the conclusion of the Lecture.

“ Thou that seekest rest,  
 First seek to know thy suffering Lord himself :  
 He is alone the way, the truth, the life ;  
 Having Him only, thou possessest all,—  
 And, destitute of Him, all else is nought.  
 Seek Him alone ; commit thy soul to Him ;  
 His providence will best appoint thy place  
 Amidst that portion of his blessed fold,  
 Best suited to his own peculiar views  
 With thee, and fitted best thy course to help.

A help if thou remain'st with single aim ;  
Though prizing thy peculiar call, as that  
Appointed by His providence to thee,  
Yet looking through it as transparent glass,  
Thine eye fix'd solely upon Him thy Lord.

Thousands of happy souls thus fixed on Him,  
Rooted and grounded in the love of Christ,  
Are found in every sect ; though mostly hid  
From casual view, yet they are quickly known  
By corresponding fruits of faith and love.

So violets spring up on every bank ;  
Though lowly, yet betrayed by sweet perfume :  
Unheeded often in full blaze of day ;  
But, in the fitful shower, or shades of eve,  
Grateful refreshing with more fragrant sweets."

## NOTES TO LECTURE VII.

CXCVI.—p. 218.

*INFIDELITY* appears as the direct contradictory of Christian faith, opposed to its existence, while Superstition is rather the contrary of that faith, capable of coexisting with it, but &c.] Both are opposed to faith,—the one being opposed to its very existence, the other opposed to its efficiency. In Mr. Trench's excellent little book, lately published, *On the Study of Words*, Lect. 5, there are some good remarks on the words 'Opposite, Contrary;' but it will be seen that I venture to differ from that writer in the choice of words here employed; regarding his 'opposite' as 'contrary,' and his 'contrary' as 'contradictory,'—and viewing both 'contrary' and 'contradictory' as 'opposites.'

CXCVII. —p. 223.

*Both may be traced to the want of active love to God and devotion to his service; both alike reveal the voluntary and sinful distance or alienation of man from his Maker.]* "Der Mensch ist ursprünglich dazu geschaffen, den sich finden lassenden Gott zu suchen, (religio activa, nicht actualis, practica) . . . Eine solche Subjectivität ist es immer, deren sich die Göttliche Offenbarung, im weitern oder engern Sinne, als ihres individuellen Mittels bedient. Die müßige aber oder leidentliche, die sich nur von Gewissen und Wahrheit verfolgen und zwingen lässt, (passiva, pathetica) ist allen Un- und Aberglaubens Ursache." Nitsch, *System der Christlichen Lehre*, § 13. Anmerk. 4.—"Sofern nämlich das sinnliche Selbst-bewusstsein von Natur schon und unwillkürlich fortfährt sich zu entwickeln, das religiöse

aber nicht auf gleicher Weise, beruht die Entwicklung des letztern auf freien Erhebungen des Menschen, welche ihm Erniedrigungen scheinen; dergestalt dass er die Scheinfreiheit vorzieht. Dieses sich Zurückhalten und Abwenden, wie überwindlich auf der einen und unausführbar auf der andern Seite es bleiben mag, hat doch eine Folge. Denn es folgt unvermeidlich daraus, dass sein träges Verharren im sinnlichen Selbstbewusstsein zu einer Lebensentwicklung führe, welche entweder mehr Unglaube, d. h. Verläugnung der Grunderkenntnisse des Geistes von Gott und der Welt, oder Aberglaube, d. i. gesetzwidrige Zersetzung und Vermischung derselben mit den Thatsachen des sinnlichen Bewusstseins ist." Ib. § 14.—

“Der Mensch *muss* religiös sein; so wie es anerkannt ist, dass es nicht in seiner Macht steht kein Gewissen zu haben. Gegen dieses *Müssen* selbst aber empört sich der egoistische Geist . . . auf zweifache Weise, indem er theils den Versuch macht, aus welchem der Unglaube, theils den, aus dem der Aberglaube hervorgeht. Nämlich in der bösen Thätigkeit der leidentlichen Frömmigkeit versucht der Mensch zunächst die Thatsachen des religiösen Gewissens ganz oder theilweise zu *verneinen* . . . , wobei ihm die Erscheinungen und die daran sich haltenden Reflexionen so zu Hülfe kommen wie es Philo . . . und das Buch d. Weisheit beschreiben. Sofern aber dennoch das Gottesbewusstsein sich aufnöthigt, springt er aus dem Unglauben in den Aberglauben über, d. h. er bestimmt sich das Göttliche als ein Menschliches, Sinnliches, Weltliches, *zersetzt* sich das Gottesgefühl in das Sinnliche, woraus dann fanatische Vorstellungen, bald knechtische, bald freche, entspringen, denen gemäss sich die Antriebe gestalten S. Rom. i. 21–25. Aus diesem verkehrten Prozesse entspringt das Heidenthum, welches zwar Religion ist, jedoch an der leidentlichen Religion sein Element, und an der thätigen *ἀγνοσία θεοῦ* (Buch d. Weisheit xiii. 1; *ἀμαθία*, Plut. de Sup.) sein Princip hat. Eine ähnliche Construction des Heidenthums s. Buch d. Weish. xiv. 11–31." Ib. § 14 Anmerk. 1.

## CXCVIII.—p. 224.

*Infidelity looks to self under one aspect, Superstition under another.*] “Read the vain reveries of ancient philosophers, of whatever sect, and see whether anything can be found in them to administer comfort to the mind, but the vain and presumptuous notion of man’s perfection. This, indeed, is at the root of every system, ancient or modern, which sets aside Divine Revelation. There are but two ways by which men can hope for the attainment of happiness:—one is, by some means of atoning for their sins, and helping their infirmities;—the other, by a reliance on their own strength and perfectibility. Every system of *Superstition* aims at the former, without any solid foundation for its support; every scheme of *Irreligion* trusts to the latter, in direct contradiction to reason and experience.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon 5.

## CXCIX.—p. 226.

“*Receives a fiction of the imagination,*” &c. . . . . “*acting upon some prejudice,*” &c.] Abercrombie *On the Moral Feelings*, part. 4.

## CC.—p. 226.

*Sometimes we find men leaning exclusively to the objective in religion. . . . . and sometimes as entirely to the subjective, &c.*] “A German historian, while speaking of the false *spirituals* who appeared after the Reformation, has said,—‘The revival of a new principle always leads to something extravagant. When the human mind is roused by great events, it hurries forward with the same boldness which it has employed in overthrowing human idols, and easily surrenders itself to ideas which violate all order.’ (Henry, Calvin’s *Leben*, ii. p. 399). We need not wonder to see that happening after a revival in the nineteenth century, which took place in the sixteenth, after the Reformation. You all know the saying of Luther, who compared human nature to an intoxicated man on horseback; he falls on the one side,—some one puts him right, and immediately he falls on the other. Mark what this comparison implies. There are two spheres in religion; the *objective*, which in-

cludes whatever is *without* us, for example, Scripture, and the expiatory work of Christ;—and the *subjective*, which comprehends what is within us,—the work of the Spirit and regeneration. That religion may be true and saving, there must be an equilibrium between these two spheres; but whenever that equilibrium is destroyed, on the one side or the other, religion is exposed to great dangers. The Reformation establishes them in a perfect harmony. But, just as the corruption of the papacy had arisen from its being swayed to the objective side, and perverting it, the evil of the doctrines which we oppose [i. e. doctrines of spiritualistic infidelity] arises from the fact, that their authors are swayed to the subjective side, and distort it. If the subjective tendency becomes exclusive, it is a sickly tendency, a fever. The sickness arises from a want of health in the individual, from his never having been converted, or, at the very least, because his conversion was not sufficiently profound. The Me, which has not been sufficiently humbled, or sufficiently crucified, starts suddenly up, and sets itself above the Scripture of God. One falls more readily into that moral malady, if he has cultivated one faculty,—the understanding, for example,—at the expense of the others, or if one has lived in his closet away from Christian experience, or Christian life. ‘Ah,’ wrote one quite recently to us,—a pastor, who has already had some years of experience, and who went forth from our seminary,—‘let our brethren, the students, enter thoroughly into the work of the ministry,—let them attempt to persuade, to convince; and then, returning from their error, if they have given ear to the new ideas, they will clearly see, that for doing good they have no more powerful weapons than the Scriptures of God.’” D’Aubigné, *Three Discourses on the Authority of the Scriptures*, Discourse 3, (Tweedie’s Transl.)

