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POSTHUMOUS WORKS

OF

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# INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY

BY THE LATE

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

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INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY.

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SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.



# SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

## PART II.

### ON THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.

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#### CHAPTER I.

ON CERTAIN PRECURSORY REASONINGS IN USE AMONG THEOLOGIANs, WHEN THEY FIRST ADDRESS THEMSELVES TO THE SUBJECT OF THE ATONEMENT.

1. It is ultimately of service to every good cause, not to lay greater stress on any argument employed in supporting it than it can well bear; for when we do commit the impolicy of exaggerating the strength of a weak argument, then on the exposure of that weakness a discredit is very apt to be laid upon the cause, which rightfully belongs to its unwise and unwary advocates. It had been well if, in the defence of Christianity, or in the vindication of its particular tenets, they who fought on the right side of the question had at all times known wherein it is that the main strength of orthodoxy lies—whether as respects religion in general, or any of its doctrines.

2. You will remember that in the very first sentence of Paley's work on the Evidences of Christianity, he tells his reader that he will not stop to inquire whether the world stood in need of a revelation; and so, without making this a preliminary consideration at all, he, instead of speculating on the

necessity of a revelation from heaven, engages immediately with the proof of it. If true, it was an event, an historical event; and therefore he casts about for its historical evidences. This is safer ground certainly than that on which many a speculator has ventured to expatiate, more especially when, intruding into things not seen, he founds his argument on his own conjectural imaginations of the best and most befitting policy for the Godhead. It is not for the philosopher's but for the poet's eye "to glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;" and as imagination bodies forth the form of things unknown, it is the poet's pen which turns them to shape, and gives to airy nothings "a local habitation and a name." Theological authorship is peopled with the embodied forms of things unknown; and many are the airy nothings which have found a name and local habitation there. It were a great achievement to find out the principle, and make a thorough application of it, on which to separate the legitimate from the transcendental—so as to mark off the *terra cognita* of human thought from that remote and hypothetical region, in which spirits of a certain lofty and ambitious cast so delight to luxuriate. Thus to restrain inquiry within its proper boundaries, and give a right direction to it, would require a *novum organum* for our science, wherein to fix and define what may be termed the logic of theology, to limit and lay on its own rightful foundation the philosophy of the Christian argument.

3. I have often affirmed in your hearing, that in no science and no subject of human contemplation, has the spirit of hypothesis dared more presumptuously, or wantoned more licentiously, than in our own; and yet surely on every principle of philosophy, there cannot be named a territory of thought where the humble diffidence and docility of little children are more imperiously called for. When we think of the eternity before, and on the still more baffling mystery of the eternity behind us—when we think of the wondrous God who unites both, and comprehends both—when we think of the universe on which He sits enthroned, stretching far beyond the ken of human eye, onward and outward to the viewless depths of immensity—is



it, we ask, for the creatures of our little sphere and our little day, to sit in judgment on the principles or policy of that high administration which reaches to all ages and embraces all worlds? Our becoming attitude surely is that of learners; and our proper business, when studying the volume of nature or the volume of revelation, is not to excogitate truth but to receive it. The light of observation which tells something of ourselves, and but a small part of the creation which is around us—the light brought from heaven which tells something of the Creator, and but a very small part of His ways—it is surely our path of safety and wisdom to walk humbly and duteously by these, not the masters of either, but the yielding and passive interpreters of both—content on the one domain with such responses as we meet to the question of, what findest thou? alike content on the other domain with such responses as we meet to the question of, what readest thou?

4. In conformity with these views, we have long had the feeling of a certain presumptuous and *a priori* character in the very attempt to demonstrate the necessity of revelation; and, like Paley, we had infinitely rather investigate its proofs than speculate on its necessity. And we have somewhat the same feeling in regard to that doctrine of revelation on which we are now entering, and in their treatment of which, many authors present us with a previous chapter, and some even with a whole treatise on the necessity of an atonement. If it be meant that many a helpless victim of his own depravity, and an outcast from his God, needed a something both to replace his confidence in the Divine favour and to furnish him alike with the motives and the powers of a new obedience, this can be well admitted—though, as a preliminary topic and before we investigate the truth of the doctrine itself, it is by no means indispensable. But if this necessity, instead of being made to hinge on the home-felt wants of man, be made to hinge on the exigencies of heaven's government, or, bolder still, on the recondite and interior nature of the Godhead—I for one rather would forego, nay, do recoil from this transcendental speculation; and far rather than predict an atonement

from my assumed and anterior intimacy with Him that sitteth on high—far rather than dare so lofty an ascent, as for the purpose of bringing down Christ upon the earth—far rather than thus foretell, would I be told of the atonement by a word brought nigh unto me; and, instead of prescribing this as a law to the Almighty, would I take it as a lesson from His own mouth, and thence learn from the information so set before me, both of His character and His ways.

5. And yet there is room in theology somewhere for this very topic which I may seem now to repudiate—the necessity of the atonement. My objection is not to the theme, but to the place and precedence which have been given to it. We must not lose the benefit of the theme, or let it disappear from the science; but the question is, when, logically and in the right order of human knowledge, or by the law of the human faculties, it should be brought into the argument? And this for a higher object than a mere intellectual adjustment, even to assign for man his becoming attitude; and that, as we said before, instead of giving law to the Lord of the Universe, he should take the lesson which God sets before him.

6. Let it be understood, then, that when the necessity of the atonement is made the subject of reasoning, and that precursory to the consideration of its direct and historical evidence, the reason is commonly made to turn on the abstractions of jurisprudence and the general state of the world. It is regarded more as a question of constitutional law between God and the species, than as a question prompted by the workings of an individual conscience, and breaking forth into the exclamation of the jailer, What shall I do to be saved? Now, here we have a necessity, a strong and a deeply felt necessity, with an inquiry germinated therefrom, which, so far from being presumptuous or illegitimate, has its pertinent and right place along the direct process of Christianization; and usually, if not universally, is lifted from the heart of every anxious or agonized sinner, on his passage from the darkness of nature to the marvellous light of the gospel. This feeling of a general uneasiness or want, the apprehension of uncertainty and fear in the heart

of the sinner, is truly different from that cool and intellectual estimate of the necessity for an atonement, on which the speculator would found the confident guess, or even the almost decisive argument, that such an atonement must be. It follows not because the conscience-stricken sinner, anterior to his knowledge of the Bible, has good ground for his difficulties and terrors, that therefore the ambitious speculator, anterior to the same knowledge, has equally good ground for the solution that he would give of these difficulties, or the relief that he would propose for these terrors, and whereby he would seem to anticipate the informations of the Bible. There might be data enough for justifying the question of the one, but not data enough for justifying the reply to that question, or even an approximation to the reply of the other, given by him in the confidence of his *a priori* reasonings, apart from and anterior to the informations of the Bible. In justification of the sinner's fears we would say, that without a Bible there is enough to minister disquietude; but in condemnation of the speculator's presumption, we would also say, that there is nothing to minister the comfort by which to appease it. I hope you understand the distinction which I now labour to impress. In the mind of the sinner there is the general feeling of a want; and what we affirm is, that, apart from the Christian message, he can meet with nothing special to satisfy it in the whole compass of nature, or of possible observation. In the mind of the speculator there is the notion of a want; but instead of the helplessness felt by the former, he, on that very notion, thinks he can excogitate for himself, if not the certainty, at least the plausible, nay, the highly probable conclusion of that precise, that specific remedy which is unfolded to the world in the New Testament. Now, what I want to lay discountenance upon is this *a priori* imagination, and would warn you from supposing that, because of any conceived adaptation between the distress of guilty nature and the atonement in the gospel, there is therefore any ground before hand for inferring from the existence of the one the reality of the other. And yet after that this atonement, instead of matter of inference, has become a

matter of revelation, then it is that this adaptation becomes palpable, and is of such argumentative power too, as often to prove the stepping-stone by which the sinner makes his way from the agitations of conscience to peace and joy in believing. Now the question is, How comes it, that while we reject the inference of the speculator as hypothetical, we admit that of the sinner to be logical and conclusive?

7. We have already asserted of the sinner, that, with or without a Bible, he may have a solid, a firmly experimental ground for his fears—the misgivings of a conscience at his felt violations of a known law, and which law at the same time stands inseparably associated with the notion of an offended Lawgiver. Whatever the degree of strength or of weakness may be which you ascribe to the evidences of natural theology, let it be remembered that even the imaginations of uncertainty may be of powerful effect as the ministers of terror. Nay, the very uncertainty, like figures seen through a dim transparency, may aggravate the terror—misshapen into things of spectral form and outline, by the hazy or distorted medium through which they pass. If I know of some fearful risk, though in the ratio of but one to ten, this of itself were a most legitimate ground of anxiety and terror; and we need seek no farther, therefore, into the principle or basis of a sinner's fears, seeing that he may be equally in terror, whether he knows, or simply because he knows not, the destiny that awaits him; but who, in looking back on the retrospect of his past life, and onward to the viewless eternity that lies before him, is visited by the sense of a present guilt and the dread of an anticipated vengeance—pursued, as if by an arrow sticking fast, with the fixed and festering thought, that his soul is lost, that his eternity is undone.

8. What we have here then is the well-grounded feeling of a subjective want; but the mere existence of such a feeling is no evidence for the objective reality of some specific remedy, not yet made known to us from any other quarter. To illustrate this, let me make the supposition, though a violent one, that men were born into the world with the same appetency for

food which they have at present, but that the counterpart food was wanting—that, nevertheless, they could live for years under this privation, yet that in the sensation of a constant and ever-increasing hunger, they had to sustain the agony of a sore endurance. From the mere existence of the subjective feeling, they would not have even the imagination of the objective thing that was fitted to meet and to appease it; and not till this requisite thing was produced and placed within reach of observation, and actually used, could they at all predict or foresee what that was in external nature which suited the physical aspiration, the craving from within of their sentient economy. And the same holds true of all the other affinities which relate the feelings of the subjective man to the products or the elements of that objective world in which he is placed. You would not, from your single experience of the various feelings in the subjective class, infer the correspondent things of the objective class which were respectively suited to them. The mere feeling of hunger would not of itself suggest even the notion of food, and far less afford any demonstration of its reality. The mere feeling of thirst, apart from the sight or the experience of water, would be no argument for the existence of this element in the world. The mere painful affection of a want arising from the organic structure of the lungs, when the needful aliment of breathing was not supplied to it, would convey no intimation to us either of the certainty or probability of an atmosphere. We could not thus find our way by an inferential process from the experience of certain felt wants to the reality of certain counterpart objects. The mere adaptation of things which are possible to feelings which are actual, do not lead us even to the conception, and far less to an assurance of the reality of these things. We must have both the feelings and the objects brought within our reach. We must have the sensation of the one, and, distinct from this, we must have the knowledge of the other. Or, to express it differently, we must have observation for both; and observation or experience too, ere we can know the adaptation between them. And then, to be sure, there do come into our possession

the materials of a most glorious argument ; and from the adaptation between the fruits of the earth and the sustenance of its living generations, as well as their intense and universal cry of hunger—of water, that cheap and common bounty, to the sensation universal too of thirst—of air, compounded as it is, to the apparatus of respiration in all animals, none of whom could breathe or exist in any other—of light to the eye—of sound to the organs of hearing—in short, of the many thousand objects in the world to the wants, and the susceptibilities, and the powers of the innumerable living creatures upon its surface. From the wants alone we could fancy nothing of the counterparts ; but from the wants in conjunction with their objects, made known to us in another way and by a direct evidence of their own, and after the finding of a full yet nice and adequate adjustment between them ;—from the manifold adaptations, we say, thus certified and made plain to us, do we come to the resistless conclusion that the world we live in is a workmanship—that the world has a God.

9. Now, we have felt wants in our mental as well as in our corporeal economy. More especially, there are the unutterable longings of a spirit, conscience-stricken because of iniquity, and in sore distress under the agonies of a present remorse and the dreary forebodings of an unprovided eternity. I do not see why, in the physical department, we should isolate ourselves from the world, and then put our ingenuity to the task of guessing from the knowledge of our wants, and our wants alone, what the objects might be in the outer panorama which are suited to them. And neither can I see why, in the moral department, we should isolate ourselves from the Bible, and thus making a voluntary abridgment of the data within our reach, put ourselves on the rack of speculation—and that for the purpose of trying how well we can guess, from the wants too as before, and the wants alone, whether there be a revelation at all, and then what be the likeliest doctrines there to meet the appetencies and the needs of our moral nature. I would make shorter work of it. I would neither address myself to the first inquiry with the world shut out, nor would I

address myself to the second inquiry with the Bible shut out. I would go forth at once on the volume of nature, and thence learn from the adaptations there to man's bodily wants, that there was a Divinity in the world. And I would go forth at once on the volume of Scripture, and might also learn there from the adaptations to man's moral and spiritual wants, that there is a Divinity in the word. More particularly would I lay immediate hold on that which professes to be the bread of life come down from heaven, or the precious doctrine of Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. I would at once make trial of it. I would bring the objective doctrine into contact with subjective human nature; and on the actual finding of its efficacy to quell the misgivings and the fears of a guilty sinner's bosom, would I found on this and numerous other adaptations, that the Bible, so profound a discerner, so skilful a provider for the wants of humanity, must have been the work of One who knew the secrets of the heart, and that verily God is in it of a truth.

10. The necessity of the atonement experienced as a feeling, is altogether different from the necessity of the atonement conceived of as a notion. To him who is occupied with the feeling, it forms a practical impulse, under which he is led to seek for relief from the distress and the fears of nature; nor will it be long ere you find him exploring the Bible, and pondering with deep anxiety and attention over the statements which lie before him there. To him who is occupied with the notion, it forms the premise of an argument which he must prosecute to a conclusion, on the side of the doctrine it may be; and on which previous verdict it may perhaps depend, whether he will admit the Bible to a hearing on the question at all. Now I ask, is this the condition that the authentic record of our authentic communication from God to man should be suffered to remain in for one moment? Is the principal witness, whose testimony is decisive of the whole point at issue, to be kept in abeyance, till we have settled all the preliminaries which we choose to interpose in the way of that only examination which can determine the matter on hand? To what purpose all our

study of the evidences, and on which we profess to be satisfied with the credentials of the book, if our examination of the contents of the book—the book of God's own counsel, the record of His authoritative message to the world—is thus to be postponed, nay, even almost made subordinate to the reasonings of man, and that too after his reason had pronounced on the divinity of the Bible? I want you not only to feel the piety, but to see the philosophy of making this question, and all others within the system of revealed truth, to hinge on the principle of—"Thus saith the Lord." The right logical order is as follows:—instead of studying the disease alone, and thence predicting what the remedy should be, learn from the mouth of God Himself what the remedy is; and then, on studying the disease and remedy together, you will meet with adaptations which evince a still more marvellous wisdom in the economy of grace than you have ever been able to trace in the economy of nature; and that whether you look downward to earth or upwardly to heaven—to man emancipated by the knowledge of his atonement from the bondage of conscious guilt into the light, and love, and liberty of a new creature; or to God shining forth in the face of Christ, in the full lustre of His vindicated attributes, with a mercy free to expatiate over the whole of His sinful creation, yet shrined as it were in the glories of unchanged and unchangeable sacredness—a just God and a Saviour—just while the justifier of him who believes in Jesus.

11. We deny not that there lie in the human breast the embryo conceptions of these things, remaining there in a state of dormancy till called forth by the exhibition of their archetypes, when the word that speaketh to us from heaven is re-echoed by earth, just because the truth which cometh from God meets a response and confirmation in the nature that was fashioned by His hands. Yet I would have you to understand of those very conceptions which, when evoked by the Bible from the deep recesses of consciousness, are the effectual witnesses of its divinity, that any attempted forthputting of these anterior to the Bible would but present us with as many crude and formless



imaginations. For the men who thus speculate in the *a priori* form are under a delusion, just as the expounders of our natural theology are insensible how much after all they owe to that Scripture over which they claim for their argument a sort of preference or precedency. Even so they who would make the necessity of the atonement a preliminary to the consideration of its evidences, are not aware how much they stand indebted to the revelation of that very atonement for all the plausibilities and seeming triumphs of their goodly reasoning. We fully admit that there is a basis for their argumentation in the human character, and that there the sleeping germs, as it were, of the demonstration are to be found; but it is only at the touch *ab extra* of the doctrine itself, as stated in the Bible, that these germs are evolved or made to effloresce into consequences of any value. We are delighted with all the coincidences which can be pointed out between the objective truth in the Bible and the state of our subjective human nature: all we contend for is, that both must be submitted to observation, and that only by the study of both we can find out these coincidences. We could not by the study of the one, that is of human nature alone, find out the other, that is, some special truth or doctrine of the Bible. Let the coincidences or affinities between these two things be what they may, you could not from the first of them discover the second; but, as it is far easier to discern than to discover, let both be placed before you—the remedy in the gospel on the one hand, and the counter-part disease in human nature on the other—then those very affinities which furnished no clue for the discovery of anything might yet be discerned in bright and convincing manifestation. What we want from all this to impress upon you is, that, once the credentials of the Bible are established by the study of its evidences, the contents of the Bible should instantly be sought after. I do not want this book to be waiting, as it were, in the antechamber of your mind till you have finished your reckonings with a number of preliminary topics that you have admitted, and are now entertaining as so many visitants in its inner apartment. I should like to see these dismissed in the

meantime, in order to make room for the principal witness. I may recall them afterwards; but meanwhile the Bible and they should be made to change places. I do not say they should be dismissed altogether from the science of theology; but they should be dismissed from the precedency which has been too often given to them; nor should one topic be allowed to intervene, one moment be suffered to pass, between the determination of the question, Who the letter comes from? and the instant taking up of the question, What the letter says?

12. The principle which we now labour to expound, if carried into effect, would not only restrain the overgrowth of theology, or save what has been termed the body of divinity from being swollen, deformed, and bloated by a thousand useless and often hurtful excrescences,—it would fix each topic and each argument in its right place; nor can I imagine a wider difference in the spirit and character of any two mental exercises, than that wherewith a theologian constructs his argument on the necessity of the atonement, and that wherewith a humble sinner, labouring under a sense of his sinfulness, and so of the necessity of some great act of reconciliation with God, takes the doctrine of the atonement as the Bible offers it, and finds it in experience most satisfying and precious to his soul.

13. The conclusion on the whole is, that from the study of the Bible's credentials we should pass forthwith to the study of the Bible's contents, and that without the detention or the delay of any intermediate topic whatever. Some express the sentiment in this way: that Scripture criticism is the basis of theology. This is true; and if I demur at all to the terms in which the truth is propounded, it is because for Scripture criticism, as commonly understood, the profoundest philological skill and the resources of a vast and varied erudition, are by many held to be indispensable. I will not depreciate nor discourage the highest efforts of criticism; and yet I would substitute for the sentence now given forth regarding it the saying—that if I know the sense of all that is in Scripture, I possess all the materials of theology: and then I would affirm that the knowledge of this sense in the great bulk and body of it, is accessible

to all—to the moderately learned in Greek and Hebrew through the medium of the original languages, and through the medium of the popular versions to the species at large. This is what we have abundantly enlarged upon in lectures formerly given, to which, in the lecture that follows, we shall subjoin a few additional observations. Scripture criticism, indeed, is the only topic which I think ought to intervene between the study of the Bible's evidences and the study of its contents. The doctrine of man's disease, or the depravity of his nature, can be educed partly from Scripture and partly from observation; the doctrine of God's remedy for the disease, of the atonement rendered by His Son Jesus Christ, is educible from Scripture alone. Scripture criticism, therefore, and more especially as the means for the ascertainment of doctrine, is a most fitting topic to come between the questions, Who the Bible comes from?—and, What the Bible tells? But I should refuse to entertain any other, as for example the origin of heathen sacrifices, ere I proceeded to consider what the Bible tells on the subject of the atonement.

## CHAPTER II.

## RECAPITULATION OF OUR VIEWS ON SCRIPTURE CRITICISM.

1. IN former lectures on this subject, I have stated the reason why we should expect the greatest accuracy of translation in those portions of the Bible which were replete with its most important subject-matter; and why, on the other hand, the chief difficulties and errors lay in those passages, or even in those single expressions, which affected not the leading principles either of Christian faith or Christian practice. This expectation is abundantly confirmed by the testimonies of the soundest and most eminent in Scripture criticism, who generally agree in deponing, that all the main articles in religion, whether of doctrine or morality, are to be found, without change and without mutilation, in the most corrupt popular versions of Christendom; and that, save when the version is executed in part or in whole for a dishonest purpose, or to serve the purposes of a sect, we may commit ourselves with all security to its guidance in everything which concerns our everlasting salvation. This is sufficiently obvious from the comparison of all these versions among themselves, and the harmony which obtains betwixt them in all that is essential—so that had any Protestant Church constructed its system of theology, or its confession, on any one or other of these versions, it would have been made up of precisely the same articles, or held forth to all its members the same identical creed by which it is now distinguished. The same thing is palpable in another way, and without the knowledge on our part of different languages. Take all the English translations, either of the whole Bible or different

books of it, and collate them with our authorized version—only excepting those which have been executed for a sectarian purpose, and so of course the version of the Unitarians—and then tell us, if you can, what the doctrinal amount is of all the variations which have been submitted to you. In some you may miss a few proof-passages for one or other of the doctrines, but not so as to expunge these doctrines from Christianity, for there still remains in each translation an abundant testimony in their favour. In other words, through these different media you look substantially to one and the same Bible, and recognise in each the same orthodoxy, or the same *credenda* and the same *agenda* in all of them.

2. It cannot be denied that the number of variations in these different translated Scriptures is immense, but they must not touch, it would appear, on aught that is essential—either on the *capita fidei* of the gospel, or on the weightier matters of the law. And what is this to say, but that all which is of substantial and practical importance, all which truly appertains to the science and system of theology, has found a safe passage from the original Hebrew or Greek, to our popular version in the hands of our peasantry. Certain matters there are which have suffered an obscuration, perhaps even a change, in their transition from one language to another; but these, it would appear, are not the weightier matters of the law, not the matters or the materials which are employed in constructing from the Bible either a system of faith or a directory of conduct. For instance, whatever sense be given to the word *ἀπήγγξατο*, one of the *ἀπαξ λεγόμενα* of Scripture, and on the settlement of which it hinges, whether the traitor Judas was hanged or strangled, or precipitated to the ground by a giving way of the rope which suspended him—whichever of these variations you adopt in the manner of his death, not one article of any confession, not one rule of Christian practice, will be in the least affected by it. In like manner there is the word *συντριψασα*, on which, as on the former, whole cart-loads of criticism have been accumulated, all of which, though cast into the pit of oblivion, would not soil or diminish by one iota, the integrity either of the doctrine or ethics

of the New Testament ; for what is the mighty question that would remain undetermined, what the lesson we should lose by parting with the vast and voluminous erudition of this fierce controversy—whether the phial of spikenard, in the Gospel by Mark, was furnished with a stopper, or had to be broken ere its contents could be discharged on the head of our Saviour. And so of another famous scriptural enigma, respecting the power which the women in churches ought to have upon their heads because of the angels. I undervalue not the labour which can rectify so much as a single letter, or cast the slightest illustration over any one passage of the Bible ; but with all deference to the pretensions and the powers of Scripture criticism, I may be permitted to rejoice, that by the general consent of its most profound and accomplished scholars, the whole sense and meaning of Scripture, so far as essential to salvation, has passed uninjured from the first penmen of the inspired record, to the vernacular language of every country in Christendom. It delights me to find, that all of Scripture truth which is of effect to medicate and enlarge the soul, or make it meet for heaven, like any of the cheap or common bounties of nature, is accessible to every one—not monopolized, as an unfeeling pedantry would have it, by a select few, who hold exclusive possession of the only cipher which unlocks the treasures of revelation, but brought by the help, not of a rare and difficult, but of a very ordinary and everyday scholarship—brought within the ken even of the humblest of our common people. There are depths and recesses in Scripture criticism which have only been explored by linguists and philologists of the first order ; and the biblical curiosities which they have fetched up, are worthy of a place in the cabinet of the student, or in what may be termed the museums of theology. I say nothing to intercept or to mar this enjoyment ; and so far from discouraging the labours of these collectors, I trust they will persevere till every conquerable difficulty shall be unriddled, and so long as any further approximation can be made to the immaculate edition that will form a perfect exemplar of the words, to the faultless, the unexceptionable version that will form as perfect an exemplar of the mind and

meaning of the Bible. Yet with all the complacency I feel in the progress of these lucubrations, I confess a thousand-fold higher complacency in the cheering thought, that through the medium of the English version as it stands, with all its errors and all its susceptibilities of improvement, the light of saving knowledge can be poured forth so clearly and abundantly throughout the families of our land, that all the critics and lexicographers of all of our universities can make no sensible addition either to its brilliancy or to its fulness. To me the intolerable thing is that haughty and heartless scholarship which would feel a pleasure in disowning this, or rather would not feel most triumphant satisfaction in the thought of our species—even to the most sunken in want and drudgery—being so richly and so largely provided for. It is well to be told of the Polyglots and Thesauruses, and other elaborate compends and digests of biblical lore, in the preparation of which the lives and labours of our mightiest men, whether on the field of controversy or in the high places of a recondite and lofty erudition, have been expended. But is it not also well to be told that in the Bible, the current and familiar Bible, used in every village school, and a universal inmate or companion in the tenements of our peasantry—that in this book, not the truth only, but the whole truth which is unto salvation, without adulteration, without change, without defect, for not one particle of essential doctrine or duty is there wanting—that thence the light, which is the life of men, shines in the eyes of a pious cottage family, with a lustre which no learning can either enhance or extinguish; and, in a word, that the real subject-matter of Christianity is placed before them so entire and so unimpaired by the transitions which it has undergone, in the lapse of centuries, from one country and from one language to another, that all the truths and all the treasures of immortality are their own.

3. Such are the precious consequences of a very obvious principle, scarcely if at all adverted to by the disciples of theological science. I am for laying no discountenance whatever, but the opposite, on the very highest learning in the languages—so that indefinite approximations might be made to an

identity the most rigorous and precise, between the sense of the translated and the sense of the original Scriptures. But I would have you to understand, that, long before this perfection is gained, and by dint of a greatly lower learning, even that learning which executed the popular versions of Christendom—the whole sense and staple of theology, both the preceptive and the dogmatical, have already been appropriated, and rendered faithfully and truly into the vernacular tongues. And I trust that this is no longer inexplicable after the statements and views we have already laid before you. The ducts of conveyance, by which all that is of weight and magnitude in the subject-matter of the Bible is transferred from the original to the translated Scriptures, are large enough and palpable enough for enabling an ordinary guide to make good a right and a safe passage from the one to the other. But many are the minuter things of Scripture, the conveyance of which from the original to the vernacular languages, as if effected through capillary or microscopic tubes, requires the nicety and discernment and skill of a higher and more accomplished order of conductors. And thus it is, that while all things of significance and moment have travelled undamaged and undiminished from Greek and Hebrew into English, many are—I will not say the unprofitable things, for all Scripture is profitable—but many are the things of inferior consideration which have suffered in their more hazardous, more critical journey from one language to another, and now stand before us in the Bible of our own tongue, distorted it may be from the shape and lineaments which they originally had, or with at least a shade of doubtfulness and uncertainty over them. In other words, the veil of an unknown tongue is now removed from all the more important passages of Scripture, and only remains as an intercepting screen against the view of the unskilled in other languages than their own, on the less important. Hence we infer—and to me the inference is a most delightful and glorious one—that the sayings of the first class are alike open to the learned and to the unlearned; and that from the unlearned are only hidden, or lie in a hazy obscurity, the sayings of



the second class. But remember it is from the first class of sayings, that systematic theology draws all its proofs and all its materials. This lets us in at once to the secret of that undoubted phenomenon—the immense judgment and sagacity of an ordinary Scottish peasant, whose father and grandfather have handed down to him unbroken the good old habit of a former generation, when the works of Guthrie, and Halyburton, and Boston, and Flavel, and the two Erskines, along with a store of well-read Bibles, were to be found in all the cottages; the judgment, we say, and clear apprehension of unlettered labourers in all the ingredient parts of the scheme of orthodoxy, or in all that was of sufficient magnitude to the subject-matter of any theological proposition, or to form part and parcel of the science. In counterpart to this we have the equally undoubted phenomenon of a meagre, superficial, defective theology, on the part of our most accomplished and erudite philologists—as if they had expended themselves on the laborious niceties and *nugae*, which call more especially for the exercise of their profession; and no strength remained with them for the grasp or comprehension of those great generalities which stand forth objectively in the oracles of God, or of those alike great applications which relate them to the subjective wants of our moral nature. We have fallen in with ploughmen and mechanics in our own land, who of course knew nothing of the first vocables of inspiration, but who, on the substance of its doctrines or its lessons, far surpassed, in the depth and enlargement of their views, the most erudite Biblists in Germany, or even many the most accomplished for the treatment of textual difficulties in our sister kingdom. The best critics are not always, I could almost say not generally, the soundest and ablest theologians. The best theologians, as President Edwards, are not always the most expert and skilful and full of scholarship in the walk of philological criticism—or of that criticism which seeks for the meaning of recondite texts in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments.

4. Perhaps I labour more than is necessary for the conveyance of what I want to impress upon you. Once for all, let me

illustrate it by a distinction on which I shall proceed afterwards, when presenting you with the Scripture proofs of any given doctrine. Let me have you then to distinguish between that part of Scripture criticism which deals with the Bible simply and generally as a book, and that part of Scripture criticism which deals with the Bible especially as a translated book. In the one way, you explore the Bible, our own vernacular Bible, I mean, just as you would any other book in the English language, for the purpose of fixing and ascertaining by the comparison of passage with passage, and of argument with argument, the whole sense and scope of its author. Now, recollect that, if I have made out my position that all the materials which are of sufficient importance to be admitted into the structure and composition of the theological system have passed uninjured into our English translation, then in the building up of that system, you may with all safety and profit confine yourself to the use of that translation, and of that only. You may have to traverse in every direction, so as to search out thoroughly in all its parts and passages, the book; but you need not go beyond it, no not even to the Hebrew Old or the Greek New Testament. This announcement may somewhat startle you; and I shall have more to say in order to complete my explanation. But meanwhile let me repeat, that if the Bible sayings which enunciate aught that is either in the doctrinal or ethical system of Christianity be accurately rendered into our own English from the original languages, why go beyond these sayings—the sayings, we mean, of the English Bible—in the act of rearing that system from the various utterances of a book, which, as is admitted by all our best and soundest proficients in sacred lore, do fully and accurately represent the corresponding utterances given forth, when the books of Scripture were first written, in the very vocables of inspiration. It is on the event of their mistranslation that there is a call and a necessity for falling back on the original Scriptures. And in what passages of the Bible is it that we are exposed to this necessity? Not—by the testimony of every honest translation, and of all the Polyglots—not in the passages which have to do with the subject-matter

of divinity at all; but in the passages charged with certain points and circumstantials, which, be they settled as they may, do not so much as loosen one stone, or even detach one particle of cement from the goodly fabric of our actual and present orthodoxy. It is here that we lie exposed to the risk of careless, and sometimes of difficult, and so of erroneous translation; and then it is that the most arduous and recondite philology is put on its extreme resources. In other words, when in search of substantial elements, keep if you like by the study of your English Bibles. When in search of curiosities, take the original Scriptures into your hands, and avail yourselves of all the light which the Hellenisms, and the Hebraisms, and the Rabbinisms, and all the peculiarities of all the cognate languages can possibly throw upon it. Or to express it differently, the Scripture criticism which fixes and ascertains the great principles of Bible instruction, may do so effectually though it only deals with the Bible as a book. The Scripture criticism which fixes and ascertains the minuter points of Bible information will have to deal with the Bible as a translated book. And let it not be imagined, that because the latter can only be the exercise of the few, and the former the exercise of the many—that therefore in this first and far most important walk of Scripture criticism, there is not room for the highest efforts of human sagacity. Edwards has demonstrated the contrary in the admirable specimens which he has given, when he handles the Bible as a book only, in some of his chapters on original sin. I want you to know, that with the English version in your hands, all the doctrinal and all the moral wealth of God's revelations have thereby come not into your possession only, but into full possession of the whole population in these realms. I want to deliver them from the imagination that there exists the barrier of an unknown tongue between their minds and one single truth, which can in the least contribute either to their present or their immortal wellbeing. I want to tear asunder that hieroglyphic veil wherewith the Egyptian priesthood of old kept the profane vulgar at an impracticable distance from them and from their mysteries. I am for no such veil between

our priesthood and our population ; but am for breaking down this wretched monopoly, and hereby do pronounce my utter deprecation and scorn on the unfeeling pedantry of those who would uphold it. It is their vocation to hold up their tiny lustres which might guide the inquirer's way among the arcana and through the by-paths of sacred literature. Let them not think to cast obscuration on the glories of that noon-day light which shines on the great truths of Christianity, patent to all eyes, and the belief of which is for the healing of the nations.

5. But it may well be asked, if the English Bible would suffice for the argumentative establishment of every article in divinity, how is it that in every argumentative treatise upon any such article, there is almost an invariable appeal to the original Scriptures? Is not the principle on which I have now expatiated contradicted by the practice of all learned theologians? And was there ever a full exposition given of any dogma in the orthodox system that was not garnished all over with quotations in Greek and Hebrew characters?—proving, by universal consent, a necessity from some cause of passing upward from the truth as set before us in our own vernacular tongue, to the truth as given to the world at the first couched in the vocables of inspiration.

6. All we contend for is, that the doctrine, in its modern investiture, is substantially the same with the doctrine in its ancient and primitive investiture ; notwithstanding which, we admit that in the discussion of it, there is a necessity from some cause for our incessant reference from the translated to the original Scriptures ; and the cause is this, that the adversaries of the doctrine put their sense on the passages, both in the Greek and Hebrew, as well as in the English ; and we in vindicating our sense must follow this movement, and try to exterminate the mischief in every quarter where mischief has arisen. We must make our appearance, too, at the very same place to which our enemies have chosen to carry their warfare ; and this harmonizes with all the former testimonies which I have ever been in the habit of giving to the immense worth and importance of Scripture criticism—even in that function

which it exercises when it deals with the Bible, not as a book, but as a translated book. I have never had much respect for *this* Scripture criticism as an instrument of discovery ; but I have all along had the utmost respect for it as an instrument of defence. It will never, I think, materially extend truth ; but it will put down error. It performs a mighty service, if it extinguish heresy, and keep heretics in order. But I trust you perceive the perfect keeping or consistency which there is between all these admissions on the one hand, and our strenuous assertion on the other, of the sufficiency of the English Bible. We must accept the challenge of our antagonists, and go forth against them to the battle, at the spot where they have fixed their entrenchments and hung out their flag of defiance—whether it be on the arena of the Hebrew Old, or of the Greek New Testament. But should, as the upshot of every conflict—and for this we have one continuous testimony from all our best philologists and critics—the undoubted faithfulness of our English version be established, in such essential matters as the *capita fidei* and weightier matters of the law—what is this to say but that the English translation is a safe and sufficient authority for the determination both of the articles of the Christian faith and the rules of the Christian morality ? If gainsayers will strike in, and force us to treat the subject controversially, then should they gainsay in Greek, we must meet them in Greek ; or should they gainsay in Hebrew, we must meet them in Hebrew. Nevertheless it remains a stable and unaffected proposition, that but for them we might have kept by our own authorized version, and landed in the identical dogmata and duties, which, after having stood the ordeal of a thousand controversies, still retain the place which they have had for centuries in the directory and creed of all the reformed Churches in Christendom. We are indebted, vitally indebted, to the championship of our men of war, in that they have warded off the invasion of heresy from our borders. But still the most precious service which they have rendered by their mastery and skill in the original languages is, that they have inspired a just and warrantable confidence in the popular version on the part of those who

know no other language than their own. And apart from controversy, or when the object is not to vindicate but simply to acquire, it is delightful to think, that, if in possession of our common Bible, the materials for a right and sound conclusion are within the reach of all ; and that in the hands of every intelligent Englishman, unskilled though he should be in every other tongue, there is enough for guiding him onward to all that is worth in theology. He is fully competent to the investigations of the *theologia didactica* by means of a Scripture criticism on the Bible as a book, though not competent by Scripture criticism on the Bible as a translated book, to the work and the warfare of the *theologia elenctica*.

7. There is a profound and important remark of a writer quoted by Dugald Stewart, of which we meet with frequent and most striking verification in theology. "The science of abstruse learning," he says, "I consider in the same light with the ingenious writer who compared it to Achilles' spear, that heals the wound it had made before. It serves to repair the damage itself had occasioned, and this perhaps is all it is good for. It casts no additional light on the paths of life ; but disperses the clouds with which it had overspread them before. It advances not the traveller one step on his journey, but conducts him back again to the spot from which he had wandered." The perverse subtleties of the schoolmen misled the world from the path of experimental inquiry, and called forth the *Novum Organum* of Bacon ; and now that men have been effectually told of the way to get knowledge—that it is to look at what is visible, and listen to what is audible, and measure what is extended, and weigh what is ponderous, and hold converse with the various objects of nature by those respective senses which form the only inlets for our acquaintance with them ;—now that these obvious methods of simplicity and common sense are again entered upon, both the perversity and its corrective may be alike forgotten. Even had it required the counteractive metaphysics of Reid and Beattie to restore our confidence in the strong and instinctive perceptions of nature, surely now both the one and the other metaphysics may be equally disre-

garded ; and without disturbance from the illusions of scepticism, may we go forth with vigour in the business of common life, or on the business of all the sciences. But, coming back to our own subject, and to that special part of it which now engages our attention, even Scripture criticism—the Bibliists of Germany thought to unsettle all our received orthodoxy by the exploration of ancient manuscripts, and the multitude of various readings conjured up from the cells and various readings of the Middle Ages. But they were followed in this laborious scrutiny by the champions of a better faith, who demonstrated not the unexcepted, but the substantial integrity even of our most corrupt editions, and put all right again. And the attempt thus made upon the readings was also made upon the renderings of Scripture ; and men of Greek, and Hebrew, and Samaritan, and Ethiopic, and Talmudic, and Arabic, and Rabbinical lore, alarmed by their novel interpretations the simple-minded Christians, who feared that the truth of the gospel, and all the precious comforts of the doctrine of grace, were to be taken away from them. But they have been tracked into all their walks and all their windings—and that by men able to equal, nay, to overmatch them, who have made as large and larger excursions than themselves ; and who have dispelled the illusions, disarming them of their wizard power, and who by a learning alike transcendental with theirs, but on the side of truth, have, as with the rod of Aaron, swallowed up the rods of all these magicians ;—and, glorious consummation, have demonstrated the substantial integrity in everything of moment, of all the national versions in Christendom. And throwing the mantle of their protection over the popular faith, have irresistibly shown that by the Bible—we mean the plain everyday vernacular Bible of our cottages and schools—the truth as it is in Jesus has been placed within the comprehension and reach even of little children.

8. I do hope that you recognise the perfect consistency of all this with the recommendation which I now offer of your studies and daily exercise in the original languages of Scripture. Remember that you are not only the propounders of the

faith, you are the defenders of the faith ; and while your chief business, or rather the great, if not only business of the many, is to hold converse in English with those who are within the vineyard, it should be the chief, if not only business of a few, to sit on the watch-towers of our Zion, and be qualified for holding converse in Greek and Hebrew, and all cognate languages, with adversaries of all tongues and all possible designations who are without. Every Church, whilst on earth a Church militant, should have its Horsleys, and Wetsteins, and Pooles, and Mills, and Michaelises, and Griesbachs ; and to prove that we are not altogether destitute, such men as our own Dr. Campbell. On the one hand, there ought to be a few accomplished for deeds of highest prowess, for works of first-rate authorship on the field of controversy. But on the other hand, there ought to be the many, and these a lettered and well-educated clergy, who value and know how to estimate the soundest and ablest demonstrations of Scripture criticism which might issue from the press. Let it never be imagined that I intend the least discountenance on this noble walk of erudition : all my testimonies and all my wishes have been in the opposite direction. Only grant me the sufficiency of the English Bible for indoctrinating, and that most correctly and fully, our general population, and there does not remain even the semblance of an exception in my mind against the most intense philological and critical and antiquarian study of the Bible on the part of as many of our ecclesiastics as feel the stirrings within them of a peculiar aptitude and taste for this branch of professional learning. Apart from our indispensable need of it for fighting the battles of the faith, it has of itself many claims and many recommendations. The rectification of a single verse, the solution of but one Scriptural enigma, the settlement even of the most minutely statistical question, on the manners and peculiarities of these by-gone times of sacred history—all these, however unnecessary for the establishment of any article of faith, should be prized and rejoiced in, and have a place assigned to them among the choice treasures of our profession. And without analyzing at present the effect into its causes,



which I at the same time think can most satisfactorily be done, I promise you, as the result of your frequent converse and great familiarity with Scripture in its original languages, not of course a different view, but a certain peculiar and often more powerful impression of its subject-matter than in your cursory perusal of the English Bible you have ever been able to realize. It is a good thing occasionally to contemplate the same substantial truth in a different investiture from that wherein we have been in the habit of regarding it ; and never can we expect a larger share of benefit from the influence of such a cause, than when we read God's message as it was first enunciated to the world. And though most frequently we look at the things of faith as presented to us in our own tongue, we shall not miss a real practical good by looking at them, though identically the same things, couched in the *ipsissima verba*, the very vocables of inspiration.

9. Without probing into the causes of the phenomenon, that we attain a more vivid sense of the subject-matter when we read of it in another than in our own vernacular tongue, we may at least appeal to your experience of the truth of it. Whether it be a French, or a Latin, or a Greek New Testament, we have often felt as if we had caught a more impressive view of the themes or archetypes when we held converse with them through these different media—other types, as it were, or other representations of thought than those in which we most frequently and most habitually regard them. It would seem as if the thinking principle were almost asleep—lulled into acquiescence from our very familiarity with the well-known sounds and phrases of our English Bibles—when we prosecute our daily task of a daily chapter or exercise in the word of God ; and so we feel satisfied, though only holding converse with the symbols of thought, that we are holding converse with the objects of thought—just as in Algebra, we are but dealing with the signs, while the *ipsa corpora*, the realities of which these signs are but the indices, are not at all present to our thoughts. We feel as if we ceased to be nominalists in theology when holding intercourse with any of its lessons in a different from

our customary language, there is a necessity for taking cognizance of meanings as well as words ; and so are brought into close strenuous effective contact, not with the *λεγόμενα* alone, but with the *νοήματα* of Scripture. Let me therefore reiterate my advice that you make a pocket-companion of the Greek Testament. I promise you new, unexpected, and most satisfying glimpses, perhaps never before experienced, of the most precious truths in revelation. You will learn more fully than before how much its most essential doctrines are interwoven throughout the whole of Scripture ; and just as on meeting with a much valued friend in an unusual place, the cordiality is whetted by the surprise ; so it is when—overlooked before in routine and cursory perusals of your vernacular Bible, there peer forth the notices of that very truth which you most value, and most rejoice in. I do not say but that with your attention all awake upon the English version, the same benefit may not be realized ; and yet I am persuaded, not only that you will swell the number of proof-passages for the various articles of your faith, by a constant perusal of the original Scriptures, but that, in particular, when you read in the Greek Septuagint of the *προσφορὰ* of the law, and read of the great *προσφορὰ* in the New Testament, which was once offered to bear the sins of many, you will receive an augmented impression of the great truth, that Jesus Christ is the pervading theme of the law and the prophets, as well as of the gospel ; and that the reception of Him as the Lord our righteousness, is the turning point of a sinner's salvation.

## CHAPTER III.

## SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE FOR THE ATONEMENT.

1. Were I to deliver an introductory lecture on biblical criticism, I should begin perhaps with the meanings of individual words, and one of my earliest remarks would be on the uncertain guidance of etymology, or how frequently and widely the actual deviated from the primitive signification. Under this head we might have exposed the folly of a certain style of pedagogical criticism, when it condemns, for example, the use of mixed metaphors, seeing that the metaphorical, like other first meanings, is lost in the course of those changes which a language undergoes; and so what was originally a figurative becomes at length a direct and proper signification. We have no time, however, for such stray excursions; nor can we enter at all on that very delightful though not very safe region of speculation, into which Horne Tooke first led the way, by the most ingenious and entertaining treatment which he bestows on the first elements of speech, in his book entitled "The Diversions of Purley." When the word which I do investigate affords a specimen of any principle, I may announce that principle without farther dwelling on it; and, accordingly, what I have now said of the little avail of etymology in fixing the sense of terms was suggested by the first word which I shall consider in connexion with the doctrine of the atonement, the word *καταλλαγῆ*, 2 Cor. v. 18. It comes from the verb *ἀλλάσσω*, *to change, to make other than before*. We instantly recognise, as of the same family, *ἄλλος*, *other*, and *ἀλλὰ*, *but*. The verb *καταλλάσσω* is even employed to denote the exchange of money for commodities, effected by the money passing into

other hands than before. The guidance of etymology were, however, very uncertain here. It might tell us of change in the general, but not of the special change. We know it to be a change from displeasure into favour; but for aught that etymology can tell, it may have been the reverse change, from friendship to enmity—such as the mind of Cain experienced when he looked to his brother with an altered countenance. But when abandoned by the lights of etymology, we have another light, the sufficiency of which above that of all others I want to impress upon you—I mean the light of the context. That the change is from enmity to friendship, even though we did not know from this being its universal meaning, we could have inferred, in this instance, from the passage itself. It is a change in God's mind towards the world in not now imputing unto them their trespasses; or in the world's mind towards God, when it passes from the alienation of guilt to the grateful and confiding sense of pardon and reconciliation. And apart from the contextual, our doctrinal light, the general knowledge we had of the subject-matter, the information of another Bible passage, that if we believe not in Christ, the wrath of God abideth on us—this alone would have fixed the direction of that change which is expressed by *καταλλαγῆ*. Doubtless we already know that, I believe without exception, in all authors it means a change from enmity to friendship. Still our information that this is the meaning in all instances, is an information gathered by us from all the contexts. The only other Scripture I shall give of this at present is 1 Cor. vii. 11.

2. The question has been often discussed whether reconciliation applies to the offended or the offending party. We believe that generally among Greek authors it is applied to the former; but though this is the most frequent application of it too in our own language, yet is it often made alike applicable to both. We should say to the offended party—We beg you to cease from your anger, and be reconciled to him who is the object of it. But ere the reconciliation can be effected, it must be mutual; and therefore we should also say to the offender—Be reconciled with Him to whom the offence has been given, or

cease from giving cause of offence any further, and enter into the friendship which He offers to you upon His own terms. Which of these applications be meant in any given passage can, at all times, we believe, be decided by the context and the circumstances. Critics have elaborately endeavoured to show, that by the usages of the Hebrew language, and thence of the Hellenistic Greek, the word "reconciliation" should be applied to the offending party, and this from the reciprocal form of the Hebrew verb, which requires that, in order to the reconciliation, the offending party should reconcile himself to the offended by doing what might appease his anger. It is quite in point to allege 1 Sam. xxix. 4, which, in the Septuagint, reads thus—'Εν τίνι διαλλαγήσεται τῷ κυρίῳ αὐτοῦ, *wherewith should he reconcile himself?* or, if translated from the Septuagint, *wherewith shall he be reconciled to his master?* This is a clear instance of a reconciliation to be effected not by the offended but by the other party—not of David removing his own anger against his master, but of David removing his master's anger against him. But, as I said before, I do think that the context in every Scripture I know will decide which of the parties it is on whom this work of reconciliation is laid, without any critical discussion either upon single words or upon the tenses and forms of these words. Rom. v. 10,—“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Here we, the sinners or offenders, are said to be reconciled—yet who does not see that because the offended Lawgiver had been reconciled to or made propitious to us by the death of His Son, the very next verse, where we are said to receive the atonement or reconciliation, (καταλλαγή,) implies not that we conferred our friendship upon God, but that God conferred His friendship upon us; and we are reconciled on taking the reconciliation at His hands, on the terms in which He is pleased to offer it? Rom. xi. 15,—“For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?” Neither is there aught in this verse to cast obscurity on the respective parts which each had to sustain for

the making up of that controversy which obtained between God and the world. 2 Cor. v. 18-20,—“ And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” There seems as little ambiguity, or rather the utmost distinctness, both as regards a reconciling God and a reconciled world. That God was the offended party, is manifest from the clause which tells us how the reconciliation was effected on His part—that is, by ceasing from His anger, and so not imputing their trespasses unto them. But the reconciliation, though thus begun, is not completed without the concurrence of the other party; and so the exhortation of *καταλλάγητε* is brought to bear upon them; and they are called upon to be reconciled unto God, which is done by their believing in Christ, whereupon the enmity in their hearts towards God is done away. This discussion respecting which of the parties it is that, upon an agreement taking place between them, might be said to be reconciled the one to the other, appears to be wholly useless and uncalled for. That the reconciliation be perfected it must be mutual; and there is an equal propriety in speaking of God as reconciled to men, and of men as reconciled to God. Eph. ii. 16,—“ And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby.” Here Christ is represented as reconciling both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God—the effect of which is, that God, the offended, is reconciled unto them, and they, the offenders, are reconciled unto God. In the parallel passage, Col. i. 20, 21, God is represented as the reconciler through Christ, and of course the believers, whom the apostle is addressing, as the reconciled. In the other two places where the word occurs, they are both human parties between whom the reconciliation had to be made: Matt. v. 24, where it is the offender that is bidden be reconciled to him who had something

against him, some injury which he could allege as a ground of quarrel, and by the removal of which ground it was, that he, the offender, was charged with the office of making out a reconciliation. 1 Cor. vii. 11,—“ But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.” Here I feel compelled to side with the Socinians in regarding the woman who is bidden in this verse be reconciled to her husband, as the offended party, and who, in virtue of that offence, had of her own accord departed from him. We feel this to be no concession whatever, regarding as we do the whole controversy about this matter as immaterial to the question of Christ’s expiatory death—a doctrine clearly affirmed in some of the verses now quoted, and thus irrespective of the idle discussion that we have prosecuted too long on this matter of determining on which of the parties in a quarrel it is that the work of reconciliation is properly devolved, or which of them it is that we should call upon to be reconciled to the other. It might devolve upon either, and so there are lexicographers who tell us that *διαλλάσσω*, the word employed in Matt. v. 24, implies a mutual reconciliation.

3. The truth is, that but for the Socinian artifice of fastening the work of reconciliation exclusively on man, and thus to get rid of the propitiation by which God is reconciled to the guilty, this subject of debate might never have been heard of; and I certainly think it might have been better disposed of than it has been done even by the orthodox. It should not have been made to turn on the meaning of the word taken singly; and more especially as the meanings, or at least the applications, so obviously differ, while severally each might be determined by the context in which it lies imbedded.

4. You will therefore not think it strange if, when labouring along with you to fix and ascertain the meaning of words, I take you, as the likeliest method for accomplishing your object, to the passages where they actually occur; and, as every book is its own best interpreter, be assured, that by much the fullest and most satisfying light on this inquiry is to be had from Bible passages. Let us again revert to Rom. v. 10 and v. 11,—

“ For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son ; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” The latter is worthy of particular notice from the translation which it has received at the hands of the authors of our own version—“ atonement.” It should have been “ reconciliation ;” and perhaps the best account or vindication of the rendering is, that in these days the translators had not lost sight so completely as we have done of the original meaning, according to Dr. Magee, of this word—*at-one-ment*, or the bringing of parties before at variance into one. Now this is reconciliation itself, and not atonement as we now understand it, being the price given, whether in the way of recompense or suffering for the healing of a breach. This is the meaning that we actually affix to the word atonement ; and reconciliation is not the thing itself, but the fruit thereof. It were interesting to know what other words in the original correspond to the word atonement in our translation ; and for this purpose I would like you to examine the following verses both in the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek Septuagint:—Ex. xxix. 33 ; xxix. 36 ; xxix. 37 ; xxx. 10 ; xxx. 15 ; Lev. xvii. 11 ; Ex. xxxii. 30 ; Lev. i. 4 ; iv. 20 ; iv. 26 ; iv. 31 ; iv. 35 ; v. 6 ; vi. 7 ; xii. 8 ; xiv. 18 ; Num. xv. 25 ; Lev. xxiii. 27, 28 ; Num. viii. 21 ; xxviii. 22 ; xxix. 5 ; 2 Sam. xxi. 3 ; 2 Chron. xxix. 24 ; Neh. x. 33. I have not nearly presented you with all the passages in the Old Testament where the word “ atonement ” occurs in our English translation. But in the vast majority of these the radical word, we mean in the Septuagint, is ἐξίλασκόμαι, *to make propitious*. In one or two instances the radical is, καθαρίζω, signifying *to purify, to cleanse from guilt*. In one instance, ἀγμάζω, *to separate, or set apart*, marking the detachment or deliverance of a person from some great and general evil—as from a world lying under condemnation, and then it is deliverance from guilt ; or from a world lying in wickedness, and then it is deliverance from the pollution and power of sin, and then it is the same in effect with καθαρισμός, when employed to denote a personal



or moral purification. Yet does this latter word often express a ritual or judicial absolution from guilt; and accordingly it forms the other Greek translation in the Septuagint, corresponding to our atonement in the English version.

5. Now, in all these instances, the word, though translated atonement, presents us with but the resulting benefit of the atonement, rather than with what we understand by the atonement itself. I am told of but the effect, not of what was done, or suffered, or paid for the purpose of bringing about the effect. Even the word atonement, if originally at-one-ment, is expressive only of the effect—not of that which purchased the reconciliation, but the reconciliation itself. Now, it is not the atonement in this sense, but what in Exodus is called the atonement-money, (xxx. 16,) that I am in quest of—*Keseph é Kopherim*. We must not seek for the evidence of our doctrine in the single word atonement, which, though now by frequent association bound up in our minds with the price of our restoration to peace with God, yet, even in English, signified the restoration itself, the thing pardoned, and not the purchase-money; and, going back to the counterpart words in the original Scriptures, we still find nothing but the final result of a certain great transaction, not the character or nature of the transaction itself—as *καταλλαγῆ*, *reconciliation*, not what effected the reconciliation; or the derivatives of *ιλύσκομαι*, representing God as purified or pleased with us, not what that was which averted His displeasure; or the derivatives of *καθαρίζω*, telling us of a consequent deliverance from guilt, but not yet telling us from what cause or antecedent the consequent has sprung. Or going to the Hebrew, we read of *Kepher* over against “atonement”—still however an effect, the effect of our sins being covered, in virtue it may be of a something respecting which however we have more to learn than what the single word “Kepher” can teach us. Even the Hebrew word *Heta*, signifying to sin, but in the form *Pihel*, to cleanse from sin, and translated in 2 Chron. xxix. 24, to make reconciliation, gives of itself but the result, and not that which had the causal influence in bringing on the result. In short, we

shall not extricate the secret we are in quest of by probing for it into single words, which have been discussed, disputed, and subjected to all sorts of torture and inquisition in the crucibles of the philologic laboratory—or under the treatment of the analyst, not of substances, but of terms. You will find the evidence for it in the passage where the word occurs, not singly or individually in the word itself—you will find it, not in any philological light struck out from a single term, but in the contextual light which shines in the plain utterances of a very plain narrative or description.

6. There is one word, however, in Greek which has more of the virtue in it taken singly than any yet specified, to establish the fact that our forgiveness is a return for a something done, or suffered, or paid; or a thing granted to mankind in consideration of a price, or in exchange for an equivalent rendered by a party distinct from Him who is the party offended—in short, that ours is not a simply bestowed, but a purchased forgiveness. The word to which I advert, and that chiefly for the sake of the family which springs from it, is λύω, *to loose*. Hence λύτρον, a word restricted to signify a ransom—as, for instance, this being its primary application, the price paid to loose a captive from his bonds. When it is said that Christ gave Himself a propitiation for our sins, this tells me only that the effect of His doing so was to make God propitious to us: or that He gave Himself to purify us, this is still an effect, that of our deliverance from the guilt and pollution of sin. But when told that He gave Himself a ransom, I learn more from that word singly, than I do from either of the other words singly. I learn that His life was the PRICE of our deliverance. The death by which His life was given up is characterized in itself, and not merely in its effects. It is that by which our release from condemnation has been purchased; and without going further, I see a direct evidence of its being the consideration on which we are let go from the penal consequences of sin in the following verses, Matt. xx. 28; Mark x. 45. Then there is λυτρόω, exemplified in the following verses, Titus ii. 14; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. It is true that the meaning is ex-

tended, as almost constantly happens in language, from the primary and specific application which it had at the first, of delivery by payment of a price to delivery in the general, as in Luke xxiv. 21. The Socinians seize upon such instances; but they are of no conceivable avail against those other instances where the thing given in price is expressly mentioned, as in the two instances immediately preceding; and where in the two instances before these, what is thus given is expressly named *λύτρον*, which means a *price* or *ransom*, and means it universally. I will therefore give up, not so much as uncertain, but as unneeded, the evidence which lies in Luke i. 68; ii. 38, (*λύτρωσις*;) and will now present you with one or two specimens from the Septuagint, Lev. xxv. 24-51, (*Γαλέ*;) thus expressed in a case of simple redemption, or buying back. But it is interesting to observe, how the same Greek *λύτρον* is made the counterpart also to the Hebrew *Kepher*—generally translated atonement, and proving that the ideas of redemption from debt or other calamity, and atonement from guilt, are interchangeable. Numb. xxxv. 31, 32, (*Kepher*.) There cannot be a more decisive verse for fixing *Kepher* as being indeed a *λύτρον*, and its not being a *lutron* for the payment of debt or release from mere calamity, but release from the penal consequences of guilt. In this verse the *Kepher* indisputably means what, had the satisfaction been the life of another given for the life of a murderer, we now generally understand by atonement. I bid you remark here how instantly we obtain the light of an explanation from the context.