CCI.—p. 227.

“*Superstition,*” it has been truly said, “*mixes and confounds divine and human causes, &c.*”] Neander, *The Emperor Julian and his Generation*.

## CCII.—p. 227.

*Both infidelity and superstition are correctly referred to ignorance as one of their producing causes.]* “An ignorant person is as obstinate in his contemptuous incredulity as he is unreasonably credulous. Any thing unlike his own narrow experience he disbelieves, if it flatters no propensity; any nursery tale is swallowed implicitly by him if it does.” Mill, *System of Logic*, book iii. chap. 25, § 3.

## CCIII.—p. 228.

*From the Spirit of Eccl.]* See Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon i.

## CCIV.—p. 230.

*‘Biblicism,’ says a modern unbeliever, ‘is the scourge of the church.’]* Francis William Newman.—“It has been said among ourselves, that the authority of Scripture is an invention posterior to primitive Christianity. This assertion is not new. Many doctors have maintained it at different periods. Allow me to quote two of them, one among the Protestants, and the other among the Catholics. Here is the first.

“In the middle of the last century, there lived in Germany a learned Protestant, whose character Madame de Stael thus delineates,—‘Original and profound, he employed words the most exact, and the most cutting; in his writings he was always animated by hostility towards the opinions which he attacked, like a huntsman who ever finds more pleasure in the chase than the capture.’ That learned man was Lessing; he is regarded by the Rationalists themselves as one of the fathers of Rationalism. How did he become so? According to Dr. Hase, himself a Rationalist, Lessing was the first in Germany to attack the divine authority of Scripture, and to pretend that Christianity is independent of the Bible. At first he wished to preserve Christianity, and to sacrifice only the Bible; but Christianity soon perished along with the Bible. The vase being broken, the life-giving water was spilt and perished. The Christian doctrines fell one after another. A learned divine [Tholuck] has given us a history of the revolution which

has been wrought in Germany, since the year 1750, in the department of theology. By degrees men have arrived at that deplorable condition in which they substitute sermons, in empty churches, upon the culture of potatoes, and other 'useful' things, for the preaching of Jesus Christ. To pretend, like Lessing, that we aim only at the authority of the Bible, but respect Christianity, is to resemble the American Indians, who cut the palm-tree close to the ground, and exclaim, 'see, the fruit remains;' and they eat. But wait a few days; the fruit is dried, the branches are dried, the entire trunk is only dried wood; and that tree which would have yielded a fruit so agreeable to you and to your children, is good for nothing but to be cut up, and cast into the fire.

"And what did Lessing do to combat the authority of the Bible? Precisely what is done now among ourselves. He said, 'It is an invention of Catholicism;' but he made that invention more recent than the time of the Gnostics,—about the era of the Council of Nice, in the year 325.

"If the Protestant Rationalists pretend that the authority of Scripture is an invention of Catholicism, see how the Roman Catholics pretend that it is an invention of Protestantism.

"The second of the Doctors whom I wish to quote to you is the Roman Catholic, Staphylus, who, when attacking the Reformation with the zeal of an apostate, put this among the maxims *invented* by the Reformation: 'Major est auctoritas Scripturæ quam Ecclesiæ'—the authority of Scripture is greater than that of the church.

"Thus, while treating of the authority of Scripture, Roman Catholics and Rationalist Protestants toss the ball between them,—neither will retain it. That authority, according to each of the two parties, is an invention of the other." D'Aubigné, *Three Discourses on the Authority of the Scriptures*, Discourse 2; in which the writer establishes the supreme authority of Scripture in matters of faith by reference to the testimony of men, after having established it in Discourse 1 by reference to the testimony of God. In Discourse 3 he appeals to the testimony of History.



CCV.—p. 232.

“*It is most remarkable,*” says a *Christian advocate*, &c.] “Doubts...have been frequently insinuated respecting the purity of their motives [the motives of the Reformers]; and in a contest where passion and prejudice had on both sides much room to operate, it is hardly to be expected that the portraits of the principal actors in the scene should be transmitted to us without some extravagant colouring. By Romish advocates we cannot wonder to find them depicted in the most disingenuous manner; while from Protestants we may sometimes apprehend a concealment of their indiscretions or misconduct. But it is most remarkable that Infidel writers seem to take peculiar pleasure in reviling their characters, and depreciating the value of their exertions. This may, perhaps, be accounted for, if we consider the nature of the contest between Christians and unbelievers. When men are desirous of overthrowing Christianity, the more they are enabled to represent it as abounding with absurdities and superstitions, the greater is the probability of their bringing it into discredit. But, without such an advantage, it is scarcely in the power of Infidels to hold it up as an object of contempt. This seems to be the most probable cause that can be assigned of the rancorous treatment which the Protestant Reformation has experienced from deistical writers. From this circumstance, therefore, we may form some estimate of its real importance to the support of Christianity itself; since our adversaries, who are ever intent upon the destruction of Christianity, are generally more quick-sighted in discerning what is really favourable or inimical to the success of their plans, than those who are ‘at ease in Zion,’ or indifferent as to what concerns its safety.” Bp. Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*, Sermon viii.

“The infidel writers, who usually affect extraordinary moderation in every thing but religious concerns, have rashly followed the Papists in questioning the purity of the Reformer’s [Luther’s] motives.....Unbelievers and sceptics do their utmost in every way to exclude God and his Christ from being supposed to exercise any superintending

influence over those great events which prove favourable to the propagation and establishment of pure religion; and when, for private reasons, they do not choose to speak plainly, they usually shelter themselves under equivocal and ironical expressions, and try to wound the gospel of Jesus by depreciating his most distinguished servants. Thus pride, opposition, singularity, self-interest, ambition, enthusiasm, have been insinuated to the unsuspecting minds of many readers as the ruling motive of the Saxon Reformer." Dean Milner, *Preface to vol. iv. of Milner's History of the Church of Christ.*

## CCVI.—p. 234.

*This is the battle which was fought at the time of the Reformation in the cause of God and of his truth.*] "Die neu entdeckte und neu verstandene Herrlichkeit des Alterthums, und die daran sich emporrichtende Nationalliteratur Italiens, fesselte mit ihrem Zauber die Geister, welche, mit Sinn für das natürlich Einfache und für das Edle der Form erfüllt, die unförmliche Theologie verächtlich von sich stiessen. Neben dem Aberglauben und der gesetzlichen Heiligung erhob sich ein Unglaube, offener oder versteckter, begleitet von einer alle Zügel zerreisenden Unsittlichkeit. Luther, ein Evangelist mit dem Geiste des Paulus, war genöthigt, der jüdischen und der heidnischen Abirrung das lautere Christenthum entgegen zu halten. Gegen jene kehrte er die Rechtfertigung durch den Glauben, das allgemeine Priesterthum der Gläubigen und ihre Gemeinschaft als gleich der wahren Kirche; gegen diese die Unzulänglichkeit der Vernunft und den Ernst des Gesetzes; gegen beide die Vereinigung der göttlichen Offenbarung in der heiligen Schrift mit der menschlichen Vernunft." Jacobi, *Heidenthum, Judenthum, und Irvingianismus*, Deutsche Zeitschrift, N<sup>o</sup> 6.