7. So much in fact does the main force of the evidence on this subject lie in the context of the places where the single words we have now specified occur, that I must now go back upon them, and present you with the passages in which they lie imbedded; and where, if they do not speak for themselves, their immediate neighbours, if I may so put it, speak most decisively for them. The word *λύτρον*, I think, does speak for itself—though even here it obtains great authority from the consentaneous testimony of those who are standing beside it. But let me now give you the specimens.

8. *Καταλλαγή*, 2 Cor. v. 18-20.—No doubt reconciliation is but the effect of what was done, and not the deed itself. But take the whole passage; and you find it was done by Jesus Christ; and that in virtue of what He did, God did not reckon with the world for its trespasses—did not lay these trespasses to its account—made no charge against it because of them—treated it as free of all charge because of them. The precise thing which Jesus Christ did to bring all this about, is very decisively told in two or three verses further on. He submitted Himself to the treatment of a sinner. “He became sin for us though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

9. Rom. v. 11.—This, too, is *καταλλαγή*, the effect of the transaction—and not in itself announcing, as *λύτρον* does, the character of the transaction. Well, but the effect of what? That whereof it is the effect is very clearly made known to us in the two verses immediately preceding. “We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son.” “We are justified by His blood.” It may be asked, but where is the evidence here that it was by the death or blood of Christ suffering as a substituted victim in our stead? We reply, that the whole character of a transaction may not be made the subject of repeated description in every passage where we meet with the intimation of it. But have these objectors already forgotten what was said in the former passage of Christ being made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God? When was any witness ever expected, as the Bible is often required to do at the hands of its tormenting inquisitors, to bring forth the whole subject-matter of any one of its testimonies, in every one place where that subject-matter is introduced or referred to.

10. *Ἰλάσκεσθαι*, Heb. ii. 17,—“To make reconciliation for the sins of the people,” is the same as to avert the displeasure incurred by the sins of the people. Not expressive of the nature, but the effect of Christ’s service. By what He did, God, before offended because of our sins, was made propitious to us. Such was the effect of His agency. But what was the kind or character of that agency? Let us gather up the light of the context

for our reply to this question. It was the agency of a High-Priest. It was in this character that He officiated when He made reconciliation for the sins of the people. This carries us back to the functions of the Jewish High-Priest—the very essence of whose office as a reconciler it was—on the great day of atonement, to enter with the blood of slain victims into the Holy of Holies; and so Christ through His own death, (Heb. ix. 14,) Himself being the victim, entered (Heb. ix. 12) not with the blood of bulls and goats, but with His own blood into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The evidence does not lie exclusively in the word, but in the light which falls upon it from the confines of the illuminated region in the midst of which it is placed—a light that grows and gathers along the way through which we are conducted, by the link of a common topic presented to us in a common expression from one part of the Bible to another.—‘*Ἰλασμός*, the abstract for the concrete; not ‘*Ἰλάστηρ*, *propitiator*, but ‘*Ἰλασμός*, *propitiation*, 1 John iv. 10. From this verse we learn that Christ made God propitious to us. It does not here say by His death,—that we learn elsewhere. We may well think that the information is given here too, because now we are fully warranted to associate the idea of sacrifice with the very term of propitiation. We have good ground for so associating it—and that from the countless number of informations to this effect scattered over the whole Bible. But let these informations speak for themselves. It is their plain meaning couched in the terms of a very plain narrative, which gives the jet and substance of the evidence, and not the single word ‘*Ἰλασμός*, by which, in its general sense, we learn, that somehow or other, God was rendered placable through Christ, in virtue of a something done by Him, which at the same time had a special bearing on our sins—“a propitiation for our sins”—by which last clause no doubt a nearer approximation is made to the idea of a sacrifice than if Christ had barely been said to have been made a propitiation.

11. The last example we shall give of a word of this family, is ‘*Ἰλαστήριος*, an adjective, and which, when not accompanied by

a substantive, might signify either a propitiator, *ὁ ἱλαστήριος*, or a propitiatory, *το ἱλαστήριον*, *βῆμα* or *ἐπίθεμα* being understood, so as to complete the expression for a mercy-seat; or, without the article, we are left at liberty to understand the word in either of these senses, or in the sense of propitiation. It is so left in Rom. iii. 25, and we incline to the idea of its personal signification as applied to Christ, and expressive of Him as the propitiator. But the evidence is not at all suspended on this determination. Any of these interpretations will suit the argument equally, though, as in all other instances, the word of itself but tells us in the general of God being made placable through Christ; and the real strength of the proof lies as usual in the context, "through faith in His *blood*," and that God's justice or righteousness might shine forth as well as His forbearance, which appertains to the other attribute of mercy. In Heb. ix. 5, where *το ἱλαστήριον* occurs, the evidence lies in the subsequent context, ver. 5-12, &c.

12. Let us now look for a moment at the contexts in the Old Testament, where words of this family occur in the Septuagint, and which generally stand in counterpart to *Kopher* in the Hebrew, Ex. xxx. 10; Lev. i. 4; iv. 20; iv. 31. The expression "a sweet savour unto the Lord," connects immediately the placation of the Lawgiver with the death of the animal. Connect this with Eph. v. 2. I do not say but that the New Testament passage contains in itself the whole pith of a sufficient testimony; but it is good to meet with the frequent reiterations of it in the description of those sacrifices, by which we are expressly told, that the great sacrifice was shadowed forth, Lev. vi. 30; viii. 15; see ver. 14, "Laid their hands." The meaning of this part of the process is made as plain as any description can make it in Lev. xvi. 21. After which it is not necessary for the purpose of confirming this transference of sin from the people to the animal, to advert, though it be in full harmony with the fact of such a transference, to the circumstance of the man having contracted uncleanness, by his very office of taking out the goat into the wilderness, and so having to purify himself, Lev. xvi. 26. The same process had to be undergone by

the man who carried forth the bullock and goat without the camp. The stress laid on these cleansings by Outram and others, exemplifies the preference one has for a conclusion when he comes at it by an argument, rather than when he gets it at once from a simple affirmation. Were it not for this tendency, a greater stress would be laid than is on the naked statement, that God laid on Him the iniquities of us all. (Isa. liii. 6.) And if this will not satisfy the desire for more confirmation, perhaps a clause in the next verse may not be without its efficacy, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter." There is a flood of evidence in the continued description of this chapter. And there is also evidence of the same first-rate character in another part of Scripture, which expresses direct of our Saviour, not the laying on, as in the last instance, which took place on the great day of atonement, but another step in the procedure of that day—the carrying of the victim without the camp. (Heb. xiii. 10-12.)

13. My time will not allow of a further induction with the words either of this or of any other family, only I cannot pass over *Θύω*, and its derivations. It is far more a ritual word than *Σφάζω*, which latter is oftener used for slaying in general, though sometimes for putting to death sacrificially, as in Rev. v. 6, 9, 12; xiii. 8. *Θύω* is also used for slaying animals for food, as in Matt. xxii. 4, and other places; but far oftener for slaying in sacrifice, like the counterpart Hebrew word *Zebeh*, 1 Cor. x. 20; Mark xiv. 12; 1 Cor. v. 7. This word was anciently employed by Homer ritually, but to express another sense than that of sacrifice—to cast into the fire of the victuals and wine; and latterly by the classical Greek writers it became expressive of sacrifice. In both ways the ritual character extends to the numerous derivations of this word. It is curious to trace the transformations of meaning that have taken place upon the words of this family, beginning with Homer, and passing onward to subsequent authors. We have *Θυμίαμα* in the sense of "*suffitus* or *odoramentum*:" the burning of spices was an accompaniment of sacrifice; and hence the words of this genus obtained a sacrificial meaning as well as

those words which originally indicated but the effect of the sacrifice in pacifying or making propitious the offended Deity. The burning of the incense produced that sweet savour of which we so often read in the description of a sacrificial offering. The same class of words were employed to designate the proper and essential act of sacrifice or slaughter of the animal; and so, too, the altar, as *Θυσιαστήριον* in 1 Cor. x. 18; ix. 13. Here the word has the same termination as *Ἰλαστήριον*, which signifies the propitiatory or mercy-seat. *Θύϊνος* is the name of a particular wood, which, in burning, gave forth a sweet odorous smell. Other derivatives are illustrative of the same thing, as *Thus*, which signifies frankincense, and *Thuribulum*, a censer, as *Θυσιαστήριον* does an altar. For the scriptural instances of this word, which bear upon the doctrine of Christ's death being a sacrifice, see *Θύσια* in Heb. v. 1; vii. 27, &c. But besides the act of sacrificing, it signifies, like the Hebrew *Zebeh*, the victim. 1 Cor. x. 28. *Θυσιαστήριον*, altar; *Θυμιατήριον*, altar of incense; *Θυμιάω*, to burn incense. Should we trace *Θυσία* and *Zebeh* through the Old and New Testament, it would involve us in such a cloud of testimonies that we are forced for the present to desist. Let me only remark of this word *Θυσία*, that, unlike most of the others, its meaning was literally and primarily sacrificial; and afterwards used tropically, it acquired a more general meaning—whereas *ἰλασμός* and certain more terms were at first general—but from frequent use and application in the matter of sacrifices, it has obtained an appropriate sacrificial meaning by association. Examples of the change undergone by *Θυσία* are found in Rom. xii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. xiii. 15, 16; Phil. iv. 18. When used ritually, and when otherwise, can be determined, as in every other case, by its place and context; and if, instead of discussing the sense generally, we betook ourselves to the actual passages where the word in question occurs, we should soon, and on the most proper and satisfactory evidence, make up our minds as to the real signification.

14. I shall conclude with a short list of passages, containing the whole pith and substance of the doctrine which has detained us so long. 1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 Pet. iii. 18; ii. 24; Heb. x. 14, 26; Eph. i. 7.



15. I might have prosecuted this induction both with these and other words a great deal further. The same method might be observed with the prepositions *ὑπὲρ, ἀντὶ, διὰ*, &c. Detach these from their contexts, and an interminable controversy might be struck out of one meaning against another meaning, and where the combatants, with their respective instances, might both be in the right. And so the defenders of the faith have had many a weary, but, in my opinion, most irrelevant struggle, to maintain with the Socinians. It was wise in *them* to shut out the circumambient light that gathered around the word in debate from the passage where it lay, and so to hinge the question upon the word itself looked to singly; but it is not equally wise in the orthodox to join issue with them upon such a discussion, when the evidence for the doctrine shines clear as day from statements that both speak their own sense and the sense of the phraseology in which they are couched, down to every the minutest term in it. As when we read of men reconciled to God, but reconciled *by the death of His Son*; or of the High-Priest transferring, by the imposition of hands, the sins of the people to the victim that was slain in sacrifice; or in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of Christ, at once the High-Priest and the victim, *offering Himself*, without spot, to God, and so purging us *by His own blood*, that by this blood we are called upon to enter into the holiest with all boldness; or of innumerable other passages, where, apart from the philology that withdraws itself from the broad aspect of things, and concentrates its regards exclusively on some microscopic fragment which it has been pleased to detach for a separate examination, as to intercept the light that would otherwise shine upon it far around—the doctrine we are in quest of, as if written with a sunbeam, stands forth, patent and unequivocal, in the sight of all men.

16. We can prosecute no further at present our scriptural inquiries into the doctrine of the atonement; but we shall not have completed our view of all that Christ has done for us as our substitute, unless we present you, as a distinct topic of consideration, with the doctrine of His imputed righteousness. We

do not think that the second doctrine has been made to stand out very noticeably or very prominently from the first, so as to offer for our contemplation two individuals instead of one. We do not think that they are much looked to as separate objects of regard in the writings of the Fathers, or even of the earlier reformers, and it is only in the works of our more thoroughly systematic authors—where, instead of being merged together under the general aspect of Christ's mediation, they have had each a treatment bestowed upon it apart from the other, and the two subjects are so extricated, that each can be set forth into a distinct article of theology, and be made to rest on a peculiar argument of its own. The additional idea thus brought out is, that Christ hath not only suffered for us, but served for us. By the doctrine of the atonement, I am told that He hath borne for sinners their punishment, so as to rescue them from hell; and by the doctrine of the imputed righteousness, I am told that He has earned for sinners a right which entitles them to heaven. These two services are not only distinguishable in thought, but, historically and really, are often, nay, very commonly, of distinct fulfilment in the business of law and governments. That sentence of acquittal by which a prisoner is absolved from crime, and therefore dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar, is of very different effect from that positive sentence of award by which a claimant establishes his right to some honourable distinction, or some prize and inheritance of glory, by the part he is proved to have borne in some high service of courage and patriotism. By the first step he is only advanced from a state of condemnation to the midway state of innocence; by the second, he is advanced to a state of positive favour, to some rich preferment, it may be, or to a place of distinction in the palace and near the person of his sovereign. You will thus understand the difference between a negative and a positive justification. By the one we are relieved from the penalties of transgression, by the other we obtain a part and an interest in the promises of obedience. To achieve the first, Christ is said to have borne the chastisement of our peace; to achieve the second, Christ is said to have fulfilled all righteousness. He

took upon Him our guilt when He bore the chastisement of our peace ; and He lays upon us His righteousness, which He completed with His last breath by the finished work of a perfect obedience—even that obedience the merits of which are unto all, and upon all who believe. We are looked upon as innocent creatures in virtue of Christ having been made sin for us, though He knew no sin. We are looked upon as deserving creatures in virtue of our being made the righteousness of God in Him. Both of these may be gathered from Scripture as benefits distinct in themselves, and forming distinct parts of our salvation, though not presented to us there in the tabular scheme of that scholastic and systematic theology which the Church was compelled to frame—not for the purpose of supplementing Scripture, but for the purpose of defending it against the perversions of heresy. Yet both the atonement and the imputed righteousness, though not announced in the Bible as in any of the Confessions of orthodoxy, may be easily discovered in many of its passages, and both are substantially comprised within the one verse which we have now referred to:—“ He hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”

17. Before adducing any more Scripture in support of this doctrine, let me advert to it as the common property of both—that whether we look to the footing on which our sins are remitted to us, or to the footing on which a positive merit is imputed to us, neither the indemnity, on the one hand, nor the reward, upon the other, are conferred by a simple act of mercy, but of mercy in conjunction with righteousness. This is the leading, I would say the characteristic peculiarity of the gospel salvation. That salvation may be made to lie in two particulars—our deliverance from hell and our translation into heaven ; but with both, instead of a mere gratuitous dispensation prompted by the love or the compassion of heaven’s Sovereign, with both the one and the other is somehow a right associated. Our present impunity is not a forgiveness only, but a propitiated forgiveness. Our future hope is not an inheritance only, but a purchased inheritance. True eternal life is said

to be a gift ; but mark the qualification—it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. And it is said that God hath given to us eternal life ; but mark again the qualification—it is said that “ this life is in His Son.” Through Him who magnified the law and made it honourable, our deliverance from the wrath and our advancement to the favour of the great Lawgiver, have alike been strictly legalized. Mercy stands forth pre-eminent in both ; but it is mercy shrined in all the characters of an august and inviolable sacredness. On the great deed of our world’s reconciliation there stands as full and as legible an impress of the divine majesty as of the divine love ; and the voice which speaketh to us from heaven, proclaiming an open door of welcome and acceptance to the guiltiest of us all, did not fall on the charmed ear of our outcast species, till by our once crucified and now exalted Saviour, the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary had the homage done to it of a complete and awful reparation.

18. The negative and the positive in the matter of our justification are thus plainly yet powerfully discriminated, the one from the other, by Jonathan Edwards :—“ Some suppose that nothing more is intended in Scripture by justification than barely the remission of sins. If so, it is very strange, if we consider the nature of the case ; for it is most evident, and none will deny, that it is with respect to the rule or law of God we are under, that we are said in Scripture to be either justified or condemned. Now what is it to justify a person as the subject of a law or rule, but to judge him as standing right with respect to that rule ? To justify a person in a particular case, is to approve of him as standing right, as subject to the law in that case ; and to justify in general, is to pass him in judgment, as standing right in a state correspondent to the law or rule in general : but certainly, in order to a person’s being looked on as standing right with respect to the rule in general, or in a state corresponding with the law of God, more is needful than not having the guilt of sin ; for whatever that law is, whether a new or an old one, doubtless something positive is needed in order to its being answered.

We are no more justified by the voice of the law, or of him that judges according to it, by a mere pardon of sin, than Adam, our first surety, was justified by the law, at the first point of his existence, before he had fulfilled the obedience of the law, or had so much as any trial whether he would fulfil it or no. If Adam had finished his course of perfect obedience, he would have been justified; and certainly his justification would have implied something more than what is merely negative; he would have been approved of, as having fulfilled the righteousness of the law, and accordingly would have been adjudged to the reward of it. So Christ, our second surety, (in whose justification all whose surety He is are virtually justified,) was not justified till He had done the work the Father had appointed Him, and kept the Father's commandments through all trials; and then in His resurrection He was justified. When He had been put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, 1 Pet. iii. 18, then He that was manifest in the flesh was justified in the Spirit, 1 Tim. iii. 16; but God, when He justified Him in raising Him from the dead, did not only release Him from His humiliation for sin, and acquit Him from any further suffering or abasement for it, but admitted Him to that eternal and immortal life, and to the beginning of that exaltation that was the reward of what He had done. And indeed the justification of a believer is no other than his being admitted to communion in the justification of this head and surety of all believers; for as Christ suffered the punishment of sin, not as a private person, but as our surety, so when after this suffering He was raised from the dead, He was therein justified, not as a private person, but as the surety and representative of all that should believe in Him. So that He was raised again not only for His own, but also for our justification, according to the apostle, Rom. iv. 25,—‘Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.’ And therefore it is that the apostle says, as he does in Rom. viii. 34,—‘Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again.’

“But that a believer's justification implies not only remission of sin, or acquittance from the wrath due to it, but also an

admittance to a title to that glory which is the reward of righteousness, is more directly taught in the Scripture, particularly in Rom. v. 1, 2, where the apostle mentions both these as joint benefits implied in justification:—‘Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.’ So remission of sin, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, are mentioned together as what are jointly obtained by faith in Christ, Acts xxvi. 18,—‘That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified, through faith that is in me.’ Both these are without doubt implied in that passing from death to life, which Christ speaks of as the fruit of faith, and which He opposes to condemnation, John v. 24,—‘Verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.’ . . .

“To suppose that all Christ does is only to make atonement for us by suffering, is to make Him our Saviour but in part. It is to rob Him of half His glory as a Saviour. For if so, all that He does is to deliver us from hell; He does not purchase heaven for us. The adverse scheme supposes that He purchases heaven for us, in that He satisfies for the imperfections of our obedience, and so purchases that our sincere imperfect obedience might be accepted as the condition of eternal life; and so purchases an opportunity for us to obtain heaven by our own obedience. But to purchase heaven for us only in this sense, is to purchase it in no sense at all; for all of it comes to no more than a satisfaction for our sins, or removing the penalty by suffering in our stead. For all the purchasing they speak of, that our imperfect obedience should be accepted, is only His satisfying for the sinful imperfection of our obedience; or, (which is the same thing,) making atonement for the sin that our obedience is attended with. But that is not purchasing heaven, merely to set us at liberty again, that we may go and get heaven by what we do ourselves: all that Christ does is only to pay a debt for us; there is no positive

purchase of any good. We are taught in Scripture that heaven is purchased for us; it is called the *purchased possession*, Eph. i. 14. The gospel proposes the eternal inheritance, not to be acquired, as the first covenant did, but as already acquired and purchased. But he that pays a man's debt for him, and so delivers him from slavery, cannot be said to purchase an estate for him, merely because he sets him at liberty, so that henceforward he has an opportunity to get an estate by his own hand-labour. So that, according to this scheme, the saints in heaven have no reason to thank Christ for purchasing heaven for them, or redeeming them to God, and making them kings and priests, as we have an account that they do, in Rev. v. 9.

“Justification by the righteousness and obedience of Christ is a doctrine that the Scripture teaches in very full terms, Rom. v. 18, 19,—‘By the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.’ Here in one verse we are told that we have justification by Christ's righteousness; and that there might be no room to understand the righteousness spoken of, merely of Christ's atonement by His suffering the penalty, in the next verse it is put in other terms, and asserted, that it is by Christ's obedience we are made righteous. It is scarcely possible anything should be more full and determined; the terms, taken singly, are such as fix their own meaning, and taken together, they fix the meaning of each other. The words show that we are justified by that righteousness of Christ which consists in His obedience, and that we are made righteous or justified by that obedience of His, that is, His righteousness, or moral goodness before God.

“Here possibly it may be objected, that this text means only that we are justified by Christ's passive obedience.

“To this I answer, whether we call it active or passive, it alters not the case as to the present argument, as long as it is evident by the words, that it is not merely under the notion of an atonement for disobedience, or a satisfaction for unrighteousness, but under the notion of a positive obedience, and a right-

eousness, or moral goodness, that it justifies us, or makes us righteous; because both the words, *righteousness* and *obedience*, are used, and used too as the opposites to sin and disobedience, and an offence. 'Therefore, as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.' Now, what can be meant by righteousness when spoken of as the opposite to sin or moral evil, but moral goodness? What is the righteousness that is the opposite of an offence but the behaviour that is well-pleasing? and what can be meant by obedience, when spoken of as the opposite of disobedience, or going contrary to a command, but a positive obeying and an actual complying with the command? So that there is no room for any invented distinction of active and passive, to hurt the argument from this Scripture; for it is evident by it, as anything can be, that believers are justified by the righteousness and obedience of Christ, under the notion of His moral goodness—His positive obeying, and actual complying with the commands of God, and that behaviour which, because of its conformity to His commands, was well-pleasing in His sight. This is all that ever any need to desire to have granted in this dispute."\*

19. It is impossible to read the sermon from which this extract has been taken, and in the knowledge that at its first delivery it was the instrument of one of the most extensive awakenings which ever took place in modern times, without being struck by the power of Christian truth, however simply and nakedly told, on the hearts and consciences of men. It is throughout a composition of mere statements and reasonings without urgency, without fervour, having in it no impassioned appeal to the affections of our nature, and written in the plainest style, though at times bordering on the metaphysical, of a cold didactic exposition. Out and out it is an address of pure instruction, holding converse with the intellect alone; and the marvel is, the force which we historically know it had to cap-

\* Discourse on Justification by faith alone.—Rom. iv. 5.



tivate and subdue the multitude who heard it. It is the agency of the Spirit, and that alone, which can dissipate the wonder; but knowing that He makes use of suitable instruments in working on the soul of man, the inference still remains good, and not affected by the fact of His operation—that after all it is truth, and truth addressed to and taken cognizance of by the understanding, which forms the mighty engine of conversion from sin to righteousness. And in the instance before us, it was not the truth as urged, but the truth simply as stated—the mere substance of the doctrine, and not the doctrine recommended by any grace of eloquence, or enforced by any expostulation the object of which was either to win or to terrify. It was but the truth calmly and clearly expounded, on the one hand, and by its operating, not on the passions, but the convictions of men simply believed in, on the other, which proved the immediate, the instrumental cause of one of the greatest practical triumphs ever effected during these later ages in the history of Christianization. It evinces the high place which Christianity gives to a right intellectual state, the sort of central or presiding eminence which it gives to a right apprehension of the truth, and this in perfect harmony with various Bible attestations.—Not grace only, but “truth came by Jesus Christ.”—“Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”—“I am not the way and the life only, but the truth.”—“The Spirit of truth will guide you unto all truth.”—“Sanctified by the truth.”—“Renewed in knowledge.”—“Every one that knoweth the truth heareth my voice.”—“By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience.”—“Chosen to salvation through belief of the truth.”—“Ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth.” All demonstrative of the presiding influence which belief, or a right understanding of the truth has—as if it were the great master principle, the primary element of a man’s Christianity. In the effect of Jonathan Edwards’ sermon we have a practical exemplification of it—a sermon from beginning to end purely and thoroughly intellectual—the converse of mind with mind, and wholly made up of ideas and arguments. I cannot fancy

a more impressive spectacle than Edwards rightly dividing the word of truth to the hearers of his homely congregation, with no other stimulus than that of conscience, which put their understanding on its utmost stretch, while their pastor told the footing of a sinner's acceptance, or how it was that man obtained justification from God. To me it is a cheering and an elevating thought that an assemblage of common people should have comprehended such a sermon; and that in the act of listening to this profound dissertation, so many of them, through the medium of the intellect, should have become spiritual men. It confirms my every impression of the great capacities, not only for highest Christian worth, but for the high intelligence, of our general population. For the reverse phenomenon also is true. We have long been assured that when a man becomes a Christian he makes a prodigious ascent in the scale of intellect; that thus by means of a universal religious education, there would be generated an immense force and fullness of mind throughout the commonwealth. We have seen it in individual specimens, that when a man becomes a saint he becomes a sage—"He who is spiritual judging all things, while himself is judged of no man."

20. But let us now proceed to lay before you a few of the most decisive texts in favour of the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness as our positive justification in the sight of God.

21. The Saviour Jesus Christ would scarcely have been called by Jeremiah "The Lord our righteousness," (xxiii. 6,) had He only redeemed His people from guilt and its punishment, and not invested them with the title to an affirmative reward.

22. But these two are expressly distinguished from each other in Scripture, as in the passage 1 Cor. i. 30,—“But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:” unless we suppose a tautology which is quite inadmissible in such an enumeration of the distinct benefits we obtain from Christ as we are here presented with—“wisdom, *righteousness*, sanctification, *redemption*.” It is a forensic righteousness, to distinguish it from sanctification, the personal righteousness. And

it is the righteousness of a positive justification, (*δικαιοσύνη*), to distinguish it from the righteousness of a negative justification. (*ἀπολύτρωσις*.)

23. And these two benefits are substantially set forth, though not by their express names of *δικαιοσύνη* and *ἀπολύτρωσις*, in the following passages:—Rom. v. 1, 2,—“Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Peace with God because His enmity is arrested, and we have no infliction to dread because of it.—Grace from God, because, more than the cessation of enmity, there is now positive favour; and on the strength of this we rejoice in the hope of His glory. Acts xxvi. 18,—“To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.” Had the salvation stopped at the forgiveness of sins, it would have been but a negative salvation. But it passes and advances into the positive, when, over and above the forgiveness, *ἄφεσις*, there is an inheritance, *κληῆρος*, awarded to us—an inheritance among them which are sanctified. The two are blended into one in the last clause of John v. 24,—“He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” The not coming into condemnation sets forth the first benefit singly. The passing from death unto life gives the whole transition, from that death which is the penalty to that life which is the affirmative reward. In like manner in John iii. 36,—“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,” where there is positive happiness; he that believeth not hath something more than the negation of this happiness, but the positive misery of the wrath of God abiding on him. Relief from the one, and bestowment of the other, form the two steps by which the translation is completed.

24. There are some remarkable passages in which the death

of Christ is related to our redemption from punishment, and His resurrection to that justification which assures us of a positive reward. But first let me premise that the Holy Spirit is represented in Scripture as the agent, by the forthputting of whose power it was that Christ quickened into life, arose from the dead. This is not obscurely intimated to us in Rom. i. 4, and it is still more decisively stated to have been the work of God in Eph. i. 20. The same thing is intimated in Phil. ii. 9, where His resurrection is spoken of—"wherefore" (*διὸ*)—as the reward of His obedience.\* Now, part of that reward consisted not merely in the homage which He receives from the world that has been saved by Him, but in the power to confer benefits on that world: and so He sends that Spirit which quickened Himself to quicken His people,—He being the first-fruits of them that slept. (1 Cor. xv. 20.) But the identity of power put forth in the two operations of raising Him from the grave, and raising us to newness of life, is set before us in Eph. i. 19; ii. 1, 5, 6:—"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power."—"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Innumerable traces of this connexion are to be found throughout the New Testament; but what we have immediately to do with, is the relation in which the resurrection stands to the positive justification of believers.

25. In 1 Pet. iii. 18, we have a very distinct testimony to the agency of the Spirit in the resurrection of Christ—"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." There is a remarkable counterpart to the two clauses of this verse in 1 Tim. iii. 16, which seems to relate the resurrection somehow or other with justification—"And, without controversy, great is the mystery of

\* See also Heb. ii. 9.

godliness : God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Had Christ but died as an atonement, this might have released us from the penalty of our guilt ; but He rose again, because the whole of His obedience was more than commensurate to the payment of our debt. But furthermore, or over and above this, He earned a reward—even that exaltation from the grave, which is expressly viewed in the light of a recompense or deserved preferment, in the passage quoted from the Epistle to the Philippians ; and as this was only the first-fruit of the general resurrection unto life of those who believe in Him, this last may be looked upon as earned in like manner, or the affirmative remuneration won for us by the righteousness of Him who served for us, as well as suffered for us. This guides us to a consistent meaning for Rom. iv. 25,—“ Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.” He was delivered, betrayed into the hands of murderers, given up to the death for us, died for our offences ; and in so doing, bore away our guilt. The first clause presents us with the negative, the second with the positive justification. He was raised again, because He did more than absorb our condemnation by His sufferings. He won eternal life for us by His services—even that eternal life within the veil, whither He as the first-fruits and the forerunner hath already entered, and where He both prepares and claims a place for all His followers as their rightful inheritance, even the inheritance which He Himself hath purchased and won for them. And so He who was delivered for our offences, was raised again for our justification. (*δικαίωσις*.)

26. The *διὰ* which occurs twice in this verse, governs the accusative in both instances. This does not absolutely guide us to the determination, whether it denotes the antecedency, as of an efficient cause, or refers to a purpose or final cause. If the former, then the clause that He was delivered for our offences, means that our offences brought Him to the cross ; and the clause that He was raised for our justification, means that our justification, completed by His obedience, released Him

from the prison-house of the grave. If the latter, then the first clause signifies that He died to atone for our offences ; and the second, that He rose again to make good our justification, to plead for us the merits, and prepare for us the rewards of His own righteousness. All this is in beautiful harmony with Rom. viii. 34,—“ Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” The very general word *ἐντυγχάνω* may signify, not to intercede, but to advocate, forensically to state one’s cause, to mediate for one’s advantage—“ to plead our cause at God’s right hand, omnipotent to save.” See Schleusner’s Lexicon and others. Ponder, too, the expression of heirs, and joint-heirs with Christ.

27. Though the distinction between positive and negative justification has a foundation in Scripture, the counterpart distinction between Christ’s active and passive obedience is more scholastic than Scriptural. This will sufficiently appear from the following passage extracted from Edwards’ sermon on Justification :—“ So that Christ’s laying down His life might be part of that obedience by which we are justified, though it was a positive precept not given to Adam. It was doubtless Christ’s main act of obedience, because it was obedience to a command that was attended with immensely the greatest difficulty, and so to a command that was the greatest trial of His obedience. His respect shown to God in it, and His honour to God’s authority, were proportionably great. It is spoken of in Scripture as Christ’s principal act of obedience. Phil. ii. 7, 8,—‘ But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.’ Heb. v. 8,—‘ Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered.’ It was mainly by this act of obedience that Christ purchased so glorious a reward for himself. Phil. ii. 8, 9,—‘ He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every

name.' And it therefore follows from what has been already said, that it is mainly by this act of obedience that believers in Christ also have the reward of glory, or come to partake with Christ in His glory. We are as much saved by the death of Christ, as His yielding Himself to die was an act of obedience, as we are, as it was a propitiation for our sins: for as it was not the only act of obedience that merited—He having performed meritorious acts of obedience through the whole course of His life; so neither was it the only suffering that was propitiatory—all His sufferings through the whole course of His life being propitiatory, as well as every act of obedience meritorious. Indeed this was His principal suffering; and it was as much His principal act of obedience.

“Hence we may see how that the death of Christ did not only make atonement, but also merited eternal life; and hence we may see how by the blood of Christ we are not only redeemed from sin, but redeemed unto God; and therefore the Scripture seems everywhere to attribute the whole of salvation to the blood of Christ. This precious blood is as much the main price by which heaven is purchased, as it is the main price by which we are redeemed from hell. The positive righteousness of Christ, or that price by which He merited, was of equal value with that by which He satisfied; for indeed it was the same price. He spilled His blood to satisfy, and by reason of the infinite dignity of His person, His sufferings were looked upon as of infinite value, and equivalent to the eternal sufferings of a finite creature. And He spilled His blood out of respect to the honour of God's majesty, and in submission to His authority, who had commanded Him so to do: and His obedience therein was of infinite value, both because of the dignity of the person that performed it, and because He put Himself to infinite expense to perform it, whereby the infinite degree of His regard to God's authority appeared.”

## CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SATISFACTION THAT HAD TO BE RENDERED TO THE TRUTH AND JUSTICE OF GOD, ERE THAT SINNERS COULD BE RE-ADMITTED INTO FAVOUR.

1. HAVING now taken a general view of the Scriptural evidence, both for the doctrines of the atonement and the imputed righteousness, let us now present you with such reflections as the contemplation of these is fitted to suggest.

2. Had sinners been re-admitted into favour by a simple and gratuitous award of forgiveness, there is one effect of which we do not see how it could have been got over. What would have become of our reverence for the authority of God? How could we have retained an entire and unbroken respect for His whole character? What could we have made of His solemn and proclaimed assurances against the children of iniquity; or what else would have been the moral government of the Eternal, but the mockery of a name? It is not enough reflected upon how much a mere act of general mercy would have unhinged the whole system of the divine economy among men; not only degrading the throne of the Almighty into that of a fallen sovereign, but in fact giving sanction to a wide and lawless impunity in the world. Not only would the high jurisprudence of heaven have suffered violence, but it would have brought down upon earth all the violence of a moral anarchy; for nothing can so put mankind at large as the vague imagination of an obscure, perhaps a variable or fluctuating, line between the placability of God and His justice. In its effect upon practice it is tantamount to an obliteration of the limit altogether. The fence between sin and sacredness were as good as broken down;



and man would sin just as much as he liked, and then draw on the placability of God just as much as he found occasion for it. It is thus that there is so much of deep and fatal tranquillity in the world, even in the midst of the world's ungodliness. It is not only because God is seldom thought of; but it is because the thought of His inviolable sanctity, and of His absolute everlasting truth, and of a law that must be upheld in its vindicated sanctions, though in the execution of them heaven and earth should be made to pass away; it is because thoughts like these are not adequately felt or pondered on, that peace, when there is no peace, has such an undisturbed hold in society. Under a system of indefinite mercy, or of mercy at the expense of justice, God no longer stands forth in the aspect of a moral governor; and the restraints of a moral government are either wholly unfelt, or are of no practical efficacy in the world.

3. Had it been, then, by a bare and general deed of amnesty that the world was recalled to friendship with God, there would have been a felt impunity for sin upon earth; and in heaven, a felt desecration would have been inflicted thereby on the character of the Godhead. Even our prior natural theology would have been revolted by it; and in spite of themselves, there would have been a felt shock on the consciences of men. Matters would have been placed in a state of violent mal-adjustment, even with the sentiments of our own moral nature, for truth and justice are felt to have their high, their rightful demands; and when these are not satisfied, there is a certain unappeased sense of disorder and deficiency upon all spirits. There is a poetic, a sentimental theism, by which mercy is enshrined as the alone attribute of the divinity, that serves to regale the imagination, and lull the human conscience into still profounder apathy than before. But it is out of keeping even with the constitution of humanity. All the higher, the more serious feelings and faculties of our nature reclaim against it; and notwithstanding the taste and the tenderness of these representations, in which God is viewed but as the kind and indulgent Father of a family, we cannot cease to regard Him according to the high state and sovereignty of a monarch, whose

jurisdiction over the creature must be upholden ; and whose claims of authority, paramount and incommutable, must not be surrendered, even at the call of mercy, though lifted up on behalf of the undone species of a ruined world. It is thus that a proclamation of forgiveness, of simple unaccompanied forgiveness, would have been an incomplete demonstration of the Godhead. It would have marred and mutilated the aspect of the divinity. The questions of His justice and truth, and the dignity of His government, would have all been undisposed of. We know not a more impressive description of the high and holy Being with whom we have to do, than in the brief but most emphatic statement of a single Bible clause—that He cannot be mocked. But this solemn proclamation of a law trampled on with impunity—this denunciation of threats and terrible consequences never executed—this assertion of an authority never enforced—and of penalties recalled from the guilty, who had braved them, by an act of easy and good-natured connivance—these all serve to undermine the throne of God, and to cast upon Him and upon His ways a most degrading mockery.

4. In these circumstances, we cannot imagine a demonstration of more exquisite skilfulness, by which all difficulties are met, and every sentiment of reverence that we associated with the divinity, instead of being thwarted or scandalized, is exalted to the uttermost, than that furnished by the atonement of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world. The penalty was not recalled, it was only transferred ; and it gives a more dreadful effect and significancy to the threatenings of God, that though averted from us, they were all discharged on the head of the illustrious Sufferer, who took upon Him the burden of our obligations, and so bowed Himself unto the sacrifice. There is no affront, but the greatest possible homage, rendered by this proceeding to heaven's high jurisprudence. It was indeed a signal triumph of the divine wisdom to find out a way by which the transgressors of the law might be readmitted into favour, and yet the law itself be magnified and made honourable. It is altogether worthy of a God—by one act to seal the pardon of the sinner, and to affix the deepest stigma upon sin. It is thus

that on the cross of Christ there sits a radiance of all the attributes. Mercy and truth meet there; and the access of the offender to his reconciled God is by a way of deepest sacredness.

5. There is a term used by Turretin and others, which I feel inclined to apply to our present subject. They speak of knowledge as admitting of increase in two ways—extensively or intensively. It increases extensively by the number of distinct truths or informations which it appropriates—by the apposition, as it were, of one particular to another. Thus when we are bidden to increase in the knowledge of God, we may do so by becoming acquainted with some new attribute, or some new work and style of procedure of which we did not know before. But there is another way of increasing in this knowledge—intensively—which is without the addition of any truths or informations respecting Him, but only by a deeper and fuller sense, and so a more intense feeling of the truths that we have already learned. This knowledge, and then this more intense knowledge of the very same truth stand related to each other, very much as the *γνώσις* and the *ἐπιγνώσις* do in Greek. They do not relate to different things; but while the one implies a discernment and an impression, the other implies a clearer discernment and more powerful impression of the very same thing. Now it is in this latter way I apprehend chiefly that we grow in the knowledge of Christ. Not that we have to look, at least in our present state, for any additional informations respecting Him to those which are already presented in the record—not because we are in circumstances for knowing numerically more truths respecting Him than we know already; but because there is indefinite room for still profounder views, and a still deeper sense and impression of what we do know. I think that the increase of our knowledge in this latter sense is pre-eminently applicable to the doctrine of the atonement—to that part of Christianity, specialized by the apostle, who was determined “to know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” I think, too, that it is the property of infinite depth rather than of infinite variety,

that suggests the expression of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that makes the apostle speak of our comprehending the length, and the breadth, and the height, and the depth of the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. I do not say that by drinking deep into the doctrine of the atonement, you draw up novelties of truth, or are enabled thereby to give forth novelties of statement. We cannot therefore say the thing differently, or say it higher, than we did at the first. But we may feel it differently, and feel it indefinitely higher than we did at the first. The power of language is limited, and so becomes soon inadequate to the expression of thoughts and feelings, ever growing more intense on a subject which admits in thought of endless augmentation. The doctrine of the atonement we hold to be pre-eminently such a subject. We may have few distinct things to say of it; but they are such things as, however soon overtaken in point of saying, in point of sense and sentiment you can never come to the end of. The love that prompted it—the wisdom that devised it—the admirable fitness of it to preserve unbroken the authority of the Lawgiver, while it provides an amnesty, a wide and welcome amnesty, for the most heinous transgressors of His law—the union, the blended harmony, of the benevolence that is there, with august and inviolable sacredness—the lustre it pours over the high and the holy attributes of God, while it rears a firm pathway between earth and heaven for the unholyest of us all—the charm that resides in this single truth at once to pacify the conscience and to purify the heart, to give unbounded security in the friendship of God, while it quickens into activity and life all the springs of a new obedience,—these are what elevates this great doctrine into the capital truth of the Christian system, the dearest of our sentiments upon earth, the song of our eternity.

6. And here we may again remark how much the interest of the atonement, and more especially its moral effect upon the heart, is enhanced by the dignity, by the divinity of the Sufferer. What a magnificent homage must such a sacrifice be deemed to the worth and authority of the law—what a dread

exhibition of the evil of sin—what a testimony, broken forth as it were from heaven upon earth, to the infinity of the outrage, when the high and the holy jurisprudence of Heaven was violated! And then what a movement of pity and infinite condescension, when God manifest in the flesh assumed the infirmities of our nature, and served, and suffered, and died for our sakes. In an expiation so mighty, what a guarantee for our sure and everlasting forgiveness! When we broke the commandment, an arm of infinite strength was lifted up to destroy; but now an arm of infinite strength is lifted up to save. How both the mercy and the justice of God are irradiated by this transaction—when in love to the world, He gave up His only beloved Son to the weight and the agony of such an endurance; and when, ere the world could be readmitted into favour, such an endurance behoved to be borne. It will be found that each of these sentiments, respecting the work of the Saviour and the worth of His salvation, is indefinitely deepened by the sense of His divinity. The price of our redemption gives new emphasis to the feeling of its preciousness; and the felt gratitude, the constraining influence of the Saviour's love, all the motives to the new obedience of the gospel, are heightened to the uttermost by the knowledge that Christ is God. Still, it is a subject on which one's knowledge grows intensively rather than extensively. It is a theme not to be so much expatiated on in words as to be cherished and deepened in the solitude and devotion of one's own thoughts. It is not so much a discursive topic, as one on which to concentrate all those thoughtful regards that are due to the first and the greatest of principles, or to the first and greatest object of affection. It is a profound and perennial feeling which abides in the heart of every real believer; and, strengthening and growing through eternity, will actuate all the songs and services of heaven.

7. But to proceed in our didactic exposition of the subject. There is a distinction made by theologians between the active and the passive righteousness of Christ. Substantially, I am inclined to adopt it. I hold it to be Scriptural, and there is a fulness in the conception which better accords with all that we

are taught to believe respecting the fulness of the gospel remedy, and which seems suited to the real exigencies of our species. By this view He is regarded, not merely as having suffered, but as having served for us—not merely as having borne our penalties, and so furnished us with a plea for forgiveness, but as having done our work of incumbent obedience, and so furnished us with a plea for reward. He hath done more than purchased our release from the agonies of hell—He hath purchased for us an inheritance in heaven. Had He only brought an atonement into the world, we should have been but as assolizied criminals, or dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar—freed from the vengeance of our country's outraged laws. But He brought in an everlasting righteousness also ; and on its strength we are preferred to a seat of honour and distinction in the palace of our Sovereign. On the limited conception of the matter, we are but placed in a midway state between a wretched and a blissful eternity. On the extended conception of it, there is secured our complete translation from the condemnation of the one to the triumphs and enjoyments of the other. The redemption that is through the blood of Jesus is but the forgiveness of sins. But He is made unto us righteousness as well as redemption ; and we, in virtue of this glorious investiture, can lay positive claim to a place and a preferment in Paradise. In a word, we can not only plead the efficacy of His death—we can plead the affirmative merit of His obedience ; and so, all humbled as we ought to be when we think of our destitution in ourselves, we, in Him, have both a right of discharge from the prison-house of condemnation, and a right of entry into the upper mansions that He has gone to prepare for us.

8. With every step in fact of our recovery, there seems to be a righteousness, and so a right associated. Our deliverance from hell is not a simple gratuity, for ours is a purchased redemption. Neither is our admission into heaven a simple gratuity, for ours is a purchased inheritance. The great, the specifying characteristic of the gospel dispensation, is not that it is a dispensation of mercy alone, but of mercy in conjunction

with righteousness. What the gospel proposes is not a mere gift of eternal life, it is the gift of a right to eternal life—not the simple bestowment of everlasting blessedness, but the bestowment of a title, a legal and meritorious title, to everlasting blessedness. This legal investiture of the sinner enters into the very essence of the gospel—insomuch that in the act of his forgiveness we behold, not mercy alone, but as in bright and vindicated lustre, the other moral attributes of the Godhead. And accordingly, God is represented not only as compassionate to forgive, but as faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness. Now that Christ has died—now that by His sufferings and His suretiship a full discharge is obtained for us—now that He has not only suffered, but also served in our stead,—the truth and the justice of God are as much committed to the fulfilment of the promises of the gospel, as they were before to the fulfilment of the threatenings of the law. The very attributes which, under the old economy, were the objects of the sinner's terror, are, under the new economy, the firm guarantees of his safety. What then was to him an argument for despair, forms now an argument on which to base his most triumphant confidence. He associates his hopes of coming glory, not with the mercy alone, but gathers strength to the bright anticipation from the truth and the righteousness of God; and so the deeply-seated tranquillity that is in him rests on this solid foundation—the entire and unbroken character of the Deity.

9. The distinction on which we now insist is something more than a verbal or a scholastic one. It is not by an act of simple forgiveness, but of forgiveness consecrated in the blood of a satisfying atonement—it is only thus we feel that the dignity of the Lawgiver can be reconciled with the acceptance of those who have trampled on the law. We cannot with confidence affirm on our imperfect knowledge of the Divine nature, that a dispensation of mercy or any other principle would have been absolutely at variance with the constitution and character of the Godhead; but we may at least affirm, on the intimate experience we have of our own nature, that it would have been

at variance with all which conscience suggests respecting the authority of the law, and the truth and unchangeableness of the Lawgiver. In other words, the scheme of salvation in the gospel seems the only one by which to meet and to appease the demands of our moral nature; and the more profoundly it is reflected on, the more we are persuaded will it be found to tally with the conscience and the constitution which God hath given to us. It is the only scheme which brings the offers of mercy to the sinner into practical adjustment with what the sinner himself feels imperatively due to the holiness and the justice of God; and without this adjustment, we feel assured that even the most authoritative declarations of mercy by a revelation from without, would have been met by the misgivings of our own moral nature from within. After the achievement of so mighty a practical benefit as this, it is of less importance to tell you of any speculative adjustment in the questions of moral science. But we have often felt, when thinking of the doctrine of the atonement, how much the orthodoxy of Scripture was at one with the orthodoxy of that sound ethical system which is espoused by the best and the greatest of our philosophers. A deed of general and unaccompanied mercy would have harmonized with that untenable theory which merges all the virtues into one—representing them as but the modifications of benevolence. The mercy of God as actually propounded in the gospel seems the strongest possible homage which could be rendered to truth and justice, as virtues that had a distinct and independent stability of their own.

10. And on this subject let me advert to the strenuous and unbending assertion of the Reformers in opposition to the Church of Rome—not only that we are justified by faith, but that we are justified by faith alone. It is a controversy charged with highest principle, and the honour of heaven's high jurisprudence is staked on the doctrine, that no other righteousness than the one righteousness of Christ enters into the matter of a man's justification. This has been well denominated by Luther the article of a standing or a falling Church; and it has been pondered neither with sufficient clearness of percep-



tion nor with sufficient depth of principle by those who underestimate the importance of it. The truth is, that, by admitting man's obedience by ever so little into the plea for his acceptance, you make the surrender of a great and incommutable principle in the Divine administration. You introduce an ingredient into the title-deed which vitiates and nullifies the whole—you mix the polluted with the perfect; and the security of the sinner's hopes, instead of resting on a compact and homogenous foundation, rest, like Nebuchadnezzar's image, on a pedestal that is partly of iron and partly of clay. The whole meaning and moral of the atonement is dissipated by this partitioning of the claim between the righteousness of man and the righteousness of Christ. The completeness, the integrity of the title-deed is essentially violated, and altogether, when the plea for eternity is thus pieced together by a conjunction of the precious with the vile, the composition is such as God, sitting in the capacity of a Lawgiver and Judge, utterly refuses to entertain or to look upon. It is a question depending not on the magnitude of the share which human merit would arrogate to itself—for let this be the humblest fraction, the gospel peremptorily refuses to human merit any share in the matter of our salvation at all. It is a question not of degree but of principle—like the dignity of a great empire, that would resent, with equal energy, the invasion of a prince, or the usurpation of a single inch of territory.

11. After the explanations which have been already given, it should be unnecessary to say that when the term justification is employed to express one of the capital doctrines in Christianity, it is used, not in the personal, but in the judicial or forensic sense of it. It has altogether a legal signification, and has respect, not to what the man is in actual character, but to what the man is held to be in juridical estimation. It is not that change in himself, by which he is made a just person; but it is that change in his relation to the law and the Lawgiver, by which he is now reckoned with and treated as a just person. It describes not the man's moral rightness, but his legal right; and however inseparably the two may be con-

joined in fact, they ought not on that account to be confounded in idea. Their union does not constitute their unity, and though constantly associated, insomuch that the one is never realized by the same individual without the other going along with it, they are distinct in themselves, and may become the distinct objects of thought.

12. This legal or judicial character extends to the whole effect of Christ's vicarious work in behalf of those for whom He both made an end of sin and brought in an everlasting righteousness. The former benefit He achieved by suffering in our stead, the latter by serving in our stead. Hence two distinct benefits in the statement of which we announce two distinct doctrines—the one being the doctrine of the atonement, the other the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness. When looked to objectively, they are viewed as two articles of faith; but it will be found that just as each objective thing, whether in nature or revelation, has its counterpart in something subjective—so will it be found of the two distinct objective doctrines which we have now specified, that there obtains a corresponding subjective distinction in two great varieties of human experience.

13. The two varieties of which we now speak may be stated thus:—First, there is one class of inquirers with whom, at the commencement of their religious earnestness, the predominant feeling is the guilt of their past disobedience, and hence a remorse and terror which can only find their relief in the doctrine of the atonement. And, secondly, there is another class whose predominant feeling is for the present rather than the past, hence a sense and perpetual consciousness of the deficiency of their current obedience, and hence a constant but fruitless aspiration after a perfect conformity to God's law, and so a disappointment or even despair which can only find relief in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness. We are far from saying that both of these sensations are not blended together in the great majority, perhaps in all the cases of a translation out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, yet in such various proportions as give rise to a great complexional

difference in the history of their conversions between one man and another, and so as to evolve two distinct adaptations in the distinct parts of Christ's substitution for sinners, to the wants and exigencies under which they labour. The subject altogether is worthy of consideration, not merely because adding a new phase or feature, as it were, to that admirable harmony which obtains between the objective and the subjective in Christianity, but because of the lesson which might be educed from it to the dispensers of Christian truth in their pulpit ministrations—seeing that the highest wisdom of their vocation, the wisdom of winning souls, lies chiefly in their being able to give to every man a word in season.

14. But before we proceed to consider the distinction between the two sensibilities of which we have just spoken, let me first acknowledge that, in reference to the vast majority of our species, there is little or no sensibility on the subject at all. We admit that there is a natural sense in every human conscience of a law and a lawgiver. God is regarded not in the light of a Father only, but of a Sovereign and Judge. We are confident indeed, that throughout our species, the sense of His righteousness prevails over the sense of His benignity and love, and that the hearts of men are far more occupied with the former than with the latter of these attributes. The reason is, that while in the guilt and the darkness of nature man feels that it is with His righteousness and not with His love that he has practically and personally to do. He looks upon himself more as an object of vindictive justice than of parental regard, and his attention of course is most drawn to that aspect or that characteristic of the Divinity, wherewith himself is personally concerned. Any hope of His mercy is languid and feeble and uncertain, but not so the dread that he has of God's righteous displeasure. He knows himself to be a sinner, and knows that as such, it is with offended justice, and not with mild and pleasing benevolence, that he has principally if not wholly to do. And that aspect of the Godhead which addresses itself to hope, when the weakest of the emotions, will not be so often in the eye of the mind's contemplation, as that aspect

of the Godhead which addresses itself to fear, the strongest of the emotions. And so an overhanging sense upon all spirits, which the tasteful representations of meagre and sentimental piety cannot displace, the overhanging sense of God as an offended Sovereign who rightfully challenges the obedience that we have not given Him, and who resents the outrage that we have inflicted on the authority of His law.

15. But we have just been saying that throughout the great majority of our species, there is on this subject little or no sensibility at all. And how then can that be represented as the general feeling of humanity, which among the great bulk of mankind has no existence. The truth is, that in regard to the state of the question between God and man, there is throughout the mass of society a deep and dense and impracticable lethargy. To use a Bible expression, they are not alive unto God. Amid the engrossments of business, they do not think of Him. In the animating converse of their fellows, they lose all sense of the unseen, but Himself, the omniscient witness, who is always looking on. In the rapid succession of these engagements, and convivialities, and recreations, and duties, which fill up the history of the day, God who registers all, and who will reckon with us for all, is scarcely once from morning till night ever adverted to. The thought of Him may sometimes intrude, but with as little practical and permanent effect as any passing phantasy of the imagination. There is in this matter a spirit of profoundest slumber—the stillness, and settledness, and apathy of death—the torpid oblivion of hearts steeped in earthliness, and that are never lifted to the God who is above, and seldom or never open to one emotion, whether of curiosity or fearfulness as to the eternity that is before it. The vast majority of men, beset by the urgencies of sense and of time, never cast one look, or send forth one vivid aspiration to the realities beyond them. And how then, it may again be asked, can we offer to analyze the feeling which scarcely exists, and still less how can we report it in your hearing as the general feeling of humanity towards God?

16. Let it be understood, then, when we speak of this gene-

ral feeling of humanity, we speak not of humanity asleep, but of the general feeling of humanity awakened. The multitude on the broad way are sunk in deepest unconcern about God; and while in this state of dormancy they offer none of those mental phenomena to our observation from which we gather the real sense that humanity has of God. Ere we can ascertain this, that sense must be in some degree awakened; and there is not one even of these reckless, inconsiderate, and altogether alienated creatures, on whom the experiment might not be tried. Let death but look at any one of them in good earnest. Let the last messenger knock at their door and give audible notice of the errand on which he has come. Let the proclamation be but sounded in their hearing that the Judge is at hand—that they have at length been laid on the bed of their last sickness—or that the stroke by which they have been arrested in the midst of those worldly cares and worldly comforts that wont to monopolize all their attention, is indeed the stroke of death. Let them thus be forced to encounter in thought the realities of the question between them and God; and as they stand on the brink of the eternity for which they have made no provision, let them, when thus torn from every earthly object, whether of desire or of dependence, be made to feel that the God into whose presence they are so shortly to be ushered, is indeed the only Being with whom they have to do. We ask whether any one of these countless millions, when thus forced to the contemplation, would look on God simply as a benign and affectionate Lawgiver, without one misgiving thought of the law which they had broken, and the Lawgiver, whom in health they had defied, and before whom in sickness they now despond and tremble? The situation which we now conceive would bring humanity to the test; and we ask, whether, in the circumstances now specified, it is more likely that they would rejoice in the benevolence, or be disquieted and in terror because of the justice of the Divinity? Would not the thoughts of himself as a sinner, and of God as a being of lofty and unapproachable sacredness, be those which chiefly occupied and appalled him? Whether would the fond imagination of a

parent's tenderness, or the suggestion from his own moral nature of God as a righteous Governor—which of these would have the practical ascendancy, and be most present to his thoughts? Whether would he feel himself to be more under a parental or under a legal economy, in the hands of an indulgent Father who smiled connivance at his frailties, or in the hands of a Judge and a Governor who should reckon with him for his crimes? Do not all history and all example prove, that, when fully awakened to the question, it is the legal apprehension which lords it over all spirits—that they cannot if they would be rid of the imagination, that there is a law, an eternal and immutable law, which challenges their obedience—and sensible as they must be of a thousand delinquencies, and a thousand defects, that within them they feel the remorse of a conscious guilt, and over them they fear the reckonings of a God of vengeance?

17. Now what takes place at the awakening of a death-bed also takes place in whatever other way the eye of the mind be opened to the realities of its condition. It is not always by means of some striking and outward demonstration that the mind is forced to entertain the question of its state with God. The same thing may happen in the secret workings of a man's own conscience, and without the excitement of any visible occasion. The spirit may be arrested even amid the frolics of childhood, and it has been arrested amid the levities of youth, and it has been arrested in the full career of ambition or guilty pleasure, and it has been arrested among the manifold urgencies of toilsome and engrossing business. But never, will we venture to say, have these topics, these awful topics of God, and the soul, and eternity, been entertained in good earnest, but the sense of a law and of a Lawgiver has been closely implicated with the whole contemplation. In these seasons of visitation God may be called upon as a Father; but He is felt to be a Governor and a Judge. He may be styled the friend and the parent of the human family; but every enlightened conscience tells that He is seated on a throne of rightful jurisdiction, and that the high state and sovereignty of a monarch belong to Him. The

dark imagery of remorse and terror haunts the awakened spirit. It cannot escape, though it would, from a certain fearful sense of an unsettled controversy between it and God. The charges and the penalties of a broken commandment weigh oppressively upon its thoughts; and it sinks under the dreary imagination, that the only prospect for a guilty sinner is an undone eternity.

18. We are aware that the advocates of a meagre and sentimental piety keep all this jurisprudence out of sight. They would contemplate the relation between God and man exclusively in the light of a family relation—where if you had the waywardness of children on the one side, you had the unextinguishable fondness of a smiling and indulgent Father upon the other. This may be the religion of poetry, but it is not the religion of conscience, which, we venture to affirm, is never, not even in one instance, fully awakened, but to the view of a broken law, and of a displeased because a dishonoured Lawgiver. You cannot discharge these judicial notions, these judicial apprehensions, from the relationship between God and man; and however often or eloquently He may be spoken of as a God of love, yet none, we aver, has been visited by a real and practical sense of the question, who does not intimately feel Him to be a God of judgment.

19. We have already admitted of the thousands who are not thus awakened, that they are in a state of total insensibility to all this. The thing never disturbs them, but simply because they never think of it. They are engrossed with other matters; and the din and daylight of this everyday world have cradled them, as it were, into a peaceful and placid oblivion of eternity. They are in a state of tranquillity, we admit, but it is the tranquillity of sleeping men. And, besides, there is a way in which both the law and the Lawgiver may be talked and even thought of, that is made the subject of speculation, without ever becoming the subject of that deep and painful sensibility which we have just spoken of. There may be a tacit delusion respecting the law. There may be the imagination that it has let down its requisitions to the standard of the man's own

practice or powers. There may be the flattering idea of a compromise between the indulgence of God and the infirmities of men—of a reduced and mitigated law, in kind accommodation to the feebleness of humanity. At this rate man might walk through life on a kind of easy and level platform, with his conscience and his conduct on terms of most comfortable equality with each other. He makes the odds even, not by bringing up his obedience to the law, but by bringing down the law to the state of his obedience. And thus, there is many a respectable, and sober, and church-going citizen, who breathes in no other element than that of an unbroken earthliness through the week, and only relieves it by the formal observances of the Sabbath—many such, who on the strength of their decencies and their inoffensiveness, and the moral fairness of their intercourse with their fellows in society—who, when they think of heaven at all, think of themselves as in a very tolerable state of preparation, as if the esteem they had earned among their human companionships below, indicated their full preparation for the companionships and exercises of the upper sanctuary; or, as if having done all that is expected of them here by creatures as sinful and alienated as themselves, they had therefore fulfilled the requisitions of a God of holiness.

20. This subtle delusion in which so many persist to the end of their days, and so many perish, can only be sustained after all by the blinking of the question. It could not stand its ground against the close and earnest and sustained contemplation of the subject. They who are under its influence only differ from the former in being under the power of two opiates instead of one. To the opiate of sense they have added the opiate of a false speculation; yet sometimes it happens, that both together will not suffice for the tranquillity of their spirits. There are occasions on which the law makes itself heard, and on which conscience responds to its loud and lofty assertion of the prerogatives which it claims. Hence the misgiving and the fears by which through life they often are disquieted; and on their dying-bed doth the law at times blaze forth with the dread manifestation both of its lofty demands and its now



unescapable terrors—the terrors of a condemnation that, but for some miracle of grace, is fixed and irrevocable—the demands of a moral and spiritual excellence, to which the trembling, because now convicted sinner never once aspired.

21. It is better when the law interposes in time with this manifestation—when conscience is awakened to its lessons sooner, and when in discharge of its office as a schoolmaster, it shuts men up unto the faith, in virtue of that important function which is ascribed to it in the New Testament, of bringing men to Christ. We feel quite assured, that when men have rightly learned of this instructor, they find that there is something else between them and God than a mere reciprocity of parental fondness on the one hand, and of filial confidence, even in the midst of nature's wilfulness and waywardness, upon the other. They find, in fact, the whole apparatus of a law to be turned in hostility against them—its conditions, its menaces, its denounced penalties when broken, its proffered rewards only in the event of a full and faultless observation. At one time it pursues them with its exactions, at another it holds up to them its own irreparable deficiencies. It haunts them with a thousand disquietudes—not the disquietudes, they are made to feel, of imagination, but the disquietudes of a juster and higher faculty—with the grave and authoritative depositions of moral principle, which at once reproaches them with their delinquencies, and represents them as in the hands of a justly offended God.

22. And having spoken in the general to such a state of mental anxiety and concern, let me now advert to two distinct varieties thereof—for there are two distinct effects which this legal discipline of remorse and terror and self-dissatisfaction has on different minds, and from which proceed two distinct and interesting varieties of religious experience.

23. There is one class who have been made to feel the enormity of their past guilt, and who under the sense of that enormity, feel themselves to be completely overborne. Perhaps in this retrospect of their personal history, there may have occurred some very dark and therefore memorable passages—some

daring impiety, some deep-laid and deliberate seduction, some scheme of perfidy or fraud, which, if known to the world, would banish them from society, and which, though only known to themselves, at least banishes all hope and all complacency from their bosoms—some death which, if not inflicted by a hand of murderous violence, may yet be distinctly traced to the tyranny or the outrageous temper that kept a household in perpetual dismay, and at length sent one or more of its broken-hearted inmates to the grave. Or without any signal or specific act of guilt, a career of guilt, a course of shameful profligacy and foul dissipation, a system of practical iniquity, that, in the pursuit of lawless enjoyment, blended in it both the reckless disregard of a reputation or name on earth, and a reckless defiance to the law of heaven. Often do we read in the history of human conversions of an arrest being at length laid on such a desperado in wickedness; and of conscience speaking to his affrighted ear in a voice of thunder, and of his standing aghast before the picture of his own worthlessness; and of his feeling himself to be in the hands of a God of vengeance, and that between the high authority of a law so sacred, and the outrage of a rebellion so atrocious, nothing awaited him but a wretched and undone eternity.

24. Now, in this state of conviction, were I to describe the condition of the man, I should say that it was not a state of activity or effort, but a state of passive, yet withal of intense suffering. He makes no effort under an overwhelming visitation of this sort, because despair has paralyzed him. When there is no hope, there is no object for his activity, and so he just gives way to the terror which haunts, and to the remorse which agonizes him. When a man sees not how he can better himself, there is no motive, no purpose which can call him to exertion. He sinks under the weight of his despondency, and realizes the description of the psalmist, when wearisome days and nights had been appointed to him. He loses all communion, all sympathy with external things; and this deep, this dreadful endurance of a wounded spirit, he feels to be the foretaste of his coming and eternal agony. Thy billows have overpassed me, Thy terrors have overwhelmed me, Thine arrows

stick fast in me—these are but varieties of expression for the mental agony of him, the eye of whose inner man has been at length opened to the demonstration of his guilt, and to the terrors of that appalling vengeance which are to follow it.

25. Now what we affirm is, that the doctrine of God's general mercy will not allay this tempest. It will not hush the alarms of an offended justice, of a dishonoured law, of an insulted authority. All the tender and tasteful representations of a Socinian or sentimental theology, will not quell the agitations of a spirit thus labouring under the conviction of its own sinfulness, and of the sacredness of that high and eternal Sovereign with whom it has to do. You may as well think of lulling it to repose among the reelings of an earthquake, or the loud discharges of an impending volcano.

26. It is on occasions like these that the gospel of Jesus Christ makes the most signal demonstration of its efficacy. It is not the assurance of simple pardon that will still the tumults of remorse and terror; but it is of propitiated pardon through the blood of a satisfying atonement. The charm lies there. When the sinner trembles under a sense of his disobedience to the law which a God hath commanded, there is no adequate restorative to his soul but in the sense of that expiation for which a God hath died. It is in the atonement of the cross that he meets with the solution of all his difficulties, and so with the solution of all his fears. It is there, and there alone, where justice and mercy have met in harmony, and where the exercise of the one casts on the awful sacredness of the other its brightest irradiation. When God is seen by us in the face of Christ, He is seen in the brightness of His mercy to the sinful; but it is a mercy so accompanied with holiness and truth—so enshrined, as it were, in the high honours of a vindicated law, as to throw over the character of the Godhead a deeper sacredness than before. In that halo which is over the mercy-seat of Christianity, there is a radiance of all the attributes. Along with the love which gladdens every believer's heart, there is an august and awful majesty to solemnize it; and while in this wondrous spectacle we behold peace to the sinner, yet, seen

as it is through the mystery of a world's atonement, we there too behold the evil of sin in most fell and appalling demonstration. While the sinner looked upon all this as the fire of Heaven's jealousy directed against himself to burn up and to destroy, there was but room in his heart for the one affection of single and overwhelming terror. But when seen as it is, averted from us because discharged upon Him who, for our sakes, sustained the agonies of the garden and of the cross, we can look on without the fear of terror, yet it is impossible to look intelligently on without the fear of deepest reverence. But herein lies the exquisite skilfulness of the whole contrivance, if it may be so termed. It is that very aspect in the economy of redemption which serves most to maintain inviolate the sacredness of God, that also serves most to establish on a solid foundation the peace of the believer. It is because under that economy the justice of God has been satisfied and His truth has been fulfilled, and His holiness has had the lustre of an awful vindication poured over it, that these attributes still remain the objects of an undiminished, or rather, of an exalted reverence. But it is just because of this also that these attributes have ceased to be the objects of terror. Instead of frowning in hostility upon the sinner, they now form into a canopy of defence over him. That truth which was formerly staked to the threatenings of the law, is now staked to the promises of the gospel; and if justice require the infliction of death on the unrepentant and unbelieving transgressor, justice equally requires the bestowment of life eternal on every repentant transgressor for whom the Saviour died.

27. But these observations bear only on remission, which, under the economy of the gospel, is vouchsafed to the believer. But there is something more than a remission granted to him: there is also a reward. And the distinctness of these two privileges must at once be obvious to you. By the one you simply obtain the treatment of an innocent person; by the other you obtain the treatment of a deserving person. By the one there is a deed of acquittal put into your hands, and you can claim an exemption from the threatened penalties; by the other a

deed of justification is put into your hands, and you can claim a title to the promised rewards. The one without the other would but place you in the midway state of him who is dismissed *simpliciter* from the bar—it would save you from hell, but it would not certify your admittance into heaven. Now the salvation of the gospel comprehends both these objects; and the justification inclusive of both effectuates not merely the remission of the penalty that is due to sin, but a title to the reward that is due to righteousness.

28. Perhaps, after all that has been said, I expatiate too much upon this subject; but I am anxious to rectify the lame and imperfect view which many have of the virtue that lies in Christ's mediatorship. It cannot be too distinctly given forth, that the substitution which He underwent for mankind has to do not only with the matter of remission, but that it has also to do with the matter of reward. He not only suffered, but He served for our sakes. He took upon Him not merely the punishment that we should have borne, but He took upon Him the performances that we should have rendered. We thus obtain through Him and through His intervention, not a right to forgiveness only, but a right to positive reward. And if in virtue of His being made our redemption, we can show cause at the bar of jurisprudence why sentence of condemnation should not be laid upon us, we also, in virtue of His being made our righteousness, can plead our title to a place and a preferment among the glories of the upper paradise. In short, to complete the doctrine of that vicarious character which belongs to the mediation of Christ, we must advert to the double exchange which hath taken place between the sinner and the Saviour. He hath taken to Himself the burden of our sins, and borne the whole of our punishment, and He hath invested us with the merit of His righteousness, and welcomes us to its full reward. He became sin for us though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

29. We have already said that the former of these benefits suited the case and the necessity of him who feels himself overborne by a sense of guilt. He reads in his past misdoing the

picture of his own worthlessness. He compares his own evil deserts with the denunciations of a law, under the apprehended power of which, and vengeance of which, he trembles, and is in despair. His heart is occupied with the terrors of the divine justice; and it is not till made to understand how this justice is propitiated by a satisfying atonement, that, lightened from the burden of his disquietudes and his fears, he feels himself quit of his despondency, and at peace with God.

30. But this is only one variety of human experience. There is another which I think more common, and which I would denominate the second great variety of human experience. The first requires for its right and proper fulfilment, a propitiated pardon. The second for its right and proper fulfilment, an imputed righteousness. I think that both of these are proposed to us in the objective truth which Christianity holds out to our view; and I also think that both are needed to meet and to satisfy the wants of the subjective spirit to which Christianity is addressed.

31. For it is not always when a man is first visited by religious earnestness that he feels the burden of an enormous and as yet unexpiated guilt. The first impulses towards Christianity do not always come in this form. There may be a strong general uneasiness—a sense that all is not right with him—a pressing conviction that he must undergo a change of state and of habit, for that his present condition is not one that would do to die in. And yet it may not be the view of his past delinquencies which bears oppressively upon his spirit. I should like your attention to this variety in the religious experience of men. There are some with whom certainly, at the outset of their great spiritual revolution, the uppermost feeling is not remorse suggested by a sense of past disobedience, but of dissatisfaction suggested by a sense of their present current deficiencies from the obedience which they know should always be rendered, but which they also know they are always falling short of. They do not feel the weight of the guilt already accumulated; but they are harassed by the vexatious hourly experience of their constant failures from the law of righteousness.

It is as if the window of remembrance was not so clear with those who undergo this, as with those who undergo the former experience—that when they look in that direction they catch but a dull and languid, and therefore unimpressive view of the deeds in their past history. The consideration that theirs had been a life of profligacy and profaneness up to the present moment, or without anything so glaring as this, the consideration that theirs had been a life of ungodliness up to the present moment, is at times brought home with such appalling conviction to the hearts of some people, as to sink them into the inactivity of despair till this fearful account is brought to a settlement. *Their* pressing necessity is an atonement for sin. Their first demand is release from the debt of condemnation, and the balsam which their peculiar necessity requires is the doctrine of Christ as a surety and as a sacrifice. Now this case is specifically distinct from that of those, who, owing to some variety, it may be, in their mental constitution, are not so haunted by the retrospect of their past deficiencies, yet, nevertheless, are ever labouring under the dissatisfied feeling of their present deficiencies. Their memory is not so awake to that which is behind, as their consciousness is awake to that which is present. The discharge, therefore, of an unsettled account between them and God, is not that which they principally seek after. They are not so much galled by remorse under a sense of their past guilt as they are goaded onward to a fatiguing, though fruitless activity, under a sense of their present shortcomings. This gives rise to an important difference of aim and of object between two sets of inquirers; and there is a corresponding difference between the objective truths which should be applied to each of them. The one requires the doctrine of an atonement—the other the doctrine of an imputed righteousness.

32. We read in Scripture of those who seek to establish a righteousness of their own. It is obvious of the people who are thus employed, that they have not been paralyzed into inaction by terror or despair. Wherever there is activity there is hope; for none would labour in quest of an object without the opinion in their mind of their having at least some chance

for the attainment of it. The people, then, who set out on the attempt of substantiating a claim to heaven by a righteousness of their own, must not be thinking all the while of the uncanceled debt which heaven has against them. They must not look on the guilt of their past iniquities as an impassable barrier in their way. It is probable that some obscure apprehension of God's general mercy, mixed up with an obscure and faded recollection of their own past offences, may explain their tranquillity on this point, and be the reason why they do not seek for the settlement of their account, ere they start anew on a career of positive acquisition. Certain it is there are many who, unencumbered by any sense of their past debts and deficiencies, are labouring to make good a right to heaven by their righteousness, and that in the midst of their perpetual distress from the consciousness all the while that their performances fall immeasurably short of their aspirations and their wishes. Now this we affirm to be a distinct variety from the case of those who, sunk in despondency, can only utter a sense of utter helplessness in themselves, by the question—what shall I do to be saved? They who are thus at a loss what to do for this object, belong to a specifically different class from those who are actually and strenuously doing all they can for the attainment of it. There is an obvious distinction here surely; and what we affirm is, that the distinction is not met—the misery incidental respectively to each of these classes is not met by its counterpart provision, unless the minister, fraught with the fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, while he declares to the one a perfect redemption, declares to the other the imputation of a perfect righteousness. The man, overwhelmed under a sense of his disobedience, and so trembling in the prospect of the future hell, and the man striving by means of his obedience to realize the future heaven—these men are in distinct and dissimilar conditions; and there is a corresponding distinctness in the truths or the arguments which should be brought to bear upon them. The doctrine of Christ our redemption is the proper landing-place for the first—the doctrine of Christ our righteousness is the proper landing-place for the second.



33. For without the latter of these two landing-places observe the effect when the man is seeking to establish by his own obedience a righteousness for himself. If he be satisfied with his success, this can only be by a degradation of the standard of the law. If he be satisfied, then his performance is up to his sense of obligation ; and this can only be because he has a low sense of obligation. He is not looking to the commandment in its extent, in its exaltation, in the lofty characteristics of spirituality and sacredness which belong to it. His conscience and his conduct are in terms of most cordial fellowship—the one smiling complacency upon the other. But this is because he has brought his conscience down to the level of his conduct ; and hence a peace when there is no peace—a delusive confidence which may be carried indefinitely low in the scale of character. At this rate he makes out a righteousness by which himself is satisfied ; but this is not the righteousness by which God is satisfied—and so a fatal tranquillity, which may not be broken up till he comes to die, or not be broken up till the spirit returns to the God who gave it. It was at the sight of the august Lawgiver, that Job, overwhelmed by a sense of defect and disparity, abhorred himself, and repented in dust and ashes. And such is the conviction that, when ushered into the presence of the Judge, awaits the spirit of every man who has been nourishing through life a deceitful complacency among the empty formalities, perhaps, of religious service, or the decencies and the virtues of a mere terrestrial society. The law will refuse to acknowledge this as an adequate obedience, and will resent as a tenfold outrage on its insulted dignity, that man should challenge the dispensation of its rewards and its honours ; or bid Heaven's high majesty pronounce of his wretched offerings that they were good enough for God.

34. But we are not to imagine of every man who seeks to establish a righteousness of his own, that his conscience is on a dead level with his conduct, and hence a placid contentment both with his present state and his future prospects. There are many such whose conscience is greatly ahead of their conduct, and so they are perpetually and most painfully haunted

by the sense of a wide and melancholy difference between what they are and what they ought to be. As they multiply their doings, the law is sure to rise and multiply its demands upon them. Their great aim is to equalize the one to the other; but in this they are continually frustrated, and so a state of constant suffering into which there enter at least two ingredients of bitterness—the fatigue of a perpetual exertion, and the mortification of as perpetual a failure. Their constant attempt is to bring up their moral condition to the rules and requisitions of a commandment which is greatly too high for them; and they, baffled by the impossibility, are constantly bordering on despair, yet cannot desist from the enterprise. And what aggravates the severity of this discipline is, that, along with the growing strictness of their moral observances, there is in general a growing moral sensibility; and thus are they all the more painfully alive to the defects even of their more exact and studied obedience. As their conscience becomes more enlightened and more tender, the rigour of the law seems to outstrip the rigour of their most scrupulous conformities. If their exertions become more strenuous, the exactions of the law appear to become more stern than before—as if with every footstep of ascent the heights should rise and retire into still mightier elevations; and the hopeless aspirant views more clearly than before, that there is both a growing altitude and a growing distance beyond him which he can never overtake. It is indeed a most heartless and harassing existence—the existence of one who wearies himself in vain to find the door, and spends his labour on that which satisfieth not. The view of that blissful eternity, to which all his prayers and efforts are directed, is ever receding from him, and the longer he perseveres in this attempt, the darkness thickens around, and both peace and hope stand at a greater distance than ever. The outgoing from this enterprise to establish a righteousness of his own to the discovery of a perfect and sufficient right to heaven in the righteousness of Christ, is like life from the dead. An oppressive burden falls from the spirit, and released from the sore bondage of a task impracticable, the man who has been thus visited walks hence-

forth at liberty, and enters with new-born alacrity on the free and willing services of gratitude to the Saviour who died for him. It was thus that Luther broke out from the imprisonment which held him, and felt all the charm of a new moral existence in a complete emancipation both from his fatigues and from his fears. The article of justification by faith, dear to him as it was from his own personal experience, gathered a brighter radiance every day from his now larger and juster views of that Scripture the great design of which is to testify of Him who not only made an end of iniquity, but brought in an everlasting righteousness.

35. I promise it, as your pulpit experience, that if only frequent and faithful and impressive in the exposition of this doctrine—the doctrine of Christ's substitution for sinners, inclusive both of the atonement and the imputed righteousness—you will find it the great instrument for turning sinners unto God. It is the only doctrine by which to meet and to allay the misgivings of guilty nature, and by which to substitute in place of all the distrust and despondency which formerly oppressed it, the charm of a felt and confident reconciliation with the Lawgiver whom it had offended. It is through the medium of this doctrine, and of no other, that we can behold in God the dignity of a sovereign, blended and harmonized with the kindest affection of a parent. There is in it both a most cordial and unbounded welcome to the penitent, and most impressive warning to the presumptuous offender—that which at once overawes the presumptuous sinner, and at the same time encourages the guiltiest penitent to draw nigh. Never was a scheme so admirably devised for reconciling the two great interests of a sinner's comfort and a sinner's holiness; and this must be the great, the favourite theme of your ministrations, if you want both to pacify the consciences and to purify the hearts of your people. It is indeed both the power of God and the wisdom of God unto salvation—salvation from the future wrath and the present wickedness. Nor will it require any pomp of eloquence, or any elaborate demonstration at your hands. If told with simplicity, and earnestness, and in Scrip-

ture phrase, it will find its way into their consciences; and never, be assured, will your voice fall with more welcome acceptance upon their ears, than when the heralds of a propitiated pardon, and of the gift of a divinely-earned righteousness, you announce that unto them a Saviour has been born.

36. I would have you, in conclusion, to be thoroughly aware, that though it may require a lengthened demonstration—and the demonstration after all not be satisfactory—to show how accordant the doctrine of Christ's substitution is with that academic theology which assigns a truth and a justice and a moral government to God, there is an instant response given to that doctrine by what may be called the theology of conscience. It may require a logical process to bring out in exhibition a presumption or an evidence in favour of the atonement, by evincing that without it violence is done even to the theism of the schools; but it is of the greatest practical importance in the work of Christianization, that, independently of any such process, there is an immediate echo to the doctrine by the theism of nature. The conscience that is in men tells them of a truth and a justice, as well as of a benevolence; and that which impresses itself as virtue on the tablet within the breast, is carried upward by a single step to the tablet of the Divine character; and so the general impression of God is that He is the Governor and the Judge, as well as the Parent of the human family, and that there are certain high prerogatives belonging to such a character, which cannot, without the violence of a moral anarchy, be receded from. And the people, the simple unadulterated people, whom you will preach to in rustic congregations, recognise in the doctrine of the Cross the only adequate homage to that authority which they irresistibly ascribe to the Supreme Being, to that sacredness of which they cannot divest Him. So that without the formality of proofs, grounded on what may be called the jurisprudence of the question, and certainly without that Scripture criticism, the great object of which is, not to make the Bible testimonies more impressive, but to repel the sophistry that would cast obscuration over them—without either the one or the other we say, but by

a simple announcement of the doctrine, by the quotation of a single verse from the English Bible, will the doctrine recommend itself to their moral nature, and be the direct bearer of its own pretensions and proofs to the consciences of men. It is this felt congruity, felt as vividly, and perhaps more so, by the peasant than by the philosopher, which gives a mighty advantage to the stewards of the mysteries of God, and you by the simple exhibition of the truth just as it stands, will experience a wide and a general reception for it. Christianity needs to be argued for the putting down of infidelity or error. Christianity needs only to be stated for the purpose of producing conversion—there being in the felt correspondence between the matter of Christianity and the subject mind to which it is addressed, the most valid and effective of all arguments.

## CHAPTER V.

ON THE PREACHING OF CHRIST CRUCIFIED, AS THE GREAT VEHICLE  
FOR THE LESSONS OF A FULL AND FREE GOSPEL.

1. I THINK that the natural pride of the human spirit has been too exclusively insisted on by evangelical writers, as if it were the sole cause of our resistance to the doctrine of salvation by grace. No doubt it were in the face both of experience and Scripture to deny the operation of this principle. Yet, apart from pride, I think that another cause might be found for self-righteousness, in our natural notions of jurisprudence. The ideas of work and win, of service and its wages, of the performance of duty on the one side, and on the other of a right earned thereby to its promised or stipulated reward—these, viewed as counterparts to each other, so fall in with our moral apprehensions of the propriety of things, so harmonize with the tendencies of every man's conscience, and, besides, all meet with such frequent verification and fulfilment in the business of society and the ordinary relations of life, that we are not to wonder if, by a prompt and very obvious analogy, they should so often be transferred to the business of our relationship with our great Master in heaven, or that we should so readily give in to the economy of "do this and live," when we set about the object of finding acceptance and favour from our Lawgiver on high.

2. It is my opinion, then, that those writers who have descanted so much on the natural pride of the human heart, as if it formed the only obstacle to our reception of the truth as it is in Jesus, would have given us a fuller and therefore juster account of the matter, would have more nearly met the whole

feeling and experience of human nature, had they over and above the natural pride, told us, and as if it were a distinct and additional thing, of the natural legality of the human heart. There are men who have less of the former and more of the latter; and in every demonstration from the pulpit, it is of the utmost consequence that we should make the truth as manifest as possible to the consciences of all, else we might altogether miss the convictions of some, the sympathy of whose intelligence, by the faithfulness of our appeal to their own felt and familiar nature, we might otherwise have carried. Certain it is that this legalism, this mercantile idea of a bargain, this conception first of a prescribed task and then of an obligatory payment upon the execution of it—that all this is most natural, most obstinately and inveterately natural to man. And the disposition thus to negotiate and thus to reckon in manifold transactions upon earth, we have an exceeding aptitude and an exceeding proneness to carry upward and onward to the business of what may be termed our transactions with the sanctuary above. And so, on the first visitation of religious earnestness, it is often our strong incipient tendency, and incipient effort, to win by working, to make good our right to an inheritance in heaven at the hands of the Judge and the Dispenser who presideth there; and that in the way of recompense for the accomplishment of a task which He hath put into our hands, on the footing of a due reward for the due performance in tale and measure, of our prescribed obedience.

3. But on the very first movement in this direction, there is an obstacle in the way—felt more strongly as an impediment by some than by others of those who have been visited with that anxiety which prompts and prosecutes the question of “what shall I do to be saved?” The burden of their past guilt is that which chiefly weighs upon their spirits. It sinks them into the inaction of despair. They feel all obedience to be vain, because, however perfect, it can only answer for itself, and so cannot both do this and also sweep off or even lighten the irredeemable debt of their bygone iniquities. At all events,

and whether they make this calculation or not, they are haunted by a sense of condemnation, against which they can lift up no plea, and from which they can see no outlet. This feeling of an inextricable dilemma is aggravated more and more by every new addition to their mental sight or mental sensibility of the law in its lofty and spiritual and uncompromising character—of God in the high state and dignity which belong to Him as a Judge and a Sovereign—of His attributes, the truth and the justice, and the august inviolable sacredness, all committed to the execution of penalties threatened and proclaimed against the children of disobedience. And, finally, of their own wretched deficiencies, as selfish, earthly, godless, unholy creatures, with their past lives deformed by a thousand palpable transgressions; and worst of all, their hearts in a state of practical atheism, their every desire full set on the things and interests of the world, and turned, at least in indifference, if not in positive aversion and distaste, away from Him who made all and who upholds all. According to this variety of religious experience, it is the agonizing conviction of sin which adheres to the spirit, and festers there like an arrow sticking fast. Doubtless it is the Spirit of God who begins and carries forward this mental discipline in all who are exercised thereby to the eventual saving of their souls. But the natural conscience, as a fit receptacle for His demonstrations, comes into ready coalescence therewith. Under its workings he can make no escape from the contemplation, either of God as an avenger, or of himself as the hopeless and helpless subject of a righteous sentence, by which his eternity is undone. A naked and gratuitous proclamation would not lay this storm. The misgivings even of one's own natural jurisprudence would not be quelled nor appeased by it. If in preaching the law, you have at all succeeded in awakening the right sense of God, as a God of unchangeable sacredness, then something else than a bare deed of forgiveness is required to meet the demands and aspirations of a moral nature, thus made alive to the prerogatives of that throne which is in heaven, and to the high state and sovereignty of Him who sitteth thereon. The problem is still unresolved.



The perplexities of the lost and agitated spirit are still left without solution, and without an outgoing. To its apprehension there is still a bar, an insuperable bar, between the sinner and the God whom he has offended—precluding all activity because it precludes all hope. The inflexible word, the outraged authority, the attributes which cannot be mocked, the government which cannot be defied or trampled on with impunity, the incommutable sanctions of a law which must either be obeyed or vindicated—these are ever present to the mind of this conscience-stricken sinner, and altogether lay a frowning interdict upon his approaches to God, standing as they do like moral impossibilities in the way of his reconciliation.

4. It is to the sinner who is thus exercised, that the doctrine of the atonement bears a special adaptation. It is this part of His substitution—His vicarious suffering as apart from His vicarious service—which forms the suitable, the counterpart remedy, for that form of spiritual distress which I have now been setting forth. The sense of guilt, the dread of its corresponding penalty—if these form the main ingredients of the sinner's wretchedness, then it were the right appliance, an effectual sanative, could he be made to believe, that all this guilt has been taken off because transferred to another, and that all its punishment has by that other been fully and conclusively borne. In other words, it is not the mediation of Christ in general, nor any other part of it than just His sacrifice, which exerts the peculiar charm of dissolving and clearing away the mental agony of him who labours under the fearful sense of his own worthlessness, and is in terror for the vengeance of an angry God. It is the doctrine of Christ made sin for him, of Christ suffering in his stead—it is faith in this doctrine, or faith in His blood viewed as the blood of expiation, which allays the whole of this disquietude, and brings the soul out from the envelopment of all its perplexities into a state of enlargement and peace. The one is the specific for the other. It is the sacrifice, and nothing else, which heals the guilty conscience. It is the gospel; but not to speak thus vaguely and generally, it is that one article of the gospel,

Christ's atonement on the Cross—it is that, and that alone, which can pluck out the sting of a broken law from the sinner's heart; or, to express it otherwise, the emollient which stills the waters of this troublous agitation. If I may so speak, there is in it a most exquisite skilfulness for this effect. In whatever aspect the sinner looks on the evil of his condition, there is a corresponding aspect in this great gospel remedy which fully meets and fully provides for it. If the magnitude of his guilt have sunk him into despair, let him only believe, and he will be comforted and reassured by the magnitude of its overpassing expiation. If it be the outraged dignity of the law which makes him tremble, the way to be delivered from his fears is to look on the high and solemn vindication made by Him who, in bowing His head unto the sacrifice, hath magnified that law and made it honourable. Or if it be the thought of God, and of His awful sacredness, which fills him with dismay, still let him lift his eyes unto the Cross, and there he will behold a harmony of all the attributes—the truth fulfilled, the justice satisfied, and that mercy which rejoices over all His works, rejoicing here over all the high perfections of the Deity. It is indeed the only doctrine by which at once the Lawgiver is exalted, and the transgressor of the law is safe—which unites the authority of the commandment with the free and full discharge from all its penalties to him who has broken it—which reconciles the peace of the sinner upon earth with the righteousness that looks down from heaven; so that by one and the same deed of amnesty, He who sitteth upon heaven's throne may be at once a just God and a Saviour. This is truly the adjustment of all difficulties and all fears. It is emphatically the gospel, or good news, which should be habitually sounded from every pulpit, and be placed as it were by the heralds of the New Testament on the forefront of all their demonstrations. This is the great truth which subdues the people under you, the balm and the elixir of every wounded spirit, the word in season to the weary and heavy laden; and on the reception of which, the prisoners of condemnation are loosed from their bonds, and walk forth rejoicing in the eman-

ipation of their spirits, the new-born children of light and liberty.

5. It is well to have preached the law, and so made manifest to the consciences of hearers their own condemnation. From this abyss it is the object of the restorative system propounded in the gospel to recover and to raise them. And I cannot too earnestly press upon your attention, that of this system the first and the foremost article is the doctrine of Christ crucified as an atonement for the sins of the world. I have no adequate expression for the sense which I have of the primary, the radical importance of this great truth, on the reception of which hinges, as on a turning point, the sinner's salvation. To be with or without a belief in this doctrine, forms the grand alternative between a state of ruin and a state of recovery; and it is mainly of Christ as our propitiation that we understand the two Bible sayings, placed in such emphatic counterpart to each other—"He who hath the Son hath life;" "He who hath not the Son hath not life." With such a conviction you may well believe the anxiety I feel that this great and capital truth, even that Christ died an expiation for the sins of mankind, should, if not at all times formally pronounced, at least be presupposed and proceeded on, in every sermon that you deliver from the pulpit. It is the want or the presence of this doctrine which forms the main difference between an efficient and a useless Church. The doctrine of man's depravity and guilt has been called the basis of Christianity, viewed as the religion of sinners; and it may be so termed, as being the basis of the sinner's anxieties—those first impulses which lead him to grope his way for a place of deliverance and safety. But the doctrine of Christ as a propitiation for sin is the basis of the sinner's hopes—the great initial truth which first awakens him from the lethargy of despair; and which, as by the removal of a barrier that with all his strength and endeavour he never could have forced, opens up for him a way of progressive holiness, and sets him free for all the aspirations and the efforts of a new obedience.

6. It is when receiving Christ as his redemption he sets

forth like a now liberated captive on this way—that his experience, as a practical disciple of that Saviour, convinces him of a larger necessity for drawing out of the fulness of Christ than perhaps he had at first apprehended. He not only feels a perpetual deficiency in his best endeavours, which convinces him that the blood of Christ is indispensable to atone for the shortcomings of his new obedience, as well as for the transgressions of his old disobedience; but that utterly unable as he feels himself to make out a claim for the rewards of eternity, he must desist from the vain attempt to establish a right by any righteousness of his own, and lay hold of Christ as his righteousness as well as his redemption. The distinction between the two doctrines of the atonement and the imputed righteousness is not scholastic but scriptural, and falls in with a corresponding subjective distinction, which is often presented in human experience.

7. You will fall greatly short in making known to your people the riches of Christ if you but tell them of their forgiveness as being the only effect of His obedience unto death; or tell them not that in virtue of this obedience they are more than forgiven—they are justified. But anterior to the distinction between one part and another of the great mediatorial benefit which He hath achieved for us, you should make them distinctly understand that it is not simply on the footing of a benefit, but of a purchased benefit, made theirs by right as well as favour, that the whole of the gospel salvation is presented for their acceptance. We are thus made sure of God's favour, not by a hold on His mercy or goodness alone, but somehow or other by a hold on His justice also. He is not only merciful, we read, but He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. The mercy we enjoy is somehow or other conjoined with the truth of God—mercy and truth are met together. The peace into which we are translated is somehow or other conjoined with the righteousness of God—righteousness and peace have kissed each other. And again, looking from God into ourselves, heaven is made ours, not alone on the footing of a present that has been given to us, but also on the footing of a right that has

been earned—though not earned by us. Jesus Christ paid the penalty of their offences for all who believe in Him; and it were not only a denial of mercy, but a violation of justice, to lay upon them that penalty over again. And Jesus Christ purchased an inheritance of glory for all who believe in Him—so as that they have not only a freedom of entry, but a positive right of entry into heaven; and it were not only the withholding of a kindness, but a positive violation of justice, to shut heaven's door against them. True, the whole of this salvation we are invited to partake in, without money and without price; but that means without our money, without any price paid for it by us. Still there were a money and a price given for it—even by Him who is the great Surety and Saviour of sinners, made over no doubt to us in the form of a free offer and a free gratuity; but not till He had most laboriously won, and most laboriously worked for it. Now what I want you to discern and to discriminate, as being of the very essence of the gospel, is, that the salvation which is held out is not of mercy alone, but of mercy in conjunction with righteousness—consecrated and made sure by the atonement which Christ hath rendered—by the everlasting righteousness which Christ hath brought in. I want you to perceive the firmness and strength of those legal guarantees by which this mercy is upholden, as being a mercy, not by which the law of God has been set aside or overridden, but by which the law has been magnified and made honourable. I want to dispossess you of the frail Socinian imagination that forgiveness, in the economy under which you sit, is simply and altogether by a movement of good will on the part of the Deity, without any provision made for the honour and authority of the Divine government, or any homage done to His lofty and unchangeable attributes of holiness, and righteousness, and truth. Doubtless it was the very perfection of goodness and good will which originated the whole scheme of man's redemption from the guilt and the misery into which he had fallen; but you must not lose sight of it as being such a scheme that it preserves entire the whole jurisprudence of Heaven, and even throws a brighter radiance than before over

the entire and unbroken sacredness of the Godhead. I would have you to rejoice abundantly in the sure mercies of David ; but never will you realize the emphatic meaning of this expression—never will you know what it is to delight yourselves greatly in that full abundance of peace which is spoken of by the prophet—till, without the misgivings of a conscience which can look unfaltering and undismayed on all the perfections of the Almighty, you feel your hold to be not alone upon His mercy, but also on the justice and the judgment which are the habitation of His throne. When the mercy of the gospel comes our length, it comes no doubt in the character of a gift. But before it came our length Christ had to purchase it by a costly offering—so that while to us eternal life is altogether a gift from God, let us not forget that it is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord ; and thus the thing made over to us is not merely eternal life, but the right to eternal life. Not only is it made ours actually, but it becomes ours rightfully.

8. But more than this. A second lesson should ever be urged upon the people, and grounded too on the same single word as the former one. To *justify* implies more than acquittal ; and when we are said to be justified, they should be made to understand that a great deal more than a deed of acquittal is put into their hands. Such a deed in fact would only place us in a sort of neutral or midway state. In virtue thereof we could plead our discharge from the condemnation, and so from the penalties of hell ; but we could not plead our right of entry into heaven, or that to us there belonged any interest or part in that glorious inheritance. We should thus be in no higher position than a prisoner when pronounced not guilty, and so dismissed from the bar—better certainly than being a condemned malefactor, but very far short of being an honoured guest, or rather inmate for life in the palace of his sovereign. Now, you should get them to understand the whole extent of that privilege which Christ has won for them. In virtue of the one we are treated as innocent creatures ; and so in the matter of punishment are let alone. In virtue of the other we are treated

as deserving creatures ; and so, in the matter of reward, have all the positive blessings of God's positive and everlasting favour conferred upon us. These two parts of redemption are never separated in reality ; yet are they different things, and might be made the separate and distinct objects of our contemplation. Both of them are comprised in that verse—one of the most precious in the Bible—which tells of Christ having become sin for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him ; or, in other words, tells us what the two terms are of that exchange which, by the economy of our redemption, hath taken place between the sinner and the Saviour—our sins laid to His account, and He bearing the full burden of them ; His righteousness laid to our account, and we admitted to the full reward of it. He hath not only paid the debt for us, which He Himself took on, but made over the present to us which He Himself did purchase. Or, still to express it differently, He sustained the load of our imputed guilt, and we are clothed upon with His imputed righteousness—that glorious investiture by which it is that not only the gates of hell are closed, but all the portals of heaven are flung open for us ; and we, arrayed in an order of merit, which by Him has been won and by us is worn, become the privileged friends and children of God, the heirs and the denizens of a blissful eternity.

9. But it is well not only to demonstrate the extent of this gospel remedy—it should be further made palpable as a remedy commensurate to our disease in its worst and most virulent form, which is its form of ungodliness. Nor can we imagine aught more decisively encouraging in this matter, than the simple affirmation that God justifieth the ungodly. We learn from this who they are whom God has been thus pleased to signalize, and to confer upon them the exalted preferment of which we have just been speaking. They are the ungodly, or those smitten with the deep-laid and universal plague of our sadly alienated species. It is needless at present to expatiate on the extent of this foul moral disease wherewith humanity is smitten throughout all its borders, and in each of its speci-

mens, from the loveliest and most accomplished of our kind, to the veriest refuse and outcasts of society—its most abandoned criminals, its most daring and desperate offenders. But though not to the extent, let me speak in brief to the virulence of this disease, to the surpassing guilt and enormity of this ungodliness, it being indeed the essence or deadly virus of all sin, the pith and marrow of which lie in this, that it is a transgression of the law—the strength of sin is the law—and which transgression resolves itself into either indifference or hostility to the will of God. We feel as if wholly unable to impress an adequate conception upon you, or indeed to charge ourselves with a sufficient sense and feeling of the turpitude, the exceeding vileness of this indifference to God; or how to portray aright the monstrous, the unnatural attitude of a creature, who, betaking himself to his own will and his own way, positively cares not for the Creator to whom he owes his birth and his being. It might appear a venial offence in our own eyes; but this only proves how deeply we are involved in it, and that ours is a moral paralysis, amounting in fact to spiritual death, and which, as if smitten with the same hereditary taint, and breathing in the same noxious atmosphere, we share alike with the men and women of a world which has departed from its God. However lightly we, in the midst of surrounding example and countenance, might estimate the guilt of this ungodliness, let us be assured that it is not so estimated in heaven; but that when weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, or looked at through the transparencies of that pure, and lofty, and ethereal region, it is there seen to be the most grievous delinquency on the face of creation—the great master sin of every fallen, every exiled world, by which this goodly universe is deformed. But ignorant as we are of what is going on in the other departments of nature, we can speak only of our own world—for the redemption and recovery of which, from the degeneracy into which it has lapsed, the restorative economy of the gospel has been instituted; and the very first overture which it makes to the sunken generations of mankind is to justify the ungodly. This is, as it were, the initial or outset step which it takes at



the commencement of the process; and if in a former lesson you have already told how high the privilege is of this offered justification, it is well that you should enhance their gratitude and wonder still more by telling how low down it is carried—even to the lowest extreme of moral degradation—to that ungodliness which is the parent of every vice, and which even turns the highest virtues of our world into so many splendid deceptions—the frail products of a mere earth-born morality, having in it nought of the sacred, and nought of the celestial, and so only fitted to shed a fleeting brilliancy over a temporary and perishable scene. And yet to this ungodliness, the pregnant source and the great pervading ingredient of all moral evil—to this, the most subtle and most spiritual of all our iniquities, as having taken up its firm and habitual possession in the heart of man, whence it sends forth on the visible history sins of every species, and of every hue, and of every aspect—from that of decent worldliness, to that of desperate, and daring, and declared wickedness;—to this, which might well be termed the great transgression, as standing foremost or at the very head of the catalogue, being a direct violation of the first and greatest commandment, and bearing the most direct reference of any to the God whom we are called on to love with all our strength and soul and mind—to this revolt of our affections from Him who sitteth on the throne, this high-treason of the inner man against the majesty of Heaven,—even to this ungodliness, whereof every son and daughter of Adam must be conscious as the reigning distemper of his bosom, is the justification of the gospel extended. God justifieth the ungodly. If the privilege might be carried thus far down, well might the message of the Christian salvation be termed the tidings of great joy to all people; for even the chief of sinners, tainted and deformed throughout his whole nature by the chief of sins, has a warrant to lift up his head and rejoice—for even unto him is made the high offer of a perfect righteousness, which he is fully and freely invited to lay hold of. The errand of reconciliation on which you are sent, the proffers of acceptance wherewith you are charged, are not confined to the nearest or

best within the reach of your hearing. This errand and these proffers you might sound in the ears of the most distant from God—for even unto him, the farthest off in exile and alienation, the voice reaches;—the blessed voice of recall and welcome from the mercy-seat of Heaven.

10. Let me now instance another and very precious lesson that should be urged upon your hearers. It is that sinners are the *immediate* objects of gospel justification. I should exceedingly like that you felt the full force and value of this blessed ordination. Sinners, even the chief of them, as the ungodly, are the immediate objects; not the objects some time hence, and after they have undergone a certain process, but the objects now, if they will, of justification. The plain meaning is—for a matter so very precious we should like to make as plain as possible—that we do not first cease from our ungodliness and then come to be justified; but by the constitution of the gospel, or according to the scheme of that economy of redemption under which sinners are placed, there is a warrant and a welcome for them to come as they are. We are not saying that they are first to be justified, and then to remain ungodly. That is a wholly different position from ours, which is, that they are not first to renounce ungodliness and then to be justified. What the effect on our character that is to follow after being justified is a different question. Our concern meanwhile, our present concern is with the question, what have we to do now? It were an inversion of the right order, if, in reply to this question, we were to say—First quit you of nature's ungodliness; first be healed of this grievous moral distemper—this hitherto constant and cleaving leprosy of the soul, and then come to be justified. No, this is not the way of it. Hold out justification now for the instant acceptance even of the worst and most worthless among your hearers. Do not call on them first, by dint of hard striving, to pluck this rooted evil from their heart; and after they have so qualified, to receive this justification, this privilege of being dealt with by God as a just and righteous person, to receive it as the result or the reward of their very strenuous and successful exertion. The thing is not so reckoned to them. Make

them distinctly understand, that it is not made over to them on the footing of a debt, or of what is due to them for a work done. It is not of debt, but of grace ; or in other words—for as being a vital matter that we are engaged with, a thing of life and death, and on which eternity hinges, you cannot be too explicit ; and therefore tell them of this justification, that when the Bible says it is of grace, it means that it is offered to them gratis, and made over to them—if you could only obtain credit for the statement—made over to them, not as a payment, but as a present ; not as a thing they have worked for and so won, but given to him that has done nothing for it, or to him that hitherto worketh not. And so, should he just have the courage and the confidence to lay hold of it, it will be to him not a thing that he has earned, but a thing that he has gotten—gotten simply, gotten freely. It were indeed a mighty achievement could you be any way instrumental in opening their eyes that they may behold the things which are freely given to them of God ; for truly there is not a greater initial obstacle in the way of their Christianity, and nothing which serves more to darken and embarrass the outset of it, than the obstinate legal imagination that they must first work for their peace and acceptance with God ; whereas God, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, lifts up the ensign of peace in the eyes of all the nations, and bids one and all of us look unto it and rejoice. He stretcheth out the sceptre of reconciliation, that one and all of us may draw nigh and touch it. He holds out a free forgiveness ; and what is more, as we have already explained, a positive justification, that we may put on as a garment ; and then will the righteousness of Christ become our righteousness—even that righteousness which is unto all and upon all who believe. Tell them to believe, and it is theirs ; that they have it for the taking. And could they only be made to see this, it were indeed the ushering in of a marvellous light upon their souls—a great and glorious translation from the darkness of nature—the giving way, as it were, of a barrier which stands between the Sun of righteousness in the heavens and the grovelling creatures below, who, mistaking the way of life, have all along been groping for an entrance, and

been unable to find it. This life, this eternal life, nay more, a right to this eternal life, and through the righteousness of Christ made ours, is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. When any individual is made so to apprehend it, it is like the lifting off of a veil from his eyes; and when the illumination becomes general, it will be the fulfilment of that remarkable passage which speaks of the lifting off of a covering from the face of all nations. A nation might thus be born in a day; or a congregation might thus be made to experience a great and gracious revival; or a single person, even the ungodliest amongst your hearers, simply on his eyes being opened to behold the free grace of the gospel, might pass by instant translation from the darkness of alienated nature to the light of life—a consummation this mightily to be striven and mightily to be prayed for; till by a universal shower of grace from on high, the Spirit of God, moving on the face of our moral chaos, shall restore its long lost beauty and goodness and order to our then enlightened and regenerated world.

11. Another lesson I would have you to impress upon your hearers is the efficacy of faith; and all the more when so strong as to repose with unshaken confidence in the averments and promises of Scripture, however unlikely of fulfilment to the eye of nature. It was thus that Abram believed in the declarations of God, even in the face of most violent improbabilities. And so it is stated to his commendation, that his was a faith which staggered not at the promise, because of unbelief; but that against hope he believed in hope, and was strong in faith, giving glory to God; counting Him to be faithful who had made the promise, and being firmly persuaded that what He had promised, He was also able to perform. It is thus that Abraham by his unflinching reliance did homage to the truth and the power and the unbounded mercy or grace of God; and what you should call on your hearers to do is to walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham, who is set forth in Scripture as the father of the faithful—the great prototype and exemplar of the faith to believers in all ages; for we are just tried as he was. We are made the subjects of a promise as unlikely and as

unhopeful in the eye of nature as ever any that was made to him. We are called on to believe in the face of violent improbabilities too, like those which tasked and exercised the faith of Abraham. But his confidence in the Promiser prevailed over the likelihood of the thing promised ; and so ought ours. That God should pass over the guilt of a whole lifetime, and more especially the guilt of our deep and settled ungodliness ; that He should not only forgive habitual and most heinous offenders, but even justify ; that He should not only remit the penalties which we have incurred as transgressors, but bestow on us the rewards which are due only to the positively righteous ; that He should look down with complacency from the throne of His holiness on such sinful and polluted outcasts as we ; that God should descend so far as to press on us both a present grace and a future heaven ; that both are ours if we will—let down for our acceptance, and brought so nigh that we may have them for the taking, and so as to become new creatures here, and hereafter the denizens of a glorious immortality, to which we might even now look forward as Abraham did when he saw the day of Christ from afar, and was glad ; that thus both grace in time, and an unfading glory in the heavens when time shall be no more, should be placed within our reach, and made all our own,—a preferment so marvellous as this, so utterly beyond, or rather contrary to, all our deservings, and therefore alike beyond, nay contrary to, all our hopes—the thing seems so great and so extraordinary as to be altogether too great for the comprehension or belief of nature ; and therefore it is well for nature to be told—it might, so to speak, help her over her incredulity and her fears—that these mighty and wonderful things, this instant translation to the friendship of God here, and hereafter an exceeding weight of glory in the heavens that fadeth not away, that these are brought within our offer, a most free and willing offer, not because we deserve to have them, but because God desires them for us. It is not because of the glory of our good works that we are evened with these things—that would make them wholly incredible—but for the glory of God's good will ; and did we only think as we ought

of His exuberant love and the unbounded generosity of His nature, then would they not be so incredible. Could we be led to hinge the expectation, not on our own worthiness of heaven, but on God's willingness to have us there, and on the faithfulness which hath not only said but sworn it to be His pleasure that we should turn to Him and live; did we but feel our way from the wrong to the right ground of confidence, transferring it from all merit of our own—a foundation this which must sooner or later give way under us—to the ample munificence of God and the infinite merit of His Son, a foundation broad enough and strong enough on which to rest the full assurance of our spirits,—then taking courage from a sense of the firm footing on which we stand, might we lift up our head and rejoice, fixed and unwavering in our hope of eternal life, not because it is a gift that we are worthy to receive, but because it is worthy of that God, whose ways are not as our ways, to bestow. On thus looking to the right quarter, might the scales at length fall from our eyes, when we came to rely, not on ourselves but on God, and took full rest to our spirits in the blessed consideration, that His highest glory and our greatest comfort are at one. It was this that upheld the faith of Abraham, which out and out may be viewed as one great act of homage to the faithfulness and the power of God, and withal to that mercy which rejoices over all His works, and in the midst of all His attributes. They were hard and unlikely things which he was called to believe; but in very proportion to the strength of the unlikelihood was the strength of that faith which got the better of them—and the stronger the faith, the more of glory was ascribed to the Promiser. It was this which obtained for the faith of Abraham such favour and acceptance in the sight of God; and did we but follow in his footsteps, or place the same unfaltering reliance on the promises that he did, we should not be long of exchanging the darkness and distrust of nature for the marvellous light of the gospel.

12. I hold it to be the very essence of good gospel preaching, when you labour by such argumentations to overcome the

incredulity of your people, and so gain them over to the faith. And let them not say that they are differently circumstanced from Abraham. It is true that he was addressed by God individually, singled out and spoken to in his own special person, and on his own special account, nay, had his very name sounded forth in his own hearing from the canopy of heaven, and, altogether, as the chosen and declared friend of God, was admitted to the intimacies of such a peculiar and exclusive converse with the unseen Father of Spirits, that he could not possibly mistake the application of any promise he heard as being made to himself in particular. But it is not so with us; our only converse with God is through the Bible, brought home, it is true, by the Spirit, whose office it is to make known the Word, but who limits His functions as a revealer to the truths and the informations which are given there. We learn of God then only through His own written message, which circulates abroad over the world, and is addressed largely and generally to the human species. In this said message, the copies of which might be multiplied at pleasure, and that in the form of a printed circular to all and sundry of the great family of man; in this document, this communication from heaven to earth, and the bearer of God's will for the world's salvation, there are calls and offers and promises innumerable, exceeding great and precious promises; but how am I to know that I come at all within their scope, or that they are addressed to me in particular? Abraham could be at no loss; for in the interviews of which we read in the book of Genesis, God held converse with him alone. But the Bible, or which is the same thing, God, through the medium of the Bible, holds converse with a vast and countless multitude, a mighty host that no man can number, the population of our whole globe: and lost in such generalities as these, what is my precise warrant for transmuting this call universal into a call particular and a call personal? It is thus that with many a reader of the Bible, the vast and the voluminous becomes the vague in the eye of his understanding, and the book in his hand fails to im-

press itself as a "message unto *thee*." Theology as a science, or a mere system of general notions, is probably all that he derives from it. Under such a treatment, its most emphatic passages, those which are most pregnant with the encouragements of the gospel, with the assurances of God's love and offered pardon, become pointless and inapplicable. His own individual concern in the book is unperceived, or at least unfelt by him; and as if regarded by one who stands aloof and views it from a distance, possibly all which he gathers from the field of information which it sets before him, is but an inoperative fancy, or at best a hazy and undefined speculation.

13. Nevertheless the Bible, and it is of prime importance that you should make each of your hearers so understand it, is a special message unto thee—as much so as if brought to your door by a special messenger, and placed in your hands in the form of an express letter from the upper sanctuary. Its declaration, and from the mouth of Christ Himself, that he who cometh unto Him shall not be cast out—that is every way as good as a pointed and personal application to each and to every one of us. Its "whosoever will, let him take of the waters of life freely," that is a message unto thee. Its "look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved," that too is a message unto thee. Its exhibition of the Son of God set forth as a propitiation for the sins of the world, is that also which every sinner who treads on the world's surface has the fullest warrant to look unto and rejoice. Its "he who seeketh findeth," its "he who asketh receiveth," its "come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,"—these single out every man, who chooses to entertain the overtures of the gospel, as explicitly and distinctly as did the "Abram, Abram," which fell in articulate language from the sky, single out the father of the faithful. These warrant our setting forth on the pilgrimage of hope with the same firm and assured footsteps that he did, and with as confident an outlook as he had on the city which hath foundations, and whose builder and maker is God.



14. In the face, then, of nature's unbelief, and though under the scowl, it may be, of a misunderstood theology, let me have you make proclamation of a free gospel in the hearing of all, and for the acceptance of all. Every minister of this gospel, as being a steward of its mysteries and a bearer of its precious contents, has the fullest warrant to lay it down for acceptance at every door, and knock for its admittance into every heart. The Sun of Righteousness in the spiritual heavens is as free unto all as is the sun of nature in the heavens over your head; or, in other words, the pardon and grace of the gospel have by its constitution been placed within the reach, and made as accessible to all, as the light and the air and the water, and any of the cheap and common bounties of a providence that is universal. You are the heralds of a grace as universal. There is not a universal willingness on the part of man—there lies the barrier. But there is no barrier, observe me, from the want of a universal welcome on the part of God. Of this welcome, then, let me have you make an open proclamation in the hearing of every man; and in the name of the God who cannot lie, invite each and every to lay his confident hold on the offered gift, and to partake of the common salvation. Could you but remove the cold obstruction of unbelief from the heart of any individual, or make the scales fall from his eyes, there is really nothing more wanting for the instant translation of him into peace and joy. And when once the covering is lifted off from the face of all nations, the whole world might be converted, and a nation be born in a day.

15. I will not put into a specific form any more of the lessons which I would have you to urge and expatiate on in the hearing of your people. Only be very sure to warn them at all times that this doctrine of full and free grace is in every way a doctrine according to godliness; and that were it preached as fully as freely, then would it be understood of gospel justification, that though it finds men ungodly, it does not leave them so. Their Christianity does not end with their justification: it only begins there. It first justifies us though un-

godly, but it does not stop at this. It makes us cease from being ungodly, by turning ungodliness away from our hearts. Preach much and earnestly on justification; but preach as much and as earnestly on sanctification. Give your hearers well to understand that all who are justified are also sanctified; and that while confidence in God's offered reconciliation is the proper outset of Christianity, it is the outset of a new life as well as of a new hope. If by dint of believing we make sure of another habitation through eternity, changing it from hell to heaven, we shall make alike sure of another heart and another moral history in time, changing it from that of an ungodly to that of a godly creature, and living no longer to ourselves, but to Him who died for us and who rose again. To give us some idea how the faith of the gospel can work this effect upon the character, let us suppose that to its free tender of grace on the one side, there is a willing acceptance upon the other—that God is taken at His word, and, instead of being regarded with jealousy or terror as a distant and inaccessible Lawgiver, that He is beheld as a reconciled Father in Jesus Christ our Lord—that the dark and before impenetrable veil which had hitherto mantled the benign aspect of the Divinity is withdrawn—that the mercy-seat is seen in heaven, not the less to be relied on in its being mercy met with truth—that disclosure is made of the love with its smiles of welcome which beams and beckons there, not the less but the more to be trusted and rejoiced in, that it is a love in full conjunction with righteousness, a love consecrated with the blood of an everlasting covenant, and shrined conspicuous and triumphant amid the honours of a vindicated law. Only imagine a translation of this sort, a translation truly out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, does it not become clear, that, with the light of the gospel in the mind, the love of the gospel in the heart will follow in its train; and the love of good will in God, when once seen and recognised by us, will surely draw our love of gratitude back again? If we had but the perception, the emotion would come unbidden; or, in the words of

the Apostle—If we knew and believed the love which God hath to us, we should love God because He first loved us.

16. But this brings us to the sanctifying influence of the truths which we have propounded in your hearing, and in the belief of which it is that we become both right judicially and right morally. But ere we proceed to this latter part of the gospel remedy, let us consider the nature of that faith on which it is that the whole of the remedy takes effect upon every one who believeth.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE FAITH BY OR THROUGH WHICH SINNERS ARE JUSTIFIED.

1. REGENERATION is no doubtful or obscure doctrine of Scripture, and only to be elicited therefrom inferentially or by a derivative process. It stands forth there in the form of a direct statement, broadly and simply on the face of Revelation, and in many of its passages. The foremost and most conspicuous of these is the recorded conversation of our Saviour with Nicodemus in the third chapter of John, ushered in with strong averment—"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and "Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The truth thus plainly announced to us is to be found in many other places of the Bible. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—(John i. 12, 13.) And so in other of the New Testament writers:—"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures."—(James i. 18.) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word."—(1 Pet. i. 23; ii. 2.) "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."—(2 Cor. v. 17.) "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus

Christ our Saviour.”—(Titus iii. 5, 6.) The Old Testament bears witness to the same thing:—“I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.” “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”—(Ezek. xi. 19; xxxvi. 26, 27.) These are but a few specimens from among many more of our Scripture authority for a doctrine which is interwoven with the whole scheme of Christianity.