## CCVII.—p. 235.

*It is seeking "quietly to insinuate itself," &c.*] M<sup>c</sup> Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, Illustrative note.

## CCVIII.—p. 236.

*Infidelity and Superstition ..... produce and cherish each other.*] “Superstition and Infidelity have often been contrasted; but it is important to observe carefully their points of contact, and even of coincidence: for they have a common origin, and produce similar results; they are of their father the devil, and the work of their father they do (John viii. 44). It is not simply by reaction that Superstition and Infidelity produce each other, so that the blind devotee, when light breaks in upon his mind, rushes to the opposite extreme of absolute unbelief, or the audacious infidel yields himself up to the most abject spiritual bondage; but these principles act upon each other as cause and effect. The carnal indifference of one age produces the voluntary humility and will-worship of the next, but neither come from God; for asceticism is not piety, nor is superstition faith; and in both instances the carnal mind was seeking rest by a way of its own instead of the way of God’s appointment. The very same state of mind which rejects the righteousness of God goes about to establish its own, substituting religious formalism for spiritual life: but formalism without life is not only not of God, but is the most subtle shape which spiritual delusion can assume; for it satisfies the conscience with the semblance of godliness, and consecrates the self-indulgent habits of the world, after exacting from them the propitiatory sacrifice of some acts of external mortification.” Bp. Shirley, *Bampton Lectures*, Sermon i.

## CCIX.—p. 237.

*In this state of mind, men are an easy prey to whatever appropriate superstition may present itself, &c.*] Thus Julian, while he renounced Christianity, appears to have been more or less sincerely devoted to pagan superstition. Gibbon says, “A devout and sincere attachment for the gods of Athens and Rome constituted the ruling passion of Julian; the powers of an enlightened understanding were betrayed and corrupted by the influence of superstitious prejudice; and the phantoms which existed only in

the mind of the emperor had a real and pernicious effect on the government of the empire..... The theological system of Julian appears to have contained the sublime and important principles of natural religion. But as the faith which is not founded on revelation must remain destitute of any firm assurance, the disciple of Plato imprudently relapsed into the habits of vulgar superstition; and the popular and philosophic notion of the Deity seems to have been confounded in the practice, the writings, and even in the mind, of Julian." *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chap. 23.

CCX.—p. 239.

"*The extreme of scepticism is sure to lead into the central regions of mysticism, &c.*" ] Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part i. chap. 3. sect. 1.

CCXI.—p. 239.

*Now again, as at other periods in the history of mankind, speculative unbelief has paved the way for superstitious extravagance and evil.*] "Amongst creatures naturally formed for religion, yet so much under the power of imagination, so apt to deceive themselves, and so liable to be deceived by others, as men are, superstition is an evil which can never be out of sight. But even against this, true religion is a great security; and the only one. True religion takes up that place in the mind, which superstition would usurp, and so leaves little room for it; and likewise lays us under the strongest obligations to oppose it. On the contrary, the danger of superstition cannot but be increased by the prevalence of irreligion: and by its general prevalence the evil will be unavoidable. For the common people, wanting a religion, will of course take up with almost any superstition which is thrown in their way: and, in process of time, amidst the infinite vicissitudes of the political world, the leaders of parties will certainly be able to serve themselves of that superstition, whatever it be, which is getting ground; and will not fail to carry it on to the utmost length their occasions require. The general nature

of the thing shews this; and history and fact confirm it. But what brings the observation home to ourselves is, that the great superstition of which this nation, in particular, has reason to be afraid, is imminent; and the ways in which it may, very supposably, be overwhelmed by it, obvious. It is therefore wonderful, those people who seem to think there is but one evil in life, that of superstition, should not see that athéism and profaneness must be the introduction of it. So that in every view of things, and upon all accounts, irreligion is at present our chief danger." Bp. Butler, *Sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel*, (February 16, 1738-9.)

"And how soon may a revulsion take place [i. e. from disbelief to superstition]! How soon, after the hour of exhaustion has gone by, may the pleasurable excitements of high belief and of unbounded confidence be eagerly courted!—courted by the vulgar in compliance with its relish of whatever is pungent and intense; courted by the noble as a means, or as a pretext, of power; courted by the frivolous as a relief from lassitude; and by the profound and thoughtful, as the proper element of minds of that order." Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 1. (A remarkable passage, considered as having been published nearly twenty years ago, A. D. 1833, and viewed in connection with events which have since transpired.)

Of Romanism it has been more recently remarked, that "its absurder beliefs have become incompatible with advanced knowledge; its more despotic assumptions with rational freedom;—and were it not for the craving vacuum in the public mind which infidelity is continually creating for superstition to fill, and into which popery is fitfully rushing, like steam into the condenser of an engine, again and again to be annihilated, and again and again to flow in, its day, in at least the more enlightened portion of the empire, would not be long." Hugh Miller, *First Impressions of England and its People*, chap. 8.

CCXII.—p. 240.

"Nothing," it has been said, &c.] Dr. Vaughan, *The Age and Christianity*, Lecture iii.

CCXIII.—p. 240.

*Superstition conducts to infidelity.*] See Coleridge, *Allegoric Vision*, in the Introduction to a Lay Sermon on the words “Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.”

CCXIV.—p. 240.

*The existence of superstition even involves that of infidelity, more or less latent and in a greater or smaller degree.*] It has been truly observed by Neander, in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Philippians that, “in all superstition there is ever an element of unbelief; for that aspiration of the spirit is wanting which alone is able to raise itself to the supramundane and the divine. And in all unbelief there is an element of superstition. All unbelief makes idols for itself. It seeks in the appearances and powers of the world that which can be found only in God and in the power of God. What Paul says of the idolatry of the things of the world is true also of it—it becomes the servant of the elements of the world.”

“Unquestioning credulity, and a superstition which, like that of the Athenians, would receive even an ‘unknown God,’ for fear of rejecting anything which might possibly ‘be called God or be worshipped,’ is consistent with entire neglect of ‘the law and the testimony’ of God, and with all but an open rejection of its authority. Nor is what is called ‘implicit faith’ merely consistent with practical infidelity, but, so far as it is a blind submission to human teaching on divine subjects instead of referring all to the revealed word of God, it is the very essence of unbelief, for it trusts man rather than God.” . . . “An unenquiring submission to ecclesiastical authority is usually little more than the refuge of scepticism or indifference, despairing of making its way to divine truth through a host of difficulties, or satisfied for the sake of peace to give up the investigation and yield a passive assent to the teaching of others; but in neither case is there faith in God.” Bp. Shirley, *Bampton Lectures*, Serm. i.

CCXV.—p. 241.