2. Now, the notion against which I should like to guard you at the outset of our argument, is that of a partial regeneration, as if the product, the new creature in Jesus Christ, were not wholly of the Spirit of God, but partly at least of man's own spirit—not wholly of grace, but partly of grace and partly of nature. What I want to impress, *ab initio*, is, that all which is good and new in the result of this process cometh from above, and that altogether they make up a whole man, not a man in part but a man entire, or not a man of whom certain members and faculties are of natural, and certain of supernatural origin; but that all old things have been done away, and all things have become new. In other words, just as the babe in embryo has all the parts and proportions of its full-grown developments, so hath the new-born babe in Christ Jesus, both at its first origin and throughout its subsequent growth, all the counterparts of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. The notion adverse to this, or rather destructive of this, is that of a joint production between man and God—man contributing his part, and God His, towards the fabrication of this moral or spiritual structure. The form which this conception has recently taken is, that the intellect is ours, and so the judgment passing into belief or faith, which is represented as the elemental principle, and hence the antecedent of our regeneration; and that, too, a faith to which the natural faith, or faculties of the natural man are competent. It is strange that such a dogma should

have been advanced in face of the clear scriptural sentence, That the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Yet this is not the only form in which the dogma of a joint production has been propounded. Some would contend that if we only were made to see aright the things of faith, then should we feel of them aright—that if only in virtue of spiritual illumination made to know and to believe the love which God hath to us, then would our love to Him back again follow of its own accord as matter of course and in obedience to the laws of our moral nature ; or, in other words, that if the intellectual in man were so renovated as to fulfil its part aright, the emotional would not be wanting to its part, but that just and appropriate feelings in the heart would instantly arise in suitable response to just views of the understanding. Now this latter method of partitioning the work of our regeneration between God and man is in every way as unscriptural as the former ; for not only in this great work does the Spirit open the eyes of man naturally blind, but He softens the heart of man naturally hard and insensible—I will take the heart of stone, and give you a heart of flesh. In short, ours is the doctrine not of a partial but entire regeneration—and this without exception or reserve of any sort. It has to do at first hand with the intellectual part of our nature, and it has as directly and as much to do with the emotional part of our nature. In behalf of the former we can appeal to such passages as—“ No man knoweth the Father save the Son shall reveal him ;” and “ I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that whilst thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, thou hast revealed them unto babes ;” and “ He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shone in our hearts, and given us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ;”—and not objectively alone, but subjectively also, for He opens the eyes of the blind, as well as He, by His Spirit, shows them the things of Christ, thus placing truth within the field of their vision, or restoring to them the seeing faculty as well as presenting them with the

objects to be seen: and so in regard to the emotional part of our nature, on which, too, the regenerative power must distinctly operate, in order that we might feel aright as well as see aright. For they who had thus to be made over again, not only had their understanding darkened, but were "past feeling," and so not only had their blindness to be cured, but the hardness of their moral temperament had to be resolved. They behoved to be made a willing people as well as a knowing people—"I will make them willing in the day of my power." And they must be rightly affected as well as rightly informed, so as that while they look on Him whom they have pierced, they should also mourn for Him as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness for Him as one that is in bitterness for his first-born. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Each of these two products is as entire in itself as it is distinct from the other. If the creative power should be accredited with all the parts of the old man, the regenerative power should be as much accredited with all the parts of the new creature. There should be no partitioning in this matter between nature and grace. If in the first birth nature has done all, in the second birth grace is all in all. It not only translates out of darkness into marvellous light—it creates the clean heart, it renews the right spirit within us.

3. What I have now laid down I would have you to regard and presuppose as the foundation or outset of what follows, and to which I solicit the closest attention from you; for the misconception, or rather the misapplication of the things I am to utter, might lead most grievously astray, both in the work of winning souls at the first, and afterwards of building them up in faith and holiness; and this by betraying you into the very error which I have been just attempting to expose.

4. To begin with the latter of these works, I would have you to understand of the new creature, that although in all his parts and all his faculties, he be not the partial but entire product of a special operation from above—yet do these parts and these

faculties stand as much in a certain relation to each other, and operate on each other as much in a certain order, as to cause that this new creature shall be as much a mechanism, a rightly going mechanism, but still a mechanism, as ever the old man was. Let us be distinctly apprehended here; and for this purpose, let us instance the two departments of our nature, of which we have already spoken—the intellectual and the emotional. To stir up the vicious or wrong affections of the natural man, we have only to place in the view of his mind its counterpart objects. If a drunkard, the mere sight of a tempting liquor will suffice to excite the corrupt propensity. If given to licentiousness, we have only to fill his thoughts with the licentious imagination, to awaken the guilty feelings, and hurry him onward to the guilty indulgence of them. If revengeful, we have but to recall the memory of his foe, in order to inflame his hatred anew, and again to confirm him in all his purposes of retaliation. In all these instances, we have the precedency of sight or thought to feeling—so that when we get the man either to see or to think in a wrong direction, we get him to feel in a wrong direction. Now, let him become a convert to the truth as it is in Jesus, and we shall still have the same sort of precedency or order as before in the working and machinery of the inner man; or it is because of the mind being employed on right thoughts that the heart is occupied with right feelings and right emotions. For example, if now made to know and to believe the love which God has to him, he has but to dwell on this truth, that he may love God back again. We love God because He first loved us, or because we know that He first loved us; and it is when the mind is employed in the believing contemplation of this object, that the heart is warmed with the love of gratitude to our reconciled Father. This is the true process; but it is not true that the man's understanding only had to be enlightened to ensure both the steps of it, or that if made to discern aright, he would thenceforward, and as if by moral necessity, behave to feel aright also. For this purpose, it is not enough that the eyes of the man's understanding be opened to the right objects—his heart



must be softened and made susceptible of the right impressions. In other words, a regenerative power must be put forth on the whole man—taking in both the intellectual and the emotional departments of his nature. Hence it is an error on the one hand, to think that if we can only get man to believe, all that is desirable and good will follow as of course ; for not only must there be a mind to know, but a heart to feel ; and we have neither the one nor the other without the grace of God exerted, not by halves, but extending to the whole of our moral nature, so as to make an entire new creature of us. But it is an error, on the other hand, to imagine of the new creature thus set up, that there is not with him the very same order of feelings and faculties as before, so that for being persuaded to what is right, he must still be presented with motives, and have the right considerations addressed to his understanding,—that either right feelings or right purposes be recalled or kept alive within him. There is often a sad failure here on the part of orthodox ministers, who, after they had set up their goodly, and we should aver, their right system of regeneration, would abandon the product thereof, that is, the new creature or new man, to the mechanism of his own evolutions, leaving it, as it were, to run of itself, without the appliance of the commands or exhortations, or all those urgencies or moving forces which are brought to bear, in the way of counsel and intreaty and persuasion, on beings who have a will and a conscience, and all the active or intelligent faculties which belong to our human, though it should be our renovated nature. They seem to forget that the nature when thus transformed, and which may be regarded as a mechanism now renewed and set in order, is still a moral mechanism, and which is operated upon by moral influences just as much, though now to better and nobler ends, after regeneration as before it. Not so did the Apostles, who addressed themselves as preceptively to their disciples after conversion as ever they did to them doctrinally or didactively before it. They regarded them still as subjects for remonstrance and admonition, and all sorts of earnest importunity, and dealt with them accordingly. To

set up a theological system, however orthodox, and then leave it to its own spontaneous evolution, when it is sure to become as inoperative and still as if it had rusted upon its hinges—this is really not a sufficient discipleship for any individual or any congregation. The objective truths of Christianity may be regarded as forming altogether a magazine out of which to select the weapons wherewith to ply and to operate in the way of motive and enforcement on subjective man, who must not only be taught what he should believe, but told and strenuously bidden what he should do. It is thus that duties effloresce from doctrines, or precepts from principles, in every epistle of the New Testament. There is nothing in regeneration to supersede this process, its main effect being so to transmute and renovate the whole man as to make him a fit subject on whom to realize the process, and set it prosperously agoing.

5. But the same preceptive, urgent, and admonitory style of earnest appliance and address should be brought to bear upon men even prior to their regeneration. But is not this, it will be asked, preaching to the dead? Yes it is, and there must be a grievous misunderstanding and misapplication of orthodoxy on the part of those whose doctrinal views restrain them from so preaching. Both Christ and His apostles, as well as the prophets of more ancient days, all preached in this way to the dead. Repent and follow me, and even sell thy goods to feed the poor, did our Saviour say to men before their conversion. Repent and be baptized, and save yourselves from this unto-ward generation, said the Apostle Peter to a multitude—all of whom were dead before the delivery of his sermon, and many of whom remained dead after it. The Apostle Paul showed to men, from the first outset of his ministrations amongst them, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. And in like manner did John the Baptist tell his countrymen to bring forth fruits meet for repentance; and explained to inquiring publicans and soldiers at large what in particular one and all of them should proceed immediately to do. These did not forbear preaching to men because they were profoundly asleep. The very object of their preaching was to

awaken them. They did not forbear preaching to congregations of the dead. The very design of their preaching was to bring them alive. The promise made by God through Ezekiel, I will give them a new heart, did not hinder Ezekiel from bidding the people make new hearts to themselves—for he also told them how to go about it, which is to inquire of the Lord that He might do it for them. It is thus that we unravel the whole of this seeming inconsistency. By the economy of the gospel, ministers exhort their people to what naturally, and of themselves, they have no strength to perform. This, in the eye of the world, or in the eye of mere nature, might appear a glaring absurdity, and so it absolutely would be, were it not that ministers on the one hand, whether they tell men to believe or to obey, should be ever looking for the requisite light and the requisite strength from on high—and were it not that hearers, on the other, while giving earnest heed to the word of the testimony, should be ever looking in the same direction, both that their eyes might be opened to behold the wondrous things which are contained therein, and that power might be given them to arise and walk in the path of new obedience. Let the statement we have just made be sufficiently pondered, and it will resolve, we might even say, will rationalize this whole mystery of preaching to the dead. He who preaches should give himself wholly, not to preaching alone, but to prayer also, or like the Apostles of old, should give himself wholly to prayers and the ministry of the word. He who listens should count it not enough that he hearkens diligently, but he should supplicate and look and wait dependingly for that illumination from above, by which it is that the day is made to dawn, and the day-star to arise in his heart. We confess our chief value for Calvinism is founded on this, that it represents God to be all in all, so as to take His grace along with it, and lead men to dependence and prayer from the very outset of their religious earnestness. And our chief apprehension from the denial of it, is lest men should, under the teaching of another system, try to begin the work of conversion in their own strength, and so with a difference of result between the two methods of going

to work, which is indicated by this pregnant verse of the Apostle James—That God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace unto the humble. In other words, our chief anxiety for right doctrine is, that men should learn therefrom how to attempt and go about it, when seeking to enter upon or keep by the way of right practice. If their dependence be not wholly upon God, theirs will at best be but an outward and superficial reformation. If they take His grace along with them—as that which originates and carries forward all good within them, theirs will be a deep and spiritual change reaching to the thoughts and desires of the inner as well as the deeds of the outer man. It makes all the difference in the world whether at the outset of our Christianity we begin with performances alone, or with prayers and performances together. And most certain it is that we cannot begin with prayers too early. We cannot date too far back the operation of the Divine grace in the conversion of sinners. Nay, it will endanger our Christianity if we should deny the part which it has in the very first movement from sin unto the Saviour, or rather if we should deny that it wholly originates the movement, or in other words, both sets it agoing and keeps it agoing. This we apprehend to be the right theory ; and in harmony with this, were it asked by any seeking after the right practice, whether the dependence should go before the duty, or the duty before the dependence—we should strongly incline, nay, we should clearly or confidently decide for the dependence going first, if not in the order of time, at least in the order of influence or of cause and effect. It were tampering most seriously with the process of regeneration, and this too at the place where it was most dangerous to go wrong—we mean the infancy of the process—to overlook the part which God has in it, when assigning the part which man has in it. Certain it is that the Bible recognises God and the agency of His grace among what may be termed the very first rudiments in the work of conversion. It not only tells us that the fruits of righteousness are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God ; but it intimates the operation of a heavenly power, with the antecedent which goes before this, where it says that the

tree must be made good ere the fruit can be good. And it further tells not only that God makes an obedient, but that God makes a willing people in the day of His power—not only giving the strength to do, (Phil. iv. 13,) but working in us to will as well as to do of His good pleasure. In like manner, although He bids us make a new heart, He bids us also pray for it—nay, still further back, among the priorities of the operation, it is He, we are told, who pours on the children of grace the spirit of grace and supplication: and whether it be to make a right intellectual or a right moral state, it is the same. It is He who opens the eyes to behold the things contained in His book. It is He who shines in the heart in order to give the light of the knowledge of His own glory. And He not only opens the understanding, but anterior to the understanding, He opens the heart, as He did that of Lydia to *attend* to the things which were spoken by Paul. It is thus that we are brought to look upward from the first. Pelagianism and Arminianism teach to look downward. The one disciple places his confidence in God, the other places his confidence in self, or confidence in man—and they fare accordingly: the grace bestowed upon the one and withheld from the other, serves fully to account for the respective issues in the spiritual condition of the proud and of the humble.

6. Such are the evils attendant on the doctrine of a partial regeneration. Yet let us not forget that there is a useless and inoperative Calvinism which has its evils also. It is truly possible to survey, or at least to state aright the processes of our subjective Christianity, and yet practically and personally to have no share in them. There are two things which might be done with the light that is in a man's understanding, or with the inclination which actuates his heart. We might either speculate whence it came, or we might follow the direction and impulse of it. Now, it is possible to do the one, yet not do the other—to be satisfied with the theory, and neglect the practice. Having the former, one might pass for a sound, inflexible, well-built Calvinist, but without the latter, what an inert, unfruitful, and utterly worthless thing it is. The Wesleyan Methodist, himself the subject of a gracious visitation, but who seeks not to

know whence it cometh or whither it goeth, having neither the curiosity, nor, it may be, the capacity or clear and comprehensive views of the Calvinist—yet relying wholly on the grace of God, and acting faithfully on the strength given by it, will enter the kingdom of heaven before him.

7. But while we thus contend for a total in opposition to a partial regeneration, let us not forget that it is the regeneration, or as it may be termed, the reconstruction of a mechanism, the various parts and powers of which stand in a given relation, and work in a certain order, whether of control or dependence on each other. The views of the understanding, for example, have the same mastery over the determinations of the will, and the determinations of the will have the same mastery over the deeds of the life and history in the new creature as in the old man. That he should feel aright, we must get him to believe aright. To awaken and keep alive proper emotions in his heart, we must present their appropriate objects to his attention; and we conceive that it is because of the primary and presiding place which belongs to faith in the processes of the regenerated man, that faith has by some had a place assigned to it so anterior and so far back in the process of regeneration itself, as to come before, nay, to originate the process. Hence the erroneous dogma that faith comes before regeneration, nay, is the cause of it; whereas instead of its cause, itself is but a constituent part of it. Men do not, men cannot, believe naturally, and yet we should tell the children of nature to believe, and tell them what to believe—a proceeding which falls as much in with the economy of the gospel, as did the utterance of our Saviour, when He bade the man to whom He administered of His grace and mercy, stretch forth his withered hand. Power came along with His order, and so power comes along with our preaching, when made effectual by the operation of the Spirit from on high—an operation to which we should constantly look, and should be constantly praying for. As in every other case of preaching to the dead, we should, like the Apostles before us, count for success not on preaching alone, but on preaching and prayer.

8. It argues a miserable confinement of ourselves to but one truth or one topic, when one essential thing so monopolizes our thoughts as to be exclusive of other things equally essential. We concede in full the doctrine of regeneration—of a regeneration extending to all the faculties of the soul, to the understanding among the number, in virtue of which we believe aright, or have the right faith. But this should not hinder our remarking either on the precise nature or proper object of faith; and more particularly should not supersede our telling what man has to believe in order to salvation, and laying before him what the evidence is upon which he should believe. Regeneration does not work faith by impulse, as if by the operation of a physical force. To be of any worth, or in fact to be faith at all, it must be faith upon conviction, and on right grounds of conviction. Regeneration changes a natural into a spiritual man; but it is the prerogative of a spiritual man that He judgeth all things. It does not supersede intelligence, but purifies and exalts it; and let us therefore attempt an intelligent view of faith, and of what it is that man believes to the saving of his soul.

9. These are certainly too simple for definition; not because of the difficulty we have in understanding them, but because of a very opposite reason; because of the difficulty we have in finding words simpler or more easily understood than themselves, by which to make them more intelligible than they already are. Should we be at a loss to frame a definition of faith, it follows not that for the want of a definition we have no clear outset from which to proceed with an argument upon the subject. It may just prove the direct contrary; that the terms we begin with are so very clear, that no clearer can be found within the compass of human language. The incessant demand of those who may be termed formal logicians, is, that we shall define our terms—a most useful observance in all reasoning, whenever the thing is practicable. But this may not always be possible; and for two reasons very distinct, nay, at the whole distance of the antipodes from each other,—either that the term in question is so transcendently obscure as to be beyond the reach of explanation, or so very plain that none can

be found plainer to make it more so. If the latter be the cause, you will surely allow that there is nothing in the instant use of such a term, even though we should make no attempt to define it, which can at all affect the rudimental character of our outset, as beginning first with that which is elementary, and proceeding onward to the more complex results of the argumentation on which we have entered. Still, however, such may be your attachment to forms, that you insist on our definition of faith, and we may tell you that it is belief, by which substantially no greater progress is made than if, were you to ask for our definition of belief, we should tell you that it is faith. If it can yield any satisfaction, however, let the thing be done; and it may be done variously. We may say, for example, that we have faith in a proposition, when we hold that proposition to be true; or faith in a person, when we hold his sayings to be true sayings. Faith, whether in a proposition or in a person, is the reckoning of him or it to be true, and it is nothing more.

10. Now, though we may not have succeeded in finding a simpler word by which to make plainer the meaning of faith, the word being itself so simple, yet may we defend that simplicity, though we should not improve it, by warding off the additions which theologians have attempted to lay upon it, when on certain occasions they would insist that faith is faith, and something more. For example, when the Bible tells us that we are justified by faith, there are theologians who, to exhibit in greater fulness the sense of this Bible affirmation, would tell us of this faith that it is not faith or belief alone, but faith joined with something else—perhaps with love—perhaps, if not with works, with the principle of works, the purpose, the true and firm purpose, of well-doing, or of new obedience—perhaps with that addition, whatever it is, by which faith, in itself but a simple assent, is turned into consent; or the assent of the understanding turned into the consent of the will. Now, in every argument which has arisen upon this question, and there have been many, we incline to faith in its simplicity, and are convinced that in this way alone can the freeness and comfort and moral forces of the gospel be upholden. We think that a



world of light may be poured into all the intricacies of this argument—an argument, however, that need never have been darkened, but for those distinctions without differences which have been multiplied, and with the same effect, as words without knowledge; but we think that all the obscuration which has thus been cast upon the subject might be effectually cleared away, would we only abide by faith in its simplicity, and just understand faith to be faith, viewed as belief, and nothing more. There is one distinction that we are quite willing to admit—a distinction of which every other conceivable thing, as well as faith, is susceptible, and which does not in the least violate the simplicity of faith; we mean the distinction between its semblance and its reality, or between a real faith and only an apparent one. The Bible speaks of a faith unfeigned, which implies that this mental act, or state, or habitude, admits of the same distinction which everything else does—that is, between the genuine and the counterfeit. There is also another distinction which attaches to faith, as well as to many other qualities, whether of mind or body. It admits of degrees. There may be a strong and a weak faith. It may be like a grain of mustard-seed, or, in the language of the Apostle Paul, it may be a faith growing exceedingly. He prayed that God would perfect that which was lacking in their faith; by which we understand, not that love, or obedience, or any quality distinct from itself should be added to supply the lack, but that itself should receive additions, by which faith, in its own proper and unmixed character, might become larger and stronger than before. Neither of these distinctions at all despoils faith of its simplicity. There may be a real or only a seeming faith—that is, a real or only a seeming belief; and there may be a weak or strong faith, which also is a weak or strong belief. But still the faith is belief, and nothing more.

11. There is another word which all admit as being akin to faith, but which I would hold to be identical with faith—and that is *trust*. They who regard the one as but a derivative from or modification of the other, are sadly at a loss, I think, to understand, or at least to make others understand.

what the process of transmutation is, by which the first passes into the second, or by which faith passes into trust. I regard the difficulty as one of their own making. To believe, is to hold true—to trust, is to trow, or to hold true also. Let one, whom I believe to be divinely inspired, come forth with the prediction of a future event. I might say indifferently, either that I believe the event will happen, or that I count on the certainty of its happening, or finally, that I trust in its taking place. There seems no perceivable difference between the believing and the trusting in this instance; though I am sensible that to trust is the expression more frequently employed when an event is predicted, as something that will give pleasure to myself, or a benefit to be conferred upon myself. In the latter case, the prediction is generally termed a promise; and my faith or belief in its veracity is perhaps more generally called my trust in the promiser, or my trust in his promise being made good to me. I would say of the former, that I believe this event is to take place; while I may say of the latter, that I trust this good thing is to be done for me. Still with this difference between faith and trust in the names, I can see no difference in the nature of the two. Two distinct events, A and B, might be predicted, and I may in consequence reckon on the certainty of both. There is an objective difference between the things predicted; but no subjective difference, I apprehend, in the nature of the mental acts by which I believe in the eventual fulfilment of both. One of these events, as B, might be some grant or benefit to be conferred upon myself. Objectively, there is a difference between A and B—the one an event in which I have no interest, the other an event which nearly and personally concerns me. But I conceive that subjectively there is no difference between the faith wherewith I look forward—in the one case, to the fulfilment of the prediction; and in the other, to the fulfilment of the promise. I may say, that I believe in the one fulfilment; and perhaps more readily say, that I trust to the other. In both cases, I hold the mental acts or exercises to be identical; and whether we call it faith or trust in either, it is belief, and nothing more.

12. As an argument for faith and trust being two different things, some will tell us that the devils believe and tremble. And well might they, even though they believed the gospel, for it was no gospel to them. It held out no prediction, no promise of salvation to them. They, in virtue of their faith, might believe that men were to be saved ; but they had no warrant for believing that themselves were to be saved, and so instead of trusting, they tremble. Let the same document be presented to two criminals, containing a reprieve or a free pardon for the one ; and for the other, a ratification of the condemnatory sentence under which he lay ;—the first, if he believed it to be an authentic document, would trust and rejoice ; the second, if he believed, would tremble. But because of these different effects, you would never say of the believing process in the mind of the one, that it was different from the believing process in the mind of the other, any more, in fact, than of the seeing process by which they discerned the characters of the writing that conveyed to them the knowledge of their respective destinations. The difference lies in the nature of the things to be believed, and the relation in which the parties stand to them, and not at all in the nature of the belief itself. The trembling in the one case, and the rejoicing in the other, form no constituents of the belief, but are only the effects of it—the effect of an intellectual state, the state of believing, which is the same in both.

13. But this suggests another word of cognate signification to those we have been already considering, and which, when admitted to take part in the controversy, has generally the effect of mystifying and complicating the whole argument. The word to which we advert is *hope*. This has been regarded as a term of compound meaning ; the two ingredients of which are expectation and desire—the one belonging to the intellectual, and the other to the emotional department of our nature. In as far as the intellectual part is concerned, it is belief and nothing else ; and gets its peculiar name, not from any peculiarity in the mental act, but from the mere *locus standi* of the thing believed—that being in the future, and neither in the

present nor the past. Had it been the expectation of a thing to which we were indifferent, it would have been expectation and nothing else. But because the expectation of a thing we like and long for, and from which we look for our own personal gratification when once it is realized, it is therefore denominated *hope*—the object of which is a thing expected, in as far as it is credible ; a thing rejoiced in, in as far as it is pleasurable. Let us not, because of this complexity, confound the things which differ, but refer the differences to their proper cause—not in this instance to any difference in the intellectual state, which is purely a state of believing, but to a difference in the emotional state, arising from a difference in the nature or character of the things believed. There is a difference between a threat and a promise, and very different will be their effects on the mind of him who looks with the same confident expectation for the fulfilment of both. In the one case, there will be a compound of expectation and aversion, and hence fear ; in the other, a compound of expectation and desire, and hence hope. The fear and the hope are doubtless very different things ; but the ingredients of difference between them form no parts of the belief, and are only the effects of it. The difference arises from the nature of the things believed. The belief itself, or common ingredient of the fear and the hope, is the same in both.

14. It is true that our translators of the Bible made *trust* and *belief* in general to signify the same difference that we do—but the difference is only in the objects of the faith, and not in the mental act of faith itself, the one having respect to a proposition, the other to a promise ; and there is a corresponding difference of terms in the original—to *believe* corresponding with the Greek πιστευειν, and *to trust* with ἐλπίζειν. Still the Scripture itself makes no difference in the faith, though the object of it should be the truth of a promise, or the truthfulness of him who had made the promise. The faith of Sarah consisted in this, that she judged Him faithful who had promised ; and of Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, that he was fully persuaded that what God had promised,

He was able (and willing) to perform—giving to God the glory both of His truth and of His power.

15. But are we, by the constitution and terms of the gospel, are we in the same circumstances with Abraham? He is called the father of the faithful; and we are required to walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham. He is obviously set forth as a lesson and an example for us all. There is a description given of his faith in the fourth chapter of the Romans; and its effect on his judicial state before God is stated to be, that it was imputed unto him for righteousness—which righteousness, it is said, will be imputed to us also, if we believe in Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. This belief on our part must be of the same nature with that ascribed to Abraham. Ours will be the same privilege, if ours be the same faith—if we walk in the footsteps of the faith of Abraham. He believed in a special benefit for himself. He trusted in a promise made to himself, and trusted in the power and faithfulness of Him by whom the promise was given. And the question is, Have we the same warrant for our faith as Abraham? If faith become trust, simply because of the object being changed from a proposition in which we had no personal concern, to one in which we were personally and particularly interested, or to the promise of some distinct and definite good to ourselves—Abraham had ample warrant for such a trust. He had been specially called upon. There was frequent converse held between God and him, with himself and for himself. He was on one occasion—and for aught we know on more than one—singled out from the canopy of heaven by the utterance of his name. When the Lord laid on him the trial of offering up his son Isaac, He said unto him, Abraham; and when he made full acquittal of himself in the trial, the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, Abraham, Abraham. There could be no mistake here in the application to himself of what was said; and there could be as little mistake in the first recorded interview which the Lord had with Abraham, when He said—“Get thee out of thy country to a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation, and

I will bless thee and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing, and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." There could be no misunderstanding here. If faith had better be called trust when the subject-matter of it relates to a benefit promised or predicted for oneself, Abraham had an ample warrant for so trusting. But what warrant have we, it may be asked, which is at all like unto his?—or how can our trust be deduced from our faith? There is no such call upon us as descended from heaven with such force and particularity upon Abraham. There is a book of life kept by God in heaven; but we have no access to know whether our names be written there. There is also a book of God's message from heaven, which reveals something no doubt; but certain we are that our names are not written there. Abraham was called expressly and by name, but we have no such privilege; and still the question remains, where lies the promise or the call to me within the four corners of this volume? I may have faith in every word of it; but what are the words in this book of generalities, sent widely and diffusively abroad over the face of the whole earth—by believing in which I would be trusting in a benefit for myself, or leaning on a promise made unto myself? The devils believe in the truth of that book, yet have no reason for trusting that any good will accrue to them out of it; and just because the salvation propounded there is a salvation not for devils but for men. And this, it may be thought, brings it nearer to my door—and so it does. Yet far short, it may be alleged, of the way in which the offered blessing, both to himself and to his posterity, was pointedly and individually brought home to the door of Abraham. Salvation for men might not be available for me, unless it were salvation for all men—or if only for a part of the species, unless I knew that I formed one of that part. In these circumstances I may have faith, yet have no trust; I may believe, yet, like the devils, may still tremble. But is such really the state of the case? Is there nothing in the gospel message to warrant such an application as that in believing I may be trusting for myself, and instead of trembling may rejoice?

16. There is not a more important truth in theology, or at least none of mightier import to each individual of the human race, than that the constitution of the gospel, the very terms in which its overtures are couched and conveyed to the world, do warrant such an appropriation. "Whosoever will, let him drink of the waters of life freely,"—while it takes in all men, carries in it to each man all the significancy and force of a personal application. And so does the verse, "Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and the verse, "Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved;" and the verse, "Preach the gospel unto every creature;" and the verse, "Him that cometh unto me, shall in no wise be cast out;" and the verse, "Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in;" and the verse, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man open, I will enter in and feast with him, and he with me;" and the verse—worthy of the acceptance of all, and from the acceptance of which none are excluded—"Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." We have only given a few specimens out of this treasury of precious things. All the resources of language have been drawn upon for the purpose of sending home the calls and invitations of the gospel—sending them personally and particularly home to each individual of the human family. There is an expression made use of by Paul—"God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." We may have neglected to bear the message everywhere; but certain it is that the message is in itself an address to all—a knock and a solicitation at every door. The gospel regarded as a proclamation of good news is commensurate with the species. Its offers—its gracious proposals of reconciliation with God—its assurances of welcome and good-will—its entreaties, nay its commands, to return unto Him and He will return unto us, may be laid down at the foot of every man. The gospel is in this respect a full and perfect counterpart to the law. If the commandments of the law carry in them an obligation binding on the observance of every man, the overtures of the gospel carry in them, not a warrant only, but also an obligation alike binding

on the acceptance of every man. Such are the terms in which the gospel is proposed to the world, that each man in it is as effectually singled out by them as was the father of the faithful, when "Abram, Abram," was sounded forth to him from the canopy of heaven.

17. Too little has been made of these specializing words, if I may so express it, by which the overtures of reconciliation, besides being diffused over the world at large, are brought pointedly home to each individual. All we ask is, that the same force and import be given to these terms when we find them associated with the calls and invitations of the gospel, that we currently and familiarly ascribe to them when they occur in the converse of our fellow-men. A wealthy and generous benefactor, who should proclaim in the hearing of an assembled multitude—whosoever comes to my house, shall receive from me there some substantial token of my friendship and good-will, would be understood by all as sending forth a distinct invitation to each and to every. Let the same application be made of the term "whosoever," as uttered by the lips of the Saviour, when, in the New Testament, He sends forth upon all its readers the assurance, that whosoever will, might drink of the waters of life freely. Faith has been called, and rightly, an intellectual act; but that faith may, in this instance, become trust, it needs but an understanding rightly exercised on the meaning of words. If barely told that some men were to be saved, there might be faith without trust. But if told that whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved, the faith would instantly and necessarily lead to the trust; or rather let me say, that the faith and the trust would be the same.

18. But other terms have been employed in the management of this discussion, and a new element has been thereby introduced into it. Faith has been defined an assent of the understanding, and the question put, Can this be all that is meant by the saving faith of the New Testament—must not something more be included in it?—For surely it is conceivable that a man might assent to the whole of the Bible as true, and yet



fall short of salvation. He might believe, it is argued, that it is a true message of salvation to men, nay, a message individually to himself, and yet he might refuse his compliance with it. Doubtless it is possible that a man should believe an offer to be true, and yet should decline that offer. And why might not the same be exemplified in regard to the offers of the gospel? It is thus that beside faith, viewed as a mere assent of the understanding, it is felt that there must be something else conjoined with the faith. In other words, that there must not only be assent, there must be consent—assent, a thing of the understanding alone; consent, a thing of the will.

19. For any practical object, it is not necessary to go into the metaphysics of this question. Doubtless with many, very many—all indeed who are not avowed infidels, and yet are not converted men—there is something very like an assent of the understanding to the truth of the whole Bible, and yet not a consent of the will to its terms of salvation. Were we inclined to prosecute our inquiry into the case of such persons, or to attempt the analysis of their mental state, we think it not unlikely or impossible to be made out that this assent of theirs is but the semblance and not the reality of a positive belief in the gospel. There might be an indolent and unresisting acquiescence in the proposition that Scripture is a message from God, without any actual or substantive conviction of it. There might be a faith in word, but not in power; and if not in power, then might it well be questioned whether indeed it be faith in reality. We should have dwelt longer on the ambiguous phenomenon of this seeming but inoperative faith—a phenomenon exemplified, we fear, by the great majority of every nation in Christendom—had we conceived with some that faith was anterior to, nay, the parent of regeneration. But believing, as we do, that regeneration is the forerunner of faith—this faith, in fact, being one of the parts or fruits of regeneration—we hold it enough to say, that call it assent if we please, still it is such an assent as will ever be accompanied by consent, nay, as if by a moral necessity, will bring the consent along with it. The same regeneration which worketh in us an assent to the truth

as it is in Jesus, worketh in us a consent to the whole of His discipleship. It gives not only the discernment to know—it gives also the sensibility to feel; because it operates, not on the understanding only, but also on the conscience and the heart, or operates on the moral and emotional as well as on the intellectual nature of man. It is thus that a question which it were difficult to resolve metaphysically, is resolved practically—that is, in a regeneration which does not its work by halves. This solution is to be found in the work of the Spirit. Unless He had opened the eyes that were naturally blind, there could have been no right faith; unless He softens the heart that is naturally hard, there can be no right feeling. Both must be provided—that is, the seeing eye and the susceptible heart—ere we have a faith working by love. The one brings into view its love of perfect good-will to us in Christ; the other insures the reaction and response of our love of gratitude back again. This is the right view for going to the pulpit with, because supplying a far better test by which to guide your hearers to a right determination of their state, than can any probing analysis among the mysteries of the human constitution. You can tell them from the Bible what the fruits of the Spirit are—certain palpable characteristics easily found and recognised if they but exist, as love, peace, joy, temperance, meekness, long-suffering; you can urge them on the possession or non-possession of these, and leave their consciences to decide by the broad indications and criteria of Scripture, which has said, that through their fruits ye shall know them.

20. But though faith alone cannot work love, because ere this effect is produced, it must be provided by the Spirit with a heart susceptible of this emotion; and though love cannot alone and of itself spring into existence—for there must be an antecedent faith worked in us too by the Spirit, and by which we obtain a realizing view of the object to be loved—though these two, we say, the faith and the love, are thus blended and interwoven in the way of cause and consequence, that is no reason why we should not also view them apart, each in its own individuality, and as distinct the one from the other. Faith

is still faith, and nothing more; and love is still love, and nothing more—the one a purely intellectual, and the other as purely an emotional phenomenon. Faith is but faith, and love is not a constituent, but the consequence thereof; and love is but love, and faith is not a constituent, but the cause thereof. It is true that the Spirit, as the great parent and renovator of our inner mechanism, is the cause of both. But still it is a mechanism of which faith and love are distinct parts, and so related, that, in the working of this mechanism, faith is the power and love is the product. It is not for the sake of a mere theoretical adjustment that we press this view upon your attention; but it is for the sake of your future preaching—for we do fear that this habit of so blending faith and love, as if they were integral parts of that one and the same belief which is unto salvation, is sadly fitted to perplex and bewilder your hearers by casting an obscurity over the freeness of the gospel. Tell them that by faith and love they are justified; and then they look inwardly after this love, with the degree and sincerity of which they must first be satisfied ere they can attain to a sense of acceptance and reconciliation with God. Tell them that they are justified by faith alone, and that in the righteousness of Christ; and they will look not inwardly, any more than the natural eye looks inwardly or upon itself when in quest of some object in external nature, but outwardly upon Christ; and when satisfied with the perfect sufficiency of His righteousness, and the perfect sincerity wherewith it is held out for their acceptance—then it is, that in the contemplation of these objective certainties, they attain to the peace and the confidence of a firm settlement with their Law-giver in heaven. “Wherefore,” as in the eleventh article of the Church of England, “that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort.” We cannot adequately express our sense of its importance, the tenet that we are justified by faith alone, though not by a faith which is alone. This precious immunity of justification is not fetched from within; it is fetched from abroad. We have to go in quest of it out of ourselves, and can only find it in

those stable, enduring, and withal objective materials, even the grace and righteousness of a revealed Saviour—of Him who is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever. It is by the objective preaching of His word in all its sureness and simplicity, that faith arises in the mind of your hearers, and that His righteousness becomes theirs—a righteousness offered unto all, and which takes effect and fulfilment upon all who believe. This will not supersede the subjective process of their sanctification ; and accordingly, in all the epistles, after the doctrine of a sinner's acceptance is laid down, the precepts of the Christian morality are made to fly as thick as hail on the several churches to which they are addressed. But it is truly good and wholesome not to mix up self with the Saviour in the matter of our justification, and to draw this wholly and exclusively through the channel of faith, or by the mental eye looking singly and outwardly on the righteousness of Christ. It is in this attitude, and when engaged in this contemplation, and cherishing this confidence, that the heart warms with gratitude to the Saviour who died for us, and that on its now softened and susceptible nature all the lessons of practical Christianity can be effectually graven, so as that the obedient disciple, now moulded into a willing conformity with the whole of God's law, becomes a living epistle of Christ Jesus our Lord.

21. We have already said that the terms in which the overtures of the gospel are framed, warrant each man to lay hold of Christ for himself, and thereby to appropriate for his own particular behoof all the benefits which Christ came to achieve for as many as received Him ; nor are we aware of aught that is fraught with more of practical importance in all theology, than that there is a warrant in the objective truth for such an appropriation. Short of this indeed the seeming offer of salvation which the gospel holds out to the world at large, or as an offer to all, were an offer to none ; whereas, according to our view, each man has in the Bible as valid a warrant for appropriation, as if, instead of being what it is, a circular for the whole species, it had been an express message to himself from the upper sanctuary. God is there beseeching him—him, in particular, to

be reconciled. God is there laying down a deed of acquittal, nay, of justification, for his acceptance, if he will only consent to take it up. God is there making a tender of the great salvation to him, and it is only by his own neglect of it that he abides what nature made him—a child of wrath—an outcast from God and heaven. Each man is urged, urged with all affection and honesty, to flee from this coming storm, and to take his secure refuge under the ample canopy of Christ's mediatorship. We have said all this already; but it has been said by others, that this doctrine of an individual appropriation, by making the forgiveness of the gospel so free and so accessible to every man, holds out an encouragement and confers a license for Antinomianism, tempting him to sin with the one hand, and to lay hold with the other on a pardon which we represent as so easily to be had, and so fully placed within his reach. Now it will place our cause on triumphant vantage-ground, should it turn out that this faith which leads to individual appropriation, so far from conferring the least sanction or authority on the abuse that would turn the grace of God into licentiousness, is the very faith which forms the most effectual security against it. For, first, it is no faith at all if it be not a whole faith in a whole Bible. It is but a fancy and no faith if it select one part of the testimony of Christ to which it shall adhere and abide by, while, if not positively rejecting the other parts of this testimony, it at least casts them or keeps them out of its habitual regards. Neither Christ nor His word admits of being thus divided. He who believes one of His sayings and blinks another of them, is no believer in Christ at all. He who, because of his faith in Christ as a true messenger from God, believes Him when He says, Whosoever cometh unto me shall not be cast out, believes Him also when He says, Whosoever cometh unto me must forsake all; He who, on the same ground, believes that to him who is in Christ there is no condemnation, believes also, that he who is in Christ is a new creature. He cannot in the face of these latter declarations, and of countless others, similar to these, such as, "Without holiness no man can see God," and, "Be not deceived, the unright-

eous shall not inherit the kingdom of God," and, "I tell you, nay, unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,"—he cannot, though he would, take to himself the encouragements of the gospel voice, and yet not take to himself the warnings emitted by the same voice, and resting on the same authority. He who appropriates to himself on the right ground the promises of the gospel, will not fail, and on the same ground, to appropriate and apply the precepts also. He who binds himself to the one will as surely bind himself to the other. The man who, because of his merely general faith, keeps the promises at a distance away from him, will just keep the precepts at as great a distance away from him. The appropriating faith lays hold of both. The same light which reveals to him the heaven of Christianity as his future and eternal home, reveals to him the new obedience of Christianity as the pathway which leads to it; and from the moment that he fastens his assured hopes upon the one, from that moment does he enter with resolute and unbending footsteps upon the other. He who hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as Christ is pure. The new prospect sets him on the new way. It would not have this effect were the prospect a vague and general and uncertain one. But just because he appropriates—just because it is a prospect which he cherishes for himself, there is no evading the conclusion that this too is the way which himself must walk in. Those are egregiously out of their reckoning who conceive of the appropriating that it is an Antinomian faith, and that a general faith acts as a security against it. The truth is, that it is all the other way. It is he who desires the open gate of paradise, and looks upon it as his own promised heaven—it is he, and not the other, who betakes himself to the prescribed course of holiness which leads to it.

22. We must say of the view now given that it greatly confirms and endears to us the doctrine of an appropriating faith. It is altogether a doctrine according to godliness; or its influence on practical Christianity, instead of an objection, is wholly an argument upon its side. The faith which appropriates the promises and rejects the precepts of the gospel, is demonstrably

no faith at all. The faith which looks hazily and generally at both, keeps the possessor of such a faith at a like distance from both. He, again, who rightly discerns and firmly relies on the overtures of the New Testament, will recognise in them, and for himself individually, both a promised heaven and a prescribed way; and with both in full contemplation, he enters at once both on the hopes and the preparations of eternity. In very proportion to the brightness of his hopes will be the diligence of his preparations.

23. This was in all its parts exemplified by him, whose procedure we do well to follow as our model, seeing that he is characterized as the father of the faithful, and that we shall share in his blessings only if we walk in his footsteps, the footsteps of the faith of our father Abraham. He believed in the promises of God that he should be made a great nation, and that his name should be great, and that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. But there was a precept as well as a promise in the first call of God to the patriarch. There was a direction given to him, as well as a promise made to him: "Get thee out from thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, to the land that I will show thee"—a hard requisition, that he should break asunder all the ties of nature, all the affinities of near and dear relationship; that he should give up his country and his kindred, and go forth of his father's house, and cast himself abroad on the perils and uncertainties of an unknown land, not knowing whither he went. He took the promise to himself, and giving credit he rejoiced in the hope of its fulfilment—saw the day of Christ, though afar off, and was glad. But he took also the precept to himself, and yielded a present, an immediate compliance with it.

24. And there is an analogy between the case of Abraham and that of all converts to the faith, in every age of the Church. In the outset call of our Saviour upon earth, and in the outset call of every sound teacher of Christianity after Him, there are both an announcement and a bidding—the announcement of things to be believed, the bidding of things to be done. Men

are not only told to believe and be saved ; they are told to repent and believe the gospel. Sometimes the announcement and the bidding are blended into one, and sometimes they are given separately. Paul in describing his apostolic message says—that he went forth commanding all men everywhere to repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance. And to state the resemblance between Abraham and ourselves more particularly ; if he was commanded to depart from his country and his father's house, we are commanded to depart from all iniquity. If on him was laid the hard injunction of forsaking all that was dear to nature—on us, too, is laid the injunction of forsaking all that Christ, the great teacher and exemplar of righteousness, would have us to forsake : “ He that cometh unto me must forsake all.” If on Abraham was laid the necessity of a local separation from his kindred and his home, which could only be effected by a victory over himself and his strongest inclinations—on us, too, the demand is made of at least a moral separation from the objects, it may be, of our strongest natural and habitual attachment, and to effect which there must be a like victory over the corrupt inclinations of a corrupt nature. Abraham was bidden get out from his own people, and we also are bidden—Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and I will receive you. In turning to Christ, we are expressly said to turn from all our iniquities. In short, even at the initial footsteps of that movement which we are called upon to make, there is a sacrifice laid upon us of what is dear to nature, as well as upon Abraham. If the distinction in his case was a valid one between the assent he gave to the truth of certain propositions, and the consent he gave to the authority of certain injunctions, there are the materials of a similar distinction in our case also. If he had not only to believe but to obey—on us, too, beside the presentation of certain truths which we are required to believe, there is a call for our instant obedience.

25. Yet let us not confound things which are distinct, nor think that, because inseparably conjoined, this union of theirs constitutes their unity. Let us attend to the respective parts



of the understanding and the will, in the process that we have now assigned both for Abraham and his spiritual descendants. With both there behoved to be an assent and a consent—the one being an act of the understanding, the other an act of the will. Abraham not only believed the truth of God's promise, he consented to obey God's precept, and so took his departure from his country and his father's house. The Christian not only believes the truth and honesty of God's offers in the gospel, he yields himself up to the guidance and authority of His biddings there, and so prosecutes a strenuous departure from all iniquity. Such is the mental history of every true disciple; nor should we be at a loss to discriminate between the respective parts in it of the intellectual and the moral, any more than the respective faculties which have to do with the fulfilment of them. When I believe in the truth of the gospel offer, this surely is by an act of faith or of assent, an act of the understanding and nothing more. When I yield myself up in obedience to the gospel commandments, this as surely is by an act of consent or act of the will. At this stage of the process let another question be conceived to arise, beside that which relates to the truth of the offer—not, Have I a warrant for believing that the offer of salvation has been made to me in particular? but, Have I any warrant for believing that the salvation offered is now mine, and that I may therefore look hopefully forward both for its developments in my state and history on earth, and for its final consummation in the blessedness of heaven? I beg that you will look at the distinction here between the prior and the posterior belief. The former has respect to the terms and the truth of God's communication. It looks objectively and solely to His word, even as Abraham did when he believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; and it gathers thence, and exclusively thence, that an offer of salvation has been made unto me. For the solution again of the posterior question, Am I individually one of the saved? it does not suffice that I look objectively, for something more is involved in it than that which God hath said is true. Agreeably to scriptures already quoted,

I am not one of the saved, unless I repent, unless I follow after holiness, unless I deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, unless I renounce that unrighteousness which shall never inherit the kingdom of God. But to ascertain these things I must look subjectively. And if I want these things, then, though I should believe, and with however firm assent, that on the part of God the offer of salvation has been made to me, yet conscious that on my part there has been no consent, and that therefore the offer has not been received by me, it is impossible that I can believe myself to be one of the saved. Even though Abraham had believed that the promise made to him from heaven came from the God who cannot lie, yet if he had declined the precept and kept at home instead of going forth as commanded, to the land of his posterity, he could not believe that the promise given by God, but not accepted by himself, was ever to be realized upon him. And so likewise under the Christian economy, one may believe in an offer of salvation made to all who will, yet if conscious to himself that he will not and has consented not, he has no ground for believing in the very different proposition that he has any part in this salvation.

26. And yet in the midst of all these varieties, the understanding and the will keep throughout distinct from each other; and whether it be a general faith in the truth of God's promises, or the special faith of their fulfilment personally and particularly upon myself, either of these faiths is a purely intellectual act, or but belief and nothing more. When I recognise God's truth in His offers of salvation, this doubtless is an act of the judgment, and of the judgment exclusively. But it were as much an act of the judgment, should I recognise the certainty of my own individual salvation. It is quite irrelevant to say that there must be somehow consent as well as assent in the matter, for that without consent there can be no salvation. This is very true; but it follows not that consent is therefore an ingredient either of saving faith, or of that faith by which I am assured of this salvation being mine. The first of these faiths works the consent, this consent being a pro-

duct, not a part of the faith. I first know and believe the love which God has to me, and then I love God because He first loved me. Ere there can be the second faith, the consent must have been already formed. This consent is one of the grounds on which the faith rests, but it is no part of it. To say that consent is a part of belief, because one of the grounds on which the belief rests, is to confound two things which are distinct from each other. It is to confound the reason of faith with the act of faith. What we want is, to assign their own proper functions to their own proper faculties, and thus ward off from our theme the false metaphysics, which, by introducing disorder among the powers and processes of the mind, would cast an obscuration over it. Consent is an act of the will. Faith, whatever be the object of it, is always an act of the understanding. When that object is God's invitation to me in Christ Jesus, it is my faith therein which works my compliance, this compliance being an effect, not a constituent of the faith. When that object is my own salvation, as one of God's now reconciled children, it can only be because conscious of having acceded to the gospel call. My consent or compliance comes as it were between the two faiths, but forms no part of either. It is the effect of the first. As being one of its grounds or reasons, it may be said to enter into the cause of the second. This midway act, this consent, is purely an act of the will; while the faith in which it originates, and the faith to which it tends or in which it issues, are each as purely an act of the understanding.

27. But why this complexity, it may be asked, or this distinction between one faith and another? Is there not an instant peace and joy in believing? Would not the first presentation of the gospel overtures make one glad, and that on the moment of his believing? Are they not tidings of great joy, which, like all other such tidings, make us joyful, just as soon as we give credit to them? Why then tell us of a process, why involve us in feelings of doubt and difficulty and darkness by this attempt, which so many a mind is unable to follow, of taking a reflex and introverted view of its own phenomena

and its own laws? Must the babes in Christ, or even they who have not yet come this length—must they all undergo this ordeal at the outset of their Christianity, and ere they can enter on it? Is this what we call the preaching of the gospel, or is it the way to expedite the work of Christianization among men?

28. To these questions we feel at no loss for a reply. First, The earnest seeker after peace and salvation has not to undergo the ordeal to which I am now subjecting you, or through which I am now causing you to pass. It is no more incumbent on him at the childhood of Christianity, to take a reflex view of the process by which he is led out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, than it was for him, in the childhood of nature, to look metaphysically or inwardly upon himself, or make a study either of the law of his senses or the law of his mind, that he might be guided aright from the first and feeble glimmerings of infancy to the full-grown intelligence of manhood. Others might make a study of these things, that is of the mental phenomena and processes; and though even for them it is not so indispensable as it may at first seem, yet might they be all the better qualified thereby for the business of education. The pupils of this education, however, might be all the while looking objectively, and without casting so much as one glance reflexly upon their own spirits, might all the direct processes both of thought and feeling be going on soundly and vigorously there—so as not only to be carried rightly onward in the business of life, but so as with the single exception, it may be, of the science of mind, to be rightly lessoned and carried forward on the right pathway of that advancing scholarship which conducts to the highest proficiency in all the other sciences. And it is even so in the school of Christ. It is with the objective that the learners there have chiefly, if not entirely, to do. I should say as entirely throughout the infancy of grace as throughout the infancy of nature. It were wholly out of place to engage either of these with a painful, and to them impracticable scrutiny among the recesses or arcana of their own spirits. But is not this the very attempt

that we are now making? Yes; but recollect that you are not only the pupils now, you are afterwards to be the educationists of Christianity; and I therefore will still draw on your continued attention to what might not only enlighten the philosophy of the subject, but serve for regulation and guidance in the work of your pulpit ministrations.

29. Suppose, then, that you have already preached and pressed home the law upon your hearers, and that some one of them, convinced of sin, is under the guidance of this school-master, earnestly and anxiously in quest of salvation, you will now have to preach Christ to him; and this surely is setting forth an object distinct from himself and away from himself. And so God is said to set forth Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the world. This surely is an objective representation; and so, too, when you tell of God so loving the world as to send His Son into it to be the propitiation for our sins, or when you tell of God beseeching to be reconciled, and not imputing unto the world their trespasses. Thus far you deal objectively with your hearers; and in virtue of such terms as "whosoever," or "every," or "any," or "every one of you," in all of which, and others of similar import, the overtures of the gospel are couched; in virtue of which terms, we say, you can isolate each of your hearers, and bring the whole force of these objective representations personally and individually to bear upon him. True, at the very outset he should be made aware—you cannot let him know too early—that while thus freely invited to come unto Christ for pardon and acceptance with God, every man who so cometh must forsake all. From the commencement of your dealings with him, he should be told to count the cost of his Christianity, should be fully and fearlessly told of the sacrifice which it requires, the all things which must be done away, and the surrender of the whole man to the one master, even Christ, who is a commander as well as a witness and Saviour to the people. But there is no more difficulty in saying all this within the compass of one sermon, than within the compass of one verse, in saying what our Saviour did at the outset of His ministry—Repent and believe

the gospel. If there be any who are conscious of no desire to repent—of no readiness to forsake all—of no willingness to be and to do altogether as Christ would have them, and who therefore could not breathe out in sincerity the prayer—Take me, such as I am, make me such as I should be; if such be the state of any of your hearers, it will necessarily bedim the object which you are setting before them, when you speak of an inviting Saviour and a God waiting to be gracious; it will paralyze the force of these objective representations. A man cannot accept of Christ, or have a rejoicing confidence in Him, at the very time that he is conscious of no wish or no purpose to yield Him an entire obedience; or if he do have such a confidence, it must be on the strength of a delusive fancy, and not of a whole faith in a whole gospel, and therefore in the partial and broken and distorted, not in the clear and full light of the truth as it is in Jesus. Such a consciousness might well forbid any man to accept or to rejoice. But if there be no such forbidding, no such check, no such felt obstacle within, then assuredly there is no such obstacle without, and therefore let the influence of the objective truth have full sway upon us. Let your hearers be told to look broadly and openly forth upon the Saviour. Let His salvation in all its freeness and fulness be pressed upon them; and let nothing stay their hands from laying confident hold upon it. They should not even be restrained by a sense of their utter helplessness in themselves for the required services of the gospel; for even upon this, too, the force of an objective representation might be brought to bear—the assurance of a grace that is sufficient, of a strength that is made perfect in weakness. The spirit is as free as the pardon is free; and were the whole gospel but rightly understood, it would be seen that there is not the breadth of a straw between an offered salvation and a willing people.

30. We make a mystery of what should be no mystery; or if the speculator will mystify the subject by his darkening metaphysics, the practical seeker after forgiveness and favour should be at no loss how to proceed in this transaction between God and

his own soul. He would be at no loss in the analogous case of an offer made by a human benefactor to an assembled multitude, and made, too, in the very terms of the gospel proclamation—that whosoever came to him, or called for him, should receive some certain and specified benefit at his hands. There is a perfect warrant for each and every as well as for all, to proceed on this invitation, and the very first footstep of the bidden movement is at once the evidence and the expression of a faith in its honesty. Will you pause for a moment, and look to the mental state at that instant of time, brief and infinitesimal it may be, between the utterance of the call and the taking of that first footstep—for the point lies here, I think, where we may get at the true metaphysics of our subject. If you will but ponder the matter aright, and from this point of view, you will perceive wherein it is that there lies all the distinction which can possibly be alleged between a general and an appropriating faith. It is obvious that without the general faith, or faith in the honesty of the offer, the first footstep would not have been taken, for there could have been no felt warrant for taking it. The invitation is not sincere; and he who gives it forth is but practising and playing on our credulity; and therefore at such a bidding we shall not move at all. But something more than this general faith is indispensable—a something which, even though we have the general faith, can be imagined at least to be wanting; whether or not, in the real history of any human spirit, such an imagination is ever realized. One might conceive, then, a real faith in the honesty of the offer, while there is no desire for the thing offered. Wanting this desire there will be no movement, just as effectually as wanting the faith there would have been no movement. He may be at once both a generous and a trustworthy person who makes this offer, and he has given it forth in such terms as fully to warrant my faith in it as an offer made to me individually; but then I do not care for the benefit thus held out for my acceptance, nor do I choose to have it. Why, it may, for example, be a gratuitous education, and such an education, too, as if undergone and received by me, would ensure my independence and comfort for life; but I de-

cline to enter on a process felt perhaps to be so irksome and so utterly distasteful, that, rather than submit to it, I will forego all the splendid, however certain and unfailling, results in which it would terminate. It is thus conceivable that there might be the faith, but if at the same time there wanted the desire ; or, in other words, if there was the assent, but without the consent, there would be no movement. But grant the consent ; and I ask if any addition must be made to what has been already specified in order to warrant an appropriating faith ? Do not the terms in which the offer is made—the *any*, and the *every*, and the *whosoever*, and the various other pronouns, distributive or collective, in which the proposal is couched—do not these abundantly warrant the conversion of the general into the appropriating faith, or of my faith in the honesty of the offer into the confidence in my mind that I have the thing offered for the taking, if I choose to take it ? The choice makes all the difference ; and in this, it may be asked, must not I look inwardly, then, in order to ascertain the choice, as well as outwardly on the honesty of the offer, ere I can accept of the thing offered, and move forward in the required way for the attainment of it ? Not a whit more necessary than it is for the child when an apple is held out for its acceptance, to look inwardly upon itself, and see whether it have made choice of the apple ere it can stretch forth its hand to lay hold of it. Doubtless if there be no such choice there will be no such motion. But though in order to this a choice must be made, it follows not that in order to this the choice must be looked back upon so as to be formally and distinctly recognised. The reality of such a subjective state, that is, the state of desirousness for the apple, is indispensable to the movement. But its knowledge of such being the state is not at all indispensable. The child's regards are not in that direction at all—not subjective, but objective, not towards itself, but wholly towards the apple, and with the implicit belief, at the same time, of such a *bona fide* proposal on the part of the offerer as to be assured that it will get what it goes for. It feels the inclination, and follows the impulse of it, but without its taking, or its being in the



least necessary to take any reflex view of it. And what is true of this simple-hearted child is just as true of any simple but withal desirous seeker after the good of his soul. If he have not the desirousness, he may not care for your expositions of the truth as it is in Jesus, and may not listen to them. But these expositions on your part might be altogether objective, nor is it needed that they should be otherwise. Your business is to set forth an objective Saviour, and, as one of His ambassadors, to call upon men everywhere that they might come unto Him and be saved. Most true that, unless they desire Christ, they will not come to Christ; but though they must have the desire, it is not needed that they go in quest of the desire, and first take knowledge of it ere they obey the impulse of it. This search and entry among the arcana of the inward spirit we leave to the inquisitive theologian, who might make a study, if he will, both of his own processes and those of other men. But we should not lay it on the simple and earnest inquirer after his own personal salvation, groping his way to it, and calling out, What shall I do to be saved? The word in season for him is, that he should look outwardly and objectively. He should be bidden look unto Jesus, not inwardly upon his own desire, but outwardly upon Him who is the object of desire, and who is altogether fitted to meet and to satisfy it. In thus looking, he may well be convinced that there is an honest invitation. In looking more narrowly, he may be further convinced, and from the very terms in which it is propounded, that it is an invitation to himself. When thus far, he may be said to have given his assent to the offer, persuaded of its truth and honesty, nay, of its having been truly and honestly made to him in particular. But consent, as well as assent, is necessary ere he can be said to have accepted, or, in the phraseology of Scripture, to have embraced the offer; for the Bible, as if to mark the distinction between a general and appropriating faith, speaks of those believers not only who were persuaded of the promises, but who embraced them. (Heb. xi. 13.) Certain it is that hitherto his regards may have been altogether objective, just as much so as those of the child in our case

of illustration ; and the same moving forces brought to bear upon the one, and which drew forth his approach to the object held out for acceptance, are brought to bear upon the other, with the purpose, and it should be with the effect, of drawing him to Christ. There is as good and sufficient a warrant for the one coming as for the other. The only difference is, that in the case of the child, there is a visible object held forth which he might come to ; whereas, in the case of the convert, the babe in Christ, the promises, or rather the things promised, and which are held out to him, are "seen afar off," and He who hath said, "Come unto me," is invisible in the heavens. But if, in the latter case, the objects to which the movement is made are invisible, the objects from which the movement is made are not invisible ; and the visibility of these just makes the movement as palpable to the eye of the senses, and as significant of appropriation, as if it were a movement to Christ in person and still upon earth, assuring every one that "Him who cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." Now that He has withdrawn to the region of the mysterious and the unseen, we cannot make the same sensible exhibition of a movement to Him that we could have done in the days of His flesh. But for all ages of the Church hath He said, that "He who cometh unto me must forsake all"—forsake all that He would have us to forsake ; and we can still make the same sensible exhibition of a movement in the way that He bids us by what we are moving from, if not by what we are moving to. He who turneth to Christ turneth from his iniquities. Let him who nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. He who aspires and seeks after the things which are above, withdraws his aims and his affections from the things which are beneath. The *terminus ad quem*, the place of glory in the heavens, and where we shall be for ever with the Lord, lies hidden in the futurity before us, or in the transcendental above us. The *terminus ab quo*, the point of departure upon earth, the evil we are called upon to renounce, the companies and the habits and the ways to which we must bid adieu—these all mark, even to observers here be-

low, the quarter whence we have set out, and so the opposite quarter whither we are tending. They prove the direction to be not earthward ; and because the opposite to this, the direction must be heavenward. It was thus with the worthies of the Old Testament before Christ came, and it is precisely thus with the worthies of the New Testament Church, now that Christ has left us. It was with the disciples of the faith then, as with the disciples of the faith now. They were both persuaded of the promises, and they did embrace them ; and their way to realize the things promised was to renounce the world, confessing themselves to be strangers and pilgrims on the earth. And we read that the doing of such things declared plainly how they sought a country, not the country whence they came out, but a better country, that is an heavenly, even the city which God had prepared for them. (Heb. xi. 13-16.) This perhaps will make obvious what it is to come unto Christ, and how it is that the movement might be effected even by us of the present day.