*A fact long since observed, and stated, by Plutarch.*] Plu-

tarch, having said ὁ ἄθεος δεισιδαιμονίας οὐδαμῇ συναίτιος, (a position which can by no means be accepted as entirely correct,) goes on to observe truly, ἡ δὲ δεισιδαιμονία τῇ ἀθεότητι καὶ γένεσθαι παρέσχευ ἀρχὴν, καὶ γενομένη δίδωσιν ἀπολογισμόν, οὐκ ἀληθῆ μὲν οὐδὲ καλὴν, προφάσεως δέ τιος οὐκ ἄμοιραν οὔσαν. Οὐ γὰρ ἐν οὐρανῷ τι μεμπτόν, οὐδ' ἐν ἄστροις, οὐδ' ἐν ὥραις, ἢ περιόδοις σελήνης ἢ κινήσεσιν ἡλίου περὶ γῆν, ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς δημιουργοῖς, ἢ τροφαῖς ζώων, ἢ καρπῶν γενέσεσι πλημμελὲς καὶ ἄτακτα ἐνιδόντες, οὕτως ἀθεότητα τοῦ παντὸς κατέγνωσαν. Ἄλλὰ τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας ἔργα καὶ πάθη καταγέλαστα, καὶ ῥήματα, καὶ κινήματα, καὶ γοητεῖαι, καὶ μαγεῖαι, καὶ περιδρομαί, καὶ τυμπανισμοί, καὶ ἀκάθαρτοι μὲν καθαρμοί, ῥυπαρὰ δὲ ἀγνεῖαι, βάρβαροι δὲ καὶ παρανόμοι πρὸς ἱεροῖς κολασμοί καὶ προπηλακισμοί ταῦτα δίδωσιν ἐνίοις λέγειν, ὡς μὴ εἶναι θεοὺς ἄμεινον, ἢ εἶναι, τοιαῦτα μὲν δεχομένους, τοιούτοις δὲ χαίροντας, οὕτω δὲ ὑβριστὰς, οὕτω δὲ μικρολόγους, καὶ μικρολύπους.—Περὶ δεισιδαιμονίας, § 12.—The following passages from the same treatise are especially worthy of remark in connection with the subject of these Lectures. Ἡ μὲν ἀθεότης, ἀπάθεια πρὸς τὸ θεῖόν ἐστι, μὴ νοοῦσα τὸ ἀγαθόν· ἡ δὲ δεισιδαιμονία, πολυπάθεια, κακὸν τὸ ἀγαθὸν ὑπονοοῦσα· φοβοῦνται τοὺς θεοὺς, καὶ καταφεύγουσιν ἐπὶ τοὺς θεοὺς· κολακεύουσιν καὶ λαιδοροοῦσιν, εὐχονται καὶ καταμέμφονται, § 6.—Τί σὺ λέγεις; ὁ μὴ νομίζων θεοὺς εἶναι ἀνόσιός ἐστι; ὁ δὲ τοιούτους νομίζων ὄλος οἱ δεισιδαίμονες, οὐ μακρῶ δόξαις ἀνοσιωτέραις συνέστιν; § 9.—Οὐκ οἶται θεοὺς εἶναι ὁ ἄθεος· ὁ δὲ δεισιδαίμων οὐ βούλεται, πιστεύει δὲ ἄκων· ἀπιστεῖν γὰρ φοβεῖται, § 11.—Ἐνιοὶ φεύγοντες τὴν δεισιδαιμονίαν, ἐμπέπτουσιν εἰς ἀθεότητα τραχεῖαν καὶ ἀντίτυπον, ὑπερπηδήσαντες ἐν μέσῳ κειμένην τὴν εὐσέβειαν, § 14.

CCXVI.—p. 241.

*Epecially when a false religion grows old among a people, &c.]* “La foi à des inventions humaines peut être ferme et vive tout le temps qu’il y a proportion entre ces inventions et le degré de culture des esprits; cette époque passé, la foi s’évapore graduellement, laissant à sec, pour ainsi dire, une classe après l’autre de la société; la lie des croyances reste à la lie du peuple; les classes plus élevées sont

sceptiques ou indifférentes, et les penseurs sont fatalistes, ou athées." Vinet, *Discours*, La Foi, second Disc.

## CCXVII.—p. 242.

"When the circumstances which first favoured its formation or introduction have changed, &c."] Mc Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 5. sect. 3, Illustrative note.

## CCXVIII.—p. 242.

*In India &c.....most probably for the delusions and errors of Rome.*] "Human sagacity cannot predict what building may be raised on the ruins of ancient superstitions, among the half-civilized nations of the East; but it can certainly foretell, proceeding on the known principles of the human mind, that when infidelity has advanced a little further with its work of devastation, nature, which abhors a vacuum, will demand something positive to fill up the void. If scriptural truth does not pre-occupy the ground, it may be feared that the superstition which grew so vigorously on the debris of fallen empires in the middle ages of Europe, and which has been transplanted into the rich but wild soil of South America, and of not a few of the British colonies, may yet find its seeds taking congenial root in the heaving plains on which the superstitions of India and China are worn to decay." Mc Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, Illustrative note.

## CCXIX.—p. 245.

*If we have the sword in one hand, we must have the trowel in the other.*] "And it came to pass, from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me." Nehemiah iv. 16-18;—



Compare Tacitus, *Ann.* i. 63, 64, “Cæcinæ dubitanti quonam modo ruptos vetustate pontes reponeret, simulque propulsaret hostem, castra metari in loco placuit; ut opus et alii proelium inciperent. Barbari perfringere stationes, seque inferre munitioribus nisi, laccessunt, circumgrediuntur, occursant; miscetur operantium bellantiumque clamor; et cuncta pariter Romanis adversa.”

CCXX.—p. 248.

“*O God the King of glory,*” &c.] Collect for the Sunday after Ascension Day.

CCXXI.—p. 249.

*There are multitudes of men, in Christian lands, who continually oscillate between bold infidelity on the one hand, and abject superstition on the other.*] See M<sup>c</sup> Cosh, *Method of the Divine Government*, book i. chap. 2. sect. 5, The Alienation of Man from God.

## NOTES TO LECTURE VIII.

CCXXII.—p. 256.

*A really Christian effort to obtain a reasonable apprehension and appreciation of revealed truth.]* “Dem Rationalismus..... der verwirft was er aus blosser Vernunft nicht deduciren kann ..... können wir so wenig huldigen, als einem Supernaturalismus der auch das Streben nach einer vernünftigen Erkenntniss der geoffenbarten Lehre zurückweist.” Twisten, *Vorlesungen über die Dogmatik.* § 31 a.

CCXXIII.—p. 257.

*It is rather to be desired that the truths of revelation, so far as possible, should be, as it were, taken up by our reason, pass over into it, and mingle with it, as a new principle of inherent light and life and energy.]* Just as a truth of reason is, as it were, taken up by, or passes over into, sense. Thus, in a solar eclipse, we think that we see the dark body of the moon interposing itself between us and the sun; whereas, in fact, all that we really see is a certain portion of darkness on the sun's disc. Animals, or savages, see the same thing; but they do not perceive the reality, because they have not been informed of it by reason. As the notices of reason thus mingle with sense, so the notices of faith may mingle with reason.

CCXXIV.—p. 257.

*The use of unstable arguments, &c.]* Concerning the value of *a priori* arguments to prove the being of God, see Dr. Chalmers, *Institutes of Theology*, book ii. chap. i. § 1, 2.—See the use of the *a priori* argument in favour of revelation justly appreciated by Bishop Van Mildert, *Boyle Lectures*,

Sermon 13.—The inexpediency of resting an argument for the immortality of the soul upon its immateriality is stated by Dr. Chalmers in his *Prelections on Hill's Lectures in Divinity*, book iv. chap. ii. sect. 1.

CCXV.—p. 258.

*Some things present serious difficulties to the minds of some men, which occasion none at all to the minds of others; and these things require to be seriously met.*] For example, those geological facts which appear to be at variance with the Mosaic account of the creation, or other portions of the sacred record.—“Why do you not let these matters alone? Why do you bring them before the Christian public, distressing the minds of pious persons, and incurring the danger of shaking the faith of your weaker brethren? I am bound to acknowledge that my own breast is no stranger to the feelings involved in these queries. Scarcely can I turn out of my heart emotions approaching to envy at the tranquil state of many of my fellow Christians. Happily ignorant, exempt from perplexities and conflicts, at least on such subjects as this, they spend their blameless lives in exercises of piety, usefulness to mankind, and all the sweet enjoyments of religion; they go down to the grave in peace, and the angel of death leads their purified spirits to the perfection of heaven. Would we harass them on their pilgrimage? Far, far from it! Alas, the choice is not left with us. These subjects are not allowed to lie in concealment. They are bruited abroad. If Christians can be quiet, infidels will not be so. ‘The arrow flieth by day, and the pestilence walketh in darkness.’ Not only in books of philosophy, but in the periodical journals and common literature of the day, in this country and in others, in Europe and in America, by various phrases, covertly and openly, coarsely and politely, it is proclaimed that Cuvier has supplanted Moses, that geology has exploded Genesis. There is a class of persons who understand the scientific side of the difficulty enough to make out of it an excuse for open infidelity, or secretly cherished scepticism; and thus they are able to pacify their consciences in a cou-

temptuous neglect of the evidence and authority of religion. Do we owe no regard to these persons? Have we no sympathy for them; no consideration for the educational and other unhappy causes of their doubts? Are not their souls as precious as our own? Is not their state, before God and for eternity, as important as ours? Can we prevail upon them to unlearn their knowledge, to stifle the convictions of their judgments, or suppress the avowal of their convictions? And if we could; if they were to promise silence, and to keep the promise; would religion be served thereby? Examples have not been wanting of complimentary verbiage, with affected solemnity, offered to the Christian religion; while the fraternity of concealed unbelievers can look significantly at each other, and mutually build up their self-flattery and pride; as if they were men immeasurably superior to the vulgar, but who, to soothe prejudice, and flatter public opinion, are willing to uphold a style of conventional hypocrisy." Dr. Pye Smith, *On the Relation between the holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science*, section 8.

## CCXXVI.—p. 258.

“*To deny evidence blindly is always a dangerous thing to venture upon; for the right of denial admitted in one case may soon be applied to another.*”] “The only instance in which scientific truth now meets with opposition is, when it runs contrary to some religious theory, and enlists that strongest of passions, I mean theological animosity, against it. Geology has had to contend with a scepticism of this nature, by which many of its leading facts, and that, too, resting upon an evidence as palpable as the human reason could well require, have been rejected on the ground of their contradiction to some previous hypothesis. The motives which have given birth to such an exhibition of authoritative scepticism, we do not venture to impugn. They may have been very pure and very reverential; but quite assured are we that they have been unwise. It never seems to be imagined by those who reject evidence of a convincing nature, on the ground of some prejudication of the matter

in hand, that their own fondest and most sacred beliefs rest upon evidence of the very same kind.

“I will suppose, for example, that a man rejects the antiquity of the crust of the earth, on the plea (though a false one) that it contradicts the Mosaic cosmogony. On what ground, we would ask, does he accept and hold so firmly the truth of the Pentateuch? His faith in it must rest primarily upon testimony borne to certain facts, and then be confirmed by conclusions, drawn by processes of reasoning, from the facts presented. But this is precisely the evidence which the geologist brings to establish the principles he asserts. He presents, first of all, facts of which he himself and others have been eye-witnesses; from these facts he draws, *with great caution*, certain conclusions; and then, on the ground of the truth of the testimony, and the validity of the reasoning which builds itself upon it, he summons the belief of mankind. On what plea, then, does any man admit the evidence in the one case, and reject it in the other; or, if he repudiates the conclusion of the geologist, how can he complain if another repudiates that of the theologian? We see not that there is any superior clearness and certainty, either with regard to the facts themselves or the reasoning based upon them, in the first case than there is in the second. To deny evidence blindly is always a dangerous thing to venture upon, for the right of denial admitted in one case may soon be applied to another; and the mistaken zeal of saving a theological truth, at the expense of a philosophical one, may end in involving both in a common doubt or destruction. When unquestionable evidence asserts two facts apparently contradictory, we must await a fresh apocalypse, natural or divine, to point out their reconciliation. Opposition to scientific conclusions, however, on religious grounds, is fast wearing away; men are beginning to see that the same evidence cannot be regarded as a shadow in the one instance, and a substance in the other.” Morell, *History of Modern Philosophy*, part iii. chap. 9. sect. 3.

## CCXXVII.—p. 258.

*Place no undue reliance on merely argumentative and historical, or, as they are commonly called, external evidences.]* “The argumentative mode of addressing unbelievers, and a reliance on external evidence, has hitherto failed. Many of the most learned and able men of modern times, who were capable of understanding the historical, logical, and metaphysical defences of Christianity, have read them without conviction, and laughed at their laborious imbecility.” —“To mere human reason and human learning the infidel is ever ready to oppose weapons from the same armoury. His heart must be pierced with the two-edged sword of the Spirit, before he will surrender to Faith the citadel of his own reason.” Knox, *Christian Philosophy*, sections 14, 59.

## CCXXVIII.—p. 259.

*Our best confutation of error lies in a disclosure and establishment of the opposite truth. We do well to search for the remote causes of error, rather than simply to combat or deny the error itself, &c.]* “We may learn from St. John what is the purest, noblest form of Christian polemics; it is that which contends against its opposite rather by means of the power attending a disclosure of the truth in its beauty than by positive assault; and this accomplishes much more than is effected by the latter method, because positive attacks generally call forth and embitter what is sinful in man, while the mere unveiling of the truth makes common cause with what is good in the hearts of the adversaries themselves, and thus enlists them among its friends and defenders.” Olshausen, *Introduction to Commentary on the Gospel according to St. John*.—“St. John recognises and fully allows the existence of a true divine  $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$ , such as that for which the eastern philosophy was in vain seeking by mere human means, and through the exaltation of the intellect. It is by dwelling upon and encouraging men to follow after the true Christian  $\gamma\upsilon\omega\sigma\iota\varsigma$  that St. John seeks to supply those wants of the more philosophic mind which led so many while they professed to be following the simple

gospel to wander quite away from it amid the misty speculations of heresy and heathenism. Thus he does not meet these errors by mere protest or denial, by seeking to chain men's minds down when they wish to soar. He knows that, as truth is certainly more in itself to be loved than error, so every error into which men fall is only attractive because it bears resemblance to a truth; for no one would follow its treacherous glare unless he mistook it for a cheering light which was to refresh and comfort him: and therefore the only way to stop men's mad pursuit of it is to set before them the true light, not to exhort them to remain contented in the darkness." Dr. Tait, *Suggestions to the Theological Student*, Discourse i.; (with reference to Lücke's Commentary on St. John's Gospel).