31. On these premises it should not be difficult to assign how it is that you, as ministers of the gospel, as the heralds of its salvation, and charged with its overtures and calls—how it is that you should deal with the hearers whom you are addressing. And, first, it seems very clear that you should so isolate them as to deal with each personally and individually. This, as we have often said, is abundantly warranted by the terms of that message from the upper sanctuary whereof you are at once the bearers and the expounders, and which it is your part so to urge and to advocate as to gain over the compliance with its proposals of as many as possible. It is not a general demonstration of human sinfulness that of itself will subserve the conviction of sin. It is the carrying home the lesson to each, and so convincing each that he is a sinner. Neither is it by a general exposition of the gospel as a scheme for the salvation of mankind, that it can be made to take effect on any of the species. It is by setting it forth as a scheme for the salvation of each individual man within the reach of your converse, and plying that man with its offers and importunities

and earnest invitations. In the language of Peter to the multitude—"Be baptized *every one of you* in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"—should you hold out to every man, for his own special acceptance and behoof, the offered pardon of the gospel—beseeching every man, distinctly and for himself, to receive the grace of God. Thus to isolate and individualize is, with God's blessing, to enhance mightily the effect of preaching.

32. But, secondly, though we begin thus, we do not end thus; for not only do we offer to every one the remission of their sins, but teach, nay warn, every one to repent, for that unless they repent they shall perish; or rather, we mix up both, both the good news of forgiveness and the necessity of repentance, from the very outset, or in our primary announcement of Christ's gospel—even as our Saviour Himself did—"Repent, and believe the gospel;" or as Peter on the occasion just quoted—"Repent, and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins."

33. If we are saved then by faith alone, and yet without obedience cannot be saved—agreeably to the apostolic affirmation, that without holiness no man shall see the Lord; if faith alone save us, and yet without a holy obedience we shall perish, must not a saving faith comprehend in it both assent and consent—the assent which it gives to the truths of the gospel, the consent wherewith it yields obedience to its lessons? Those who are desirous of warding off from the faith this inroad upon its simplicity, those who are set on maintaining its integrity without mixture as an act of the understanding and nothing more, would fain represent the obedience, or even the consent which gives birth to the purpose of obedience, as but a posterior consequent, not as a primary constituent of the faith. To make this out they tell us of the powerful effect of faith upon the affections, in that it worketh by love, and that love is the fulfilling of the law. In this reasoning they generally confine themselves to one, or at most to two propositions—the first, that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the world; the second, that Christ hath brought in an everlasting righteous-

ness, to the reward of which all are as welcome as if it were a righteousness which themselves had worked out, and a reward which themselves had won. Let a sinner but believe that Christ hath died for him, that He hath borne the punishment which himself should have borne, and at an expense of suffering equivalent to the torments of an everlasting hell that, but for the expiation made upon the Cross, would have opened to receive him ; that He hath averted from his person the wrath of the offended Lawgiver ; and that God in Christ, now a reconciled Father, no longer imputes unto him his trespasses—let this be only believed, and it is argued, that as if by the force of a moral necessity, such a faith will infallibly beget love, even such a love as must germinate, with all the necessity of a physical law, the new obedience of the gospel. There is certainly much of truth and power in this consideration. But we have long thought that the theologians who have most dwelt upon it, have unnecessarily weakened their conclusion by confining the influence of the faith to the influence of but a single truth or single doctrine in the Bible. It is the authority of the Bible which forms the ground or principle of our faith in any one of its truths or doctrines. But this ground is obviously broad enough to sustain our faith in all the doctrines and declarations of Scripture—insomuch that if on the principle of the Bible being the word of God, you have faith in Christ as your propitiation, you cannot miss having an equal faith in all the other known and clearly revealed truths which lie within the compass of God's written revelation. In other words, if the faith be real, it will be universal—insomuch that a real belief in any one article of the sacred record, and because of its being there, is in itself the guarantee of a like belief in all the other articles which come under notice, and stand forth as legibly and distinctly as does the first to the view of the observer. In contending then for the power of faith to generate obedience, why restrict our argument to the operation of a faith in but one truth, even though it be the precious truth of Christ's having died an atonement for sin, when we might call to our aid all the constraining and sanctifying influences

of a whole faith in a whole Bible? We may at least be sure of such a faith, that it cannot possibly co-exist with the habit and the purpose of disobedience. A man might be fain to believe that Christ died for his sins, because he reads that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and he, therefore, as one of the world, takes this declaration to himself. And were this the only declaration of Scripture, were the revelation of God to man made up of but this one sentence, he would be abundantly warranted in making this special application, and so in believing, nay, trusting and rejoicing in the thought that he himself was a forgiven creature. But he could not thus trust or believe in the face of another declaration, That unless ye repent, ye shall perish—if conscious to himself that there was no honest aspiration after repentance in his heart, and no work of repentance going forward in his history. Let us look on the Bible as a record of the true sayings of God, and then we must see how impossible it is that there can be a partial faith, or that there can be any such thing as believing in one declaration, and blinking another. Every honest, by which I mean every real believer, must have his eye full upon both; and then the question becomes a very plain one, How can a man be sure of salvation for himself because he believes that Christ died for the sins of the world, if he knows himself to be not a repentant sinner, and also believes that unless he repent he must perish? If for a moment he fancy himself to be sure of forgiveness in virtue of the first declaration, the second should operate as a decisive check on the presumption, and, putting the vain imaginations of a false security to flight, would demonstrate that it was but a fancy and no faith, which for the time had taken possession of him. If God had only said to Abraham, and said no more,—“I will make thee a great nation,” Abraham might have instantly and absolutely believed the promise, and been right in doing so. But God did say more. He said—“Get thee out of the country in which thou dwellest, and I will make of thee a great nation;” and then think how impossible it were, that he should believe in the latter clause of this announcement, and not proceed on the former;

or that he should trust in the promise made to him, and yet not fulfil the precept laid on him. Now it is precisely so with the precepts and promises of the gospel. Had this been a record of promises and nothing more, we might have looked only at these promises in the certainty and hope of their coming accomplishment. But it is a record both of promises and precepts; and we, looking at both, cannot possibly rely upon the one, while there is neither a desire nor a purpose, nor a sincere endeavour towards the fulfilment of the other. There is in the economy under which we sit, both an offer of salvation and a statement of certain things indispensable to salvation, and without which we shall most certainly fall short of it—as the statement, That without holiness no man can see God; and, That if we do such and such things, we shall not inherit the kingdom of God. We cannot accept of this offer, and at the same time reject these statements. The faith that were capable of such a double dealing with Scripture is really no faith in Scripture at all. A true faith not only takes up with certain parts of the Bible, but deals equally and honestly with the whole of it. The sayings which respect the efficacy of Christ's blood, will not gladden it, while the sayings respecting the necessity of turning unto God, and doing works meet for repentance, look hard upon it. The real believer respects both, and proceeds upon both—taking freely the comfort of the one, and taking faithfully the guidance and direction of the other. Paul looking outwardly on the righteousness of Christ, which is unto all and upon all who believe, rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. Paul looking inwardly upon himself rejoiced in this—the testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the world. His was a strong faith, because resting on a broad and extended basis, the basis of all Scripture. Let a part or parts of this basis give way, and the faith will give way. On the other hand, if it be faith at all, it must be a whole faith in a whole Bible. It is like the casting of a die, which closes and conforms with every part of the mould into which it is thrown. The living Christianity of a man is an accurate and full transcript of the Christianity that is

graven on the tablet of an outward revelation. His is not a fragment of Christianity, but Christianity entire—imperfect it may be, but not the imperfection that lies in the want of any essential part—rather the imperfection of an embryo that is not yet matured, but has all the proportions and parts of the future plant or the future man. It were ruinous to our Christianity, did we but believe in the atonement by Christ, and not believe in the necessity of repentance. Such a partial faith as this is destructive to the very being of faith at all. The man who blinks the sayings of Scripture respecting the clean heart and right spirit and new obedience of the gospel, must be destitute of all these things; and knowing that he is so, will also be destitute of a good conscience. But most assuredly he who thus puts a good conscience away from him, of his faith has made shipwreck.

34. Now, I hold of those theologians who contend that faith, the proper intellectual faith which consists in believing, and nothing more, have unnecessarily restricted the object of believing to one proposition, viz., that Christ died for my sins. I do not object, you will observe, to the object of their faith being in this particular form, that He died for my sins—as I hold that the precious terms of *all* and *any* and *whosoever*, wherein the overtures of the gospel are couched, abundantly warrant this blessed appropriation. Such an appropriating faith is indispensable indeed to those moral and sanctifying influences upon which they reason, and by means of which they make out their conclusion. It is not the general proposition that Christ died for men, so put as to furnish me with nothing which I can lay hold of and transmute into the special proposition that He died for me; it is not the general, I say, but the special, which has the power of calling forth the love of gratitude in my heart, even that love which prompts the sentiment and the saying of—What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits? There could be no feeling of this sort awakened by the proposition that told me no more than that men were to be saved—leaving it uncertain whether I was one of the men. With no other than the former to go upon, I could not join the Apostle in saying,



“We love Him because He first loved us ;” or in saying of Christ, “Who loved me and gave Himself for me;” and yet short of the faith which can take up such utterances as these, I do not see how it can be a faith working by love, or how there could be a love yielding obedience. The faith, then, upon which they reason, who contend for its sanctifying operation on the heart and life, must be a special and appropriating faith—not the faith of salvation vaguely and generally, but the faith and the hope of one’s own salvation. We have no quarrel with this latter way of it, this special and appropriating faith—nay, we contend for it ; we press it upon hearers wherever we meet with them ; we hold that there is abundant warrant for such appropriation in the objective truth of Scripture, in the invitations, the offers, the calls, which have come down by revelation from above, and which are so framed as to be addressed to all and to every—insomuch that each man, from the very terms in which they are announced, is entitled to view them as pointed specifically to himself, and to proceed upon them accordingly. We know that there are many theologians who think it safer to keep by the dim, and the distant, and the general view of faith, and who stand in dread of the particular, the personal, the appropriating faith, which leads one to trust for himself, and so to rejoice in the promises as his own, lest it should also lead to Antinomianism. Now, in very truth it is all the other way. He who looks dimly and distantly at the promises, and will not venture to take them to himself, why he is just the man who looks as dimly and distantly at the precepts, and will not take them to himself either. He looks vaguely to all, and so he sits loosely to all. He does not take to himself the encouragement of—“Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved :” and as little does he take to himself the warning, that “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.” The precepts tell upon him just as little as the promises ; and the only fruit of this general faith is, that viewing the whole as a distant speculation in which he has no concern, he will neither rejoice in the one, nor will he bind himself to the other. It is thus that the gospel and he stand aloof from each other, so that

neither its offers nor its directions have any realizing, any practical effect upon him. And yet there are theologians who would keep him in this sort of useless and indefinite state, fearful that he should rely too much on the promises, lest he should regard too little the precepts of Christianity. Now, only grant me the impossibility that I should believe in one thing on the ground of my finding it in Scripture, and not believe in everything which I find to be there ; or that I should believe in one saying of God because of my confidence in His truth, and yet not believe in all His sayings ; and the very reverse will follow of that anticipation, on which it is that so many theologians would keep by their generalities with all men, and refuse to each man the comfort of thinking that he had any share in them. It is thus that they would make the gospel of Jesus Christ graze, as it were, over the heads of the whole species without lighting upon one of them, fearful of transmuting the general into the particular, lest, in closing with the promises, any should put away from him the precepts of the New Testament. But why, in the name of wonder, do they not see how impossible it is, that I in particular should come and drink of the waters of life freely, because such is the invitation held out to every reader of the Bible, unless I in particular shall repent lest I perish, because such is the warning held out to every reader of the Bible ; or unless I in particular shall be perfecting my holiness, for told that without holiness no man can see God ; or unless I in particular should be prosecuting a strenuous departure from all the vices of a corrupt nature, for told that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God ? Only take in all these, and make of all the same consistent application ; and then let your faith be as appropriating as it may, and the more so the better. That particularity of which so many stand in dread, lest it should engender Antinomianism, is the best guard and guarantee against Antinomianism. Paul could say of the Son of God—Who loved me and gave Himself for me ; and so too might each of us, were our faith but real as his was, and as co-extensive as his was with the whole length and breadth of the divine testimony ; and in virtue of which

he could say—The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God. There is no danger in pressing the comfort, or any other part of Scripture, closely upon your hearers, if you but press all the parts of Scripture closely upon them. There is no danger, but the contrary, in faith being as particular as it may with respect to the subject of it—that subject being myself, my own individual self, provided only that the faith be universal in respect to the object of it—that object being the Bible, the whole Bible. Let it not be alleged, then, by those who contend that faith is belief, and something more, or that it is not assent alone, but assent joined with consent, let not any instances be alleged of men having had an appropriating faith by which they took to themselves the promises of the Bible, yet lived in palpable disregard of that new obedience, without which we are expressly told that there can be no salvation. We deny the reality of these instances, because we deny altogether the reality of the alleged faith. Be assured that the man who disregards the express telling that there is no salvation for him who is without holiness, and so makes no effort or aspiration after it, be assured of such a man, and of his seeming faith, that for him there is salvation, because of his reading that Christ died a propitiation for the sins of the world, be assured that this is but a seeming, and not at all a true faith. The man, it is said in the Bible, who believes not the record that God hath given of His Son, makes Him a liar; and the man who believes not the record that God hath given of the necessity of repentance and a new life, makes God a liar: and yet these are the men whom our antagonists would refer to as men having the faith of mere belief, and nothing more, and who undoubtedly fall short of salvation, trying thus to prove that the faith which makes out our salvation, or the saving faith of the New Testament, is belief and something more. The faith which these men profess to have in their own salvation, cannot be a faith grounded on what they have read in the Bible, and resting on the principle that the Bible is the word of God, which they hold to be infallibly true, for here are palpable sayings of the Bible which they live in the discredit of, and

live in the defiance of. The Bible tells us, that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven ; and after this, where can be the faith of those men, or of what sort can it be, who, though unrighteous, are looking to that inheritance as their own ? It may be fancy, but it is not faith, the fond desire of a heaven after death—an idea in their minds which they like to cherish and sustain and resolve to keep by ; but no one would call this a belief, resting on what they have found in a Bible, which they hold to be true. They therefore cannot be alleged as instances of men who have the faith of assent, but not of consent, for truly theirs is no faith at all. They therefore have no right place on the footing of this argument. They are *hors de combat*, and may henceforth be dismissed from all future consideration. Instead of believing God, they counted Him a liar. But it is their own lie, and not His. Let God be true, and every man a liar. The lie is altogether theirs ; and which, if they do not renounce, persisting in the most ruinous delusion, they will go down to the grave with a lie in their right hand. But then it may be said by our antagonists that we concede as much as they do the necessity of consent ere there can be salvation, of practical conformity to the bidding—the bidding to repent or to enter on the new obedience of the gospel ; and if you admit this to be essential to a man's salvation, this is practically all that we need to care for. I believe that, practically, we are far more at one than many of the parties themselves in this argument seem to be aware of. We are most assuredly at one in regard to the necessity of such a consent, as that a man must, at the time of conversion, have not only assented to the truth of what is said in the Bible, but have consented and yielded himself to the authority of what is bidden there. But it follows not that this consent forms part of his faith in his own salvation. It is a reason for his faith in this, but forms no part or constituent of the faith itself. To view it or talk of it otherwise, is to confound one of the grounds of our faith with the faith itself, an act of the intellect with the objects upon which the intellect is employed. Faith, in its most general form, is belief that all which God hath said in the Bible is

true, and in this form there might be no consciousness required of anything distinct from the Bible or out of the Bible. But when I condescend on the particular sayings, then it will depend on what these sayings are, whether my faith in the propositions grounded upon these does or does not require such a consciousness. For example, in virtue of salvation being tendered in the word of God to all men, I have a warrant for believing that the tender of salvation has been made to me; but then this implies the consciousness that I am a man—a consciousness which the devils cannot have, and so they tremble—a consciousness which I must have, and have therefore a ground for trusting that the offer of salvation has been made to me individually. But surely you would not on this account confound the act of trust with the reason for trusting, or say that the circumstance of my being a man had ought more to do in this operation than merely to supply the ground for that act of trust or confidence which in itself is purely intellectual. In like manner, let an example be given of another proposition varied from the one that has now passed under notice, not that the tender of salvation has been made to me, but that in virtue of the tender being accepted, this salvation is mine, individually mine, and thus a confidence created within me that I am one of the saved. This, too, implies a consciousness, but of something more than that I am a man; for ere I have ground to believe in my own individual salvation, I must be conscious that I am a believing man; or to specify other marks still more palpable, and of which I can take an easier and a readier cognizance, that I am a repentant man; that is, a man turning to God in the way that God bids me when He says, Come out from a world lying in wickedness, and I will receive you—a man willing to be all this, and on the strength of divine grace to do all this, so as to become henceforth a religious man—a man growing in charity and holiness, and all those characteristics without which the Bible tells me that I shall not enter into the kingdom of God. Yet you would not say that my consent to all this formed any part of the faith I have in my own individual salvation, or that this faith was assent

joined to consent. Without the consent, doubtless there could be no such faith in my own personal salvation, but still the consent is only the reason for such faith, and not a part of it. To say otherwise, is to confound the acts of the understanding with the objects of the understanding—the exercise of the intellect with the materials upon which the intellect is exercised. We have spoken of faith in three distinct propositions. The first is, that all which is in the Bible is true, and faith in this has its distinct grounds to rest upon. The second is, that in this said Bible, the tender of salvation is made to all men, and therefore to me as a man; this also has its own grounds to rest upon, one of them the consciousness that I am really a man. The third proposition is, that I am one of the saved. This, if a true proposition, has also its proper and distinct grounds to rest upon. That salvation is mine in offer, is the second proposition. That salvation is mine in deed or in possession, is the third proposition, which, like the second, requires a consciousness, and of something more than that I am a man—that I am a man who has realized these characteristics, or is honestly and resolvedly, in the way of God's appointing, bent on realizing these characteristics, without which I cannot, but with which I am taught to feel the assurance that I can and will have a place through eternity in the inheritance of the saints. These are propositions all having their own respective grounds for my faith in them; but however different these grounds may be, my faith in each of them is but belief, and nothing more. But we have not yet come to close quarters with the real difficulty of the question, and that which I believe has originated the chief misunderstandings that prevail on it. Let me entreat, therefore, your firm hold of the distinction which there is between the second and the third proposition—the one being that the tender of salvation is made to me in the Bible, the other being that I am one of the saved. We think that by a steady hold upon this distinction, the whole of the perplexity might come to be unravelled. But ere we proceed to the attempt, let us endeavour to review the ground we have already travelled through.

35. Let us reassemble the observations already given into a few distinct heads. *First*, there can be no doubt that the gospel message to the world is so framed, and that the terms in which it is propounded are of such an import, and admit of such an application, that every man in the world has a right to entertain it as a message to himself. And if he do thus entertain and proceed upon it, he has the very same warrant that Paul had in saying, that Christ died for me and gave Himself for me. If it be true, and how big with importance the truth is, that a message to the world is a message to every man in it, then might every man accept with full reliance, and for his own special behoof, of the offered forgiveness and the offered reconciliation which are held out through the blood of a satisfying atonement. His faith becomes trust, at least in a real tender of salvation having been made to him, and that not by looking inwardly upon himself—for surely he does not need to ask of his consciousness, whether he be a man—but by looking outwardly on the record, and putting the right construction on the announcements which he reads therein. Indeed some such personal, some such particular faith, must be the thing that is meant, when we come to treat of the sanctifying influences of faith; for surely no one will allege any such influence, whether from gratitude or from whatever other cause, if I have only the general faith that some men are going to be saved, and have not been made to understand, that a way has been opened for my salvation in particular.

36. But, *secondly*, we hold that those reasoners who try to make out the sanctifying power of this faith, greatly weaken the force of their argument, by resting it on the mere operation of gratitude because of a received benefit. It is most true that this is one of the influences which lies in special and appropriating faith. It worketh by love, though to have this effect there must be the belief that Christ loved *me*, else how can we share in the apostolic feeling, that we love Him because He first loved us? But undoubted and mighty as this influence is, it is not the only one, as becomes obvious when we look to faith in the whole compass and extent of it—not as

confined to the one object of Christ having died a sacrifice—not as looking exclusively to this one statement of Scripture, but as looking freely and abroad upon all its statements, so as to make our faith in these tell, not on the love of gratitude alone, but on our fears, for that unless we repent we shall perish; or our sense of the necessity of holiness, for that without holiness no man shall see God; or our desire that the Spirit may be given to us, for unless we have the Spirit of Christ we are none of His; or our endeavours to abound in all the works of the new obedience, for while it is by faith that we are justified, it is by works that we are judged. Faith, not in one only of the Bible doctrines, but in the Bible itself, will comprehend all these sayings, will harmonize them all, will proceed on them all, else it is no faith at all. There is no such thing as believing in one declaration of Scripture, and blinking all the rest, any more than it is possible that with the eye of my body I should be awake to the reality of but one object, and be blind or insensible to all the others within the field of vision. I either have faith in all or have faith in none; and if faith in all, why attach ourselves to but one doctrine for proving that faith must engender obedience? Why not avail ourselves for this purpose of all the influences which lie in all the doctrines which bear upon the subject, and which tell, not on our gratitude alone, but on our fears, or our sense of interest, or our desires after a present holiness, which the Bible teaches us to associate and to identify with a future heaven? Let such a faith as this have but full and free operation, and then the obedience, instead of being deduced through the strainer of but one article, will flow in one broad and copious stream, because supplied out of many fountain-heads, that have all been unlocked by a whole faith in a whole Bible.

37. And, *thirdly*, whether it be yet made out or not that such a faith must work obedience as its necessary and invariable consequent, it should now be abundantly obvious, that without obedience there can be no faith, at least in my own personal salvation. If this appropriating faith have not enough of force and fitness in itself to be the efficient cause of obedi-



ence, obedience is at least the *sine qua non* of an appropriating faith. A man cannot believably apply to himself the promises, when conscious all the while that he is making no honest endeavour to fulfil the precepts of Christianity. Such a consciousness would operate as a check and a preventive on his faith. He cannot, in virtue of his faith, apply to himself the comfort of the promises, without at the same time, and in virtue of the very same faith, too, applying to himself the obligation of the precepts. He cannot rejoice in the certainty that in Christ he will be saved, without proceeding on the certainty, that unless he repent he will not be saved ; for if he be not repenting, the one certainty would neutralize, would exterminate the other, and the only way of maintaining the co-existence of both, is to cast all his confidence on Christ, and at the same time give all his energy to the prosecution of the task which Christ put into his hands, when at the very outset of his public ministry on earth, He called upon men to repent and believe the gospel. If instead of slicing down our Christianity according to the articles, we would take our Christianity entire from the Bible, and become the entire and thorough disciples of every lesson it sets before us, we should feel no difficulty, nor be at all puzzled in harmonizing these things. In particular, it would be not only seen but felt, that an appropriating faith is the direct enemy and extinguisher of Antinomianism, and this just because the right and valid appropriation of one thing in the Bible, ensures the appropriation of every thing that is there. The stronger and more confident the appropriation, or self-application of the promises, the surer will be the self-application of the precepts ; and that property of directing to oneself the Bible's encouragements, which many are so afraid of lest it should mark a deceitful security without obedience, is the very property which we hold in greatest value ; because, in virtue thereof, there will be a like direction to self of the Bible's warnings, and so as to make it good that the security shall not be without but with obedience.

38. But, *fourthly*, however the question might be disposed of, if by faith alone we can be sanctified, let it never be lost sight

of that it is by faith, and faith alone, that we are justified. Or rather, it is the righteousness of Christ which justifies us; and this righteousness becomes ours by faith, and by faith only. I cannot adequately express the sense under which I labour of the importance of this proposition, a proposition without our acquiescence in which there can be no solid, no satisfying peace with God. In that mental process through which it is that we are justified, we have not to look inwardly upon ourselves in order to fetch any thing thence, by which to contribute even in the smallest degree, or to help out by so much as one shred or one particle our justification in the sight of God. We must look outwardly and objectively to the righteousness of Christ, and fetch thence, not a part only, but out and out the whole of our justification. It is true, that ere this mighty privilege can be ours, we must have a personal qualification, and that qualification is faith. But it is not the faith which makes the justification, it only receives it. It acts but an organic or a receptive part in this process, being the mere organ of transmission, through which the righteousness of Christ is admitted into contact with, and becomes the property of the soul. And it is all-important to remark that there is no other personal qualification which has any share in this reception of the righteousness of Christ, and that this office or function of a receiver belongs to faith only. Yet we do not object to a special relation of correspondence between the special benefit received and the special object on which faith rests, and to which it is directed. Believest thou, says the Saviour, to the man on whom He was about to confer a miraculous cure—believest thou that I am able to do *this*? and when the man said, yea, Lord, according to his special faith in this so was it done unto him. And there is the same counterpart speciality still between the benefit received and the object believed in. It is through faith in the blood of Christ that Christ becomes our propitiation. It is through faith in the righteousness of Christ which is unto all, that that righteousness comes *upon* us. It is not our diffused or universal faith in the whole Bible, but our concentrated faith in the righteousness of Christ, that

gives us a part and an interest in that righteousness. And let us take our fill of the glorious privilege without the fear of Antinomianism, for there is no inlet afforded to this corruption by keeping our eye open to what the Bible says of the righteousness of Christ, if we do not shut our eye when we turn to the other sayings of the Bible. That is the way of impressing the whole Christianity of the whole Bible upon our hearts. Keep the eye open to the whole of it, and whether it be the influence of comfort or of warning, the object, the special object to which we are looking at the time, will do its own work upon us—so that the same Bible which is profitable for doctrine, will be profitable also for reproof, and for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.

39. Whether these considerations be decisive or not of the question—If faith of itself, or the mere act of believing the gospel, viewed as an assent of the intellect to its truth, and nothing more—whether this, in its naked simplicity, without the addition of any other constituent at the outset of conversion, but in virtue of its own operation, be enough to save and to sanctify the soul? However this question might be settled, surely what we have said, if not sufficient to clear up the metaphysics of the question, at least enables us to lay such a message before the people, as they should be at no loss to understand and proceed upon. We do not deny, you will observe, that there must be a consent as well as an assent. The only question—one perhaps of mental philosophy more than of practical usefulness—is, whether the consent forms part of the saving faith, or be only a fruit and consequent thereof; whether it have a primary or a secondary place in the order of those footsteps by which a sinner passes from the alienation of nature to the peace and obedience of the gospel? Now let this be determined as it may, and whether the preceding observations cast any light upon it or not, they at least furnish us with the material of a most distinct and intelligible proposition, and one which might be converted into immense use and application, when we are setting forth to our hearers the overtures of reconciliation which God hath made to the world. What-

ever mystery may have been made of the gospel calls, the calls which have been addressed from God to man, there is no such mystery ever dreamed of in the perfectly analogous calls made by man upon his fellows. Should any willing and generous benefactor among ourselves, actuated by good-will to one and all of the multitude before him, proclaim in their hearing, that whoever came to his person, or to the place which he specified, should receive a certain donation, I am sure there is not one of them who would suffer any mystifications, however subtle and perplexing, so far to darken and pervert his understanding, as that he should not construe this call, flung abroad though it has been over a whole assemblage of people, into a special promise and invitation directed to himself: and it positively requires no more than his faith in the truthfulness of the proposal, to engender his trust and his confident expectation that all its benefits would be realized upon him. It is true that along with the promise there was a bidding—the promise of what he should get, and the bidding that he should come for it; but this distinction between one part of the call and another, however scholastically it might be stated, and however scholastically it might be discussed, brings no practical difficulty along with it to the hearer of the call, who simply does the bidding, and looks for the fulfilment of the promise. And it is precisely so with God's call to the world, "Whosoever cometh shall not be cast out;" or, in other language, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto God, and he will have mercy upon him, and to his God, and he will abundantly pardon him." There is here too a promise and a bidding; and the purpose of your message to every congregation is, that they shall trust the promise, and do the bidding: "Trust in the Lord, and be doing good." It is true that there must be a consent as well as an assent; but, postponing for the present the question whether the assent will or will not of itself ensure the consent, there is nothing surely in this or in any other question which should in the least obscure or embarrass the practical operation of the gospel call on the man who listens to it with a plain and

ordinary understanding. Say that you first proclaim in his hearing a call on him to believe the gospel of salvation, or which is the same thing, the good news of salvation. This were no good news to him were it but the salvation of others that you were announcing. To make it good news for him it must be a message of salvation for himself that you are bringing to his door; or, in other words, you must make him, what I feel quite sure you are fully authorized to do, the tender of his own salvation. Every preacher of the gospel is a bearer of glad tidings of great joy unto all people—to him, therefore, as one of the people; and they can only be glad tidings to him, because the tidings of his own offered pardon, of his own promised recovery from the evils of sin and reconciliation with God. But the message does not stop here. There is in it a command as well as an offer; and the whole substance of it is fitly represented by the first recorded announcement of our Saviour in the evangelist Mark—Repent, and believe the gospel; or, Repent, and believe the good news. Be assured that he who with a true faith takes the good news to himself, charges himself with the repentance also. He treats alike the promises of what he is to get, and the bidding of what he has to do. He lays both upon himself, and from the very commencement of his Christianity, do we see him at once the hopeful and the laborious disciple—joyfully trusting in the promise that has been made to him, diligently working at the task which has been prescribed to him. There must surely have a sad mist arisen out of our theological warfare, which could have at all obscured or distorted a matter so plain. In the case of illustration which we have just given, the man who was told, although through the medium of a general call addressed to a whole multitude, to come to a certain place and receive a certain benefit, he would be at no loss how to proceed, that he might realize to himself what had been thus held out to him. He would simply believe as he was told, and do as he was bidden. There would be no disjunction of these two things. They behoved to stand or to fall together. If he believed that he was to get the thing promised, he must also have believed that he behoved to go for it.

On the other hand, there would be no hope if there was no obedience. He would look for no fulfilment if conscious to himself that he did not mean to move a single footstep towards it. With the expectation of the offered boon, there behoved to be the consciousness of a purpose to enter on the prescribed walk. His very first footstep would indicate the reality of the expectation—an expectation that would brighten with every succeeding footstep, and in proportion as he got nearer and nearer to the time and place of that accomplishment, which both stirred up his hopes and set him agoing in order to realize them. And it is precisely so with the walk and the work of Christianity. The man who truly believed on its announced promises would also enter on its bidden path. If there be no consciousness of a purpose to repent, there will be no confidence in the offered salvation. The ransom of his soul is fully held out to him for his acceptance, but the way he is told, by which the ransomed of the Lord pass over to heaven, is a way of holiness. If there be no purpose to enter on that way, no progress made or making on it, there can be no well-grounded hope; on the other hand, with the first dawnings of a hope that is at all genuine, there will be a dawning purpose of reformation, and the consciousness thereof. The first moment of the new obedience will be at once the indication and the effect of his newly formed faith—a faith that will strengthen with every advancement that is made on the narrow way which leadeth unto life. There may be a difficulty in following out the argumentations, and apprehending all the distinctions of a learned or metaphysic theology; but with the simple reader of his Bible, who, with the docility of a little child, receives the informations which it gives, and betakes himself to the course which it prescribes, there is no difficulty. To him who orders his conversation aright, God will show his salvation, and the wayfaring man who runs may read with understanding, would he simply believe as he is told, and do as he is bidden.

40. Let me not leave off this argument without an earnest recommendation of Bible preaching. Let not the textual character of your discourses be impaired or encroached upon by

the distinctions of an artificial theology. Let the Bible lay its impress on every sermon. It will be difficult to avoid the distortion or disfiguration of the true Scripture model, if you bear too great a respect for men, or give in too much to the conceptions and the views of human authorship. Call no man master but Christ; and then it will be your uttermost study to deliver the precepts and promises of the gospel, just as Christ and His apostles delivered them. You will find that the faith and obedience of the gospel—faith in its promises, and obedience to its precepts—work most admirably to each other's hands. It is thus that the Divine word, which hath come down to us from on high, will meet with its duplicates and its confirmations in the human experience that is verified in the hearts and among the habitations of men. There will be a growing and a gathering brightness in the path of every honest believer; and he will feel more and more of a present and a living interest in the declarations of Scripture, when the word which speaketh to him from heaven obtains its fulfilment upon earth, in the realisation of his own moral and spiritual history. Amid the reelings of church controversy, faith and works have been confronted in hostile array to each other. The more that Bible Christianity prevails over sectarian Christianity, the more will these two elements be found to act and react most beneficially for the mutual help and advancement of both.

41. But admitting the importance of these views, and perhaps that they are enough for the practical guidance both of ministers and people, is it not desirable that even the metaphysics of our question should be seen into, as far as they can be legitimately carried? In order that faith should put man on the right way, or urge him along it, must there not be consent as well as assent—and not the one as a posterior derivative from the other, but both coeval with the very outset of the new course, and both in conjunct and contemporaneous operation at the very entry thereupon? Is it not conceivable that Abraham might have believed the call from heaven, and yet that from the strength of his earthly attachment he could not quit his hold, and so clung to the home and

country of his fathers ; and to overcome this must there not have been a consent as well as an assent ? For though with the intellect alone he might have apprehended the truth of the promise that was made to him, would the faith of mere intellect have led him to go where he was bidden ? Or as a still more convincing illustration, could not Abraham have perfectly recognised the voice of God in the call to offer up Isaac ; but is it not quite conceivable that, however entire this belief might have been, natural affection might have prevailed, and the obedience not been rendered—seeing that here, too, the faith of mere assent would not have sufficed, but the consent also behoved to be given : and thus it is contended that there must be a right disposition as well as a right belief, or that the consent and concurrence of the will must go along with the view of the understanding. And thus, too, it is reasoned and concluded in regard to the saving faith of the gospel. The plain faith of the intellect alone might suffice, it is alleged, for our reliance on the promises ; but that something more is required for our compliance with the precepts, and more especially with the initial and all-comprehending precept of “repent,” which is brought to our hearing, just as soon as the call of, Believe the gospel, is brought to our hearing. And thus, too, in this example, the one which most nearly concerns ourselves, it is conceived that there might be an assent without a consent ; or, in other words, that the faith of a bare assent would not avail, but that consent must be superadded, in order to make up a faith which will sanctify and save us. This argument seems to obtain great countenance from the mental state of whole multitudes, perhaps the majority of every Christian land, who have a sort of general faith in the Bible, and yet most assuredly are not walking in that heavenward path which the Bible points out as the only road to a blissful eternity : and hence it is most plausibly asked, whether there must not be a choice or consent by the will, as well as an assent by the understanding, ere the faith that we profess can be regarded as the faith of a true and living Christianity ?

42. We reply to this that there must be a consent as well as



assent. There is no question as to the necessity of a consent. The question is, whether, according to the order of the human faculties—which order we do not conceive to be changed or violated by the Spirit's operation—whether the assent, if it be real, will not draw the consent after it? The question is not as to the absolute necessity of there being a consent or a choice, on the part of him who at conversion passes from death unto life. The only question for solution regards the place which this consent occupies in the mental process which the believer undergoes—whether as a primary ingredient, or as the sure and immediate effect of that faith which is unto salvation? For we greatly doubt, if the assent do not beget the consent, whether it be a real assent or real faith at all; for there is a semblance of faith without its reality. There are thousands of propositions to which the mind might give its listless acquiescence, while taking no pains either to verify or to contradict them. But we should not call such an acquiescence as this faith; and yet such may be the whole amount of that seeming faith in the doctrines of Christianity which brings no willingness for the services of Christianity along with it. It follows not that the mind gives actual or positive credit to the propositions set before it, merely because it does not or dares not contradict them, or because it feels no opposition to them; nay, though even at the telling of another—be it the telling of a man or of a book, of the minister or of the Bible—though at this telling he has formally adopted these propositions as his own, and avers them to be the articles of his creed. There are many, very many, so called beliefs in the human mind, of which we are persuaded that if subjected to some decisive test of their reality, they would turn out to be no beliefs at all. We remember long ago, when reading the works of Dr. Adam Smith, being much interested by a curious fragment of his on the evidence for the truth of the Copernican system, and the effect of that evidence on the mind of the inquirer. It is worthy of your perusal, were it but for the illustration of our present subject. This little effusion is a good deal characterized by the philosophical scepticism of the age—a scepticism carried

to its utmost height by his intimate friend and associate, David Hume—and wherewith, it is to be feared, that his own mind was perniciously infected. Still, there is some truth in what he says, or rather in what is implied by the views set forth in his essay,—that a student might but fancy himself a convert to the modern astronomy, while, after all, instead of belief, it might be the mere repose of the imagination, regaled and satisfied with the harmonious spectacle of phenomena and principles brought into good and well-looking adjustment with each other. I shrewdly suspect that there are many of our scientific, and many of our historical beliefs which amount to no more than this ; and I am not sure, however general the profession of belief in them might be, if so much as one could be found who would stake life and fortune, or even greatly lesser interests, on the truth of the Copernican system, or the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar. There are states of mind in relation to certain doctrines or propositions—not only where there is no denial of them, no dissent from them, nay, a preference or inclination toward them rather than their opposites—and yet all this short of settled or absolute conviction in their truth. And such we hold to be the mental state in reference to the truths of Christianity, of a vast number—nay, we fear, of the vast majority of those called Christians. They give their assent to mere verbal propositions, and nothing more. They yield a sort of assent to them ; but it is an assent to them in word only, not in reality, and therefore not in power. They go along with the words, without almost the conception, and certainly without any realizing sense of their archetypes. They would shudder at infidelity, and therefore do not resist any of the great and acknowledged doctrines of the faith ; but truly one may not resist, and yet in good earnest may he as little realize them. He may repeat, and without the slightest tendency to question or contradict them, all the sentences both of his creed and catechism, so as to have got them by heart, and yet without any such sense or perception of their reality as that he should lay them to heart. In which case we should say that he does not believe them, and that it is not merely

his heart which is in fault, but his understanding is in fault. We are inclined in the state now described, to dispute, not merely the strength of his faith, but the existence of it. Certain it is that the Scripture would not own it to be faith, or at least most distinctly and decisively affirms that if it do not tell upon the heart, if it do not work by love, if it do not lead to the walk of a new obedience—then it is not the faith which availeth. We are doubtful, very doubtful, if it be faith at all; and there is one thing at least undeniable, that it is not the faith which is unto salvation—for if such, it would have its fruit unto holiness, and in the end life everlasting. But though we should not labour any farther to determine the nice metaphysical question, whether it be faith at all, or faith in its most embryo and rudimental form—whether it be not the mere shadowy resemblance of faith, with nought of its substance or reality—though we should not prosecute this question, suspecting that it would land us in a mere logomachy, or war of definitions, there is one observation which should not be omitted, because of capital importance, as eminently subservient to the practical guidance both of ministers for the right conduct of their pulpit instructions, and of private Christians for the right culture and advancement of their own personal religion. It is an observation to which both Scripture and experience lend their concurring testimony, and that is, the mighty importance of a right understanding and right views of truth to a right direction of the affections, and the will, and all the active powers or faculties of our nature. In accordance with this, you will find that the initial exercises of the mind, in order to a change from the bad to the good, whether in character or conduct, are so many intellectual acts or exercises—and this with the view, either to discern truth aright, or to keep that truth steadily in the presence of the mind. One of these exercises is giving or taking heed: “How shall a young man cleanse his way?”—by taking heed unto the Word. “We ought to give earnest heed unto the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip.” In like manner, what more frequent injunction, and for the purpose, too, of recalling

us to the paths of wisdom, and righteousness, and keeping us therein, than that we should *consider* certain truths, or charge our minds both with their meaning and with their big and important reality: "Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath, there is none else."—"O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end."—"Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how good things he hath done for you."—"When I consider, I am afraid of him."—"Stand still, and consider the fearful works of God."—"Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."—"I will consider thy testimonies."—"Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."—"They regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operation of his hands."—"That they may see, and know, and consider, and understand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the Holy One of Israel hath created it." Mark here the intellectual signification of all these words—the seeing, and the knowing, and the considering, and the understanding—all spoken of as the primary and preparative steps to a right state of the affections, or a right habit and character of obedience towards God. But to pursue still further these important quotations: "It may be, they will consider, though they be a rebellious house."—"They consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness."—"Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."—"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus."—"Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." We could produce many similar quotations of words that bear the like intellectual meaning with those that have been already instanced—such as regarding, and remembering, and attending, and hearkening, which, in their nature, are so many acts and exercises of the understanding, and have for their objects the truths which God sets before us; and which acts or exercises we are enjoined to perform on very

purpose that the truths may be rightly apprehended, and in virtue of their being so, have a right influence on our hearts and our lives. There is much to be learned from these passages of Scripture. They demonstrate what observation indeed abundantly tells—the primary and presiding influence of truth over the affections and the will. But truth were a mere non-entity in point of effect, unless it were truth believed, truth understood, truth attended to ; and when called on, as in the extracts now given, to take heed, and to consider, and to attend—these can be regarded in no other light than as so many testimonies to the moralizing and sanctifying power of faith ; for the whole purpose of these prescribed mental exercises is, that we should obtain through means of them a realizing sense of the objects presented for our contemplation.

43. I am unwilling to quit the subject without some such deliverance as might let you know how far the lights of Scripture and the mental philosophy have carried forward my own views on the question at issue. There is such a thing as being carried forward a certain way among the difficulties of an inquiry without being carried over them. Still it is good, though we should not be able to reach the end of the question, or as we may say, to consummate the solution of it—it is good if we can define to what extent we can confidently go in it. Next to a determinate and full solution of the question, it is of importance, failing the possibility of this, to assign the limit of our discoveries thereupon, and so to trace, as it were, the marches of separation between the certainties and the uncertainties which belong to it.

44. First, then, there can be no doubt, and with the exception of avowed Antinomians, I should imagine that there is a general agreement on this matter—there can be no doubt that over and above the assent of the understanding to the truths of the gospel, there must be the consent of the will to come under the practical discipleship of its lessons and its laws, and that without this there can be no salvation. The question is, Whether there be not virtue enough in the assent, if it be real, to produce the consent, so as that the assent might be all in

all of saving faith, and the consent, however indispensable, might still, instead of a constituent part of this, be only the effect or consequent thereof? Certain it is, that faith, even when spoken of singly in Scripture, is often said of itself to save us.—Salvation is of faith: “we are saved by faith;” “believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved;” “whosoever believeth in me shall not perish but have everlasting life.” But then other things beside faith are stated to be essential to salvation—holiness is, the new obedience of the gospel is—and so therefore must the consent on our part that we shall render that obedience. Yet it follows not that this, or any of the other requisites to salvation besides itself, should be part of this faith, or enter into the primary composition of it. Enough to secure for faith the power and the property ascribed to it in the Bible of its sufficiency to save us, if these other and indispensable requisites for our salvation shall be not the parts but the necessary product of faith, the necessary results of its operation on the heart and practice, or on the active powers and the emotional sensibilities of our nature. Enough to reserve for faith all the fulness of its saving efficacy, if these, though not its ingredients, are the fruits of faith, which might therefore in itself be still belief, and nothing more.

45. But here lies the difficulty. There is often a belief, or something at least as like it as possible, and on matters, too, which to ourselves are of the greatest practical and personal concernment, and yet which terminates in no corresponding practical result. The instance that weighs most with me is the universal belief which all men have in the certainty of death, which no one will deny to have existence at least in every mind, whether it have influence and operation there or not. Now it is the existence without the operation which is the staggering fact, and however we may be able to dispose of it, the phenomenon of an existent faith, and yet not an operative faith, must have an important bearing on this controversy. It is quite palpable of every man that he will tell you he believes in death, and yet how few live as if they were to die, nay, how palpable it is of the great majority of our race, when

you look at their plans and their calculations, and their busy pursuits and interests, and, in short, to the whole set and habit of their mind, that believing though they do in the death which at the end of a few little years is sure to overtake them, yet still they live here as if here they were to live for ever. Now you would scarcely call this faith in the minds of all men that they are to die, you would scarcely call it but a seeming faith, or faith in semblance only, not faith in reality. You must call it an inoperative faith, but you would hardly say of it that it was no faith at all. Here, then, to all appearance, there is a faith which leads to nothing practical, and if so in one article of belief, why may it not be so in other or in all the articles of belief. My own partialities would have led me to regard even this faith in death as but a seeming and not an actual faith, so long as it remained inoperative, or up to the point at which it began to tell on the heart and the history of men; or, in other words, that it became a real only when it began to be an operative faith. I fear, however, that I must concede to the generally received phraseology on this subject, which characterizes the faith that is without works not as no faith at all, which does not refuse it a reality and a being, but which calls it a dead faith, an inoperative faith.

46. I shall not quarrel about names and definitions; but let us look to the actual phenomena, and on the contemplation of these, if I am not mistaken, we shall not fail to recognise the paramount importance of faith in religion, so in fact as to secure for it all the might and ascendancy of a great overruling principle, which we need practically to care for. And to manifest the great practical power of this said faith, let me ask what is the object or meaning of all these directions which we have now been quoting, to take heed, to consider, to attend, to remember and dwell upon this one and that other truth? why, the object, the design of all these admonitions, is to keep the truth present to the mind, to keep the truth within view of the mind, to keep the truth close upon the mind, to keep it in contact with the mind. The good old Puritanic authors, among their other prescribed exercises, often tell us to act faith on

this one and that other verse in the Bible. Now this acting of faith upon any Bible intimation, is just to think well how true it is, to charge your mind with the trueness of it, and this in order that the felt trueness might tell appropriately on the heart and conduct. Take as an illustration of what we labour to impress on you, the saying of the Apostle, That we love Him because He first loved us. The affection, the thing of highest moral worth, being in fact the first and greatest of the commandments, is here represented as the effect of a something anterior, the love, namely, of our gratitude to God, as the effect of God's love of kindness towards us. But in order that this first love, the love of God to us, should awaken the second love, the love of man to God, we must have faith in it, for in point of influence it were a nonentity if it were not believed; but what is more, it is a nonentity for the time, at least so long as it is not thought upon. That this our love to God be awakened in the heart, and kept up in the heart, it is not enough that God's love to us be believed in, it must also be thought upon. So long as the thought is not in the mind, so long is the affection corresponding to the thought not in the heart. If the mind be otherwise employed than in thinking of God's love of good-will to us, the heart for the time is otherwise occupied than with our love of gratitude to God back again. But surely you cannot ascribe this latter phenomenon to any want of power in faith, seeing that the absence of love from one heart at any given time is due not to the powerlessness of the faith, but to the absence of the faith. We cannot charge it on the moral impotency of faith that there should be no love felt so long as faith is not present and not in exercise. Nay, it speaks all the more emphatically for the power of faith, when told that the love is not there, just because the faith is not there; and that the way to relume the love is just to recall the faith, which is done by our taking heed, by our attending, by our considering, by our bringing to remembrance—all of them the expressions of an intellectual act, and the object of all being to bring God's love to us within the perception and view of the understanding. And surely if the love being suspended



when faith is suspended, form no reason, but the contrary, for questioning the power of faith, it forms as little reason for questioning its simplicity as being belief and nothing more. It says nothing for faith being a composition of two ingredients, such as belief and love, or such as assent and consent, to tell us that many a man who calls himself a believer, and has all the appearance of being so, spends hours and days together without being visited by the love of God, nay, that the general habit of his heart is so as to be devoid of this affection; we ask if all the while that this love to God is away from him, the belief of God's love to him is not also away from him? Is the thought of God's love to him ever present to his mind at the time when he labours under this utter desolation in the heart of all love to God, and this thought not in the form of a vivid conception, but in the form of a felt and confident reality? We are persuaded that whenever the simple, if real belief, that God loves me, is occupying my mind, love to Him back again will occupy my heart. Were the faith perennial the love would be perennial—did I realize God's reconciled countenance all the day long, love for Him all the day long would arise like the incense of a perpetual offering—did I believe and keep in memory, for without this memory, says the Apostle, faith is vain, and would be of no efficacy—did I believe and keep in memory the truth that Christ died for my sins, according to the Scriptures, the unfailing consequence would be, that I should keep my heart in the love of God, and just according to the language of the Apostle Jude, be building myself up in our most holy faith. And going back to Paul, did I live a life of faith on the Son of God, then would it be a life of love; and as this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, the life which I lived in the flesh, just because a life of faith on the Son of God, would be a life of obedience. It argues nothing against either the power or the simplicity of faith, that there is no love in the heart at those times when it might be said that faith is not in being, for when the thing believed is not present to the mind, faith in that thing is not in act and operation. Enough if every time that the faith is exercised the

love is excited; and without mystifying our speculation by making a perfect jumble of the human faculties and their respective functions, we understand, when we speak of faith and love, that faith is faith itself and nothing more, and that love is not a part but a consequent, an effect of faith, and not one of its primary ingredients, the consent of the affections, the fruit of that assent which is yielded by the understanding to such truths as are the objects of its believing contemplation.

47. With the help of these observations, we are the better able to dispose of the phenomenon that death should be so universally believed in, and yet should be so little operative. It can only be operative when in operation, and by the very nature of the thing, can only be in operation when the thought of it is present to the mind. If it do not tell upon us through life, it is because the urgencies of sense, which beset us all life long, dislodge the idea of it. Amid the songs of festivity, and the busy pursuits of the world, the mind can easily make escape from the unwelcome intrusion of such a thought; nay, such is the corrupt and carnal tendency to be monopolized over by things seen and things sensible, that it would require a strenuous effort to detain the thought within the precincts of memory or recollection, and there to dwell upon it at all times. Be assured that it arises neither from a want of power nor from a want of simplicity, as if the belief of it were any thing more than a conviction of its trueness, that it produces so little or no effect on the heart and conduct. Were it in view of the mind, it would tell on the feelings and purposes of the mind, and if it fail of this, it is not because of its want of fitness to sober and solemnize the heart, but because it is forgotten; and even when taken cognizance of, seen so faintly, or through a transparency so dim, as to be well-nigh veiled altogether from observation. Let it but haunt us at all times with a sense of its impending reality, of its agonies and horrors, of the judgment that follows it, and the unprovided eternity to which it is the portal, and we should soon perceive that really it requires nothing but to see it as it is, nothing but a right understanding and belief of it, to form an adequate motive by which

to impress the heart of a rightly constituted man, whose heart of stone had been taken out of him, and to whom a heart of flesh had been given in its place. There must, we admit, be an impressible subject, but the moving force to operate on this subject lies in the understanding; and so the Bible makes use of terms altogether intellectual when addressing itself to the object of recalling man from sin to seriousness. "O that they were wise, that they understood these things, that they considered their latter end;" and, "O that they, too, had so numbered (an intellectual operation this, too, surely) their days as to apply their hearts to wisdom." It argues nothing against, but all for the fitness of the principle to work any given effect, that when not present and not in operation, there is no such effect as we are contending for. It just tells us all the more forcibly, that this is the principle, and that nothing else is competent for the production of the effect in question. Or that regeneration is indispensable, in order that man become an impressible subject, this does not hinder but that it is truth rightly apprehended, and truth alone, which makes the impression. A man may have to undergo a renovation, and have spiritually to be made all over again, ere he becomes a fit subject for sanctification; and yet faith, faith in its simplicity, faith as consisting of belief and nothing else, may be the sanctifying, and the only sanctifying power, that which overcometh the world, and to which and by which all things are possible.

48. On this question, I have sometimes alleged the case of Peter calling out in terror when walking on the sea, when he was rescued by the Saviour, and at the same time rebuked by Him in these terms: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" People might say on this instance, was not courage requisite here as well as faith? Our reply is, that it was because of the faith being wanting, that the courage was wanting. The faith, had it been strong enough, would have upheld and alimented the courage. Our Saviour puts the failure of his courage on its right footing, when He ascribes it to the failure of his faith, which gave way amid the turmoil of conflicting waves and rushing waters. Had the faith been strong enough

for the occasion, the courage would have been strong enough, not as an ingredient of the faith, but in the order of cause and effect, as a consequent of the faith. The understanding dealing rightly with the truth would have sufficed to carry Peter triumphantly through the perils of his situation, even though he acted wrong by precipitating himself into it, thus tempting the Lord his God. But notwithstanding, had he, even after the mistake was committed, but trusted in the Lord, judged the Lord to be able and faithful as Abraham and Sarah did in the face of the unlikelihoods which tried them, charged himself with the trueness of this proposition that such were the power and such the tenderness of Christ for him, that He would never let him perish; according to this his faith, a purely intellectual act, as I apprehend it to have been, both his fears would have been repressed and his deliverance been alike sure.

49. Let me now sum up my leading views on a subject which has detained me longer than I anticipated.

*First*, we hold that saving faith is belief, and nothing more; and that whatever else is indispensable to salvation, call it repentance, or holiness, or the love of God, or the new obedience of the gospel, or the consent of the will to its bidding, is distinguished from the assent of the understanding to its truths, that it forms no part of this faith, but is only the fruit of it.

*Secondly*, we hold that the gospel makes a tender of salvation to all men, and that to believe in it requires but an intelligent faith in these sayings of Scripture which relate to the subject. It is thus that every reader of the Bible has a warrant for believing that there is in it the message of an offered salvation to himself, and this without the help of any other consciousness than simply that he is a man. The devils wanting this consciousness believe and tremble. A man having it, may believe and trust that God is holding out for acceptance the salvation of the gospel to himself individually.

*Thirdly*, the proposition that the gospel makes a tender of—salvation to all men, and therefore to me in particular, is distinct from the proposition that I am one of the saved; a belief in the former proposition required a certain degree of con-

sciousness, even the consciousness that I am a man—a belief in the latter requires a further degree of consciousness, the consciousness that I am a returning man, a repentant man, a man who not only assents to the truth of all which the Bible says, but consents and is resolved on the strength of divine grace to be all which the Bible requires of him. The consciousness of such being his purpose, might awaken the hope of salvation for himself, even on his first acceptance of the gospel. The experience of growing success in the fulfilment of our purpose might brighten and confirm this hope more and more even to the degree of a full assurance of salvation.

*Fourthly*, although such a consent as we have just described be essential to my salvation, there is confusion of thought, or at least of language, on the part of those who tell us that this consent forms any part or ingredient of the faith that I am one of the saved, or that this faith is aught else or aught more than an act of the understanding. The fact of my consent forms part of the evidence on which I believe myself to be one of the saved, but it forms no part of the belief itself, and they who affirm so, confound the reasons of faith with the act of faith.

*Fifthly*, there is no danger in appropriating to oneself those invitations and promises in the gospel which are addressed to all men, if we make a like honest and consistent application to ourselves of those warnings and precepts in the gospel which are addressed to all men. Such appropriation, so far from leading to Antinomianism, forms a security against it, nay, raises the barrier of its moral impossibility in the way of every man who places a whole faith in a whole Bible.

*Sixthly*, whatever difficulty there may be in determining the question, whether that seeming faith, which yields not the fruits of practical righteousness, be a real faith or not, certain it is that it is not a saving faith. It may be as difficult metaphysically to discriminate between an operative and inoperative faith, or to lay one's finger on the point that divides them, as it is to explore the arcana of a man's spirit, and thence to determine the question, whether he is or is not a believer. But whatever difficulty attaches to either of these inquiries, there

can be no difficulty in assigning the Scripture test—whether of the faith being a saving faith, or of the believer being a believer unto salvation—even that by their fruits ye shall know them.

*Seventhly*, there is nothing in this admission to infringe either on the supremacy of faith as the sole principle of the new obedience of the gospel, or on its simplicity as consisting of belief, and nothing more. It were a vain thing to look for faith being operative when it is not faith in exercise; and if that faith be in exercise, the truths which are its objects must be present to the mind. Hence the frequent calls in Scripture to think, and to hearken, and to take heed, and to consider, and to recall, and to keep in memory—all intellectual acts, and all for the purpose of keeping faith, itself an exclusively intellectual act, in busy and habitual operation. So entirely is this the principle of our new obedience, that a course of such obedience is called a walk of faith in contradistinction to a walk of sight; and the great specific of the Apostle Jude for keeping our hearts in the love of God, is to build ourselves up on our most holy faith.

*Eighthly*, the prosecution of this inquiry will open up additional and confirmatory views of the Scripture doctrine of regeneration. Some misapplying the principle, that had we only faith, all would follow, conceive that if the objective light of Scripture were made sufficiently clear, *ab extra*, this of itself would suffice for the virtues of the new creature in Jesus Christ. But ere this can be effected, there must be a subjective and inward operation upon the mind; so that man has not only to be visited by light from without, but must be gifted with the seeing eye, or the power of spiritual discernment, from within; and accordingly the Scripture says, That He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.

*Ninthly*, but more than this, the internal operation of God's Spirit in the work of regeneration is not confined to the understanding of him on whom He operates. He must not only be

made capable of knowing and discerning aright, but made capable of feeling aright in the contemplation of what he does know; thus superadding to a true perception by the understanding the susceptibility of a true and right impression in the heart. And accordingly, God is said to make a willing people, to take the heart of stone out of them, to give them a heart of flesh, from which, and many other places, it is abundantly obvious that in conversion there takes place, not a partial, but a total regeneration, the fall having deteriorated each faculty, and dislocated the connexion between them.

*Tenthly*, but though our moral mechanism be thus renovated, all its parts and faculties stand in a given relation to each other. The understanding, and the heart, and the active powers of human nature, maintain each their appropriate and distinct functions, and exert on each other their appropriate influences as before. Faith, from the central place it occupies in the mental system, takes the direction and exerts the supremacy over the whole man, so that we are saved by faith, and sanctified by faith.

## CHAPTER VII.

ON FAITH IN SOME OF ITS CONNEXIONS AND  
CONSEQUENCES.

1. SHOULD Scripture, previously ascertained to be the word of God, affirm a connexion between any two events which lie beyond the reach of my own observation, I would instantly admit the truth of the connexion, however ignorant of its reason or its propriety. I may not be able to understand it as a principle, yet that ought not to prevent my reliance upon it as a fact which I received on the ground of credible information. I might know not how it is, yet have perfect reason for knowing that so it is. And the explicit declarations of the Bible, that by faith we are saved—that he who believeth hath everlasting life—that he who believeth not shall not see life, leave no room for doubting that there is a real, even though it should for ever remain an inexplicable connexion, a sequence, if we may so term it, however mysterious, between a man's faith and his salvation.

2. But while bound on the testimony of an authentic and authoritative revelation to admit the fact of this connexion, even though utterly unable to comprehend the reason of it, it is a possible thing that Scripture may have given some partial information at least of the one, even as it has given entire and absolute information of the other. And besides, on the subject of the laws and the processes of human nature, we have an independent experience of our own; and this of itself may lead to the discovery of certain connexions between the intellectual state of believing, and that moral state in which lie the health



and harmony of the soul. And so the way in which a man's faith and his salvation stand related to each other, may not be a hopeless, nor yet an unprofitable subject of inquiry. Had we conceived it either the one or the other, we should not have entered upon it, or attempted any disquisition under the title that we have prefixed to our present Lecture. But we hold that there is something in Scripture, and something too in reason, which might help to regulate our views, not respecting the fact only, but the manner of this interesting connexion, and to rectify certain grave and hurtful errors upon this subject into which many have fallen.

3. In the first place, then, faith and salvation are the two counterpart terms, which, as it were, stand over against each other in the evangelical economy; and corresponding to them, obedience and salvation are the counterpart terms in the legal economy. Under the one, we are told to do this and live; under the other, we are told to believe and be saved. The fountain of obedience in the old dispensation, seems to be that of faith in the new dispensation. If formerly we had to work for heaven, now we have to believe for heaven. It just looks like the substitution of one term for another; and the great anxiety in both cases is to make out the term. Heaven in the one case is made to turn on our obedience; and in the other case, it is made to turn upon our faith. To all appearance, there is only a change in the condition—the performance of the commandment to believe, instead of the performance of the commandment to obey. It is thus that the legal imagination of a bargain may come to be introduced into the matter, and the very essence of legality may still be presented to us in the guise of evangelism. Heaven is regarded still, not as a gift, but as a purchase—a return made to us, if not for the rightness of our conduct, at least for the rightness of our creed. There is the subtle insinuation of a sense of merit in the new covenant as well as in the old—associated now, not with the effect of acting rightly, but with the effect of thinking rightly. The obedience of works was the condition of everlasting life under the old dispensation; and the matter still seems to rest on as legal, as mercantile an

imagination as before, if under the new dispensation the condition of everlasting life be the obedience of faith.

4. Now, on this subject I hold it of capital importance to observe, that, in attending to that which forms properly and meritoriously the condition of our salvation, the mind is not looking inwardly to the act of faith, but looking outwardly to the object of faith. Our faith does just as little for the meriting of salvation as ever our works did ; and however it may stand related to our eternal life under the evangelical economy, it is certainly not in the way in which obedience stood related to eternal life under the legal economy. There is one respect in which the old and the new dispensation resemble each other: whether under the one or under the other, none can be admitted into the kingdom of heaven but in virtue of a right and in consideration of a righteousness. It is clearly so under the legal dispensation ; but, though not sufficiently pondered and had regard to, it is equally so under the evangelical dispensation. It is this, and this precisely, which distinguishes gospel mercy from general mercy. Were we dealt with in the way of general mercy, there would be a mere movement of benevolence on the part of God, by a simple and absolute remission of the penalties that we had incurred, a simple and absolute bestowment of the rewards that we had forfeited. But in the exercise of gospel mercy there is another attribute of the Deity concerned beside His benevolence. There is His justice also ; and so, while there is a full remission of the penalties, it is because another has borne them ; while there is a full bestowment of the rewards, it is because another has earned them. You miss altogether what I should term the distinctive peculiarity of the gospel, if, looking upon heaven merely as a grant, you overlook the right and the righteousness which stand associated with the grant. It is not so much the grant of eternal life that is held out to us in the New Testament, as the grant of a right to eternal life, even a right that has been won for us by another, a right made good by another. We can no more get to heaven save through the medium of a righteousness under the new dispensation than under the old ;

yet the obedience of the one stands related to this righteousness in a very different way from what the faith of the other does. In the economy of the law, every holder of the right obtained it by purchase, even the purchase of his own services. In the economy of the gospel, every holder of the right obtains it by present, it having been granted to him after it had been previously earned by another's services: And hence the mighty difference between the respective functions of obedience and faith under the two covenants. In the one, man's own obedience made the right. In the other his faith does not make the right—it only receives it. It lays hold by an act of compliance on a ready-made right, and a ready-made righteousness. It sees no right in itself; but looking out from itself, sees it in the sufferings and the obedience of another. The believer in looking to that which forms the ground of his meritorious acceptance, looks not to his belief, but to that which is the object of his belief—not to any right or righteousness which faith has wrought in himself, but to the righteousness which Christ has wrought for him; on which righteousness, viewed apart from himself and external to himself, he rests as the ground of his justification before God. When faith is said to justify a man, it is just as the window enlightens an apartment—it is a mere organ of transmission through which the light of the Sun of Righteousness enters into the soul. When faith is said to enrich a man, it is just as the recipient hand of the mendicant appropriates the supply that is rendered to him by the bounty of an almoner. To the righteousness by which we are justified, faith just stands in the relation of the perceptive faculty by which we see, or the receptive faculty by which we lay hold of it. Faith in the evangelical, has neither the character nor the pretension of obedience in the legal economy. So unlike are the two economies in this respect, that that boasting which the law of works gives rise to, is said by the apostle, to be wholly set aside and annihilated by the law of faith. Faith is not that which forms the meritorious condition of our salvation—it is only that which looks to or lays hold of the condition of our salvation, even the righteousness

of Christ which is unto all and upon all who believe. To Him it ascribes all the merit, and all the glory of a sinner's justification. His righteousness is the objective thing which forms the whole matter and ground-work of a sinner's acceptance. The subjective thing, faith, is no more to be accredited therewith, than the open window can be said to have originated the radiance of day, or the beggar's hand to have been the fountain-head of the wealth it has appropriated.

5. But there is another mischief connected with this same topic of faith, still more subtle in its operation, yet not less substantial than the one that we have now animadverted upon. By the one which we have just endeavoured to expose, we place the merit of salvation in a wrong quarter—in ourselves, instead of the Saviour. By the other we look to a wrong quarter for the comfort of salvation—to ourselves, instead of the Saviour; to the quarter, in fact, whence it constantly eludes our grasp, and in a direction where from the very nature and constitution of the thing, we can never realize it. We should understand the delusion did we know how to discriminate aright between the objective and the subjective in Christianity—for then we should never be looking to the act of faith, when we ought to be looking to the object of faith. It has been well observed by Mr. Hume, that should one try to make himself acquainted with some one of his affections, as anger, on the moment of his turning his eye inwardly for that purpose, the thing he is in quest of takes flight and disappears. It evanishes so soon as the eye of consciousness is turned towards it. And the reason of this is, that to uphold any particular affection, there must be present to the mind, either in remembrance or in reality, the particular thing or object which excited it. One ceases to be angry so soon as he ceases to think of the provocation. Let there be an attempt then, on the part of the mind, to study the phenomena of anger, and its attention is thereby transferred from the cause of the affection to the affection itself; and so soon as the attention is withdrawn from the cause, the affection, as if deprived of its needful aliment, dies away from the field of observation. There might be heat and indignancy enough in the

spirit, so long as it brooded over the affront by which they have been originated. But whenever it proposes, instead of looking outwardly at the injustice, to look inwardly at the consequent irritation, it instantly becomes cool, and hence the difficulty of finding that which is dissipated by the very act of seeking after it, and which glides away like a spectre that is seen by fits and momentary glances, but recoils from the intense and steady observation of human eyes. The mind ceases to feel when it ceases to think of that which caused or perpetuates the feeling. But it ceases to think when it looks inwardly upon itself, and begins to analyze its own phenomena or its own processes. When I am thinking of my anger, I am not thinking of the man who made me angry; and the more that I concentrate my thoughts upon the one, with the view perhaps to a close and thorough inspection of it, the more I abstract my regards from the other. And thus, unlike to other subjects of examination, the more that I fix my attention upon its lineaments, the more do they fade away from my observation; and the darkness thickens, as it were, with every effort that is made of intenser discernment.

6. This applies to every mental state and affection whatever. Of the emotions it is quite obvious. To feel hatred, something must be present to the mind's eye that is hateful. To feel esteem, something must be present to the mind's eye that is estimable. To feel gratitude, or pity, or moral approbation, something must be within notice, and be noticed—a benefactor must be seen or thought of—a sentient creature in suffering must be adverted to—a virtuous person or a virtuous deed must have the eye of contemplation fastened upon it. These are the objects either of perception or memory at the time of the emotion in question; and the mind is the subject of the emotion. Now it is in turning from the object to the subject that the emotion vanishes. If it be true of the mind that it can only think of one thing at a time, then it cannot at the same instant look with intentness on that which is lovely, and reflect with intentness on the love that is felt for it. The love is felt when it is not reflected upon, and why? because the mind is otherwise employed, even in gazing upon that which is

lovely. And again, when it is reflected upon, it is not felt, and why? because the lovely object is then out of view, the mind being turned away from it to look at the impression which it maketh upon itself. But then the impression fades into evanescence, even by the momentary leave which the mind takes of the object, and can only be renewed again by another visit, as it were—an act of recurrence that shall again bring the mind and the object into contact. It is when the eye looks openly and directly outward on external nature—it is only then that the whole scene of contemplation is pictured forth on the retina behind. But should the eye attempt to see this picture, and, in turning round upon its socket, withdraw the pupil from its original exposure to the objects that were before it, the retina would instantly be darkened, and all that was looked for there would cease to be. And thus it is with every attempt to explore the recesses of the mind. The desire, and the aversion, and the kindness, and the blame and the approval, and all the other feelings that spring up there, do so, as it were, at the touch of certain objects of which the mind is then taking cognizance; and when passing from the objects it proceeds to take cognizance of the feelings themselves, they go into dissipation, and leave a blank over which the eye of consciousness wanders and seeks in vain to be satisfied.

7. It is this fugitive character of the mental phenomena which attaches a difficulty, not merely to the philosophy of the emotions, but also to the philosophy of taste and of the intellectual processes. Were the mind isolated from all converse with that which is without, there would be no phenomena of taste for classification, no principles to make up a philosophy, because there would be no facts, and it would be utterly in vain to look to the mind for its elementary conceptions of grandeur or of beauty, when they had never been called forth by its communions with external nature. It is when the eye rests on some scene of loveliness; or when by an act of memory, some secondary reflection of it is held up to the eye of the inner man—it is then that the mind gives to it the responding homage of its grateful and delighted admiration. It is the presence either by

vision or by remembrance, of the objects of taste, which gives rise to the emotions of taste; and when the mind takes leave of the objects to look at the emotions, then as at the turning of a mirror, the whole reflection hath disappeared. So long as the mind's gaze is outwardly from itself, all the internal principles of taste may be in vivid and busy operation; and the rapt enthusiast while inhaling the utmost enjoyment from the scene that lies before him, may be not only in warmest but in most legitimate ecstasies—the inner tablet of his breast carrying upon it the accurate as well as bright exemplification of the whole philosophy of the subject. But when he turns himself round to look at that philosophy and to expound it, he looks upon a tablet that is blinded and bereft of all its characters. The chamber that he now tries to explore has become a camera obscura, whose opening has just been averted from the light of day and from the irradiations of that landscape, with the reflection of whose graces and whose glories it had been so recently illuminated.

8. For the mind to have within itself the phenomena of thought, it must be provided with something to think about. To have the phenomena of taste, there must be offered to its notice that which it admires. To have the phenomena of moral feeling, the virtues of life and character must be submitted to its contemplation; and never can it have the feeling of its own affections, without having had the objects of desire and hatred and esteem and fear set before it. It is the mind that is most practised among externals, that is most crowded with internal phenomena and processes; and the way to keep these processes in action, is not to descend into our own minds as into a subterranean vault, having shut the door after us, but to keep open communication with the light of day, which can only be done by a perpetual interchange of notices between the world of feeling that is within, and the world of fact and of familiar experience that is around us.

9. And there are like principles as well as like effects to these in the objective and the subjective of Christianity. It is the objective when regarded by the mind looking outwardly,

that brings the whole of the subjective into existence; and when the mind is withdrawn from the objective, the subjective for the time ceases to be. The faith and the feelings of Christianity are upholden by the objective truths of Christianity; and when that faith and these feelings have taken their departure, they can only be rekindled at the touch again of those objects which form their essential and sustaining aliment. That the faith of Christ be kept steadfastly within us, Christ and His doctrine without us must be kept steadfastly in view. We must persevere in what may be termed the gospel attitude of looking unto Jesus—for there is a method of so looking away from Him, in the act of casting a reflex or introverted view into our own hearts, as to obliterate every trace of the mental phenomena that we are in quest of—as to put an extinguisher on the faith, and all the gracious affections, which we long to ascertain.

10. Our present topic has not escaped the notice of practical writers on Christianity; and many of them, as Richard Baxter, have wisely remarked on the primary importance of the objective. It is in truth the fountain-head of the subjective which is originated by it at the first, and kept in being ever afterwards, by fresh and perpetual applications to the external doctrine of Christianity.

11. It is not a vain or merely speculative distinction that we now insist upon, but one eminently conducive both to the comfort and the direction of inquirers. There is often an earnestness to ascertain that we have faith, because we know that by the established constitution of the gospel our eternity hinges upon it. But faith is a mental act, and has the mind for its dwelling-place; and to what quarter can we look for the purpose of seeking after and finding a thing, save just where the thing exists? It is most natural, when we go in quest of that which is inward, to look inwardly, and so to institute a sort of metaphysic or internal scrutiny, at the moment of which, however, in conformity to the principle just laid down, the very thing eludes our grasp which we want to seize upon. Certain it is, that however ready or responsive the faith may be, when



the object of faith is present to the mind, yet the mind itself may at the time appear altogether blank and desolate when subjected to this sort of examination. You must see the importance of the objective here. It is only when in contact with the objective, that there can be any act or exercise of faith at all; and therefore I would say that my possession of faith is more a question of past memory than of present consciousness. By maintaining a habit of hourly or frequent recurrence to the objective in Christianity through the present day, or yesterday, or past week, month, or year of my history, I accumulate the materials of this self-examination. I can recollect how it was that the thought of a Saviour's atonement tranquillized me; or how the sense of His objective love charmed me into the feeling of subjective gratitude; or whether the consideration of His death for me drew back again the purpose of devotedness to Him; or when, in the conflicts of temptation, I be-thought myself of His lessons and His laws, and stood my ground against the adverse influence, that, but for a strong impression of the Saviour and His will, might have upset the patience or the purity of my discipleship. These are so many facts, a look at which cannot possibly be gathered by a peering inspection of the characters wherewith the tablet of the inner man is at the time engraven. They lie in obvious presentation along the track of my mental history; but it was the power of objective Christianity, and nothing else, which brought them there. It is this, and this alone, which makes the subjective state and character of the man palpable. It is this which attests, and in a way the most palpable and convincing, that he proceeds on the reality of the truths which be in the gospel. It is by these repeated touches of the objective that the subjective is brightened into visibility, and the path of the believer is strewed with the tangible evidences of his faith. He reads the inscription of his own personal Christianity, not in the shadowy evanescent subtleties, which even the keenest metaphysic inspection cannot realize; but he reads it in the strength of feelings powerfully sensible at the time, and therefore remembered afterwards; he reads it in the stable facts of

an obedience which accredits this scriptural and satisfying text, that "by their fruits ye shall know them."

12. This principle applies to all the feelings and characteristics of personal religion. Christians complain that they want love as well as faith. But it is not by an inward and undirected plunge among the recesses of their moral system, that they will either find it where it is, or excite it where it is not. It is by the application of the objective, and by that alone, that it is awakened. It is the perceived worth of the Godhead that calls forth the love of moral esteem. It is the sense and sight of His kindness that calls forth the responding love of gratitude back again. We may as well think of calling up the images of beauty into the mind by introverting the pupil of the eye into the retina, rather than directing it openly and outwardly upon the landscape, as think of conjuring within us the love of God by a metaphysic search into the arcana of our bosom, rather than looking with the eye of contemplation on the moral radiance which encircles His throne. It is only a mental regard to the objective that creates the subjective feeling or manifests it. It is by our thinking of God, of His worth, or of His kindness, that love to Him is fostered and perpetuated within us. And still we are met as before, with the prime and paramount importance of looking outwardly. That will awaken the feeling, so as to make it sensibly announce itself; and if the feeling be genuine, so as to be practical, it will further work out the solid and historic text, "This is the love of God, that ye keep His commandments."

13. But we have expatiated so long on these two errors, or rather erroneous tendencies respecting faith, that we have only time for a few brief remarks on what may be called the congruities which obtain between two things closely and inseparably associated in Scripture—we mean faith and salvation.

14. The first congruity we shall notice between faith and salvation is grounded on the right moral disposition in which this faith commonly originates. Did we mean by this that the faith merited the salvation, we should be offering an express

contradiction to a principle which we trust has been explicitly and distinctly enough affirmed by us already, that there is no such legal relation of desert whatever between faith and eternal life in the new economy, as there was between obedience and eternal life in the old economy. But there is nothing in this to preclude the expectation or the likelihood, that, in the administration of a moral and righteous Governor, the blessings which He has to confer should come in the train of what is morally good, rather than in the train of what is morally evil. And so on this ground there seems a befitting propriety that salvation should be attached to belief, should be withheld from unbelief. It is in unison with many other analogies of nature and experience, that what we desire, and with earnestness labour for, that we should obtain. Now when the conscience-stricken sinner is visited with the desire of his salvation, he makes diligent inquisition into the means and methods of realizing it. Desire induces attention. Attention brings the mind into contact with the subject and its evidences. The studies and the prayers of moral earnestness are followed up by the consummation of a discovery. He who describes this process realizes in his own person the fulfilment of the saying—that he who seeketh findeth; and it is surely a more likely thing that salvation should be come at through such a medium, than through a medium of indolence and unconcern; that he who, all awake to the personal importance of the subject, has arrived at faith as the result of a serious and sustained inquiry, should find it the stepping-stone to eternal blessedness, than that eternal blessedness should be the lot of him who has never been awakened, and felt no such interest or alarm as to prompt any inquiry upon the subject; or of him who repudiated the whole contemplation, and turned away from the offered light because he loved the darkness better, and would persist in the deeds and the desires of iniquity. There is a moral evil in unbelief, which our Saviour Himself assigns as the principle of the condemnation that rests upon it. On the other hand, faith has a moral origination in the desirousness of a heart bent on being right with God, which is altogether in keeping with the moral

salvation in which it terminates, with the pure and virtuous character of that heaven to which it conducts the inquirer.

15. But again, there is another, and we hold a still more essential congruity in this connexion between faith and salvation. Faith recognises the sacrifice which has been made for the sins of the guilty ; faith recognises that righteousness of Christ, in virtue of which we obtain a title to the rewards of eternity ; faith recognises the reparation which has been made for a broken law, and the consistency of the sinner's acceptance with the truth, and justice, and dignity of the Lawgiver. We cannot imagine how without those recognitions, the sinner can find admittance into heaven, unless by forcing his way to it over the fallen majesty and the dishonoured attributes of heaven's Sovereign. We cannot see how he can partake aright in the solemn services of heaven, unless his reverence for heaven's high sanctity be upholden. We cannot conceive of any being, that he is fit to join in the adorations of the upper sanctuary, who is not fully possessed by a sense of the unbroken authority of the Godhead—the untarnished lustre of all the graces and perfections which belong to Him. Till the pardoned rebel can find entrance there, it seems indispensable he should know that though forgiveness has been awarded to him, it is such a forgiveness as preserves inviolate the security of heaven's throne, and the high imperial state of Him who sitteth thereon. Now this he can only know through a knowledge and belief of the gospel propitiation. He is justified by faith in this ; but it is by faith in this that he beholds the truth and righteousness of God to be justified ; and unless he can look upon these with unabated reverence, we positively see not how he can import into heaven a sense of heaven's sacredness. The exquisite skilfulness of the gospel lies in this, that the sinner is thereby delivered from the fear of terror, yet without diminishing or doing away from his heart the fear of deepest reverence. When God is seen by him through faith in the face of Christ, He is seen in the brightness of His mercy to the sinful ; but it is a mercy so accompanied with holiness and truth, so enshrined as it were in the high honours of a vindicated law, as to throw

over the character of the Godhead a deeper sacredness than before. In the halo which is over the mercy-seat of Christianity, there is a radiance of all the attributes—along with the love which gladdens every believer's heart, there is an august and awful majesty to solemnize it ; and while, in this wondrous spectacle, we behold peace to the sinner—yet, seen as it is through the mystery of a world's atonement, we there, too, behold the evil of sin in most fell and appalling demonstration.

16. But perhaps the highest and most important congruity of all in this connexion which obtains between a sinner's faith and his salvation, is that he is sanctified by faith. It is faith which at the first sets him on a hopeful career of activity ; for, anterior to faith, he was either paralyzed by terror, or chilled into inactivity by despair of ever reaching the perfection of the law, or satisfied himself with a low standard of obedience. Faith brings him into contact with moral influences which had no place, and could have no place before, with the love of God, whom he once viewed with indifference, or spurned as the object of dread and of aversion, but now regards with the confidence and affection of a son to his reconciled Father—with gratitude to the Saviour, who gave up His life unto the death for him, and to whom in return he gives up his own life in absolute and entire dedication—with the strengthening aids of that Spirit who is promised to them who believe, and whose office it is to begin and to perfect the work of moral renovation—with the prospect of a heaven, the very anticipation of which, if it please and elevate the heart, is a virtuous sentiment, for it is a heaven of virtue ; and he who carries the hope of it in his bosom purifies himself, even as all its exercises are pure. Lastly, with all the prospects and all the encouragements of Scripture on the side of new obedience—for faith binds itself to the whole testimony of God, and proceeds not on the partial but the universal truth of His inspired record. It limits not itself to but one article—to the truth which quiets the forebodings of guilt, while regardless of the truth which announces the necessity, and awakens the ambition of universal holiness. With a whole faith in a whole Bible, it expatiates with open

eye over the length and breadth of the volume, and so cannot miss this greatest and highest of its disclosures—that to raise our prostrate nature from the ruin into which it has fallen, and by a new moral creation to make man the perfect and the holy creature that he once was, is the great object of the economy under which we sit. So indispensable is the connexion between faith and salvation, that one sees not how the moral salvation of the New Testament can be realized without it; and, on the other hand, it seems a great and manifest propriety, that the principle which ushers all these influences into the moral system, should be the principle which ushers him who owns it into heaven.

## CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE PLACE WHICH OBEDIENCE HOLDS IN THE ECONOMY OF THE GOSPEL, COMPARED WITH THE PLACE WHICH IT HELD UNDER THE ECONOMY OF THE LAW.

1. THE controversy respecting faith and works has given the impression, that obedience holds but a very secondary and subordinate place in the evangelical system. Nay, after having refused to it all share in a sinner's justification, some are at a loss to imagine what precise character, or what significance can be assigned to it at all. Because obedience is of no use in helping to make out a title-deed to heaven, the conclusion with many is that it is of no use whatever. Because now discarded from the place it wont to have under the legal economy, they are at a loss where to find a place for it under the gospel economy. There is a felt puzzle, a felt obscurity upon this subject in many an understanding; and the conception is, that if you deny to human virtue the power of earning the rewards of a blissful immortality, just as an earthly wage is earned by the faithful industry of a servant—then virtue becomes a matter of no account in religion; and the righteousness of man, superseded as it is represented to be by the righteousness of Christ, may be as well set aside from Christianity altogether.

2. Nevertheless human virtue has an undoubted place in Christianity; and there is nothing contrary to this, in the position that we are justified by faith alone. For what is this faith, of which some imagine that it casts virtue utterly into the shade, and reduces it to a thing of no estimation? It is belief in the testimony of God, and, of course, belief in the truth

of all which is included within the limits of that testimony. There can be no real faith in any saying of the Bible, resting on the ground that God is the author of that book, which does not extend to all its sayings, and does not consent to the truth of all. If in virtue of faith you reckon it a faithful saying, That God hath set forth His Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world, you will also, and in virtue of the same principle, reckon it a faithful saying, That God hath set Him forth an example that we should walk in His steps. Faith is represented by the orthodox as the channel through which the righteousness of Christ passes, as it were, into contact with the soul, and invests the whole man with the garment of acceptance. But it should ever be remembered of this same faith, that it is an open channel, through which every lesson of the Bible passes in like manner, and works its appropriate effect on the mind of the honest disciple, who travels over the full length and breadth of the land, and gives a whole faith to a whole testimony. When an alarm is felt lest the doctrine of justification by faith should lead to licentiousness, it is forgotten that a partial faith is not a real faith; and, on the other hand, that if the faith be universal as the testimony, then it cannot admit the tenet of a justification by our faith, without admitting the tenet of a judgment by our works, and that unless we repent we shall perish. By attaching the privilege of justification to faith, it is attached to that which, in every instance where it really exists, opens a door of entrance for every doctrine and declaration of that Scripture which is profitable not for comfort only, but for warning and reproof and instruction in righteousness. Had the justification been annexed to any other act or property of the human spirit, then I can imagine how it might have been appropriated by one who, after all, shall be found to have made but a very lame and imperfect preparation for heaven. But by being annexed to faith, it never can be realized but in conjunction with a full admission of all the essential truths of the gospel, and, of course, the influence of these truths on the affections and practical feelings of our nature. I can fancy a man to read these words, "unless



ye repent ye shall perish," and yet to care no further for his repentance. But not the man who in good earnest believes these words; for then most assuredly he would pause and tremble, and give himself no rest, till the work of repentance was begun and was going forward unto perfection. I can conceive a man to read these words, "without holiness no man shall see God," yet without one effort or aspiration after holiness; but still not the man who in earnest believes these words, else he would proceed on the awful alternative, and prosecute the way of holiness to escape a ruined and undone eternity. Or, again, I can conceive him to read these words, "Be not deceived: neither covetous, nor extortioners, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor unrighteous persons, shall inherit the kingdom of God," and yet recklessly and securely indulge himself in all these varieties of wickedness; but still, as before, not the man who *bona fide* believes them, else he would flee from the present wickedness, in the full assurance, that, unless he did so, he could not flee from the coming wrath. And so when justification and belief are made to go together, the privilege is conjoined with that which ushers into the heart, and thence pours forth upon the history, all the moral influences and effects which belong to the truths of God's revelation. This faith, in fact, is the best guarantee for a man's Christianity being co-extensive with the Christianity of the record. It may be regarded as the duct of conveyance, through which all that the hand of God hath graven on the tablet of revelation, passes into the inner man, and is there graven on the fleshly tablet of the heart—so as to make the Christianity of every genuine believer a full and a fair transcript of the Christianity that is in the New Testament.

3. This is not enough reflected on. Should a man be rejoicing in his fancied exemption from the punishment of sin, while living in the practice and under the power of it; and such a man be appealed to as evidence against the doctrine of justification by faith; I would reply by questioning the reality of his faith. I would demonstrate that it was partial, and I would insist upon this as the test of its being null. I would affirm the impossibility of a man really believing in one part of

Scripture while he rejected, or even while he was heedless of another part. What is true of the corporeal is just as true of the mental eye. It is not within the limits of possibility or nature for a man to see one visible object, and not, with his open eye and looking at it, to see another visible object within the field of view and immediately beside the former one. This is not a matter that is within the power of his jurisdiction or his will. There is an organic necessity, that, while he is looking full and open to the one, he must see the other also; and this is not more true of the material landscape than of the moral or spiritual landscape spread before him in the Bible. He cannot if he would behold, truly and actually behold, the truth of one clause, while he blinks another that is immediately in contact with it; and often are the danger of abuse, and the corrective of that abuse, to be found within the limits of the same sentence. If made to rejoice that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, he, in the very same glance of the eye which directed him to this passage, is reminded that they who are in Christ Jesus walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. If led to repose in the security that Christ is exalted to give the remission of sins, he cannot even connect the first and the last of this proposition without having to travel in sight over another as indispensable a constituent of the Christian salvation; and the whole runs thus:—Christ is exalted at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins. If he in one place read of salvation through the belief of the truth, he can only make this out by traversing a few intermediate words which he cannot overleap; and from which words he will gather that the salvation of the gospel is through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. If he be lulled into tranquillity when he reads in another place, that Christ gave Himself for us, he has only to complete the sentence that he may be raised into action; for He gave Himself for us, it is said, to redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. The imagination of those who dread a perversion and an abuse in

the doctrine of justification by faith, is, that man can believe at pleasure—that he can select the one doctrine which pleases him, and keep all the rest at a distance from the view of his mind. But by the very constitution of his intellectual nature, as well as the construction of his Bible, the thing is impossible. These, the truths which comfort, and the truths which moralize and sanctify, are so interwoven—they lie so widely and profusely scattered over the record, and yet are so closely implicated—that the former cannot be seen by an inquirer, without the latter forcing themselves upon his observation also. He cannot perceive the one, without the others being also the objects of his notice ; and he cannot believe the one without the others being also the objects of his faith. It is not a competent exercise for the mind to credit or to discredit at its own will, or to bestow this diverse treatment on truths found within the limits of the same record, and resting on the same authority. We admit, that even with such a disingenuous process as this, there may be a semblance of belief, but not its reality—there may be fondness or fancy, but it is not faith. The man who believes, actually and honestly believes, that in the righteousness of Christ he has a title to the kingdom of God, believes also, that, if himself an unrighteous person, he cannot enter that kingdom.

4. There is another way, and I believe the most common, of vindicating the doctrine of justification by faith from the charge of an Antinomian tendency. It is by tracing downward the effect of this principle of faith in the character and conduct of him whom it actuates. There is an argument to this effect grounded on the constitution of the mind, and the connexion which there is between the truths present to the understanding and the influence of those truths upon the heart, or on the practical principles of our nature. Some, indeed, without any reasoning, content themselves with mere assertion on the matter, and that in the most general of all forms—as when they speak, but without explanation, of the power of the truth, and tell us, that wherever there is true faith, works will follow, and indeed admit that these works are the only

satisfying evidences of our faith. Others again, enter more analytically into the process by which the faith worketh this effect upon the character. They speak of it as that by which we are led to behold the Deity in another and more endearing aspect than when we trembled before Him as an inaccessible because an offended Lawgiver. They speak of the now manifested good-will that is in heaven, calling from the hearts of those who believe in it the response of their gratitude back again; they furthermore expatiate on the character of that whole transaction whereupon the faith of the sinner rests, and whence it receives the assurances of pardon—of the impressive testimony which it gives to God's abhorrence of moral evil, and how impossible it is therefore that man can connect the forgiveness of his sins with the spectacle of the Cross, and at the same time resist the voice of Him who died for them when He says to us, Sin no more. And then they tell us of the emotions that are displaced from the bosom when once the faith of the gospel enters there, and of the new emotions which are substituted in their room—that on beholding the Deity as now reconciled, the terror which went to degrade the character of our obedience, if not to paralyze it altogether, takes leave of the heart, and the inspiring principle of love obtains the full possession and mastery there. In short, they would demonstrate from the laws and the principles of human nature, that Antinomianism, in conjunction with a faith in justification by grace, is a sort of impossibility—that this faith has that central and presiding influence over the moral system which guarantees the zealous performance of all duty—that from it there must spring, as if by a necessity of inward mechanism, the aspirations and the activities of a willing service, insomuch that faith can never have a real existence and operation in the heart, without germinating all the fruits of righteousness on the outward history.

5. Now, we admit that much which has been said upon this subject is at one with the phenomena of the human constitution, and with the findings of experimental religion. The moral dynamics, if I may so term it, of the gospel, are in

exquisite accordance with the subject mind on which it is brought to bear. There is not a doctrine of Christianity which, when admitted into the belief, does not tend to moralize and mediate the whole nature ; and we doubt not, in particular, that faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ has in it an efficacy and a charm by which to renovate the whole man into a state of personal righteousness. Still we do not think of this derivative process, that it furnishes the readiest or most effectual refutation of the charge of Antinomianism. We have that refutation at first hand in the Scriptures. No demonstration made out, however soundly, by the ingenuity of man, can have in it the conclusive force which belongs to an express testimony of God. The authority of any such reasoning as that to which we have alluded can never equal, and far less can it supersede, the authority of a Bible quotation. We thus arrive by a shorter, and, we think, a surer way, at the refutation of this alleged Antinomianism. The same Bible which tells us of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, tells us also of the indispensable need, ere heaven can be ours, of a personal righteousness of our own. How can faith draw any vitiating influence to the heart from the first of these passages, when, if it have any being at all, it must recognise a co-ordinate authority and truth in the second of these passages. That faith which is but the semblance of belief, may, from that exclusiveness which is the mark of its nullity, imbibe a moral poison from isolated passages of the Bible ; but a whole faith, which attaches itself to the whole testimony, never can. The Bible itself will furnish the best checks, the best counteractives, to the mischief which might result from the perversion of its own doctrines. Instead of finding an antidote in the result of some painful and lengthened excogitation, we shall find it lying palpably before our view on the face of the record. It needs but a simple acquiescence, not in one but in all its sayings, to be armed against the mischief of which we stand in dread. Let us receive the various lessons of Scripture in the spirit of a little child ; and if we feel an emphatic comfort in the saying, that Christ is set forth as a propitiation, we shall

feel as emphatic a warning in such sayings as that Christ is our Master and our Judge, and is set forth as an example that we should follow His steps.

6. I would rest the vindication of our doctrine from an immoral tendency, not on the remote conclusions of any reasoning, however unexceptionable, but, laying an immediate hold on this one testimony and that other of the Scripture, I would ask, How is it possible that the faith, through which, after all, it is that the righteousness of Christ is appropriated by the believer, can let in any depraving influence along with it—when, if it be faith at all, it must let in every threat and every solemn denunciation to be found in Scripture against the children of iniquity, and more especially against the self-deceptions of those who would turn the grace of God into licentiousness, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? And here I may advert to another method, the worst that can be imagined, in which the expounders of Christian truth would protect the minds of those whom they address from the abuses to which the doctrine is liable. Instead of doing this by calling forth to view other doctrines and other declarations from the face of the record, which would effectually neutralize the whole apprehended mischief of the doctrine in question, they would give a moderate and reduced view of the doctrine itself. More especially, in the article of justification by faith alone, they would veil as much as possible from observation the last word of it; they would fain admit human virtue to a share in this justification; they would partition the matter between the righteousness of Christ and the righteousness of man—making vague that which Scripture has made clear and determinate, and casting a haze over its limits and lines of demarcation. It is not by veiling any one part of Scripture that you neutralize the mischief; but it is by unveiling the whole of it. Let Scripture be fully and fearlessly expounded, and we may, with all safety, trust to itself for the effectual correction of any abuse that may have arisen from a partial and limited contemplation of it. The protection which some would seek by the cancelment of parts of the truth, is far better secured by

the unreserved exposure of it in all its entireness. It is thus I would neither mince nor mitigate the apostolic doctrine of justification by faith alone; and I would have you to avoid all the shuffling, and the mixing, and the wretched policy of fast and loose, which have been practised in this doctrine. The deliverance is absolute and unqualified in Scripture. I would make it as absolute and as unqualified from the pulpit. Human virtue has positively no place in your title to heaven; it being the righteousness of Christ, even of Him who trod the wine-press alone, when of the people there were none with Him, which, of itself and without one particle of addition or of aid from any other quarter, has completed the title-deed. We deny not, nay, on proper time and occasion, we shall most strenuously affirm, that human virtue has a place, an indispensable and high place, in Christianity—only we are not to seek for it in the Christian's right to an inheritance of bliss and glory. It forms no part of the purchase-money by which he acquires a property in heaven, though essential to the preparation by which he is qualified to enjoy it. In the claim for heaven, it is of no account; in the indispensable character for heaven, it is all in all.

7. We have only room for one observation more. Though there can be no special faith in any one of the sayings of Scripture without the principle that would lead to a general faith in all the sayings, yet we must not overlook the distinct connexion which there is between each special faith and its special influence, or between the special faith and its special fulfilment. I wish I could make myself understood here—for I feel strongly the importance of the matter on which I am now treating. It receives illustration from the history of one of our Saviour's miracles. When the applicant requested the cure of his particular disease, he proceeded, we have no doubt, on a general confidence in the power of Christ. And he was met by the question, *Believest thou that I am able to do this?* It was not required of him at the time whether he believed in the gospel—how far he conceived the ability of his Saviour to extend—or if he thought He was able to do all things; but

whether he believed Him able to do the special thing that he prayed for ; and according to this, his special faith, so was it specially done unto him. The cure stood connected with the faith, not however with the general, but the special faith—the act of the mind which preceded the fulfilment, being just as distinct and specific as the fulfilment itself was. Now we hold this to be a universal law in the economy of the gospel. A special faith in the truth of one Bible saying, we hold to be inseparable from a general faith in the truth of all the sayings—yet though inseparable, they are not identical ; and what we affirm is, that the special benefit to which any special saying has reference, stands immediately connected, not with the general faith in all Scripture, but with the special faith in that one distinct and particular truth of Scripture. For example, an atonement is made good to us, not immediately in virtue of our general assent to Scripture, but immediately in virtue of our special assent to that doctrine of Scripture : and, accordingly, we read of propitiation through faith in His blood. In like manner, do we realize the benefit of the imputation by a distinct act of faith in the efficacy of the righteousness of Christ for this special end. And so of the atonement in general we would say, that it is not by a comprehensive act of faith, in the very generality of which the virtue of Christ's obedience and His death may be altogether lost sight of—it is not thus that its benefits are realized by the believer ; but it is by that pointed act of attention and faith which rests on the special object of Christ both serving and suffering in our stead, in the contemplation of which object we are led to associate, with the confident sense of our forgiveness, the profoundest homage both to the law and to the Lawgiver. We feel that this view of the matter would have saved the defenders of orthodoxy from the fatigue of many a fruitless and elaborate argument. For example, in proving that we are sanctified by the faith as well as justified by the faith, they have attempted to educe the special effect of sanctification from that special faith whose proper object is our justification ; and so tell us of the holy influence which lies in the sacrifice of Christ for purifying the



hearts of all who believe in it. Now this, though true, is not the whole truth respecting our sanctification, and the power which belongs to faith of working it upon our characters and lives. A special act of faith in the sacrifice is not the only, perhaps not the principal act concerned in the process. There is an act of faith in the saying, that without holiness no man shall see God ; and so of many other acts, all of which enter into the explanation of the way in which faith sanctifies every disciple whom it actuates. And so of the habit of living by the powers of the world to come, which, if connected with faith, must mean our faith in the doctrine of immortality. The man who walks by faith and not by sight—what is the special object on which this faith terminates? He looks not to the things which are seen and are temporal, but to the things which are not seen and eternal. By thus connecting all these special faiths with their special fulfilments, we might have arrived, without any straining or any mysticism, at a more distinct explanation of the mighty power ascribed to this principle in the New Testament.

8. We have surely said enough to demonstrate the impossibility of a real and appropriating faith being unaccompanied with obedience—for we have abundantly insisted on the securities which are provided by the very constitution of the gospel against the Antinomian abuses to which the doctrine of justification by faith might have otherwise been liable. There are many such securities even in the constitution of human nature ; but I hold the first and the most effectual, to lie in a property of that faith to which the privilege is annexed, and which has not been enough adverted to. If the faith be real, it will receive the whole of the divine testimony. That message which has brought to us the report of a forgiveness through the blood of a satisfying atonement, has also brought to us the calls of repentance, and the most solemn emphatic intimations, that without repentance we shall perish ; and repeated warnings against the perversion of gospel mercy into an encouragement for sin ; and a thousand other declarations, which, if only believed, will convince every honest reader, that heaven stands as widely

dissociated from wickedness of character under the New Economy, as it ever did under the Old. In other words, the aspirant to a blissful immortality has still as strong a sense of personal interest as before, urging him onward to the pursuit of virtue, with the clear advantage of far higher and nobler incitements to it, than under the mercenary dispensation of mere obedience and reward; or which is tantamount to this, of work and wages. It is by our faith resting on the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness, that we appropriate to ourselves a right of entry into heaven. But this we cannot do without, at the same time, our faith receiving all those other lessons of the New Testament, under whose influence it is that we make entry on that way of new obedience by which, and by no other, we shall ever find admittance there. The same Bible which sets forth Christ as a propitiation for sin, also sets Him forth as an example that we should walk in His steps. We cannot, if we would, separate the one saying from the other. We can no more believe the first and disbelieve the second, than with our corporeal eye we can at our own bidding perceive the form of a visible object, and yet be blind to the colour of it. The exercise is altogether an incompetent one—but not more so than that of giving our faith to one part of the divine testimony, and withholding it from another. Let a man rejoice in the propitiation, but follow not the example of our Saviour, and I would not say of him that he had a wrong faith; it were more correct, I apprehend, to say of him, that he had no faith at all: and, at all events, his, most assuredly, is not the faith of the New Testament. A real faith embraces the whole record; and when told that we are justified by such a faith, we appeal to the subject-matter of that record, as our guarantee against the abuses of such a doctrine to the purposes of licentiousness.

9. Should any then be cherishing a sense of forgiveness, because of the efficacy that lies in the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin—this he can only do legitimately, in virtue of believing the statement to that effect which he has met with in the Bible. But if he do believe this statement, then believes

he that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ; and he also believes that unless he repent he shall perish ; and he believes, that they who are in Christ, and to whom there is no condemnation, walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit ; and he believes, that on a day of reckoning every man shall be dealt with, and shall be judged according to his works. He lies open to the influence of one and all of these passages ; and we affirm that the evil which results from the confinement of our view to any one saying of Scripture, is best counteracted by all these sayings being brought forward, and co-ordinately, to bear on the mind of the Christian scholar and the Christian inquirer. It is not by the single influence of any one truth, traced downward, as it were, through a derivative process to its final effects on the heart and history, that the morality of the faith is best vindicated. It is by an enumeration of all the truths which, as well as that one, enter into the creed of every honest believer. There is a distortion in that man's Christianity who concentrates his regards on but some separate testimony of the Bible, and the way to rectify this distortion is just to ply him with the whole testimony. And thus it is that the man who, on legitimate grounds, has the most triumphant assurance of the faith among all his fellows, is at the same time the most signalized above them all by his resolute avoidance of moral evil, and the most aspiring in the pursuit of supreme moral excellence—the most strenuous in his conflicts with the power of that sin, from whose condemnation he is now altogether freed—the most assiduous in all the tasks and the toils of Christian obedience.

10. Before proceeding to describe or to characterize the nature of that obedience, we may advert for a moment to the reflex or the reciprocal influence which faith and obedience have upon each other. We think that the principles of the argument which we now employ might help to explain that remarkable process so often announced to us in the New Testament, in virtue of which he who, on the one hand, is strongest in the faith, is also the busiest at the work of obedience ; and conversely, he, on the other hand, who is most diligent in the

prescribed obedience of the gospel, is also the clearest and the most confident and the best established in its faith. Whether we can explain it or not, the fact is undeniable, that there is a connexion between obedience and light on the one hand, and also a connexion between disobedience and spiritual darkness on the other. The truth is, that it is the same with the eye of the mind and the eye of the body. We cannot clearly or distinctly see with either of them any one object of contemplation at the moment of our endeavouring to blink some other object which lies contiguous to it. We can have no strong or steadfast conviction of any one doctrine in the Bible, while we try to stifle the impression, or to hide from ourselves the truth of certain other doctrines wherewith it is intermingled. The indecisive and vacillating and double-minded habit of him who would receive one part of Scripture, while he would shrink from the very sight, and, still more, from the application of other parts, must have a very darkening and distorting effect on the whole of his mental vision in reference to Christianity. It is only when the eye is single that the whole body is full of light, or, in other words, when it gives one and the same consistent reception to all the parts of the divine testimony. A man may be conceived to rejoice when he gives credit to the declaration—He who cometh unto Christ shall not be cast out. But if still living in wickedness or in sin, it must check his joy when he meets with the other declaration—That he who cometh unto Christ forsakes all. With both these declarations full in his eye, he could not believe himself to have any part in the one while he lived in practical neglect of the other. He may by an act of unnatural violence cleave to the first of these sayings, and put forth the second from his attention altogether. But few minds could bear to have this force put upon them; and in these few, the result, after all, of this disingenuous abstraction from certain offensive parts of the testimony, would be fancy and not faith. But, in general, the Antinomian confidence breaks down under the power of so many Scripture warnings, which make it impossible, but in rare instances, for a man to combine the hope of a future heaven with the purpose

and the habit of a present sinfulness. By putting away a good conscience, one will sooner or later make shipwreck of his faith. And so it is, that, in the vast majority of cases, the wilful transgressor must live without the light or comfort of the gospel. The experience of Augustine is in beautiful accordance with this moral phenomenon. He strained hard after the faith of Christianity, understanding that his salvation was suspended on it. He knew that if he could but place his reliance on the propitiation by Christ, according to his reliance so would it be done unto him. But there was a master-appetite which tyrannized over him, and this was the obstacle in his way. He could not at one and the same time fetch comfort from one set of sayings, while he took no warning from another set of sayings. He could not rejoice in the hope of forgiveness, while the call of repentance was unheeded by him; and so it was that the sinful indulgence, while he continued the slave of it, darkened to his view all the promises of the gospel. It was in the act of quitting his sin that he felt the radiance of Christianity gather upon his soul. His faith from that moment became bright and steadfast, and just because now it was a whole faith in a whole testimony. So long as there was one thing which he would not forsake, he made a thousand unsuccessful attempts at comfort by coming unto Christ; but all was in vain, because made in the face of the Scripture declaration, that he who cometh unto Christ must forsake all. It was that one vice which stood between him and his enlargement, and not till he came to the full and the honest purpose of renouncing it, was that which letteth taken out of the way. The lights of conscience and of faith united into one consistent harmony. The obscuration that hung over the soul was dispersed when it broke loose from the chain of its only remaining idolatry; and so far from the faith of Augustine leading to licentiousness, it was only on bidding conclusive adieu to his licentiousness that he became established in the faith.

11. Let faith be but co-extensive with its objects, let it be a belief in the whole record, let the credit which you place in God extend to every utterance that proceeds from Him; and

then most assuredly, there were nothing in the doctrine of justification by faith which could lead to Antinomianism. That doctrine only disjoins the legal right to heaven from our obedience; it does not disjoin heaven itself from our obedience. After having obtained possession by faith of the legal right to heaven, we are still told that the way which leads to it is a way of holiness. Having these promises let us cleanse ourselves, and perfect our holiness in the fear of God. It is positively no faith at all, if it be not comprehensive of the proposition respecting the indispensable character for heaven being a personal righteousness of our own, as well as of the proposition respecting the indispensable claim to heaven being a part and an interest in the righteousness of Christ. We are aware of the great demand which there is among certain religionists for clear and simple views of the gospel. Now, what we affirm is, that the clearness is not obtained by that kind of simplicity which consists in the selection of but one gospel truth with the stifling of all the rest. If this be their meaning of the word simple, then I would say that clearness is obtained not by simple but full views of the gospel.

12. We have already said, that, in order to guard any doctrine against the abuses to which it is exposed, we are not to reduce or attenuate the doctrine; but, while rendering it in all its fulness, we are also to bring forward, and that with the very prominence which they have in the record, the other doctrines and declarations of Scripture. We are not, for example, to lay any mitigation whatever on the doctrine of our being justified by faith alone, and that faith resting on the atonement and righteousness of Christ, as on the whole the only foundation both of pardon and of acceptance with God; but we must give all the doctrines of Scripture the benefit of this principle, and partition the application of it fairly and equally between them. Now you must be aware of a shrinking and sensitive fear, on the part of the orthodox, lest by preaching morality to the people, you encourage what they call the natural legality of the human heart, or lead them to repose on their own merit as the basis of their justification before God. Well,

I would not, by way of preventing this abuse, give them one whit less of morality, or abate in the slightest degree the strenuousness and frequency wherewith I urged it as the indispensable preparation, nay, as in itself an integral part of the heaven of the New Testament. But telling them that their right of entry there is secured by the obedience of Christ, I would at the same time tell them, and with as much earnestness as if even this right depended on it, that without their own obedience they would infallibly fall short of heaven's preferences and heaven's joys. To guard against the perversion that has now been instanced, I would not refrain from urging their sanctification, in all its details and all its familiar and everyday varieties; I would only tell them what the precise function of the sanctification was; and this I should in fact be doing, when I presented to their notice the other doctrine, that while their preparation for heaven lay in their own righteousness, their plea for heaven lay exclusively and entirely in the righteousness of Christ. After having conceded to the alarmists about orthodoxy, that we should not keep back the doctrine of justification, they must allow us not to keep back the doctrine of sanctification either. A whole Scripture is in fact the best corrective against any abuses to which a partial Scripture is liable; and we therefore call upon you, that, while as strenuous in sound doctrine as the Apostles were before you—you at the same time be as earnest in the exposition of duty—as minutely practical and as closely applicable to all the varieties of life and experience—as they were.

## CHAPTER IX.

ON THE DIFFERENCE IN POINT OF SPIRIT AND CHARACTER BETWEEN  
THE LEGAL AND THE EVANGELICAL OBEDIENCE.

1. AFTER having abundantly demonstrated that there is no dispensation from obedience under the gospel any more than there is under the law, we may now enter on the consideration of its distinctive character and spirit. The matter of the commandment is the same in both economies ; but that the respective disciples of it are differently actuated is evident from various passages of the New Testament. In one place, Christians are said to serve no longer in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit ; and we may gather from various places, that service in the spirit of bondage is wholly a distinct thing from service in the spirit of adoption. And there is a remarkable transition spoken of which takes place in respect to the law, when a man embraces the faith of Christianity. Anterior to this, he looks on the law as written upon tables of stone, whence it frowns condemnation, because of his fruitless attempts to obey its high requisitions ; but posterior to this, the law is written on the fleshly tablets of his heart—and so, with his affections and his will enlisted on the side of obedience, his duty becomes his delight, instead of being, as before, the drudgery of an overawed and reluctant slave. We cannot imagine a greater revolution in a man's character than when that becomes a thing of congenial taste which wont to be a compulsory task-work ; and the same law which was formerly a law of constraint, is rejoiced in as the law of liberty. It were surely an important analysis to discriminate aright between the servile obedience of the law and the spontaneous obedience



of the gospel. The comparison will be found most honourable to Christianity, and to Christianity in that peculiar form of it which has been denominated the evangelical system. That orthodoxy, of which many conceive as if it had divorced morality from religion altogether, will be found not only to have heightened its importance, but inconceivably to have refined and exalted its character. Virtue is purified by it from all its sordidness; and instead of the purchase-money for heaven, is represented as heaven itself, or as the constituting essence of its beatitude and its glory.

2. There are many who think they do homage to virtue when they impugn the doctrine of justification by faith; and that it has a higher place of consequence in their religious system, which represents a blissful eternity as the result of their doing, instead of being the result of their believing. In their imagination, virtue is the work by which heaven is earned in the shape of wages; and I think it may with all safety be affirmed, that, along with this, there is the very general imagination of the wages being a something distinct from the work. In the earthly relationship between a master and a servant, the service is one thing, but the reward is another, and in general a wholly dissimilar thing—inasmuch that it would be held a very strange remuneration, if, in return for the first piece of service, it were proposed just to impose another and more laborious piece of service; or that, because he had done one thing so well, he must just get additional and more things to do. No doubt, the customary effect when one is expert and faithful in the employment which has been allotted to him, is, that more of that employment is required from his hands; and he is pleased that it should be so. But most assuredly, it is not the employment which yields him so much satisfaction, but a something given in return for it, and distinct from the employment. He is pleased that more work should be put into his hands—not, however, for the pleasure he has in the performance of the work, but for the pleasure he has in the payment that is made for it. If punctual, and honest, and able in the execution of his task, he may look for other and similar

tasks being required of him ; but this is not what he ultimately looks to. It is not the pleasure which he has in the exercise that prompts his assiduity, but the pleasure he has in the equivalent which is bestowed upon him, and which equivalent is a something addressed to the pure selfishness of his nature—the food that subsists him, or the lodging and raiment that shelter him, or the luxuries that regale him, or the money that purchaseth all things. This is the moving force that sets our servants, and tradesmen, and functionaries of all sorts in civil society, on the discharge of their respective obligations. And this, with all the inveteracy of a settled habit, is the main and moving principle of obedience, under the legal economy of—Do this and live. When a man works for heaven as for wages, he conceives of heaven as distinct from the work—not as a place whose happiness consists in the joys of obedience, but as a place whose happiness consists in the compensations which there await him for the toils of obedience. In the estimation of every earthly servant, the wages are better than the work—that which is earned better than that which earned it. And so, under the legal economy, heaven stands forth to the eye of the imagination, not as virtue, but as something better than virtue. In other words, principle under this system degenerates into prudence ; and the service of God becomes a thing of concentrated and absorbing selfishness.

3. If virtue be the price, and heaven be a remuneration distinct from the price, then the end that we propose to ourselves in the work of obedience, is not heaven because of its moral but heaven because of its intellectual, or heaven because of its physical enjoyments. We believe that in the popular imagination of heaven, the physical will be found greatly to predominate ; and there is no saying how much the prospects, even of those professing Christianity, are tinged with the idea of a sensual paradise. Into our vague and indefinite conception of its happiness, there by no means generally enters the happiness of virtuous affection, or the delight which is necessarily and immediately felt in the service of God. We figure to ourselves a heaven of splendour, and of spaciousness, and of melody—all

fitted to regale not the spiritual, but the sentient nature of man ; and what gives a more decidedly physical character to our notions of the upper sanctuary is, that we are sure to associate with our admittance there a secure and everlasting exemption from the agonies of hell. Now, if to us the main charm of heaven be, not its psalmody, or its sacredness, or its charities, or its seraphic adorations, but its freedom from the sore inflictions of the place of condemnation—then it matters not whether the moving force of our obedience be to obtain deliverance from physical suffering, or to obtain the enjoyment of physical gratifications. Either way in working for such a heaven, we are working not for the moral, but the physical ; and the wages we look to are just as distinct from the labour that we are rendering, as in any mercenary contract of an earthly trade, or an earthly service. Now, this inserts a vitiating flaw into the whole character of our obedience. It so taints and transforms as to annihilate its virtuousness. The moral is degraded thereby into the sentient and the physical ; and instead of a native principle sustained by its own energies, or the outgoing of a high disinterested love for God and for goodness, we behold in every aspirant for heaven a system of action whereof self is perpetually the centre, and the sordid interests of self are mainly the objects which the heart longs after, and the desires of the whole man are intently set upon.