## CCXXIX.—p. 261.

[*All the appliances of learning and of science.*] Against Superstition no less than against Infidelity.—“*Veræ et genuinæ philosophiæ studium ad ejiciendam ex animo superstitionem plurimum conferre, non temere quis, nisi expertus fuerit omnis philosophiæ, dubitaverit. Credulitati enim, similibusque intellectus vitiis, medebitur logica; quippe ejus hocce est proprium munus. Morbos enim istos intellectus non tantum designat, sed eorum etiam fœditatem demonstrat, et rationem ab iis se liberandi ostendit. Philosophia moralis, uti de reliquis affectibus, ita et de avaritia, metu inconsulto, et intempestiva curiositate nos erudit, et quanto studio hæc omnia, ne miseros nos reddant, fugienda sint, nos conducet. Physica autem, seu naturalium rerum scientia, id efficit, ut evidenter intelligamus, falli magnopere homines superstitiosos dum inter causas quasdam et effectus nexum sibi fingunt, qui revera non tantum non est, sed nec esse potest; stolidæque adeo et insipienter eos agere, qui sibi ab aliis ea persuaderi patiuntur, quæ non tantum non sunt, sed nec esse possunt.*” Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 10. § 4, not.—“*Philosophia naturalis, post verbum Dei, certissima superstitionis medicina est; eademque probatissimum fidei alimentum. Itaque merito religioni donatur tanquam fidis-*

sima ancilla ; cum altera voluntatem Dei, altera potestatem, manifestet." Bacon, *Novum Organon*, Aph. 89.

CCXXX.—p. 261.

*How great the work in this department which is still left to be achieved, and how urgent the necessity for its accomplishment!*] "We reject the learning which is made the mistress of the Scriptures of God, but we invoke that which is their servant. We see great miseries for the church if we abandon the one or the other of these elements, learning or faith. Now, more than ever, a true scriptural learning is necessary to combat subtle errors, and incessantly lead back the church to the primitive sources of life." D'Aubigné. *Three Discourses on the Authority of the Scriptures*, Disc. 3.

CCXXXI.—p. 262.

*The very faculty and opportunities of sound critical investigation are to be regarded, and reverently employed, as an especial gift of God.*] Speaking of a passage in St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, the meaning of which has been a subject of dispute, Neander says,—“Here it is essential to investigate the original form of St. Paul's words, which has been corrupted by the interpolated attempts at explanation, which, through misunderstanding, have been received into the text as if they were component parts of his own expressions. It has not been the design of Divine wisdom that such corruptions should be averted, in the lapse of centuries, by a series of miracles, or by the authority of a visible church enjoying the power of infallible guidance ; but, while natural causes have been here left to their course, so that such adulterations might, through misunderstanding, gain free scope, the impulse was thereby given to independent investigation, to the development of all the faculties of the understanding in their functions of examining and distinguishing, in order that we might learn, through a spirit of examination exercised under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and by the cultivation and application of that discipline which is grounded in the nature of the human mind, and which we designate by the



name of criticism, to distinguish the true from the false, and, by comparison, discover the original form of apostolic words. Criticism, when guided and animated by the Holy Spirit, should be regarded as belonging to the spiritual gifts of the church." Neander, *Commentary on Philippians* iii. 16. (Napier's Transl.)—"If there were no need for rigorous criticism, no reward for acute philology, no scope for philosophical inquiry, in the study of the Bible, —if the text were uniform, the diction simple, and the connection obvious, we might neglect the consecration of our entire faculties to divine ends; while, as it is, we find in the human form, and the natural transmission, of the sacred volume, the noblest field for our labours. The difficulties of Scripture are thus useful intellectually." Westcott, *Elements of the Gospel Harmony*, chap. 5.

CCXXXII.—p. 263.

*We must discriminate accurately between things divine and human; and fix precisely the limits and domain of faith.]*

"At corruptio philosophiæ ex superstitione, et theologia admista, latius omnino patet, et plurimum mali infert, aut in philosophias integras, aut in earum partes. Humanus enim intellectus non minus impressionibus phantasiæ est obnoxius, quam impressionibus vulgarij notionum. Pugna enim genus philosophiæ, et sophisticum illaqueat intellectum; et illud alterum phantasticum et tumidum, et quasi poeticum, magis blanditur intellectui. Inest enim homini quædam intellectus ambitio, non minor quam voluntatis; præsertim in ingeniis altis et elevatis.

"Hujus autem generis exemplum inter Græcos illucescit, præcipue in Pythagora, sed cum superstitione magis crassa et onerosa conjunctum; et periculosius et subtilius in Platone, atque ejus schola. Invenitur etiam hoc genus mali in partibus philosophiarum reliquarum, introducendo formas abstractas, et causas finales, et causas primas; omittendo sæpissime medias, et hujusmodi. Huic autem rei summa adhibenda est cautio. Pessima enim res est errorum apotheosis; et pro peste intellectus habenda est, si vanis accedat veneratio. Huic autem vanitati nonnulli

ex modernis summa levitate ita indulserunt, ut in primo capitulo Geneseos, et in libro Job, et aliis scripturis sacris, philosophiam naturalem fundare conati sunt; *inter viva quærentes mortua*. Tantoque magis hæc vanitas inhibenda venit, et coercenda, quia ex divinorum et humanorum malesana admistione, non solum educitur philosophia phantastica, sed etiam religio hæretica. Itaque salutare admodum est, si mente sobria fidei tantum dentur quæ fidei sunt." Bacon, *Novum Organum*, Aphorism. 65.

CCXXXIII.—p. 263.

*What need of caution and care, of intelligent reverence, and of heaven-sent wisdom have we here!*] "If Theology be that science in which man clothes in human language, and classifies under human divisions, what Revelation suggests to him of God, there must always be danger for the student lest he lay a rash human hand on the divine ark, and tread with soiled feet upon the holy ground. Whenever the divine and human are brought into close proximity, it requires no small degree of *faithful reverence* to enable us, while we *probe* and *examine*, and *test*, still to *worship* with humble adoration whatever is shewn to be divine." Dr. Tait, *Suggestions to the Theological Student*, Discourse 4; and see this whole Discourse, "On the Critical Study of the Bible."

CCXXXIV.—p. 264.

*All portions of divine revelation point to, or bear upon, Christ and his salvation.*] "Enttäuscht . . . konnte man der Wahrheit nicht länger widerstreben dass *die Bibel ihr Princip in sich selber trage* . . . Nur in ihrer Totalität hat die Bibel mehr als ein Buch, hat sie das Buch der Bücher werden können. . . . Von dieser Doppelerkenntniss aber, dass das Princip der Schrift ein ihr eigenthümliches, aus ihr selbst zu gewinnendes sey, und dass ein organisches Offenbarungsleben Gottes sich aus ihr erschliesse, glauben wir für die Zukunft der theologischen Wissenschaft die eingreifendsten und bedeutendsten Erfolge hoffen und erwarten zu dürfen . . . . Fragen wir nun aber, welches

dieses Princip sey, das die Schrift in sich selber trage, und von welchem aus ihr Lehrgehalt uns erst verständlich werde, so hat gewiss schon Luther den rechten Griff gethan, wenn er sagt 'man müsse die Schrift also führen, dass man Alles ziehe auf den Herrn Christum' (Waleh 3, 538; 4, 17); *Christus ist das Princip des Schrift*, und es ist rein unmöglich, die Schrift anders als aus der durch ihn vermittelten *Heilsoffenbarung* und dem in ihm begründeten *Heilsleben* heraus verstehen zu können. Damit ist auch jeder Versuch, die Schrift nach irgend einem philosophischen Schulbegriffe oder irgend einer speculativen Religionsidee meistern zu wollen, für die Zukunft mit aller Entschiedenheit abgelehnt. Nicht auf dem Wege *begrifflicher Entwicklung*, nicht durch das Mittel *speculativer Operationen*, sondern vermöge *thatsächlicher Offenbarung des lebendigen Gottes* ist Jesus Christus, als kein blosser Begriff und als keine blosser Idee, sondern als eine *welthistorische Person*, die freilich Alles in sich begreift und *Aller Ideen Erfüllung* ist, in der Welt erschienen, und hat die Welt *wirklich* mit Gott versöhnt und von Sünde, Tod, und Verdammnis erlöst. Das Princip der Schrift ist somit . . . nicht ein abstractes, ein *Gedankending*, sondern ein concretes, es ist *persönliches Leben*." *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrgang 1852, Erstes Heft. (Schenkel, Die Aufgabe der Biblischen Theologie in dem gegenwärtigen Entwicklungsstadium der Theologischen Wissenschaft.)