4. To ascertain what virtue should be in man, we have only to consider what virtue is in the Godhead. It is not with Him a price given for happiness—for what being is there in the universe to confer the remuneration? Virtue is the very essence of His happiness ; it is that which constitutes the eternal and ineffable beatitude of His nature. Neither is it extorted from Him at the bidding of authority—for in what quarter, external to the Godhead, can any such authority be lodged? He is virtuous, not because responsible at the bar of any jurisprudence ; but He is virtuous, because prompted thereto by the spontaneous workings of a love for righteousness, of a hatred for iniquity. It is with Him not the product of a dictate from without, but the product, the native product

and emanation of a desire from within. You will at once perceive the infinitely higher character of that morality which is loved and cultivated for itself, over that morality which is rendered at the bidding of another, and for the sake of a something distinct from itself. By this change in its object, it in fact ceases to be morality, and assumes one or other of the forms of selfishness. At all events, it ceases to be godlike; and restoration to the very character of the Godhead is the great design of that economy under which we sit. This is another way in which you may be made to perceive the transcendent superiority of the evangelical over the legal virtue. The one is but the term of a mercenary bargain, which any man with but the spirit and the selfishness of a hireling, may execute—the other needs the Spirit of the Divinity to awaken it. It is the spontaneous homage of the inner man to the worth and excellence of virtue in itself, and apart from its consequences. It is virtue unmixed and unpolluted—the elements of selfishness, and calculation, and interest being wholly detached from it. Virtue would be heaven enough to a being so framed and so actuated. His is a pure moral existence, and a moral atmosphere is the only one suited to him. Such a heaven is the generous and lofty ambition of every true Christian. It is there where all his fondest hopes, and all his most exalted conceptions of happiness lie. With him sin is wretchedness; and righteousness is the element in which he desires to live and luxuriate through eternity. He would be happy enough were he but holy enough. With him these two things are not only conjoined but identical. With him the education of virtue is the ascending ladder to heaven; and heaven itself is but the perfection of virtue. This is the mark for the prize of his high calling—the perpetual aim of his existence—the high and holy aspiration of his now regenerated nature.

5. Now it never can come to this with any aspirant after immortality, till the legal economy be set aside, and all its mercantile fears and mercantile jealousies are disposed of. So long as the object is to establish a right to heaven by our righteousness, the constant set of the spirit is towards a something

ulterior to the righteousness, and distinct from it. Righteousness is but the work, and a something different from righteousness is the wages—the one being the path of transition along which the spirit toils, the other the ultimatum on which the spirit rests. The bliss and beauty of the landing-place are conceived to be a recompense for the weariness or discomforts of the journey. In other words, virtue is the hard and revolting labour that must be submitted to, in return for an equivalent, distinct from the virtue which earns it. This conception is greatly fostered by those elements of a right, and a claim, and a legal challenge to reward, which are all bound up in the dispensation of—Do this and live. Inseparable from these, there is the idea of an exchange, which presupposes two sides or two terms—whereof the one is virtue, and the other is its mercenary hire. This marketing for heaven belongs to the very essence of legality; and it is impossible to compute how much morality is vulgarized by it. It is, on the great scale, making a gain of godliness; and those feelings of self, and sordidness, and ignoble affection, which are implicated with the pursuit of gain, gather around the preparation for eternity, and spoil the virtue by which we hope to win our way to it, of its celestial character altogether.

6. And the effect is greatly enhanced by that consciousness of insufficiency which haunts and dispirits this whole enterprise. If there be aught like a sufficient estimate of the law, there must, along with it, be a perpetual sense of distance and deficiency therefrom—so that he who seeks to establish a righteousness of his own, is ever and anon pursued by the apprehension that he has not made good his term of the bargain. The jealousies of a contract enter into this converse between God and man, and selfishness takes its most concentrated, and, at the same time, its most degrading form—the form of fear. At this rate, religious obedience has no other principle than that which actuates the effort of a creature to struggle and keep back from the precipice, down which its persecutors are endeavouring to cast it. In so far as it is the terror of hell which forms the principle of our religious services,

it is not a moral but an animal salvation after which we are aspiring. To have the desire of such a salvation, no higher endowment is requisite than the capacity of pain. It were enough that we had a sentient nature, though with an extinct moral or an extinct spiritual nature. The desire to escape from physical pain is certainly not a higher principle than the desire to obtain physical gratifications; and so, whether the moving force be to work out our exemption from the agonies of hell, or to work out a right in law to the joys of heaven—still there may be but the grossness of sense, and nought of high or heaven-born principle in our religious observances.

7. Now, it is only under the evangelical system that we stand disencumbered of all these adverse influences; and that the whole of that legality which is so fitted to repress the willingness and so to degrade the character of our religious services, is fully cleared away. Heaven, instead of being exposed to us for purchase, is held forth as a present to us, while the fruit of the purchase of another. Its gate is thrown open for our entrance, if we will; and a proclaimed welcome has been sent to our world, for one and all of the human family. Eternal life is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and you cannot overstate the perfect freeness wherewith even the chief of sinners are invited to lay hold of it. It is of capital importance in the work of Christianization that this freeness of the gospel should be fully and distinctly understood. What causes many thousands to hang back from it is either the imagination of an impassable barrier, in the guilt which they have already contracted, or the imagination of an impossible task, in the establishing of a right through their own obedience to the rewards of eternity. It is like the removal of a wall of separation between them and heaven, when both these obstacles are cleared away; and many who, before they perceived so patent a way to the happiness of eternity, were chilled into inaction by the heartlessness and the apathy of despair, are made to bestir themselves when heaven is set before them as an object so hopeful and so accessible. There is no danger of Antinomianism from this representation, if, along with their

welcome, their unbounded and unconditional welcome, to heaven, you further tell them what heaven is—the land of uprightness, where love, and purity, and religion, form the eternal recreation of beatific spirits—an essentially moral paradise, where moral affections and moral services constitute at once the felicity and the employment of all the inmates—a society of immortals in full enjoyment of the most exquisite and exalted happiness, but that a happiness which none beside the virtuous can taste, and none beside the lovers of God and virtue can at all understand or sympathize with. You must at once perceive, that, to hold out the overtures of such a heaven to the worldly and the vicious, is to bid them renounce their vice, and forsake their worldliness. If they will not make this renunciation, that is the obstacle—the only obstacle, in fact, for by the constitution of the gospel, all others have been moved away. The vicarious sufferings of Christ have cleared away the else impassable barrier of their guilt—the vicarious services of Christ have superseded the impracticable task of establishing a right to heaven by their own obedience. The Spirit, given by the Saviour to them who will, is in readiness to help them onward through the toils and the difficulties of a progressive sanctification. Heaven, in fact, is theirs, if they will; and the only remaining obstacle is, if they will not—if they turn in distaste from such a heaven, because of their greater love for earth and for earthliness—if they choose to grovel in the pleasures of sin which are but for a season, and put away from them the offered boon of a heavenly nature on this side of death, and a heavenly state on the other side of it—if they refuse the happiness which lies in the service of God, because the happiness of present and sensible things has a greater charm for them;—in a word, if they love the darkness rather than the light, and that because their deeds are evil.

8. You will now understand the respective places which virtue holds in the legal and the evangelical dispensations. In the legal, virtue is the price of heaven—in the evangelical, virtue is heaven itself. In the one, virtue is the purchase-money wherewith we buy heaven—in the other, virtue is heaven

already in possession ; and there is nothing of equal worth in the whole compass of the universe that could be given, or that would be taken in exchange for it. The wages given for earthly work are meat and drink. Under the legal economy, virtue is conceived to be the work ; and the wages are the meat and the drink, not perhaps suited to our present animal constitution, but the meat and the drink suited to a more exalted physical or a more exalted intellectual nature, wherewith humanity shall then be invested. But under the evangelical economy, the kingdom of heaven is not meat or drink of any sort—it is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, even in Him whose fruit is represented to be in all righteousness, and goodness, and truth. These moral treasures form the main beatitude of heaven. They themselves are the meat and the drink of all who are admitted to heaven's glorious and immortal festival—their only meat and their only drink, like the Saviour's before them, being to do the will of God. Their will is at one with that of God. They need not first to acquire virtue, and therewith to purchase heaven. In the very act of acquiring virtue, they lay an immediate hold on heaven. Let them but have virtue, and they hold within their grasp the very essence of heaven's blessedness.

9. The advocates of the legal system arrogate this glory to themselves—that it is by them only, and not by their opponents, that morality is exalted to the place and the precedency which rightfully belong to her. But we leave it to yourselves to judge, by which of the two systems it is that the highest honours are awarded to her—whether by that system which represents virtue as standing on one side of the exchange, and heaven on the other ; or by that system in which virtue and heaven are identified—whether by those who employ virtue as the stepping-stone to eternal happiness ; or by those who, in taking hold of virtue, rejoice as in their immediate possession of that wherein the main happiness of eternity lies—whether by those who regard virtue but as an ascending ladder to the *summum bonum* ; or by those in whose estimation virtue is itself the *summum bonum*, the ultimate and the highest good



of existence—whether by the men who, in labouring at the work of heaven, are only truckling for heaven by their services ; or by the men who, on entering the career of virtue, feel that their heaven is already begun, and know that it is just by their virtue being complete that their heaven is perfected—whether by those with whom virtue is the beggarly element of a sordid negotiation ; or by those with whom virtue is that element which they would not barter for all the glories and felicities of creation besides, the element in which they desire to breathe and to be regaled by its own native beatitudes for ever—whether, in one word, by those with whom virtue is a thing of ignoble selfishness and speculation ; or by those whose virtue, apart from all its connexions and its consequences, is like that of the primary fountain-head whence it springs, native, and generous, and godlike.

10. But our only quarrel is not with the legalists on this question. We hold that virtue has been degraded to a secondary rank by a vast number, perhaps by the majority of those writers who are termed evangelical. It is so degraded when represented merely as the evidence of faith. We are not sure but that in one view they have made a farther remove from the real importance of virtue, and the honour which is due to it, than even the legalists. They make virtue but the index of our faith ; and so reversing the apostolic maxim, that charity is greater than faith, they would make faith greater than charity—that which is indicated being greater than that which indicates. And, again, they make faith the condition on which salvation is suspended ; and surely the fulfilment is a greater thing than the mean or condition of the fulfilment. It is thus that they would reduce virtue to a very humble and subordinate rank in the scheme of their Christianity—not allowing it to be heaven itself, not even allowing it to be the price of heaven, but only the symptom or evidence that we have the price in our possession. With them it is neither the money, nor the money's worth. If I may use so strange a figure, it is but the reflection of that money in a looking-glass. Now, we refuse all this. Virtue is not the mere token of heaven—it is

the great reality of heaven. It is not but the sign, it is the very substance of salvation. It is something a great deal more, and a great deal higher, than only a diagnostic of our spiritual health: it is itself the very health and harmony of the soul. It is heaven within us; and when at length placed before the throne of the righteous God, and in the midst of His righteous family—still it will be virtue that gives its quality and its charm to the heaven around us.

## CHAPTER X.

## ON SANCTIFICATION.

1. THE heart of man is the proper seat of the kingdom of God, as far as man has a part or interest therein. His heaven, and indeed the heaven of every created being, consists mainly and essentially in the sway of heaven's principles and affections within him; or, to express it otherwise, in the possession of heaven's character. That this is the doctrine of the Bible may be collected from a number of its passages, as in Luke xvii. 21—"The kingdom of God is within you;" though this admits of being so rendered as only to express that the kingdom of God is among you. There can be no misunderstanding, however, of the very clear and express definition given of the kingdom of God in Rom. xiv. 17, as being neither meat nor drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The things here enumerated are evidently within. They are internal feelings or internal characteristics. They are the fruits of the Spirit dwelling in us. The peace and the joy are directly stated to be among His fruits in Gal. v. 22, and righteousness also in Eph. v. 9. To conclude this very limited induction, the Spirit is said to be given as the earnest of our inheritance, as in 2 Cor. v. 5. Now the first-fruits that we have of the Spirit here are not only earnest, but earnest in kind, of what we shall be made to enjoy in full and perfect measure hereafter. They are samples, as it were, and foretastes of the coming blessedness. They form the germ in time of what shall be so far expanded here, but which will only be consummated, or have its full-blown development in eternity.

In other words, heaven is not to be spoken of as a locality, a thing to be pointed at, and of which you can say—Lo, here ; or, lo, there ; but heaven is a character which begins on earth, though its full and final establishment may be either in the new heavens or new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. We do not deny that heaven is a place—we only affirm that the constituting essence of heaven, that which may be said to form the substance or the staple of it, is the principles, the moral perfections, the graces of those by whom it is occupied. We cannot refuse that there must be a somewhere for heaven ; and that there the sons of God, whether redeemed or unfallen, rejoice for ever in His manifested presence. We only hold that the question, where is heaven ? is but a very subordinate one indeed to the question of, what is heaven ?—the reply to which might convince us, that heaven already begun, exists in embryo, even on this side of death ; and that, whether we take the Psalmist's description of it as the land of uprightness, or that of one Apostle, who tells of it that there the servants of God for ever serve Him, and cease not day nor night from their ascriptions of glory to Him who sitteth on the throne ; or, finally, that of another Apostle, who sets forth heaven as the eternal abode of the charity which never faileth, and where the happiness of loving and being loved, and that with perfect and immaculate holiness, seems to constitute the essential happiness of the glorified and celestial beings who are assembled there. In short, there is a body of most sufficient Scriptural evidence for the heaven of the New Testament, or the heaven of Christianity, being substantially and in essence a moral and spiritual heaven—a paradise not of sensuality but of sacredness, and where the essential beatitude, the oil of gladness, the elixir as it were of a blissful immortality, is distilled from the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. This happiness, in short, of rightly attuned and rightly constituted spirits, the spirits of just men made perfect, lies mainly and radically in the delight which the Author of our being, who Himself loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, has annexed to the play and the exercise of those good

affections which, in the state of glory, will meet with nothing to impede their pure and vigorous operation in our then glorified natures.

2. The doctrine that we now press on your consideration will perhaps be all the better understood if we only attend to what that is which formed the heaven of the eternal Godhead, and that anterior to the creation of all things. The heaven of that mysterious Being who fills the immense and the infinite, and is present everywhere, could not well be said to have been a special locality. His heaven obviously lies not in where He is, but in what He is—and here it is obvious that not the place, but the character, must be all in all. If we seek for the happiness of the Godhead, its essence and its fountain-heads are nowhere to be found but in the primeval depths of His own uncreated nature; and, if not identical with, is immediately consequent on the holiness of the Godhead. In other words, His is altogether a moral and spiritual, and so an inherent beatitude; and it should never be forgotten, that the great object of the economy under which we sit, is our restoration to the very image of the Divinity, even that image in which we were originally formed, when with a character altogether like unto His, our tastes and our affections, and so also our enjoyments, will be altogether like unto His. But the process of our restoration begins here, and so our heaven begins here—not yet the heaven of splendour and melody that is above, but even now, a heaven beneath, a well of living water struck out in the heart of regenerated man, and which yields its true health and truest harmony to the soul.

3. But instead of fetching our whole argument from considerations of so general a character, let us see whether the experience of familiar and everyday life does not lend a full confirmation to the view which we are now advocating. We make a confident appeal to your own feelings and your own recollections. Both the delights and discomforts of the outward sense are quite palpable; but though less sensible, you must all admit equally real are the delights and the discomforts of spirit also—the difference of which every man can tell, because

every man daily and hourly feels it—the difference in point of enjoyment between one state and another of the inner man. Take account of those affections which are purely mental, and from which bodily pain and bodily pleasure are alike excluded. Just conceive what the soul, and the soul alone, or apart from sensation altogether, might be made to suffer, if lorded over either jointly or severally by any of those distempered emotions which war against its peace—as tempestuous anger, heaving in the bosom like a troubled sea; or corrosive envy, eating inwardly as doth a canker; or deep and settled hatred, brooding over its fell purposes of revenge; or without the imagination of aught so dark and tragical, and to convince you that we are dealing in the experimental and not in the pictorial, just take the instance of a vexing and fretting peevishness, that frequent inmate of the family circle, which operates by a constant effusion, like the dropping of a perpetual wormwood, on every half-hour of human existence. Yet as we are raising an argument on the capacities of the human spirit—whether for suffering or pleasure—capacities that might be enlarged to an unknown extent in the developments of our future and eternal state, let us therefore recur to the enumeration that we were making of the more fierce and turbulent passions of our nature, and, without the limitation of our view to the findings of commonplace and everyday life, take account of the mortified pride, the frenzied ambition, of which Scripture tells that it pierceth itself through with many sorrows: or extending our cognizance to those affections of the human spirit which stand more properly and nearly related with conscience and the coming judgment, let us think of the remorse, and the inward dissatisfaction, and the terrors of a deserved vengeance, and the brooding melancholy of our hopeless and outcast condition, when abandoned by those pleasures of sense and of time which serve to divert and to occupy us here, we are given up to the hands of an offended God, who, to consummate the wretchedness of our eternity, has but to turn upon us the rebuke of His countenance, and never lifting it off, therewith to haunt and disquiet us for ever. All those affections which we have just

noted are purely internal. Their operation and their place of residence are within; and we ask, whether apart from all inflictions of physical pain on these our corporeal frameworks, they be not of themselves sufficient to constitute a hell in the heart of every several transgressor against the law of God. But to aggravate still more the horrors of this our final destiny, we should recollect that it is not a single offender, but a society and assembled host of offenders, that we have to look to—brought together and cast into one place, like the tares in the parable, respecting whom the order was given to bind them up in bundles, and burn them. We reckon on no other burning at present than of those fiery and tumultuous passions which not only prey on the heart of every separate criminal, but are let loose in the fierce encounters of mutual resentment and mutual disdain on each other. We shall not carry out this awful representation, or dwell any longer on a contemplation so revolting as the moral state of the ungodly when turned into hell; but we bid you judge for yourselves whether it be not in the power of moral elements alone to make out a lake of living agony; or whether, in the action and reaction of those distempered spirits turned in fierce hostility against each other, or only united in one cry of daring and desperate rebellion against God, there be not, aside altogether from material torments, all the miseries of a dire and dreadful Pandemonium.

4. But let us now turn to a more genial contemplation, and see, whether as moral elements alone would suffice to make out a hideous and everlasting hell, moral elements alone would not suffice to make out a heaven of pure and perpetual ecstacy. If from a fountain within there might distil such waters of bitterness on the soul as to make it wretched through all eternity, is there no fountain within, no well of living water, which, if struck out in the heart of regenerated man, shall yield that oil of gladness, that elixir of immortality, which never ceases to refresh and to satisfy the spirits of the immortal? In a word, we have already seen that there might be a hell in the heart, made up of foul and fiendish and vindictive passions, which, if once the tyrants, might remain the tormen-

tors of the soul through all eternity—let us now see whether there might not also be a heaven in the heart, made up of those good and gracious affections which are sweet unto the taste, and melody in the ear of the inner man. The experience I am sure of some here present, can tell that it is no dream of fancy, no description of fairy-land in which we are indulging, when we speak to you of the peace and the pleasure and the inward satisfaction, which are felt in the mere desires of a rightly constituted spirit. We are not dealing in romance surely, but in plain and sober reality, when we tell what is so palpable to your own consciousness—as that love is a pleasurable, just as hatred is a painful sensation, and that the one rejoices the heart, just as the other rankles and agonizes it. Let there be but kindness in place of malignity—let there be confidence in place of suspicion—let there be frank and cordial affability, in the place of proud and sullen disdain—let there be open-handed and open-hearted generosity, in place of a cold, creeping, contracted selfishness—let there be a placid contentment with one's lot, however humble, in place of the ambition which never rests, the avarice which no accumulation of treasures can satisfy—let there be the clear element and day-light of truth, in place of low, sneaking, distrustful concealment—let there be the manly, and I will not say a proud, but an elevating sense of perfect integrity and perfect honour, in the place of fraud and meanness and conscious degradation—let there be an ethereal delicacy, a lofty self-command, a steadfast and serene mastery over all the inferior propensities of our nature, in place of debasing intemperance or debasing impurity;—and who does not see, that simply on the exchange of one set of affections, or one set of moral habits and characteristics for another, simply on passing from the evil to the good, the mind passes from a state of suffering to a state of enjoyment—from the darkness and the distemper and the disquietude, capable of being aggravated downward to the misery of the lowest hell, to the light and the liberty and the heart's ease and the harmony of all the faculties and all the feelings—composing on the whole a happiness, capable of being raised upward to the



bliss and the joy of heaven's immortal festivals? And all this, you will observe, forms but the establishment of a new character and new moral regimen set up within you. The heaven of which we speak, felt by every man apart who has turned from sin unto righteousness, is sensible to the conscience of each within the deep recesses of his own bosom. But it would become more patent to general observation were all men righteous, and were our eye permitted to expatiate over the smiling aspect of a regenerated world. Instead of looking to each individually, just figure a society of the good and the upright, within the precincts of which no vice and no malevolence were known—where each recognised in every one of his fellows a brother and a friend—where integrity and good faith reigned in every transaction between man and man—where all were bound together by the ties of mutual good-will, and the love of kindness on the one hand was ever responded to by the love of gratitude on the other;—why, under a regimen like this, the earth we tread upon, in spite of its hurricanes and floods, and its whole train of physical evils and disasters, would, by a moral transmutation alone, be mightily approximated to the heaven that is over our heads. Each family, each village in our land, would become a little heaven, and that even in the midst of poverty and hard labour, and purely because of the moral sunshine which had been lighted up among their habitations. For, apart from all gifts and from all that ministers in this world to the desires of selfishness—out of a moral economy alone, by mind acting upon mind, and one benevolent emotion re-echoing to another—there are materials enough out of which an Elysium might be formed. And in proportion as this good-will on the one hand, and its responding gratitude on the other, are multiplied upon earth, in that proportion shall it be assimilated in its joys as well as in its virtues to the paradise that is above. It is not by turning everything into gold that the delights of the golden age are at length to be realized. It is by a higher and nobler alchemy, the alchemy of the heart, which can transmute every condition of human life into one of purest blessedness; which, even without the gifts, can pour a

lustre on all around it by the manifestations of kindness ; which by the ethereal play of the affections alone, can give a transport and a tranquillity that wealth cannot buy ; and, singly, by the mechanism of human feelings, can work off the best and most precious ingredients that enter into the bosom of human families.

5. These, however, are but the social moralities, or social affections, of which we have hitherto spoken—the virtues only of the second great law, which is not the first, but only like unto the first ; yet we thought it right to begin with the love of man to his neighbour, as fitted to give you a more familiar and a more experimental conception of the moral heaven, which I am now trying to describe. But we must not forget that the great, the predominant affection in such a heaven, what may be called its proper and pervading element, as being in fact the main essence both of its character and blessedness, lies in the love of man to God. It is when this love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that the kingdom of God is set up within you. But this is done here in the work of regeneration ; and so your heaven begins here, a heaven on earth, the same in kind though lower in degree, yet with the very feelings and foretastes of that heaven which afterwards awaits us among the choirs and companies of the celestial. It is because with your human feelings and human experiences you would sooner apprehend us, that, in telling you of the paradise of the blest as a paradise of virtue, we spoke first of the love between man and man—for in the formation and growth of the new creature, I would say that it is the love of God which is the first in the order of time, or at least first in the order of cause and effect, it being in truth the primary or germinating principle of that great moral revolution, which every sinner must undergo ere he becomes meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. It is this in fact of which we read in the book of Revelation, as the main, the occupying affection of the saints and the seraphs who are above. The supreme, the engrossing sensibility of their hearts, is the love of God—His service is their best loved employment, “ There Thy servants serve Thee ;”

and the chief delight of their eternity lies in the beatitudes of His immediate presence. They overflow with the love, they are satisfied with the likeness of God. In the land where these happy immortals dwell, most significantly termed in the Bible the land of uprightness, and where they hold everlasting jubilee—it is a festival of virtue and of the virtuous affections, which they cease not day nor night to celebrate, a moral and spiritual jubilee. And we are told that the glory of the Lord is the light thereof. The graces of the divine character there stand out in open manifestation, and ever and anon call forth this song of eternity—“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, just and true are Thy ways, thou king of saints.” It is the love of moral esteem for Him who sitteth on the throne which prompts this acclamation; and it is love, too, the love of gratitude for the Eternal Son at His right hand, which prompts this other acclamation of the redeemed, another of the songs of eternity, even to “Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.” Now all this is internal. Both the affection and its consequent enjoyment have their residence in the home of a man’s own bosom. Both are felt by the good on this side of death; and so the essential blessedness of heaven, for which many are looking upward among the stars, might be realized in the midst of earth’s lowly habitations. The kingdom of God must be set up here—the kingdom of God is within you.

6. We are not pronouncing on the material sanctions either of a future hell or a future heaven, nor whether the representation which the Bible gives of these be literal or figurative. We are not denying the fire, or the brimstone, or the everlasting burnings in the place of condemnation, although we have been looking also to the moral character of its unhappy inmates, and setting forth the wickedness as one main ingredient of the wretchedness which is there—of its bitter and ever-during agony. Neither are we denying the sensible glories of the upper paradise—the music, the splendour, the surpassing loveliness of its innumerable mansions—“in my Father’s house,” there are many of these—the magnificence of that city, whose

builder and maker is God ; nor that there are sounds of melody for the ear, and sights of beauty for the eye, in that place which Christ hath gone to prepare for us. We only affirm that it is chiefly the righteousness, the holy love of these ethereal regions, which forms the vital and rejoicing element of all who live in them—whether as felt in thrilling harmony within their own hearts, or as beheld multiplied and reflected throughout the society of the blest, and, above all, in the countenance of Him who sitteth on the throne. We certainly have no right to exclude materialism from those high abodes of innocence and immortality, for Adam, at his creation, realized both, and yet was placed on the firm basis of the earth we tread upon, and with the very sky spread over his head that mantles our present habitations. And what we know has been done once might be done over again. In the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, the matter, for aught I know, which is now around us might only be purified of its corruption, but not swept away. And so we should hold it very rash to deny the materialism of our future state ; or that, for aught we can tell, there might be sights of surpassing loveliness, and sounds of surpassing richness and melody in heaven, and rivers of pleasure, and fields of bright and unfading verdure, and pavements of emerald, and all that can minister delight to the glorified senses of those whose bodies have been transformed into the likeness of the glorified body of our risen Saviour. Yet these are but the accessories of heaven ; and what we affirm is, that, in its characteristic and constituting essence, heaven is a place of righteousness—that nothing which defileth or is unholy can enter there—that it is chiefly a moral glory which is lighted up there—that virtue blooms and is immortal there—that what forms the happiness of the good here is identically and in substance the happiness of the good through all eternity : and that to be prepared and perfected for such a heaven, we must forthwith enter on the busy cultivation of heaven's virtues and heaven's graces—the charity which never faileth, the holiness without which no man can see God.

7. It is not a dream of mere fancy, or of mere idealism, in which we are now indulging. Let us but discard all that is speculative, and keep by all that is practical and certain in this representation, and it will be found that the subject of our present argument is one of the highest moral and highest theological importance; and certainly brought forward by us not to regale the curiosity or the imagination, but to regulate the conduct and to educe such lessons as might be at once brought home to the business and the bosoms of men. There occur to us three applications of this sort, each of which we can only announce in a few brief sentences, but which we would have you to keep in mind, when urging the lessons of their sanctification on your future hearers. Let me hope that even the brief utterance of these will supply material for your own thoughts.

8. The first lesson which we would have you to urge is against the Antinomians, or those who think that if justified by faith they are exempted from duty—or that virtue and personal righteousness are somehow superseded and have no place in the economy of the gospel. Now justification but confers the right of admission; and they who are satisfied and would stop short at this, are like men who would but open the door of heaven, and then refuse to enter it. All who refuse a life of virtue, do in fact refuse the heaven of the New Testament, the only heaven of eternity—for search far and wide over all the domains of infinite space, and there is positively no other heaven to be found than a heaven of righteousness and true holiness. Were it only a musical heaven, we ask of what use and enjoyment could it be to the deaf?—or were it only a heaven of beauty and splendour, a panorama of glorious spectacles over which the delighted eye might expatiate, of what use could the privilege of entry into such a heaven be to the blind?—or were it only an intellectual heaven, how could it prove a heaven at all to those bereft of understanding?—or, finally, being, what it is, a moral and spiritual heaven, it can be no heaven to the wicked, or the secular, or the earthly; and that it might be a heaven to us, there must be an adap-

tation of the subjective to the objective, or, in plainer language, we must be sanctified—we must be moralized. Antinomianism is thus reduced to a practical absurdity, a contradiction in terms. And I would say of all who seek to be justified and care not to be sanctified, that theirs is a religion of intense selfishness. There is a way, a heavenward way, for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in ; but it is a way of holiness.

9. Our next lesson is against the legalists, who, unlike the former, would retain virtue, but who would make it the instrument of a far mightier achievement than human virtue is at all equal to. They would make it the instrument of their justification, or think to earn a right, a pleadable and valid right, to heaven by their own righteousness. They, of course, must think that something less than perfect virtue will serve ; and when once the plea is conceded to something less, a door is opened to the question, How much less ?—and, with each man at liberty to answer this question for himself, it is marvellous to find how little, in the shape perhaps of a few earth-born moralities, or of a few decent and formal observances, how very little they will make to serve. But not only is this legal system, not only is it fitted to reduce the amount of our practical righteousness—it is also fitted utterly to vitiate and degrade its character. Virtue, instead of being looked upon as heaven itself, is only looked upon as the price or purchase-money that is given for it ; and this heaven, this return for virtue, and therefore distinct from virtue as wages are from work, is regarded and aspired after as a physical rather than a moral happiness ; and so the whole spirit or character of our obedience, viewed as the mercantile term of an exchange for something better and something different from itself, is immeasurably vulgarized. There is nought of the sacred, or the disinterested, or the godlike, in such an economy ; and its religion is one of intense selfishness.

10. Our third lesson is not against the evangelicals, but it proceeds on the ground that there is perhaps a something to rectify and to amend in certain of the writers of that class. Virtue is not in their estimation the price of heaven ; and

here they are right—for, vastly higher than this, it is the very substance and being of heaven in the soul. But do they never forget this high attribute, and assign to virtue or holiness a lower place and character than belong to it, when, instead of being heaven itself, they speak of it only as the evidence of our title to heaven? Is not this fitted, too, to sustain and foster the imagination, that heaven is a something different from virtue—as different, if not as wages are from work, at least as a thing signified is from its sign? Is there no taint of selfishness and sordidness, we would ask, in this view also? And is it not calculated to make us satisfied, if we just make out as much of obedience as might warrant the conclusion that we are safe? Now our safety, our state of salvation—or which is the same thing, our state of spiritual health, and so of spiritual enjoyment—lies in a state of earnest, progressive, aspiring holiness, along a career in which the greater our holiness the greater will be our happiness also; or, in other words, the more virtuous here the greater will be our preferment there—the more we heighten and multiply our graces on this side of death, the greater will be our moral and spiritual treasures through all eternity. Thus ought we to understand the precept of laying up our treasures in heaven; and the virtues of the new creature, instead of being the price which we give in exchange for these treasures, or only the evidence of their being in reserve for us by the time that we enter into Paradise, are the very treasures themselves which regale and satisfy the spirits of the celestial. It is thus that the evangelical system fully carried out, not only adds indefinitely and without limit to the amount, but exalts the aim as well as refines and ennobles the whole character of the gospel obedience. Holiness is more than the way to some better and higher landing-place: holiness is itself the landing-place, and our restoration to holiness the great object of the economy under which we sit. Christianity does not begin with virtue and end with justification—it begins with justification and ends with virtue. And thus we are told by the Apostle, after having received the grace of the gospel, after having received the promises, our unceasing busi-

ness is to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect our holiness in the fear of God.

11. But in the pulpit you must not confine yourselves to these generalities, but come to such pointed and personal applications as might tell upon your hearers. The question for each of them to entertain, the matter on hand with them, is, How am I to obtain a part and an interest in these things? What are the footsteps, or what the transition, by which I, perhaps at this moment an earthly and unregenerate creature, am to pass over from the state of nature to the state of grace, and so that this kingdom of heaven, the enjoyments and affections of which have now been set before me, may actually and in very deed be set up within me? Certain it is that I cannot change my affections from the world to Him who made the world, so as to set them upon God and goodness, simply at the bidding of my own will. I cannot of myself work so great a moral revolution on my own character; and the question recurs, How am I to go about it, and by what way is it that I make entry on the heaven of goodness here, and which forms the portal, as it were, and way of preparation for the heaven of eternity?

12. We know but of one answer to this question—Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. Embrace the faith of the gospel; and this is the great, the only inlet for the love of the gospel, even that love which is shed abroad in the heart of man by the Holy Ghost. Make a study, an earnest study, of the footing upon which God takes sinners into acceptance; and hearken diligently unto Him when He lays down the method of salvation in that blessed record which tells of eternal life as the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and where the free and generous announcement is made in the hearing of all and for the behoof of all, that God hath given to us eternal life, and that this life is in His Son. It is thus and thus alone, be assured, that either spiritual life here, or everlasting life hereafter, can ever be realized. He who hath the Son hath this life: he who hath not the Son hath not this life. Never cease, then, to tell your hearers that they



should come unto Christ—that they should venture their all upon Him as the foundation which God hath laid in Zion—that they should make mention of His righteousness, and enter into reconciliation with God through Him who died the just for the unjust.

13. This is the way, and let me add the single and exclusive way, by which the light and the love and the blessedness of heaven will be made to descend on us. But here comes in the sad, the humbling experience of every Christian minister. He may succeed in carrying the attention of the general public to a demonstration of human ungodliness, and they will call it an interesting argument; and he may succeed in carrying their attention to the representation which he gives of the virtues by which regenerated humanity is adorned, so as that they shall call it a beautiful and interesting description; but with the exception of the few who make the salvation of their souls a real, practical, business concern, he will not so carry their attention to God's own message of peace and pardon as that they shall call it an interesting statement, and act upon it accordingly. It is their acceptance of this message which forms the great bridgeway of communication from the carnal to the spiritual, from the old man to the new creature; and yet the terms of this message they will scarcely listen to. The great question between heaven and earth—the method of its settlement on the principles and according to the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary—the way in which God might be just while the justifier of those who believe in Jesus—the free offer of the gospel as founded on the satisfaction made by Christ for the injuries of a violated law—the connexion between his sufferings and the glory that should follow;—these are the very things, we read, which angels desired to look into, and yet they fall as so many bald and meagre insipidities on the dull ear of a listless and alienated world. We can interest them on the collaterals of Christianity; but it is the essence, and, above all, the way of realizing it so as that it shall become personally theirs—it is this which they repudiate as tasteless and unsatisfying, insomuch that, while the apostle was deter-

mined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, this is the very knowledge in which they can see no form or comeliness that they should desire it. It is this remarkable phenomenon which has long convinced me, that our most successful evangelizers, they who best carry forward the real work of Christianisation in the land, are those men of faith and prayer who preach simply and scripturally the great doctrines of the gospel, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Be assured that there is but a show and a delusion in all the noise and bustle and excitement which are created by anything different from this or opposite to this. Delighted with the argument, it may be, but not one inch of progress made towards the clean heart and the right spirit; lulled Sabbath after Sabbath, as if by the sound of a pleasant song, or of one who can play well on an instrument, and yet the old man persisting in all the obstinacy of his deep and in-born principles; rejoicing once a week in the house of God as if it were the gate of heaven, yet the whole week long giving his entire heart to the world, and resting all his security upon the world's wealth and the world's enjoyments; running after gospel ministers, and sitting in all the complacency of approbation under them, and yet an utter stranger to the devotedness, to the spirituality, to the close walk, and the godly spirit of the altogether Christian;—oh, it bids so flattering to hear the city bells, and see every house pouring forth its family of worshippers—to look on the avenue which leads to the house of God, and to see it all on a glow with the crowd and the bustle of passengers—to enter the church, and see every eye fastened attentively on the man of God as he tells of the high matters of salvation, and presses home the preparations of eternity upon an arrested audience! Oh, if the charmed ear were a true and unfailling index to the subdued heart, the business of the minister would go on so prosperously! But there is a power of resistance within that is above his exertions and beyond them—there is a spirit working in the children of disobedience which no power of human eloquence can lay—there is an obstinate alienation

from God which God alone can subdue ; and unless He make a willing people in the day of His power, the influence of the preacher's lesson will die away with the music of his voice—the old man will be carried out as vigorous and entire as he was carried in—the word spoken may play upon the fancy, but it will not reach the deeply seated corruption which lies in the affections and the will—the seriousness which sits so visible on every countenance will vanish into nothing in half an hour—the men of the world and the things of the world will engross and occupy the room that is now taken up with something like Christianity, and all will dissipate into a thing of nought when you go to your shops, and your farms, and your families, and your market-places.

14. In urging home the lessons of religion, there is one consideration not so powerful as most of those which are purely theological, but which ought to have place too in your sermons, even as it occasionally has in the Bible—as when Paul says, “Brethren, the time is short.” In like manner, along with your other practical arguments, you may intersperse the question, Why it is that your hearers should suffer the short-lived pursuits and enjoyments of a day to seduce them from the magnificent aim and prospects of eternity? When crossed in the business of life, we have heard men taking comfort that it will be all the same a hundred years after this—a good reason why they should sit loose to this world's interests, but surely a better reason why they should forthwith enter on a busy preparation for the world which passeth not away. A hundred years after this! With what speed and what certainty will these hundred years arrive at their termination? This day will draw to a close, and a number of days makes up one revolution of the seasons. Year follows after year, and a number of years makes up a century. These little intervals of time accumulate and fill up that mighty space which appears to the eye of the fancy so big and so immeasurable. The hundred years will come, and they will carry along with them the wreck of whole generations. Every living thing that now moves on the face of the earth will disappear from it. The infant

that now hangs on its mother's bosom will only live in the remembrance of his grandchildren. The scene of life and intelligence before you will be changed into the dark and loathsome forms of corruption. The people who hear you will cease to be spoken of; their memory will perish from the face of the country; their flesh will be devoured by worms; the dark and creeping things which live in the holes of the earth will feed upon their bodies; their coffins will have mouldered away, and their bones be thrown up in loose and scattered fragments among the earth of the new-made grave.\*

\* The last paragraph, although already published, (*Posthumous Works*, vol. vi. p. 83,) is retained, as indicating how favourite a passage it was in the eyes of its author.

## CHAPTER XI.

ON THE WARRANT WHICH EACH MAN HAS TO APPROPRIATE THE CALLS OF THE GOSPEL TO HIMSELF, AND WHAT THAT IS WHICH MARKS HIS DOING SO.

1. I do not think that enough of stress has been laid by theologians or Christian ministers on the various particular terms in which the overtures of the gospel are couched for presentation to the world. Each man would understand the import of a special message to himself, but he may not see how the Bible can be understood, as being adequately and fully such a message. An express letter from the upper sanctuary, with his name and designation, might satisfy him; but in the general record of Scripture, that name and that designation are nowhere to be found. He reads calls and entreaties and promises innumerable, but there wants something to warrant his own confident appropriation of them. We hold that the want he complains of is not in the Bible, but somewhere else. This, however, he does not perceive, or at least does not proceed upon. He does not see, distinctly or confidently, how this universal can be transmuted into an individual revelation; or what entitles him to lay hold of encouragements and offers as designed particularly for himself, which are only found in a book that circulates at large, and is left, without any specific destination impressed upon it, to go vaguely and diffusively over the face of the earth. And so, in reading the Bible, he holds converse only with generalities. His own heart remains uncheered, his own path unshone upon.

2. It is needless to expatiate on the power of those terms in which the overtures of the gospel are framed, and by which.

without the nomination of a single individual, each individual may hold them as pointedly and specifically addressed to himself—giving them at once a general diffusion among all, and a personal direction to every. Let me only once more enumerate them. All—“Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved.” Every—“Every one that asketh receiveth.” Any—“If any man open the door I will enter with him into fellowship.” Whosoever—“Whosoever will, let him drink of the waters of life freely.” He, a pronoun as generic as the human family—“He that believeth shall be saved.” World, a term co-extensive with its rational and accountable generations—“Christ is set forth a propitiation for the sins of the world.” Sinner, a designation that misses no one individual of the species—“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” I do not see how any designations or terms can at all be devised more comprehensive than these, insomuch that I hold it an indisputable maxim in theology, that the word and the offer of salvation are co-extensive the one with the other: or, of whomsoever it may be said that the word of salvation has reached him, of him also it may be said that the offer of salvation has been made unto him.

3. There is a conscience within every heart that may be said to intimate individually to each man, both his special delinquencies and his special danger because of them. But as far as Scripture is concerned, he has as good reason to take to himself the comforts of the gospel, as to take to himself the terrors and threatenings of the law. For it has been well remarked, that whatsoever the defect or completeness of the warrant may be on which a man appropriates to himself the declarations of the one, it is in all respects the same with that on which he appropriates the declarations of the other. If he tremble because of the saying, That cursed is every man who breaketh the commandment, why, on the other hand, does he not rejoice in the commensurate saying, That blessed is every man who believeth in the Saviour? If he sink into despondency and dismay, or, to borrow the language of Scripture, if he be weary and heavy laden because of the judgments denounced upon all, why does

he not take heart again, when he reads the invitation addressed unto all, Come unto me, all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest? If he gather from the Old Testament, that whosoever sinneth is under condemnation, and so views himself as an outcast from the friendship of God, why is it, when he gathers from the New Testament, that whosoever will may come and drink of the waters of life freely—why is it that he refuses to draw water out of the wells of salvation? In short, the terms in which the gospel holds forth an amnesty to the world, are co-extensive with the terms in which the law holds forth a condemnation to the world. If the man cannot rejoice in the belief that he is included in the gospel's proclamation of mercy, because he does not read his name or his designation there, why does he tremble in the belief that he is included in the law's proclamation of vengeance, seeing that he can as little read his name or his designation there? If the overtures of Divine forgiveness, like so many pointless generalities, pass him by, how is it that the terrors of the Divine wrath, couched and conveyed though they are in language of the same generality, have such special application given to them, and so enter his soul like an arrow sticking fast? Perhaps we can give the reason. Perhaps it is that his sense of guilt is but a product from the workings of conscience alone. It may be only a natural, and not at all a Scriptural conviction—an operation by the law of the heart, and not by the law of revelation. Had his apprehensions of punishment been derived from the Bible, they might have been quieted by the expectations of pardon derived from the same fountain; for certain it is, that as far as the word of God is concerned, the comforts of the gospel are directed as pointedly and specifically to every reader as the menaces of the law. A belief in its statements fully warrants the individual application of them; and if the application be not made, and so the heart retains its despondency, then, making the one the test of the other, from the languor or the non-existence of individual hope, would we infer the languor or the non-existence of faith.

4. There can be no doubt, then, from the way in which the message of the gospel is constructed, from the very language in which it is framed and by which it announces itself to men, that each individual man has a full warrant in the objective truth of Scripture, for appropriating to himself the calls and the overtures which it addresses to the world. Now the question is, what is the first palpable effect which such an appropriation will have upon him? or, in other words, what is that which most significantly and most decisively marks its having been made? We have no doubt upon the subject, in the case of a general announcement made by any human or earthly superior to a general multitude. Let him only be conceived to cast abroad among them a general promise or invitation, that all who should meet him at an assigned place, should obtain a certain and specified benefit from his hand; or, varying the terms even as the gospel does, that whosoever repaired to that place, or that any who repaired to it, or that every man who repaired to it, should have the benefit realized upon him, there can be no doubt, that in each of these intimations, there are sufficient materials for a warrantable and valid appropriation. They hold forth a distinct pledge and promise to each individual of the assembled multitude; and, whoever he may be, he has but to take an intelligent view of the statement which has been made, and to make an intelligent application of it. Let him only believe in its honesty and truth; and, with the full gait of assurance, may he enter and move onward on the pathway which leads to the place of assignation, and rejoicing in the confident hope of the fulfilment which has been held out to him there.

5. It cannot be difficult to assign what is the first palpable thing which an appropriation in this instance will lead him to do, and which thing will be at once the effect and the indication of his faith. He will betake himself to the place of invitation. He will enter on the road that leads to it, and move with assured pace, just in proportion to the confidence which he feels in the honesty of the invitation. His very first foot-step in the direction of the bidden walk and the bidden way,



may be regarded as the first distinct and noticeable evidence of the faith by which he is actuated. Observers do not see the mental phenomenon, or the faith itself; but they see the hopeful and obedient movement, and from this they infer the faith. Even he himself does not look reflexly on the faith that is in him, but his mind simply rests on the truth of the Promiser, and is occupied with the certainty and value of the thing promised. The terms of the invitation were enough to warrant an appropriating faith, and his compliance in deed and in action with the order given, is enough to evidence it. It were difficult for others, perhaps even for himself, to ascertain the faith by the direct view of it as a mental phenomenon. But it may be gathered at once from the broad and palpable exhibition of his obedience.

6. This applies, in all its parts, to our faith in the gospel. Eternal life is there held out as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and the way is prescribed by which to reach it. We have already, I trust, made it obvious how by the terms in which it is held out, each man within hearing of the gospel has a right to appropriate the thing offered to himself, and to go forth on the bidden walk in the confident possession or confident prospect thereof;—that walk is the walk of repentance, or of new obedience. When the earthly benefactor invited the approach of those whom he addressed, and accompanied the invitation with the promise of some large and liberal gratuity, he did not bid them wait till the faith had arisen in their minds—he bade them instantly to move; and they, by their instant obedience, gave proof of the faith being already within them in vigorous and practical operation. They were not called upon to ascertain it before obedience; they ascertained it by obedience—the obedience to which they were urged at the very outset of this communication. It is true, unless they had put faith in this communication, they would not have stirred, and the doing as they were bid was the immediate effect of their faith, which was therefore anterior in influence and anterior in time to their obedience. But though the faith must have first existed, that is not to say the

faith must first be known to exist, ere the obedience is attempted. You do not look reflexly on the faith by an exercise of consciousness, and then start on the bidden career of activity ; but the faith immediately prompts the activity, and indeed it is through the medium of the activity that the power and reality of the faith are first and most satisfactorily ascertained. At all events, there are initial calls to plain and palpable doings from the very commencement ; and you respond to these, not by feeling inwardly after the faith, but by following externally the impulse of it—by plainly doing what you are plainly bidden to do. It would be deemed preposterous in the case now specified to lay an arrest on the movement, till by search and entry among the arcana of the mind the faith had been found. Instead of this, you are required on the instant, and with all practical urgency, to enter on the movement, and simply, if the faith exist, whether it be known at the time to exist or not, the movement follows. There is nothing in all this to embarrass either the initial or the progressive footsteps of this process. The man is simply told what he is to expect, and what he has to do for the fulfilment of his expectation ; and if he believe what is thus told, he expects and he does accordingly. There is both a mental phenomenon here—that is, the expectation ; and an outward movement—that is, the doing : and had the former not been in previous being and operation, the latter, it is undoubted, would not have taken place. But that is not to say we must look inwardly, and take accurate survey of the phenomenon, ere we act outwardly on the plain and palpable direction which has been given to us. The connexion between the inward and the outward will not less surely take effect, although we should not take metaphysic cognizance of the same—just as surely as the satellites of Jupiter would describe their mathematical courses, although no mathematical survey had ever been made of them. A plain man, in the circumstances we have now alleged, will feel no embarrassment. He is told what to hope, and where to go for it ; and, without mystification or metaphysics, he hopes as he is told, and goes as he is bidden.

7. Now to me it appears quite obvious that Christianity, in its initial overtures to man, supplies the materials for just as distinct and intelligible an outset. We have already told how, by the very terms which it uses, it singles out every man as a special object for its invitations and its calls ; so that each may proceed on its primary addresses to the world, as if they were made individually to himself. And then if the question be put, In what way shall he respond to these addresses ? I would say, just by doing the very first injunctions of performance which it mixes up with the very first announcements of promise. It promises eternal life, and it bids us take the way which leads to it. And our proper response to this is just to depend on the promise, and to do the bidding. There can be no mistake as to the promise—forgiveness to all who will through the blood of a satisfying atonement. There can be no mistake as to the bidding—repentance, and turning unto God, and doing works meet for repentance—ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well. There seems nothing wanting here but the plain understanding of a very plain thing. With but belief in the truth of the message, we see not what should intervene to stay an immediate result, and that at the very first hearing, of a heart animated by the hope, and a hand directed to the obedience of the gospel. The New Testament presents every man with a view of heaven's door opened in the distance before him, and calls on every man to enter on the way of holiness which leads to it. We can imagine nothing more lucid than these direct and primary overtures from heaven to earth—so that if sounded forth upon the world by a trumpet of universal proclamation, it were anything rather than a trumpet which sounded uncertainly. Yet who will deny, since theologians have taken it up, and the haze of a thousand controversies has now gathered upon the question, that it is altogether beset with uncertainties. They have clouded, because they have overborne with their endless commentaries, what in itself is conspicuous as noon-day. Men's minds are lost in the perplexity of long and intricate argumentations, and are bewildered to find that path to heaven, of which, nevertheless, it may

be said, that, as delineated and set before us in Scripture, a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

8. The reasons for this unfortunate obscuration are mainly reducible to two.

9. The first is, that although nothing can be more patent than those objective realities, by a faith in which it is that the simple Christian is practically set agoing, yet nothing, at the same time, may be more dark and puzzling to him than the description which an inquisitive theology has attempted to make of the subjective process. In Christianity, both the promise held forth and the direction given are as plain matters, as far as the understanding of them at least is concerned, as any parallel promise with its accompanying direction which can be specified in ordinary life. And yet there is no such case, however familiar, that, if subjected to the same treatment with that of the gospel, might not be involved, even as it has been, in most perplexing metaphysics. The child whom you call to approach you across the floor, and to receive from your hand the apple which you are holding forth to its view, is at no loss how to proceed in making out the acquisition which you intend for it. Yet the data I contend upon which it acts are not more obvious, more apprehensible, than the data set before us all by the gospel of Jesus Christ, and upon which we are required to go forth on our movement for that heaven which is placed with its open gate and its waving flag of invitation in the perspective before us. The child is exclusively objective in its contemplations. All its regards are directed to outward things : the apple held out for its acceptance—the order to come for it—the path by which it moves towards the object its desires are set upon. It is altogether an objective influence which has set it agoing, and set it rightly agoing. Still, however, there is a real subjective process going on within the recesses of its little bosom, however unconscious it may be, or incapable of reflexly observing its order or its laws. Yet another may accurately describe the process, though it cannot ; and among other things may remark, and justly remark, on the precedency of the child's faith to the child's obedience. It was faith, in

fact, which gave movement and direction to its very first foot-step, and which upheld it along the continuous path from its place of departure to its place of arrival. Yet for any practical object, it were of no earthly use to tell the child so ; and it were still more preposterous to exact from it the certainty of having the faith, ere it did any of the plain things which it had been bidden do. But this is just the preposterous thing done by our speculatists and our system-framers in theology, to the man who, under the first invitations of religious earnestness, may be said to be yet in the infancy of his religious course. Instead of being plied with the broadly and conspicuously objective, he is perplexed among the subjective intricacies of a mental and metaphysical process. The assurances of pardon, the calls of repentance are deafened, as it were, by immersion in the depth of inextricable subtleties ; and between ministers and hearers, so great is the bewilderment as to verify the observation I have heard from my departed friend, Robert Hall—that the majority of evangelical ministers knew not how to lay down the gospel, so as that a man of plain and ordinary understanding should know how to take it up.

## CHAPTER XII.

ON THE CHECK THAT IS FELT AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE  
CHRISTIAN COURSE BY THE APPREHENSION OF LEGALITY.

1. WE have already specified one check in the way of instant obedience. The antecedency of faith to obedience is one of the categories of our orthodox theology. Now this is very true; and it follows therefrom, that the obedience of a Christian may prove he has the faith. But it does not follow, that, ere he begin the obedience, he must know he has the faith. This last is the error which has misled many a plain and simple understanding. They think they must ascertain their mental state, and be satisfied of its rightness, ere they shall proceed on the plain inducements which the gospel sets before them. In this way their outset has been entangled with subtleties. Instead of directly acting on the objective realities presented to them in Scripture, they, under the idea that they must follow the theologian in his speculation on the subjective process, would first assure themselves that all is right within them, and just as he has described it; and thus, in fact, their immediate converse with the objective is broken. It is only when in contact with the calls and truths and promises of the gospel, that the machinery of their moral system, operated upon by the appropriate power thus brought to bear on it, is kept rightly and prosperously agoing. But when, instead of looking to the gospel, the man looks in a reflex or metaphysical direction to the working of this inner mechanism, the mind slips, as it were, and is separated from those moral forces, which can only act upon it when the objects of revela-

tion are present to the thoughts. Hence a very sore and fruitless harassment, to be delivered from which there seems no other method than just a return by the mind from the subjective to the objective contemplation—a re-opening of the mental eye to the object which is presented from without—a re-opening of the mental ear to the voice which addresses it from without—a surrender of the whole man to the proper effect of the Bible's own sayings—the bringing of Scripture and the mind together again, when the one will in fact work its proper influence on the other, whether we in theory can speculate rightly or not on the influence or on the order of that mental history to which it gives rise.

2. We now proceed to the other check which a misconceived or misapplied orthodoxy lays upon instant obedience: and that is the dread of legality which it has inspired. Men have been so much told of the danger of self-righteousness, that, lest they should incur it, they are fearful of putting their hand to any work of righteousness at all. This perhaps is one of the worst effects that has resulted from the controversy of Protestants with the Church of Rome. In their opposition to the doctrine of merit, they have been led to look suspiciously and hardly at every one thing wherewith merit might be associated: and they have communicated this jealousy far and wide, so as deeply to have impregnated the popular mind with it. Men have been told so strenuously, that to seek a justification by works is the high road to perdition, that they are positively afraid of works altogether. The direct authority of Christ and His Apostles in their favour is overborne by the dead weight of these representations against them. Men are afraid to meddle with what theologians of great name and authority in the Church have so stickled at. There is at least a conflict in their minds between the direct urgency of Scripture on the one hand, and, on the other, the discouragements and caveats of orthodoxy. Amid these counteractive forces the man is brought to a dead stand; and, instead of entering with confidence or alacrity on the activities of the Christian life, we find all his energy expended on the right adjustment of the doctrines—leaving to

duties a very subordinate place, perhaps an insignificance or even a nullity in the system of his religious contemplations.

3. This is a sore evil. It has mystified the outset of Christianity, and laid a mischievous restraint on that plain work of obedience, to which, at the very commencement of its discipleship, we are invited to give a free and a fearless hand. It forms one of the initial calls of the gospel to every man, that we should cease to do evil, and learn to do well. But there is a certain orthodox antipathy to the doings that deafens this mandate from heaven, which, bereft thereby of all enforcement and power, falls without effect on the inquirer—lost in the difficulties of a system, even whose first principles appear to him so abstruse and contradictory. Between the sayings of the Bible and the subtleties of those controversialists who have disputed and darkened the meaning of its most plain and authoritative sentences, the trumpet is made to blow most uncertainly; and a posture, a gait of uncertainty on the part of many who aspire to be Christians, if they knew but what lessons to begin with, is the unavoidable result of it. We observe no indecision of this sort on the part of those who, steadfast and immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord, know that their labour in the Lord will not be in vain. They had taken up a sure position, they had entered on a sure path. An Apostle spake, and they obeyed. Their goings were established; and so might ours, but for the sophistications of an orthodoxy which proscribes labour, and would represent works as useless, nay, as pernicious things in Christianity. This again unsettles all; and, instead of acting as men confident of heaven and confident of the way that leads to it, we run as uncertainly, we fight as one that beateth the air.

4. To disentangle this perplexity, we ought ever to recollect, that a sense of the necessity of good works and a sense of their merit are in no way necessarily associated. It is hard, indeed, that, as if wire-bound, we must not move a footstep in executing the plain directions of the gospel, because legality may chance to found a claim upon them—that an express bidding by Christ or His Apostles must fall powerless on hu-



man consciences, because of a veto by the systematic theologian which neutralizes it—that a responding sense of duty to the voice of our celestial benefactor must be stifled and suppressed, because told by an earthly interpreter of His will, that duties are often perverted by men to a delusive self-righteousness—that the word of God's own messengers, even of God's own Son, must be deafened on its way to our earthly habitations, because taken up by intermediate expounders, and there kept in abeyance till they have adjusted its place and its limitation in their schemes of divinity. They, in fact, have laid a burden on duty, so as to make it impracticable, or rather associated a bugbear therewith, so as to scare us away from it. The man who reads his Bible, and, when so employed, sists himself in the presence of Christ, and takes on the direct influence of the words which are told him, and acts accordingly, is not, when thus doing, attempting to establish a right or a righteousness. This is not his aim or his object at all. He is not thinking of any such thing; but in the spirit and with the simple docility of a little child, he feels no other impulse than that of a superior's authority, whom he wills to obey. When our Saviour at His last meeting with the Apostles after His resurrection, bade them go to Jerusalem and there wait till power should descend upon them, they, in the exercise of a simple duteness, bent their footsteps thitherward. Had schemes and systems of theology been as elaborately concocted then as they are now, and some profound and zealous adept in the science met them on their way, he would have offered to lay an arrest upon their movement. He would have remonstrated with them on the danger of their proceeding. He would have asked them what they were doing, and whether they were not labouring to rear a title-deed upon their obedience? And could he have wielded as great authority then, as he has unfortunately wielded in latter ages of the Church, he might have brought them to a stand. He might have wrested them from the tuition of their heavenly master, and placed them under his own. He might have seduced them from the plain work of obedience in which they were engaged, and sub-

stituted in its room a perplexing and paralyzing speculation. He met them busy in doing what they were bid ; but he might have taught them to apprehend a danger in their doing any thing. He might have told them, that, in their state of crude and imperfect theology, obedience was very unsafe ; for, by the right order of precedency, doctrines came first and doings came afterwards. Had he by an anticipation been charged with one of our modern systems, and brought it to bear upon them, he might have taught them to apprehend a danger in their moving another footstep. He might have expatiated in their hearing on the evils of legality. He might have told them that works and self-righteousness were so apt to go together, that, to avoid the self-righteousness, they must, for a time at least, till seasoned and prepared for it, give up the working. And it is certainly conceivable, that, as the fruit of this secondary influence exercised over them by a new master, these simple men might have yielded to the spell of his learned incantations. They might have felt, in the force of what he said, a complete interdict on their further progress. They might have felt, what I am sure many of their successors in the Church have done, a wizard power in this artificial theology which petrified them into stillness. Even the commandment of our Saviour that they should go to Jerusalem, till then fresh in their remembrance and vigorously acted on, might have been struck with impotency, under the cold and withering look of the ghostly counsellor who had now gotten the ascendancy over them. When at the bidding of Jesus Christ they travelled onward to that place where the illumination of the Spirit had been promised to them, they were doing their duty, and on their way to doctrine. But this is not according to the order of our latter day, by which we are called upon, first, to rectify and complete our doctrine, ere we shall venture at all upon duty. And yet had the Apostles of our Lord been on this principle arrested, in their duteous movement of compliance with the will of the Saviour, they would have been stopped on their way to the enlargements of Pentecost.