CCXXXV.—p. 264.

*The cross is the ground-plan of that magnificent structure which has been reared by means of Moses and the prophets, of evangelists and apostles.]* "Die Schrift ist ein zusammenhängender, in stetem Wachsen begriffener, aus lebendigen Glieder bestehender Organismus, der aus einem ihm zu Grunde liegenden, und selbständig innewohnenden Principe verstanden werden muss: diesen wichtigen und folgenreichen Satz in allen seinen wissenschaftlichen Consequenzen darzulegen, das ist die Hauptaufgabe, welche die biblische Theologie in nächster Zukunft zu lösen hat, und mit dessen Lösung sie der gesammten theologischen Wis-

senschaft ohne Zweifel einen grossen Dienst leisten wird. Erst so wird das alte Testament seine richtige Stellung zum neuen finden. Erst so wird die Typik und Symbolik des jüdischen Ceremonialgesetzes ihr volles religionsgeschichtliches Licht erhalten. Erst so wird das prophetische Element zum gesetzlichen in sein rechtes Verhältniss treten. Von diesem Standpuncte aus wird dem Forscher das Kleinste nicht zu klein, das Geringste nicht zu gering erscheinen. Wie an jenen mittelalterlichen Domen, deren Wunderbau unser Herz heute noch mit ehrfürchtgebietenden Staunen erfüllt, bei sorgfältiger Betrachtung auch die unbedeutendsten Verzierungen zur Vollendung des Ganzen gehören, und den Gesamteindruck erhöhen helfen, ja wie selbst die Mächte der Finsterniss die schlanken Bögen und Thürme mittragen helfen müssen: so dient auch im Wunderbau der h. Schrift das Kleinste wieder dem Grössten, und die finsternen Gewalten, deren Daseyn und Machtäusserung die Schrift uns enthüllt, sind nur die unfreiwilligen Werkzeuge die zur Verherrlichung *dessen* mitbeitragen müssen, in dem Gott der Welt geschaffen und durch den er sie erlöst hat, um sie einst zum vollendeten Tempel seines himmlischen Reiches auszubauen. Und wie die Grundform jener alten Dome in der Regel das Kreuz ist, das im himmelanragenden Thurme gleichsam seine Erhöhung und Verklärung feiert, so ist auch das Kreuz der Versöhnung, die in der Person des Weltheilandes vollzogen ist, die Grundform der h. Schrift; und nun nachzuweisen, wie von der weitesten Peripherie aus alle Radien der Schrift offenbarung in dieses *Centrum* auslaufen, wie in dieser Thatsache sich *Alles* erfüllt und von ihr aus sich *Alles* verklärt, das ist die höchste Aufgabe für die künftigen biblischen Theologen." *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, Jahrgang 1852, Erstes Heft. (Schenkel, Die Aufgabe der Biblischen Theologie, &c.)

CCXXXVI.—p. 268.

*That "congregation of faithful men," &c.] "Of the Church. The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure Word of God is*

preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

“As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of ceremonies, but also in matters of faith.” Article XIX. of the Church of England.

CCXXXVII.—p. 270.

*Essential, spiritual unity, arising from real union with Christ, and existing together with circumstantial diversities of form and ceremonial.]* “He which affirmeth speech to be necessary among all men throughout the world, doth not thereby import that all men must necessarily speak one kind of language. Even so the necessity of polity and regiment in all churches may be held without holding any one certain form to be necessary in them all.” Hooker, *Eccl. Pol.* book iii. chap. 2. § 1.—“The one Saviour will be worshipped, and his doctrines apprehended, in many varying ways, by men of different natural dispositions and in different circumstances; and to allow room for such varieties is absolutely necessary if we would have any real unity of heartfelt, earnest piety.” Dr. Tait, *Suggestions to the Theological Student*, Discourse ii.; and see this whole Discourse, ‘Variety in Unity,’ with its extract from Jeremy Taylor’s *Liberty of Prophesying*.—“All would be well, if the simple principle could be remembered,—That although the perfection of knowledge in matters of religion is an object of the most worthy ambition to every Christian for himself, something immensely less than the perfection of religious knowledge is all we are entitled to demand from others as the condition of holding with them Christian fellowship.” Taylor, *Fanaticism*, sect. 8.—See Bacon, *Of Church Controversies*, and *Of the Pacification of the Church*.

CCXXXVIII.—p. 270.

*Even the different degrees or phases of religious knowledge and spiritual life in the same individuals.]* This is practically acknowledged, by the readiness, for example, with

which we receive into our own church any individual who has been convinced of previously cherished error, and who renounces it by abandoning the community in which such error has been taught. And it is right that individuals, while in error, should have the liberty of professing their imperfect or mistaken creed, provided that this profession be not blasphemous, or such as to interfere with the peace and good order of society.

## CCXXXIX.—p. 273.

*Laws, institutions, ordinances, however excellent or well-established, cannot of themselves produce any positive benefit apart from the personal character of those among whom they exist.*] “*Quid leges sine moribus Vanæ proficiunt?*” Hor. *Carm.*, lib. iii. *carm.* 24. vv. 75, 76.

## CCXL.—p. 273.

*Our duty is to use our efforts for imparting sound Christian knowledge, &c.*] “*Domine, tremenda sunt judicia tua, quoniam veritas tua nec mea est, nec illius aut illius, sed omnium nostrum, quos ad ejus communionem publice vocas, terribiliter admonens nos, ut nolimus eam habere privatam, ne privemur ea. Namquis quis id, quod tu omnibus ad fruendum proponis, sibi proprie vindicat, et suum vult esse quod omnium est, a communi propellitur ad sua, hoc est, a veritate ad mendacium.*” Augustin. *Confess.* lib. xii. *cap.* 25.

## CCXLI.—p. 275.

*To “make men in love with the lesson, and not with the teacher.”*] “*Doctrine should be such as should make men in love with the lesson, and not with the teacher; being directed to the auditor’s benefit, and not to the author’s commendation.*” Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, book 2.

## CCXLII.—p. 275.

*“He has his pulpit in heaven who preaches to the heart.”*] “*Jam hic videte magnum sacramentum, fratres. Magisteria forinsecus adjutoria quædam sunt et admonitiones; cathedram in celo habet qui corda docet.*” Augustin., *Tract.* 3. *in 1 Joan.*

## CCXLIII.—p. 278.

*When ignorance on common subjects prevails, &c.]* See Foster's *Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance*.—"The human mind cannot remain in a state of indifference, with regard either to opinion or practice. 'Tis of an active nature; and, like a fertile field, if by due cultivation it be not made to produce good fruit, will certainly spring up in tares and thistles. Impressions, opinions, prejudices, of one kind or other, a child will inevitably contract from the things and persons that surround him. And if rational habits and opinions be not infused, in order to anticipate absurdities, absurdities will rise and anticipate all rational habits and opinions." Brown, *Essays on the Characteristics, &c.*, Essay 2.

## CCXLIV.—p. 279.

*We cannot educate for this world rightly, unless at the same time we are training up a child in the way in which he ought to go in order to enter upon a state of endless felicity when this world shall be to him no more.]* It has been well said, in a recent number of the *Edinburgh Review*, "Man is not a moral and intellectual being merely; he is a religious being also; and any system of instruction which overlooks this fact, or passes by any one of these three fundamental attributes of man's nature, is not only defective *quoad* such omission, but faulty. An exclusively intellectual education leads, by a very obvious process, to hard-heartedness, and the contempt of all moral influences. An exclusively moral education tends to fatuity, by the over-excitement of the sensibilities. An exclusively religious education ends in insanity, if it do not take a directly opposite course and lead to atheism. Whatever education therefore is offered to the people, and by whomsoever communicated, must, to effect a good purpose, provide for the culture of all these three principles; and certainly the religious principle is to the full as important as either the intellectual or the moral." *Edin. Rev.*, N<sup>o</sup> 194, April, 1852.

## CCXLV.—p. 280.

*Let the church be thoroughly assured that if she be not faithfully employed in working with good moral effect upon*

*the world, the world will operate with bad moral effect upon herself.]* “Wenn wir darauf verzichten sittlich auf die Welt zu wirken, so verzichtet die Welt darum nicht auf uns zu wirken; eine völlig neutrale Stellung ist im sittlichen Leben nicht möglich, und die Welt wird frühe genug Jeden, der sich in ihr bewegt, ihren Einfluss fühlen lassen.” Gelzer, *Religion im Leben*.

CCXLVI.—p. 284.

*Take care that the errors which you reject are rejected, not from ignorance, but from knowledge.]* “I exceedingly doubt whether the superannuation of sundry superstitious fancies be the result of any real diffusion of sound thinking in the nation at large..... The exit of two or three superstitions, e. g. astrology, is no more a proof of the entry of good sense, than the strangling of a despot at Algiers or Constantinople is a symptom of freedom..... As many errors are despised by men from ignorance as from knowledge.” Coleridge, *Statesman's Manual*, Appendix B.

CCXLVII.—p. 285.

*Lest a repudiation of superstitious dogmas or practices on insufficient grounds should lead you to infidelity.]* “If, instead of believing that we are to seek Christ at Jerusalem, or at Loretto, or at Compostella, or at Glastonbury, we take up with the belief that He is nowhere, our gain will be small indeed, less than our loss: for it were far better to believe that we may find access to God somewhere upon earth, than that we can find it nowhere. If we seek Him somewhere, although it be far off, we may at length find out that He is near at hand, whereas if we seek Him nowhere, we shall never find Him. Much care is always needed lest, in casting off the superstitious observance of the types that have passed away, we also reject the sacred realities which were shadowed forth in them.” Hare, *Judgment of the Queen of Sheba*.

CCXLVIII.—p. 285.

*The energy of practical personal piety.]* “It is a general law of our nature that, while every power, the legitimate



exercise of which is followed by a corresponding action, is strengthened thereby, on the other hand every power which is checked in this its appropriate manifestation is weakened and gradually deadened. A tree that has been blighted spring after spring ceases even to bud. A conviction that has failed of producing acts conformable to it becomes less convincing every time it is appealed to: experience establishes its nullity. And as this must be the effect of such a notion on individuals, so, as was again proved in the last century, will it spread a chill and numbness through the body of the Church. They who believe only with the understanding soon cease almost to believe at all. Even the knowledge, which is only the knowledge of the understanding, dwindles and sickens and shrivels." Hare, *The Victory of Faith*, Sermon iii., Office and Province of Faith.

CCXLIX.—p. 286.

*There must be a habit of godliness as well as a study of religion,—a cherishing of the truth within the heart, &c.]* "Ex Scriptura autem dum remedia contra superstitionem petenda contendimus, de *legitima ejus* hoc intelligimus *tractatione*; ut aliquis eam diligentia debita non tantum legat, sed et scrutetur, verumque ejus ac genuinum sensum investiget, tum cuncta rite ad se ipsum transferat, et hac ratione ad pœnitentiam et fidem, et per fidem ad sincerum Numinis amorem, perducat. Quod fieri non posse, nisi preces devotas et ardentissimas cum ista tractatione jungat, obsequiumque doctrinæ cœlesti præbere paratus sit, nemo non intelligit. Hoc enim si non faciet, sed existimet, externam verbi tractationem sine attentione, sine seria applicatione, sine precibus, sibi profuturam, speratum non tantum inde non referet fructum, sed potius hoc ipso superstitionis se reum faciet." Buddeus, *De Atheismo et Superstitione*, cap. 10. § 4. not.—"In referring to and studying the Scriptures, though no infallible interpreter is to be found or hoped for,—no system of general directions that will absolutely secure us against mistake; yet there are two maxims especially . . . which, studiously dwelt upon, and perpetually recalled to our thoughts, will prove a safe-

guard against many and various errors.—The one is, to remember that in studying the Scriptures we are consulting the Spirit of *Truth*; and therefore must, if we would hope for His aid, search honestly and earnestly *for the truth*, not for a confirmation of our pre-conceived notions, or a justification of the system, or the practice, to which we may be inclined. This maxim is the more frequently transgressed, from men's falsely persuading themselves that they *have* complied with it: the conclusions which they arrive at, they, of course, believe to be true; and thence, from their having, as they suppose, *found* truth, they take for granted that it was for truth they were *seeking*. But, a desire to have Scripture on our side is one thing; and a sincere desire to be on the side of Scripture is another.—And, finally, in combination with this rule, we should also keep constantly in mind that of seeking in Scripture not only for truth, but for *practical* truth, with a view to the improvement of our life and heart: this is an express condition on which spiritual aid in enlightening the understanding is promised: 'if any man will *do* the will of God, he shall *know* of the doctrine.' We must seek therefore in the Scriptures, by the aid of Him who gave them, not for speculative knowledge respecting the intrinsic nature of God, or of the human soul, but for practical knowledge concerning the relations existing between God and the soul of man, that we may be enabled to serve and please Him the better; and that 'the inspiration of his Holy Spirit may cleanse the thoughts of our hearts,' and fit us for enjoying the more immediate presence of our Master in his triumphant kingdom. 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed belong unto us and our children for ever, that we may *do* all the words of this law.'" Abp. Whately, *Essays on some of the Difficulties in the Writings of St. Paul and in other parts of the New Testament*, Essay ix. § 9.

CCL.—p. 286.

*Increasing in purity, intensity, and power.*] "For the use a man makes of his talents he is deeply responsible; and

he is placed in such a scene of trial and probation as that moral good or evil will assuredly result from their cultivation, their neglect, or their abuse. It is not permitted to him to rest satisfied with any measure of intellectual attainment, social good, relative duty, gentlemanlike feeling, or moral influence, while there remains an attainable point in advance upon any one or upon all of these routes,—while there can yet be found upon earth one individual to instruct, to comfort, to protect, to please, or to improve, —or while there exists virtue to love and to esteem, a God to serve and to obey, or a future state of rewards and punishments.” Newnham, *Body and Mind*.—It has been observed by Neander (*Deutsche Zeitschrift*, Jan. 1850) that the middle of the present century finds the germs of both good and evil extensively at work; and that we await a decisive conflict between two great principles,—the principle of Christianity, and the principle of the licentious deification of self and the world. Let each individual look forward to the new era, says he, “mit dem Entschlusse sich von neuem ganz dem Herrn zu weihen, der Zucht und Leitung seines Geistes sich immer mehr hinzugeben, und von allem Selbstischen, wodurch Diejenigen von einander getrennt werden die zusammen kämpfen und wirken sollten für die gemeinsame heilige Sache, und wodurch das Werk Gottes in ihnen selbst immer mehr getrübt wird, in fortschreitendem Läuterungsprocess gereinigt zu werden.”

THE END.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

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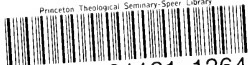
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