5. This surely would have been a sore perversion, and yet

we behold it exemplified every day. It is the very perversion of which at this hour we complain, as having mystified and so paralyzed, more especially at its outset, the process of Christianisation. The gospel has plain directions for the disciples of all stages, nay, for men anterior to their discipleship, and meditating an entrance thereon—directions as plain as those given by Christ to His apostles when He told them simply to go to Jerusalem, and there wait for the larger powers and larger manifestations which were afterwards to descend upon them. Men now are just as distinctly told as the Apostles were then, what they must turn their feet and their hands to in quest of the pearl of great price, or in prosecuting the business of their salvation. But feet and hands are working instruments; and working of any sort is looked on by many as a very suspicious, nay, as a tainting ingredient to bring into Christianity. Why, they are the very instruments which men gain their bread by; and by the busy employment of which they earn a right from their earthly master to the wages which he had stipulated to bestow on them. Now, it is this which alarms the orthodox. It is lest this analogy of a right should be introduced into a system of religion, from which all right by the creature to the friendship or rewards of the Creator is expressly excluded. It is this which explains their antipathy to those plain and practical biddings which the Christianity of the New Testament lays upon men, even on the first parley which it holds with them. The New Testament does so fearlessly and freely; but many are the expounders of the New Testament who do not and dare not. They will not, for example, tell an unrighteous man to forsake his way. They will not, in the early stages of their converse with thieves, or drunkards, or delinquents of any sort, tell them, as one at least of their religious directions, to give up the evil of their doings. Their orthodoxy has spell-bound them; and so nothing is said upon the one side that can be acted on upon the other. Ministers and people are equally at a loss. Salvation is represented in the Bible as a thing to be found, but they know not how to seek after it—as a thing to be hardly and laboriously won, but

they know not how to strive in order to obtain it—as a thing which requires all that is within man to be stirred up, as if in pursuit of a great enterprise ; but this implies action, and from this the bugbear of an apprehended legality scares them away. In short, Christianity sets forth an object supremely to be desired, and for which some thing or other must strenuously be done—yet all men seem equally at a stand how to set about it ; and what we affirm is, that one main ingredient of this perplexity is just the dread of that legality against which theologians of greatest name and authority in the Church have launched so many fulminations. Men are fearful, lest by putting their hands to anything, they should be found in the wrong track of seeking to establish a title to heaven by exertions or services of their own ; and so, to escape the condemnation of endeavouring after a right, they hold it safest to refrain from endeavouring after all righteousness.

6. This, we repeat, has proved a sore impediment in the way of setting out on the business of Christianity at all. It has done infinitely greater mischief as an incubus on the activities of practice, than it has done as a safeguard against the errors of legality. It is indeed at a fearful expense that we try to rectify the creed, if we thereby thwart and perplex, and at length altogether benumb the conscience. It often terminates in darkening all, and deranging all. That very faith, for the sake of whose integrity we have expelled works, because of an incidental evil which may stand associated with them, will not maintain its ground against the ravages which an artificial orthodoxy makes upon Scripture. Now the fearfulness, the scrupulosity of the former, on the article of works, is in utter incongruity with the perfect freedom and fearlessness of the latter on the same subject—inasmuch, that while the obedient pupil of the former would keep hovering at the commencement of the Christian service with trembling and uncertain footsteps—the obedient disciple of the latter would, with instant alacrity and confidence, enter at once upon its course. Here, then, does the system come into conflict and collision with the Bible ; and, as far as it prevails, will it

undermine the authority of the Word of God. But a mind loosened from that authority in one instance might be loosened from it in all. The Antinomianism which begins with magnifying faith, ends with the annihilation of it; or, as the Apostle most instructively warns us, when once a good conscience is put away, faith suffers shipwreck.

7. Let the initial biddings of Christianity then stand discharged of this legal imagination altogether. A man of a duteous and docile spirit will simply obey them without ever thinking of founding aught in the shape of a right, or a meritorious righteousness thereupon. He merely acts as he is told; and it never enters into his conceptions that he is building up a title to heaven by his conformities to the will of the Saviour. It is very hard that his conscientious and child-like services should have the burden of this controversy laid upon them, or that systematic theology should lay its chilling restraints on one ready as he is to welcome the deliverance which Christianity announces, and at once to comply with the demands which Christianity prefers. It is most unfortunate that because Popery founded merit on its pilgrimages, and penances, and self-appointed tasks, we, by way of keeping at the greatest possible distance from its errors, must be fearful even of the moral reformation of Christianity, lest merit, too, should be associated therewith. This comes of the contests of partizanship. With the senseless and superstitious observances of Popery, there has been connected the doctrine of a merit in good works. Both the observances themselves, and their associated merit, deserve to be alike exploded. And it is further true that merit in the sight of God, or on the standard of His perfect and unchangeable law, should be associated with no human observances whatever—even those of a religion as pure and fervent, or of a morality as noble as any of which the species is capable: and so, as both their associated merit and the superstitious follies of other days have been alike exploded—the proscription, I will not say avowedly, but effectually though tacitly, is extended to both terms of the conjunction—that is, both to their associated merit and to the essential

doings themselves of Christianity, whether these be the doings of its first outset, or of its progressive course. It is right that all sense of merit should be alike disjoined from both—that is, both from the superadded performances of the Romish Church, and from the essential obedience of the gospel. But it follows not because the Romish services may be given up along with the merit, that the gospel obedience must also be given up along with the merit. Yet practically, in many instances, this is as good as done. Men have become fearful, not of superstitious works only, but of all works together. A chill and motionless apathy has seized upon them. There has been so much said of the danger of legality, that, to shun the danger, there is a very prevalent impression of its being safer to have nothing to do with aught which might involve them in it; and so they will not even seek, lest this should land them in self-seeking; they will not try to be righteous, because of the horror which they have been taught to feel at self-righteousness.

8. It is with the greatest satisfaction and pleasure that I observe a confirmation of these views in the following sentences from Jonathan Edwards:—"It is quite a wrong notion that some entertain, that the more they do the more they shall depend on it; whereas the reverse is true—the more they do, or the more thorough they are in seeking, the less will they be likely to rest in their doings, and the sooner will they see the vanity of all that they do. So that persons will exceedingly miss, if ever they neglect to do any duty either to God or man, whether it be any duty of religion, justice, or charity, under the notion of its exposing them to trust in their own righteousness. It is very true that it is a common thing for persons, when they seek salvation, to trust in the pains they take; but yet, commonly, those that go on in a more slight way, trust a great deal more securely to their outward services than he that is pressing into the kingdom of God does to his earnestness. Men's slackness in religion, and their trust in their own righteousness, do strengthen and establish one another. Their trust in what they have done and what they now do, stills them into a slothful rest and ease, and hinders their being sensible

of their need of raising up themselves and pressing forward. And, on the other hand, their negligence tends so to benumb them, and keep them in such ignorance of themselves, that the most miserable refuges are stupidly rested in as safe. Therefore we see, that when persons have been going on for a long time in such a way, and God afterwards comes more thoroughly to awaken them, and stir them to be in good earnest, He shakes all their old foundations, and rouses them out of their old resting-places, so that they cannot quiet themselves with those things that formerly kept them secure."

## CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE PREACHING OF GOOD WORKS AND OF ALL VIRTUE, WHETHER IN THE HEART OR LIFE, THAT THE ASPIRANT AFTER HEAVEN MIGHT LABOUR WITH ALL STRENUOUSNESS TO REALIZE THE CHARACTER OF HEAVEN.

1. WE do fear that with many serious professors of our faith, even the men of deepest earnestness among them, there is a want of perception as to the use and necessity of, and the consequent want of a practical impulse to the work of obedience. They know that they are justified by the righteousness of Christ; and well have they been told from evangelical pulpits, often have they read in the pages of evangelical authorship, of the utter vanity for justification of any righteousness of their own. After this they do not perfectly understand what their own personal virtue, their own personal character or conduct has to do in the matter of their salvation. They do not fully see the good of it, or the object of it. They hear so much of the finished work of Christ, that they do not clearly discern, nor can they rightly tell, what work is left for themselves to do. They have been so accustomed to regard Christ as the Captain, and as the sole Author and Finisher of their salvation, that they are at a loss how to fit in with this undoubted doctrine of Christianity, the equally undoubted precept of Christianity—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And we are not sure that the controversies of churchmen have at all cleared up, we rather fear that on these questions they have served to mystify the understandings of men, who can very exactly see what the end or what the motive of obedience is, under the economy of—"Do this, and live;" but do not



see with the same distinctness of vision what the end or what the motive to obedience, under the economy of—"Believe, and live." Ever since the period of the Reformation, when Protestants and Papists took their respective sides, and the doctrine of salvation by faith was placed in array against the doctrine of salvation by works—ever since then the argumentations of a learned theology have multiplied upon our hands; yet we are uncertain whether, instead of casting light upon the subject, they have not left a deeper haze upon it than before. Such, we doubt not, has been the effect on many a mind. There has been so much said on the danger of trusting to works, that men are positively afraid of meddling with them at all. They have been told that to believe is all in all; but often they have not been told, by a trumpet giving forth no uncertain sound upon the subject—often have they not been told what that thing is which they have plainly and practically to go about. The minds of men, we greatly fear, are both be-dimmed and benumbed upon the question, so that, in consequence, a stealthy and secret Antinomianism has been creeping over the Church, and is positively gaining ground amongst us. It would appear as if their very orthodoxy had spell-bound both the preachers and the hearers—the one at a loss what to say, and the other what to do, in the matter. It is a miserable thing when men are thus left to strive so uncertainly, and to fight as one who beatech the air, instead of being set on a plain path, along which they might clearly and confidently go forward, with the delightful assurance that their labour is not in vain in the Lord; and that every footstep they take brings them so much nearer to the prize of a high calling.

2. This is a sore evil. It is very hard that because Luther denounced so strenuously—and most rightfully to be sure on his part—the will-worship, the penances, the self-imposed drudgeries of the Popish superstition, that the lesson thus given forth by him should have been so exaggerated, or so perverted and misapplied, as that an incubus should have somehow or other been laid by it on the work, the actually prescribed work and busy warfare of our own practical Christianity—a work

and a warfare urged with such force, and fulness, and freedom from the mouth of Christ and His Apostles, and throughout all the writings of the New Testament. It is true that we are there most clearly and authoritatively told, that the works of men, be they ceremonial or be they moral, are of no possible avail for justification before God, or for helping, by ever so little, to build up a legal right to the rewards of eternity ; and that for this object the righteousness of Christ, the everlasting righteousness which He hath brought in, is all in all. But the work of man, or his own personal righteousness, though utterly worthless for this end, the end of establishing his right to a place and a position in the paradise above, might be so indispensable to another end, that, unless he abound in such works—unless he make good such a personal righteousness, he can have no part, no lot in that glorious inheritance—an inheritance which Christ, and Christ alone, hath purchased ; but which, without the preparation of a new heart and a new life, no professed follower of Christ can by any possibility enjoy. And, accordingly, who can mistake the breathing and living earnestness of all the Apostles and first teachers of Christianity, for the upright walk of their followers, and for all the graces and virtues of their new obedience ? This new obedience—this incessant diligence, and for the object, too, of being found without spot and blameless on the future day of reckoning—this constant abounding in the work of the Lord, and this abounding in it more and more—this busy engagement both of heart and of hand with a prescribed task—this laying up of treasure in heaven, and not most assuredly by our ceasing from service, but by the renouncement of one service for another—the service of Mammon, or of the world, for the service of God, whom we are henceforth called upon to serve with all the devotedness of reverence and godly fear ;—these are everywhere set forth in the Bible as essential preparations for that eternity to which we are fast hastening : and the theology which represents it otherwise is obnoxious to the charge that it is blinking the lessons of Scripture ; and that itself, instead of a genuine exhibition, is an artificial distortion of the truth as it is in Jesus.

The very essence of Popery lies in the subjugation of the mind to another yoke than that of our Lord and master, Jesus Christ. But, under the guise of our own Protestantism, there might still be a superstitious reverence for men ; and to get the better of this we must rise upwardly, and beyond all human authority and human authorship, to the primitive Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God ; nor are we at all satisfied that the controversies of men have worked out or have left behind them, even throughout the Churches of Reformed Christendom, a clear perception of the truth of God. We fear that in the writings of men contending earnestly for the faith, works have, to a greater or less extent, been disturbed out of the place which they occupy in the writings of Apostles and of the first teachers of Christianity ; and that to view them in their right position, both as respects our present business in life and their bearing on our eternity, we must look away from the turbid streams to the pure fountain-head, or, in other words, call no man master, but Christ only. To express it differently, we should give earnest heed to the word of that prophecy, regarding which we are told, that the spirit as well as the substance thereof is the testimony of Jesus. Let us but take this direction, and it will soon become palpable that testimonies to the worth and the need indispensable of our own personal character and personal doings abound everywhere throughout the oracles of God. Nor are we aware of any single testimony so decisive as that verse where the disciples are spoken to, not as having completed their Christianity, but as only beginning it—after they had received the promises of the gospel—after they had become a temple of the living God—after they had entered on reconciliation with the Lord Almighty, and He who cannot lie had engaged to be their Father, and to take them in as the accepted sons and daughters of His own family. We cannot imagine a more distinct and conclusive evidence for the truth, that they who are justified must also be sanctified. and, for attaining to this, must enter on a busy career, both of warfare against the pollutions of the world and of aspiring

endeavour towards the purity and the sacredness of heaven, than that verse where the Apostle tells his beloved converts, that "Having these promises, they should henceforth cleanse themselves, and perfect their holiness in the fear of the Lord."

3. Having made these preliminary observations, let me now address myself closely to our subject, and endeavour to make palpable the reasons and the objects for urging upon the converted hearers in the Church a busy work of obedience to the law of God, and this with the view of making good their sanctification: seeing that their own works and own obedience are now utterly excluded from having any part or office in the matter of their justification; or that a man is no longer justified by the deeds of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ—whereupon His righteousness becomes our righteousness; and we are admitted to meritorious acceptance with God, not because of our own deservings, but because of Christ's deservings: He having sustained the penalties which otherwise we should have borne—He having performed in full tale and measure the services which otherwise would all have been required of us, ere that we could have built up a legal title, or preferred aught like a judicial challenge or claim to the rewards of eternity.

4. First, then, and before giving any statement of the positive reasons for the new obedience of the gospel, let me negatively, and with all earnestness, disclaim for that obedience the virtue which many, who err from the faith, have ascribed to it, of contributing, even by the least jot or tittle, to our justification in the sight of God. This is not the function of our obedience at all. No works, no services of our own, are of the least possible avail for our justification. They neither constitute our justification, nor do they contribute so much as one iota to it. We again most decidedly and anxiously repeat, that to make our own righteousness the basis, or even to mix it up in the slightest degree with the righteousness of Christ in the business of our justification, were both utterly to annul the truth of the gospel, and utterly to unsettle the foundation of the believer's peace; to take away the only solid resting-place for the sole of his foot, which is the perfect and immacu-

late righteousness of Christ, not only as the ground, but the sole ground, of his legal or judicial acceptance with God. He could not enter into judgment with God on any other footing ; for, let it well be understood, that what God does is in judgment as well as in mercy. To seek or to labour for the establishment of a right to heaven by our own righteousness, is utterly to miss the road to it : and take away from the sinner the righteousness of Christ—not as his plea in part, but his entire and only plea for his meritorious acceptance with God—and you take away the only ground which is left for him to stand upon. It is not enough that we are justified by faith—to complete the saying and make it altogether precious, it must be further told to us that we are justified by faith alone. The righteousness of Christ become ours by faith—and this apart from all admixture of our own righteousness—forms the only consideration on which we are regarded, in the high jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary, as meet in law for the kingdom of heaven ; and to compound these two by however so little, were to mix up the vile with the precious, and to insert such a flaw as would vitiate our title-deed to the inheritance above. It were the importation of such an element of weakness that the foundation of our confidence, as if held together by a loose and crumbling cement, would, like the pedestal of Nebuchadnezzar's image, partly of clay and partly of iron, infallibly give way under us. We do hope, then, that it will reconcile even the most sensitive orthodoxy to what we shall state respecting the indispensable uses of our own righteousness, our own personal righteousness, when we affirm thus strongly, that, as to any use in justifying, it is utterly valueless and of no consideration whatever. Having now told, and we trust with sufficient distinctness, what its function is not—let us proceed to tell, and with all possible distinctness too, what its functions actually are.

5. Your first positive reason, then, for urging upon your hearers the practice and busy cultivation in their own persons of all righteousness is, that in so doing, you are just bidding them do what God Himself bids, and so are but declaring what, as a faithful pastor of His will, you are bound to do wholly and

without any reservation—declaring the counsel of God. Under the first covenant, commonly called the covenant of works, God bade men do His will, and do all righteousness; and we find that under the second covenant, commonly called the covenant of grace, He bids them just do the very same things. What He bade them then He bids them still. There is just as loud a trumpet-call to obedience under the New Dispensation as under the Old. It is true that one object of our obedience under the former was to earn thereby a right, a legal and challengeable right, to a blissful immortality; and that this object is now utterly fallen from, and never can be attained by means of any obedience of our own, however unremitting and however strenuous. Then obedience was rendered because of the judicial right which it earned to a something in return for it; now obedience is rendered, not because of any judicial challenge which it entitles us to prefer, but simply because God wills it, and because it is right. To obey God's will is in itself indeed the supreme, though not the only rectitude which enters into the composition of virtue. But we ask which is the purer virtue, which the higher and better style of obedience?—whether to obey simply in order to please God, or to obey in order to obtain from Him the payment of a stipulated reward?—whether because of the return which it brings, or simply because of its own rightness? Let us look upwardly to God Himself in heaven, and consider what is the nature or what the character of virtue there. He worketh righteousness, we are told, but His is not the work of a hireling. It is not for a remuneration that He is virtuous, but because prompted thereto by the inherent and spontaneous virtuousness of His own nature. Now the great, the terminating object of Christianity, is to restore in us the lost image of the Divinity. It is to make us like unto God. Most assuredly it is not to absolve us from the obligations of duty; and, as much now as before the fall of Adam, is it the indispensable propriety of all who are admitted into the presence of God in heaven, that they be as they ought, and do as they ought.

6. It is a sad perversion of Christianity, when, in virtue of a

misconception regarding the high functions ascribed to faith in the New Testament, works are held to be superseded, or men would slacken the inducements, which still remain as binding as ever, to a life of strenuous and aspiring virtue. This comes of the controversies which have laid too disproportionate a stress on one part of theology, so that other parts of it have been disposed of with but a slight and passing notice—if not blinked and kept out of view altogether. It is indeed a high office which belongs to faith, that it appropriates the righteousness of Christ—to which alone, and not in the very least degree to our own righteousness, heaven, with all its blessedness, is judicially awarded. But beside the judicial right to heaven, there must be a personal meetness for its exercises and its joys. In regard to this meetness, it says that greater than faith is charity; and so we are told that, after having received the promises, there is a busy course of preparation, which is fulfilled by the perfecting our holiness in the fear of God; and that if not the first, which was to make atonement for us, at least the final purpose of Christ's death is, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Most true, most importantly true, that we are justified by faith; but alike true, and as importantly true, that we are judged by works. And if a like prominency be not given to both these propositions, it is just because there has arisen in the Church a human theology, not after the model or according to the proportions of Scripture. The wrath of man, it is said, worketh not the righteousness of God; and it would seem, too, as if the controversies of man have not worked, in the minds even of the evangelical and the orthodox, have not worked a full and perfect impress without distortion and without mutilation of the truth of God.

7. And after all, what is heaven but a place of holiness; and wherein does its happiness specifically and essentially lie but in the exercise of good and holy affections? Its pleasures are but the pleasures of virtue, of love to God and love to the family of God—those copious principles of all good works, be they the works of piety or the works of heartfelt,

exuberant, ever-breathing benevolence. The character of man, whether in his original or renovated nature, is essentially the same with that of God; and his capacity for happiness, nay, the very happiness itself, is the same with that of God. And thus it is that in heaven all are righteous, because the habitation of the immediate presence of that God over all who loveth righteousness; and thus too it is that nothing sinful can enter there, because the same presiding and ever-present God hateth iniquity. He rejoices there in the midst of His own family, but there is a family likeness which pervades all the members of it, and without which they could not be reckoned, and could not be admitted among His children, because not created, or not after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. That the expectant or the possessor of such a heaven has nothing to do with virtue, is in truth a most egregious paralogism, or contradiction in terms. He has everything to do with it. It is his business, his vocation, the grand concern of his life here, the very element hereafter of his immortal wellbeing. It is true that this virtue of his has nought to do with his right to heaven; it does not purchase heaven for him, but it prepares him for its joys and its exalted services. The right, whether of entry or possession, is no achievement of ours, but is the fruit of that everlasting righteousness which Christ hath brought in, even He who, in thus magnifying the law, hath magnified the Lawgiver, and by the obedience unto death which made it honourable, hath vindicated the honours of that Sovereign against whom we have rebelled, but who now, through the consecrated way of His Son's mediatorship, invites, and will accept of our returning allegiance. If we obey the call, we renounce the unfruitful works of darkness, and forthwith enter on the service of the living and true God; in other words, we enter on the course of our moral and spiritual education, on the true work of our pupilage and preparation for eternity, that we might be qualified for the companies of the celestials, and for taking part in the employments of that heaven where the servants of God for ever serve Him.



8. And what after all is the faith which justifies but the faith which also sanctifies? It is no faith at all if it respect not the whole of God's revelations—if it but fasten on one doctrine, and shut out from view all the other doctrines and informations of the record. A true faith looks abroad over the whole field of Scripture, and appropriates and applies all, and turning each to its own proper use, finds all to be profitable. It finds salvation by our faith there, and it finds a final sentence according to our works there—even that sentence which is to fix us for eternity. It ranges freely and without fear throughout the volume, taking cognizance of its precepts as well as its promises; of its call to repent as well as its call to believe; of its urgencies to a life of holy and active obedience, as well as its blessed assurance of their peace and safety and coming glory to all who rely on Christ as their propitiation. It does not disjoin these things. It does not place them in controversial array, the one against the other, as all are apt to do who look at them through the artificial medium of a Church's formularies, or an argumentative treatise, even though on the side of orthodoxy, because framed not so much to set forth the sayings of God, as to put down the gainsayings of man. That it may realize the power and the spirit and the true significancy of these sayings, its continual resort is to the Bible; and in this Bible does it meet throughout with a constant testimony and demand both for good moral dispositions and for the good works which flow from them. Can that be faith, we ask, which would shut its eyes against so large a portion of the Scripture testimony? Can he be a believer in the truth of God who will not believe in one-half, or one-third, or in any part, however small, of what God hath said to him? The Scripture tells of justification; have faith in this, and rejoice. But Scripture also tells of sanctification; have faith in this too, and forthwith enter on the busy prosecution of it. If you do not, there is no reality whatever in your faith. It is not faith, but fancy, which occupies the breast, and practises its delusions on the inner man. If this state be persisted in by any, he will go to the grave with a lie in his right hand, and perish amid the

infatuations of a sadly misunderstood and sadly misapplied evangelism.

9. But more than this. If there have been provision made for the one, there is just as express provision made for the other—we mean for the personal as well as for the imputed righteousness. If for the imputed righteousness, which is our justification, there have been instituted a vicarious suffering and a vicarious service by Christ Jesus the Son of God ; for the personal righteousness, which is our sanctification, there has been instituted the work of regeneration, carried into effect by the Spirit of God, and taking sure fulfilment in the new obedience of every real Christian. The effect of the Spirit working in him is to set him a-working. He prays for strength to work, and he works accordingly ; and thus his life is a continued effort, a continued aspiration, nay, a continued actual and historical progress in the prescribed holiness of the gospel. This in fact is the grand design, the terminating object of Christianity—arrived at by a series of means, having the moral and spiritual perfection of every genuine disciple for its result or its landing-place. Before the effusion of this heavenly influence upon man, there behoved to be a humiliation and a sacrifice, and a burial and a resurrection, and, finally, an ascension—that at last the Holy Spirit might be given after that Christ had been glorified. And in keeping with this we are told that Christ died, in order to purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Justification, then, the fruit of Christ's obedience unto death, is not the end of a sinner's Christianity, it is but the mean to an end, and that end is his sanctification. To neglect this, then, is to live in neglect of the great design for the accomplishment of which the economy of the gospel was set up in the world. It is to frustrate or defeat its conclusion, and so to stamp a mockery on all the antecedent steps which ought to have led to it. And, accordingly, we read of every wilful sinner, not only that he does despite unto the Spirit of grace, but that he tramples under foot the Son of God, by his counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. Never then was there a more grievous misunderstanding of the

dispensation under which we sit than those have fallen into—a very numerous class we fear—who have come under the delusion, that, somehow or other, faith without works is to save them; and so look askance at the preacher who tells them, that they must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Instead of which they like a great deal better if he just keep harping on the phrases of a cabalistic orthodoxy, which is altogether in word, and not at all in power. Keep therefore—for the distempers of the Church require it—keep the repentance of the gospel as fully and broadly in view as the faith of the gospel—the doctrine of a sinner's regeneration as much as the doctrine of his reconciliation—the office of the Spirit to renew as much as the office of the High-Priest to atone and to intercede for him;—in a word, the indispensable preparation for heaven as much as the sure and rejoicing prospect of heaven, that the new life might emerge with the new hope, and that they who look for the coming glory might well understand it to be a glory only in reserve for every man who worketh good, a glory only realized after a patient continuance in well-doing.

10. Little do they imagine who thus set faith and works into conflict with each other, how admirably and efficiently they work to each other's hands. The stronger the faith which proceeds on the truth of the Bible in all its parts, the more steadfast and exact will be the obedience; and the closer the obedience, the brighter and more settled will be the faith. The two in fact lend mutual support and confirmation to each other, though the reality of this action and re-action cannot be made so palpable by argument, as it is to the experience of every practical and well-exercised disciple of the Lord Jesus; yet the vinculum, thus to speak, between these two elements, or the reciprocal influence which they have on each other, does admit of an explanation, which might make it doctrinally clear to the speculative, though experimentally clear only to the actual Christian. Let me without attempting to complete this explanation, state one great security for faith and obedience going hand in hand, so that they shall grow with each other's growth, and strengthen with each other's strength. The Holy

Spirit is the author of that illumination which gives rise to faith ; and He is also the author of those dispositions and purposes which give rise to obedience. But the way of the Spirit, if we make a right and faithful use of His gifts, is to enlarge those gifts—as we read in one place that we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith, and in another, that the Holy Ghost is given to those who obey Him. Let us but conform, then, to this economy ; let us stir up the gifts that are in us, exercising them with all diligence, and ever labouring at the right and proper application of them, and we shall obtain at the hand of that heavenly agent by whom they have been conferred upon us, still larger influences and larger manifestations. It is thus that if, on the one hand, we hold fast our faith, we shall receive more strength for obedience ; and if we acquit ourselves well of obedience, we shall receive such accessions of light from the upper sanctuary as will minister to the increase and stability of our faith. These two endowments, the light and the strength, will keep pace with each other. Let us but act as we ought upon the light, and more strength will be given. Let us but put forth this strength to the uttermost, and more light will be given. This beautiful process admits of many proofs and many illustrations, but we abstain from indulging in them. It is no ingenious fancy of ours, but the actual finding of every honest and desirous and aspiring Christian. By faith he looks forward to a coming glory in heaven ; and by experience he is made sensible of a present grace upon earth. The one is the part, the other the counterpart ; and just as surely is there a conjunct and contemporaneous brightening of both, as in proportion to the brightness of the radiance is the brightness of the reflection it gives birth to. It is thus that the faith which apprehends the unseen, is propped and upheld by the conscience which takes cognizance of the present and the sensible. The one is a duplicate to the other, and has all the confirmatory power of a duplicate which is near towards an original which is far off. The two must not be severed, else there must ensue an inevitable obscuration—for a deadening conscience will ever be followed by a decaying faith.

The darkness and the degeneracy will both, as it were, keep abreast of each other, till the light in the mind, and the love of God or of goodness in the heart, both go into utter dissipation. He who hath put away from him a good conscience, of faith hath made shipwreck.

11. We have distinct Scripture for this re-action of obedience upon faith. The action of faith upon obedience is more palpable; and it is therefore less necessary to allege our quotations in support of it, though we might repeat this one decisive sentence from Holy Writ—even that faith worketh by love, and purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world. But the converse between these two elements does not stop here; for the obedience tells back upon the faith, and in virtue of this its reflex influence, amply repays the obligation, “If a man keep my sayings, to him will I manifest myself.”—“To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God.” Let your works be, not those of penance and mortification, but works of righteousness and charity, and then shall your light break forth as the morning. The Reformers have demolished the former works, and made noble demonstration of their vanity; but we fear, that as the controversy thickened, a withering influence has been cast upon all works, and men have looked hard at them, as having at best an ambiguous and questionable place in Christianity. There is all the difference in the world between the free, fearless, urgent, and unqualified manner in which the Apostles press home the observance of them, and the feeble, tremulous, hesitating testimony in their favour given by many of our modern evangelicals, who beset their every exhortation to practise with so many cautions and adjustments, we could almost say apologies, that it falls with uncertain sound upon the hearer—so that, instead of abounding in the work of the Lord because knowing that his labour is not in vain, he, as if lost in the mists of an artificial theology, is bereft of all confidence and all comfort in the way of obedience. Faith and works have been placed in a sort of hostile attitude, like two rivals jealous and distrustful of each other. It was most assuredly not so in the first days of the Christian reli-

gion, when faith, on the instant of its formation, called out—“Lord, what willest thou me to do;” and zealous of good works, rejoiced in the teeming progeny of which it was the fountain. A man’s faith was known by his works, and by works his faith was perfected.

12. On the whole, then, it appears a great desideratum, that good works, inclusive both of acts and of principles—that personal Christianity, as characterising both the inner and the outer man of a disciple—in short, that virtue, made up of the duties which man owes both to God and to his neighbour—that his state of moral rightness, taking both the moral and the right not in the mere civil or social or earthly, but taking it in the most sacred and comprehensive sense of the term;—we affirm it to be a great desideratum, that this grand constituent of a living and personal and real Christianity should be re-instated, should be restored to the place which it undoubtedly has in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, but which it has not in the popular mind of Christendom. Whatever should be done for this momentous object, the precious doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ must be left intact and inviolable. This righteousness is not the part only, but the whole, the single and entire ground of our meritorious acceptance with God. To harmonize, or rather to interweave with this precious doctrine, the absolute need of obedience and personal goodness on the part of man, we have often felt it to be a most available consideration, that in Christ, and for the sake of His righteousness, we not only have acceptance for our persons, but acceptance for our services. Every act of obedience by which we give up our own will to God’s will may be regarded as an act of self-denial, or what the Bible terms a spiritual sacrifice; and we there read of our spiritual sacrifices being acceptable to God by Jesus Christ our Lord. Could we only, then, adopt and proceed upon this view, the acceptableness of our obedience in the sight of God, so far from conflicting with the doctrine that the righteousness of Christ is our alone justifying righteousness, would form part and parcel of it. Let us just conceive that He beheld not ourselves only,

but our services, in the face of His Anointed, then might we recognise as true, both that these services were indispensable and that the incense of Christ's righteousness gave all their merit to them. This sentiment gleams forth occasionally in the commentaries of Luther, and presents human obedience in such a form as to cause thereby no infringement on orthodoxy, but rather to bind it up with the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The righteousness of Christ is all in all for our justification. Apart from this, there is no merit either in our prayers or in our performances; and if there be an ingredient of merit which goes up along with them for the acceptance of God, that ingredient is exclusively and wholly the merits of Christ's obedience, neither in aught changed nor in the least added to by any obedience of our own. Still we read in the book of Revelation, that there is an incense which ascends to the throne with the prayers of saints, and the same incense ascends to the throne with the performances of saints—at all times well-pleasing to God when offered in the name of Christ, acceptable to the Father through the Son. Such are the performances which should be urged to the uttermost, with all force and with all freedom, on the disciples of the Saviour. Sure we are that the Apostles did so, and so ought the ministers of Christ in the present day, in greater fulness of detail than they are now accustomed to, with greater closeness of application to familiar and everyday life, and with far less restraint than many of them feel from the freezing influences of an ill-understood orthodoxy. The works of superstition and will-worship, denounced with so warrantable a vehemence by the Reformers, ought not to be confounded by us, as I fear they often are, with the works of that eternal and immutable law which Christ came not to destroy, but to establish. The discredit laid by them upon the former should not be laid upon us by the latter also. The works enjoined by the Church of Rome for pacifying the conscience were indeed vain and unprofitable. The conscience can be pacified aright and purified only by the blood of Christ, after which the believer turns him not from all works, not from those works of charity, and justice, and obedi-

ence to the Divine will, which are of everlasting obligation, but only from dead works, and that to serve the living and the true God, to serve Him not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.

13. Let this service, then, be urged in all liberty and with all earnestness upon your hearers. I will it, says Paul, to be affirmed constantly, that they which have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. And accordingly we cannot fail to remark it as a reigning characteristic of almost all the epistles, after the doctrinal foundation has been laid, as in Romans, and Galatians, and Ephesians, and Hebrews, and the others, with scarcely an exception, with what exuberance and what power of moral suasion, they then effloresce into all the varieties of everyday practice, descending to the most familiar relations of household and ordinary life, and filling up every conceivable department in the business and the affairs of men with duties and counsels and authoritative demands from on high for the guidance and government of their conduct. Let not the good works which crop out, as it were, into such fertility and abundance towards the end of our epistles, be confounded with those works of Popish superstition and observance, on which the Reformers laid such emphatic condemnation. Let not their argument—and a most triumphant argument it was—be so made to overlap its own legitimate territory, as to lay an incubus on the lessons of the Christian preacher, when he tells his hearers, and as from the mouth of the Most High, to live soberly and righteously and godly in the world. The works which superstition enjoins have not only no part in the matter of our justification, but God has not willed them, and they are worthless in themselves. The works which Scripture enjoins have just as little part in our justification as the former; but God has willed them, and so far from worthless, they are indispensable, both to our present religious wellbeing and to our future heaven—nay, in the day of judgment we shall be recompensed according to them; and, so far from being to be spoken of in such terms of depreciation as would almost exclude them from Christianity, it



forms the very end or great terminating design of Christianity, that the law of God should again be re-established in its ascendancy over man, and he be made to run with alacrity and delight in the way of all the commandments. Salvation is not of works but by grace, yet salvation is to works; and for the very purpose of making this good is man created the workmanship of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Salvation is not of or from works, but it is to works. If it do not begin with works, it ends with them; or rather I should say, it does not begin from works, but no sooner does it exist, even in its most embryonic form, than there commences a stirring and a working and a busy movement away from sin and towards righteousness—so that it may be said to begin with works, or, in other words, that our works are coeval with Christianity in the order of time, though not prior to our Christianity in the order of cause and effect; while, on the other hand, Christianity, from the earliest or most rudimental and incipient stage of it, exerts a most powerful causal influence both on our history and habits—a mighty impellent, and this from its very outset, to all good works. Faith, even when it exists but as a grain of mustard-seed, is a working faith, and proceeds on the question which Paul asked at the moment of his conversion, Lord, what wilt Thou me to do? And what he thus exemplified himself he expected of others also; and so he went about teaching everywhere, among his first lessons, you will observe, that men should repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance: and thus let the Christianity which you teach be, from its commencement even to its full and final establishment, of a thoroughly practical character—an active, diligent, ever-watchful, ever-doing religion. Go forth on the battle against the Hydra of Antinomianism, that subtle and deep-seated delusion which operates so powerfully and extensively, we fear, throughout the popular mind in all Christian lands. Enter on an unsparing warfare against it. Let not the trumpet, from first to last, give forth any uncertain sound, but make distinct, and audible, and open proclamation against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men: and all this without offence or injury

to the prerogatives of Christ's righteousness, which is the all in all of our justification. By this, and by this alone, hath He redeemed us; but the high design of that mediatorial economy over which He presides is to regenerate also; and it is only when thus born again, and by our growth as new creatures in Him, or, in other words, it is only when we make progress in sanctification, that He sees in us of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

PART III.

ON THE EXTENT OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.



## PART III.

### ON THE EXTENT OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.

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THE arrangement of some is to consider, first, the nature of the remedy, and then the application and extent of it—not making the transition from the one subject to the other till they had discussed the whole remedy, as including in it both the judicial and the personal, or both the deliverance from the guilt of sin and the deliverance from its power. It forms another arrangement, when, instead of taking up the subject of the extent and application after the view had been completed of the nature of the whole remedy, they entered on it at an earlier stage, that is, so soon as the argument had been fully described respecting the nature of the atonement, which may be regarded as the initial part of the remedy; and then the topic of application and extent would be presented to us in the form of the application and extent of the atonement. There is something to be said for this latter arrangement, though we have not adopted it. The truth is, that the arguments, and I may add the difficulties, connected with the subject of the extent of the remedy, all hinge on that part of it which was brought about by the death of Christ as a sacrifice for sin: and not only so, but the great anxiety of every sinner at the commencement of his religious earnestness, and the great practical inquiry to which it gives birth, is, How shall I

escape from this state of condemnation ; or on what ground can I be reconciled with the Lawgiver whom I have offended ? This inquiry could be met by a right statement, if not of the extent at least of the application of the atonement—thereby satisfying the sinner's question, In what manner, or through what channel, is the atonement so applied to me that I become the partaker of its benefits ? after which, and when the reply had been made to this question, that the benefits of the atonement are to every man who believeth, the next subject that should fall to be taken up, but not till the doctrine of faith itself had been sufficiently established, were that property or power which is everywhere ascribed to it in the New Testament, even its sanctifying influence, under which a man becomes a new creature, and his personal meetness for heaven is perfected. Then it is that the argument respecting the nature of the remedy may be resumed and carried forward to its completion. It better suits our notions of a right arrangement when the application, whether of the atonement or of the remedy, is thus separated from the extent of it—the one part, or the application being that in which individual man is interested, having his heart charged with the question, what shall I do to be saved ?—the other part, or the extent appertaining to the general government of God, and standing related to the question, Lord, are there many who shall be saved ? Our preference of the practical to the transcendental has disposed us first to take up the former, postponing the latter till now, when we have arrived at that ulterior part of our course which we assigned for the consideration and treatment of the more arduous questions in theology.

The subject on which we now enter involves in it the leading peculiarities of Calvinism ;—not but that the articles already discussed form part and parcel of the Calvinistic system of theology ; but then they are the articles of other creeds as well as of ours. The doctrine of justification by faith alone—of a personal and moral, as distinct from that mystical change which has been termed baptismal regeneration ; and furthermore, of the indispensable agency of the Holy Spirit, in the

work both of our conversion at the first, and of our progressive sanctification afterwards,—these are tenets of Calvinism, no doubt; but then they are not distinctive of Calvinism, for they are equally professed in the Churches of other denominations, where Calvinism is repudiated and disowned. We are not sure, however, but that the *total* corruption of human nature—a corruption so entire as to imply the utter powerlessness of man for his own conversion, insomuch that, apart from and anterior to the operation of God's Spirit, he can contribute nothing even to the first movements of a saving change upon himself: we are not sure but that the doctrine of man's inability for even the least co-operation, and that at the earliest outset of this great transition in his moral and spiritual history—we are not sure but that to such an extent as this, the extent of the complete and the absolute, the doctrine of human corruption may be held as peculiar to Calvinism. We do not see how, if the work of the Spirit be the all in all of our regeneration, to the utter exclusion of all contingency from the self-determining will of man having had any part in it—we do not see how, after the admission of a corruption and a helplessness so entire as this, leaving the work of conversion in every instance wholly to that Spirit who bloweth where He listeth, and on whom He listeth—we do not see how, after this, the tenet can be refused, that the extent of the gospel salvation, or the number on whom it shall take effect, must be limited by the sovereign pleasure and purpose of God. But the inconsistencies of Churches in their admission of one doctrine and their refusal of others, however closely or necessarily implied by it, belong rather to the literature of the subject than to the subject itself; and let us, therefore, without any further reference to the history of this theology, enter at once upon the matter of it, seeking our way to the high topics of predestination, and election, and particular redemption, and the perseverance of the saints, through such disclosures as we can find to have been made either by the light of nature or by the light of revelation.

For just as in what we termed the great initial doctrine of Christianity, viz., the moral depravation of our race, we had the

concurrent testimonies both of observation and Scripture, so, even in those transcendental themes which have now been announced by us, it will be found that the conclusions of human science and the statements of the Bible, have alike to do with them; and as in our treatment of the first and introductory doctrine, viz., the corruption of our nature, we gave first the findings of experience, and then the testimonies of holy writ, so now, and on our present subject, we shall address ourselves first to the views opened up by the mental philosophy, and then to such depositions as might be found regarding it in the oracles of God. This was Edwards' order, and it will be ours. I may here state that my convictions are as entire as his were on the side of a rigid and absolute predestination. I do not know in what extent he held that the theology of a Church was vitiated and defective which either disowned this tenet or was silent regarding it. The two questions are obviously not the same—the truth of the doctrine, and its necessity, whether for being admitted as the article of a Church's creed, or for the saving faith of a private Christian. I have no doubt in my own mind that Calvinism is true—even to the full amount of those peculiarities by which it differs from other Churches; but there is another question, In how far Calvinists might agree to differ from them? and I confess myself more intent upon this question than even upon the truth of Calvinism, and more intent still on protecting the business both of our pulpits and of private Christians from being injured and perverted, as I fear it often has been, by a misunderstood and misapplied Calvinism. Meanwhile, let us address ourselves to the doctrine of philosophical necessity, as being preliminary in science to what in theology is the counterpart or cognate doctrine of predestination. It will be found that the mental and moral philosophy, as well as natural theology, bear a part in this argument on both sides of the question. Let us take up each of these in succession, and then proceed to the scriptural evidence upon the subject.



## CHAPTER I.

ON PHILOSOPHICAL NECESSITY, OR THE NECESSITY OF HUMAN  
ACTIONS AND OF THE HUMAN WILL.

(ARGUMENT TAKEN FROM THE NATURE OF THE MIND.)

1. BEFORE entering upon the discussion, it occurs to us to state, that if we may judge both from the present and the past, there seems little prospect of a pacific settlement upon this question, which bears every appearance of remaining a *questio vexata* till the end of time. If we look back upon its history, we shall find a very powerful array of names on both sides—as Leibnitz, and Hume, and Lord Kames, and Jonathan Edwards, and perhaps Dr. Thomas Brown; and these about countervailed in authority, and greatly more than countervailed in numbers, by Samuel Clarke, and Butler and Locke, and Reid and Stewart, with almost all the divines of any eminence in the Church of England; while in Europe the progress of speculation, as far as influenced by the transcendentalism of Germany, seems in favour of what has been termed the metaphysical liberty of the human will, as opposed to the doctrine of Edwards and Leibnitz. Coleridge would certainly take away from this doctrine its firmest support if he could make good his affirmation, that the events called volitions or determinations of the will are marked by this singularity, that they do not, like all the other events that we know of, lie within the category of cause and effect—thus giving rise to a difference of understanding which seems of all others the most hopeless, a difference in first principles, and therefore beyond the possibility of adjustment by any process of reasoning. In these circumstances, there seems as little hope of their coming to one and the same mind, as

that two men shall ever come to one and the same place, who have set out on their respective journeys with their backs to each other. The difference looks almost an organic one, a difference of conformation between minds differently constituted. When one party in an intellectual warfare profess to base their argument on principles clear to themselves, and the other party deny these principles, the two must be wholly out of sight from each other, nor can there be aught like the sympathy of a common understanding betwixt them. It is unavoidable, indeed, but that the former of these must regard the other as altogether wrapped from the view of ordinary men in a cloud of unintelligible mysticism. On which side the mysticism lies we shall not at present say, but certain it is that there is a deep and subtle misunderstanding betwixt them, and all the more aggravated by the introduction of a moral element into the question—the one body of controversialists contending that the doctrine of their opponents is subversive of all the ethical distinctions between right and wrong; and the other vindicating their tenet of necessity against the charge, affirming on grounds which are clearly felt by themselves, and which are certainly capable of being presented to others in the terms of a sufficiently lucid and clear statement, that the whole system of morality, its duties, its responsibilities, with the awards of merit and condemnation respectively due to virtue and vice, remain as entire as ever, if not rather placed by this hypothesis of theirs on a firmer basis of reason and principle than before. Still, however, they have not been able to quell the indignancy of men against what is very generally conceived to be both an infidel and an immoral speculation. And so the conscience, as well as the consciousness of many, are enlisted in opposition to the views which, nevertheless, I shall attempt to advocate, so as to clear our way through the perplexities and perils of such an argument as best we can. I frankly confess that I am not able to discard from my mind the convictions of about half a century—convictions first received from the perusal of an infidel author, Godwin on Political Justice, but afterwards, and before I left the Divinity Hall, confirmed by Edwards,

who, I think, has succeeded not only in rationalizing, but in moralizing and evangelizing the whole of this argument. The views which I received from him have remained with me ever since, or rather ripened into a fuller assurance, not only of their truth, but of their perfect safety, nay, positive wholesome influence, on the minds both of ministers and of private Christians. In addition to the silent operation of my own thoughts, my convictions have been still further matured and fortified by a perusal of the writings of Leibnitz and Dr. Williams.

2. It might seem a strange announcement to make at the outset of our advocacy on the side of this doctrine, that it is not our main object to gain for it the consent of your understandings. Far more anxious than to convince you of its truth are we to convince you of its safety, nay, of its uses, so far as it receives the countenance of that Scripture, all of which is profitable. Doubtless it is better in all circumstances that your opinion should be on the side of truth rather than of error; but in this instance, what we have greatly more at heart than to enlist your views on the side of necessity, is to guard you against the abuses and the dangers to which the speculation has been perverted by the disciples of an ill-understood and worse applied orthodoxy. We do not care so much for your being strict and sturdy necessitarians, as for your being sound and Scriptural and withal practical divines, not stiffened and frozen out of all your activities, and more especially such as belong to the duties of your vocation, by the withering influence of any dogma whatever. It is not our chief aim to indoctrinate you into the system of necessity, or to make proselytes of you even for our own belief—for we confess it to be a system on the side of which, not our partialities alone but our absolute convictions lie. But our chief aim is to protect your minds against certain perverse consequences which have been educed from a tenet, in favour of which so many plausibilities, and as we think, so many proofs can be alleged. The truth is, that beside the mischief now alluded to, this dogma, wherewith both philosophy and theology have to do, has been sadly perverted to the support of what may be termed

a moral scepticism in ethics, and of infidelity in religion, and so it is not for the immediate lesson itself, but for the safety of higher lessons, that we feel most inclined to enter upon the argument. We want the business of our pulpits, and the whole business of a religious life, from the beginning to the end of it, to proceed as usual, although the doctrines of Necessity and Predestination have been so misconstrued as to lay a sedative on these, and to put the arrest of an inert and unproductive orthodoxy both on the urgencies of the minister and the activities of the people. We further want the eternal and immutable distinctions between right and wrong to be as clearly apprehended and as fully recognised as ever, although our doctrine of Fatalism, as it is sometimes called, has been charged with the deadly mischief of breaking up these distinctions, or at least of casting an obscuration over them. We think that the lesson may be so put as to free it of these injurious consequences; and we repeat, that it is more for the object of so putting the lesson, than for the lesson itself, that we have entered upon this controversy.

3. But we confess to another and a distinct object to which we are greatly desirous that our treatment of this matter should be in some degree subservient. You are aware that the topics we are now to be engaged with, form the leading peculiarities of Calvinism. You are further aware of what may be termed the union movement that has now been set agoing—a movement in a direction much more to my taste, I must say, than the movement of our Reformed Churches for the three last centuries, which have almost all been movements of divergency, or in an opposite direction to that movement of convergency, on which the hearts and wishes of many are fastened at this moment. The question is, In how far should the peculiarities of each Church be made to stand in the way of such a union as is contemplated; or in how far they should be made to give way for so blessed a consummation? It is not proposed, we understand, that any Church shall give up the distinct peculiarities in which it differs from its neighbours, but to try in how far they shall agree to differ, so as to maintain osten-

sibly, or in the eyes of the world, all the fellowships and recognitions of a common Christianity, under those varieties of doctrine and denomination which have hitherto kept them far too widely apart from each other. In the treatment of such a question our own Calvinism behoved to come under review; and few things would rejoice me more, than a wise and well-weighed deliverance, pointing out in how far a diversity of creeds may consist with an essential unity of faith.

4. It is not required that ere we enter upon this argument we should investigate the nature of Causation, whether we shall adopt the popular view simply as it stands, or that view as modified by the theory of Professor Robison, Dr. Thomas Brown, and others—the reasoning that is commonly employed on the side of necessity, if good and valid under the one hypothesis, seems equally good and valid under the other. Both parties seem alike to admit the constancy of nature, as being a history of innumerable progressions, and where the contiguous events, in each of the separate trains, stand related the first with the second, or the second with the first, by the tie of invariableness. Let A and B be two such events, it is enough for us if it be granted on all hands, that when A takes place it will certainly be followed up by B; or that when B is observed, we might certainly infer that A had gone before it. All we demand is an invariable succession between these two terms, whatever might be said of the intervening power, real or imaginary, which, as a sort of cementing principle, is conceived to be necessary for the purpose of binding them together. If the connexion be only invariable, that is sufficient for the purpose of the Necessitarians. The distinction between a simple and a causal accompaniment is equally recognised on either side of the controversy respecting cause and effect. The coincidence between the pointing of the shadow on a sun-dial and the striking of a clock, is never confounded with the connexion between the former and the sun's position in the firmament, or between the latter and the state immediately before it of the mechanism in the timepiece. Whatever shadowy or metaphysical speculations may have arisen on the subject of power, or of

efficient principles, or of unseen ligaments and agencies, under any other name, which are conceived to fasten together the two terms of a sequence, or to run along and concatenate all the terms of a progression—the Necessitarian seeks for no other concession than the invariableness, or the certainty wherewith these terms succeed the one to the other. His only postulate to begin with, is, that there do occur throughout nature innumerable sequences, when a given antecedent is uniformly followed by one and the same consequent, and the given consequent is as uniformly preceded by one and the same antecedent. This is all the closeness, and all the constancy of connexion between the terms, which he at all seeks or cares for in the construction of his argument, an argument not in the least affected by any speculation as to the *modus* of the connexion. We think, indeed, that there has been felt a most unnecessary and uncalled for alarm on the speculations both of Hume and Thomas Brown on the doctrine of Causation; for grant but the invariableness of nature's sequences, and this forms a sufficient foundation on which, in every instance of a formerly observed sequence, to predict its consequent whenever the antecedent shall again occur, or to infer its antecedent whenever the consequent shall have come under notice. There is no danger, therefore, to the cause of Theism, from a speculation which has proved obnoxious to many, and given great uneasiness to the minds of the pious. If one of these regular sequences in nature be a forthgoing of skill and power on the part of a designing mind as the prior term, and the adaptation of parts to an end as the posterior term—then the inference of a human wisdom and power from a workmanship, competent to one of our own species, is not more sure than the inference of a Divine wisdom and power, and we may add goodness, from the countless beneficial adaptations that bespeak to reason's ear the agency of a God. We shall therefore disembarass ourselves of that subtle speculation regarding cause and effect altogether. To introduce it into the question between the liberty and the necessity of human actions, would subserve no other purpose than that of mystification. It were laying a most unnecessary

servitude on the subject of our present discussion; and the controvertists on both sides should feel thankful for being relieved from the obligation of entertaining an argument that has really nothing to do with the point at issue.

5. It is of importance to remark, at our entrance upon this subject, that the doctrine of Necessity is held to obtain universally throughout the material world. We may regard it as the universal faith, both of the learned and the unlearned, that the same antecedents are followed by the same consequents throughout inanimate nature in all her departments. Let but the volitions of the Deity, and those of creatures endowed with life and the faculty of choice, be kept out of view, and then I should imagine that, by the unexcepted agreement of all parties, it would be fully conceded to us, that in the whole universe besides, there was no caprice, no contingency, and nothing uncaused; and for every change or event which takes place in the material world, a reason could be found in some antecedent, to which one thoroughly acquainted with the powers and processes of nature could refer, as the proximate cause of the phenomenon in question. Even when the proper, that is the strictly causal antecedent, could not be assigned, there is no imagination on that account that it does not exist. It is conceived to be not the less certain, though not yet ascertained, perhaps even not ascertainable. In the presence of a crowd of accessories, it may often be difficult to fasten on the precise element, or the precise combination which has given rise to some observed result; and the great object of experiments, in chemistry and physiology, and generally the more complex sciences, is to detect and eliminate the real antecedent of any event or appearance in nature, viewed as a consequent—so as to distinguish essentials from accessories, or the causal from the casual, in the processes of the material world. There are certain of the simpler sciences, where, as in astronomy and mechanics, fewer agencies are concerned, and where the difficulty is less either in predicting, under given circumstances, what is to follow, or inferring, in given circumstances, what it was that had preceded them. It is thus that one can rigidly

compute the movements, even the aberrations of a planet in the firmament—where the deflecting and disturbing forces concerned in the operation are few and measurable, with far greater ease than he could compute the seemingly wayward and fitful movements of a particle, be it of dust along the road at the merey of every passing breeze, or in a stream of water, where the thousand countless and unseen impulses which come in the way of each atom in the assemblage, are far beyond the cognizance, and still more beyond the calculations of the observer. This, however, does not in the least relax or unsettle the conviction that the particle is just as much the subject of a strict and unfailing necessity as is the planet—so that the path of the one, however untraceable by us, is as much under the guidance of an absolute law, or as much a thing of absolute determination, as is the path of the other. There is no difference in this respect between the atoms and the masses of our material system. Both are conceived of by all as lying within the domain of a rigorous and adamant necessity. Whether in the terrestrial physics, where we have often to do with atoms, or in the celestial physics, where we have to do with masses, the operations in both are reckoned on as equally certain—the only difference between them being that they are not equally ascertainable.

6. In the more minute and complicated operations of matter, we admit the very same precise and rigid necessity that obtains in the movements of the planetary system, even though it is not a necessity that is so ascertainable by us. Take the motion of a fluid, for example ; confine your attention but to the velocity and the direction of one of its single particles in a stream of running water. There is no calculus that can enable us to trace its path in space, even as we trace the path of a planet in the firmament. It is the subject of forces more various, and which, in the precise degree of their intensity and their direction, are altogether unknown to us. We are not aware of the many impulses to which it is liable ; and from our ignorance of these, we are wholly unable to predict the many flits and fluctuations which this particle is destined to undergo ;



yet no one doubts that a power, in every way as sure as destiny, overrules every inch of its progress—that there is nought of the random or the fortuitous in any of its movements—that every stop or turn or acceleration which it receives is the precise result of the various influences wherewith it is beset, and to the operation of which it is subjected. There is no start either of caprice or of contingency in the journeyings of this minute atom, from the point of its departure at the fountain-head to the point of its arrival at the waters of the mighty ocean; and even when it has commingled with these, and become the sport of elements, in the vastness and variety of which it is now lost to all human observation—when at one time wafted along by the breeze, and at another hurried forward in the current, and at another intercepted by the rock, against which it is dashed among the spray, and driven back upon some new voyage among the fathomless mysteries of the deep,—why, to track this continuous path were to describe the adventures of an atom; yet in no one point along this line of continuity was it ever abandoned by those forces which guided it through all its windings, and gave precise direction to every step of a progress which to us is unsearchable. And the same may be affirmed of every particle of dust which is blown along the road; of every atom that eddies, or unites, or effervesces, among the combinations of chemistry; of every individual in that innumerable army of vapours which ascend to the upper regions of our atmosphere, and there are marshalled into clouds, and are thence precipitated in showers, and some of which enter into composition with the growing plant, and are detained and elaborated and compounded there among the juices of vegetation. You will see how utterly impossible it is for man to pursue the course of one such particle through all its mazes; yet in every footstep of the untraceable way there is a certainty, though it be not ascertainable. There is a determination by existing forces which operate at the time, though we cannot determine it. There is even in these inaccessible departments an unfaltering constancy in nature, though the precise order of this constancy is unknowable by us. In a word,

the unconquerable faith, whether instinctive or acquired, whether anterior to or the fruit of experience, which man has in nature's uniformity, reaches to all the hidden places where that uniformity cannot be the subject of our particular observation. There is at least apprehended by us a strict and unvarying succession throughout all the processes of materialism. Apart from the phenomena of animal life, apart from the fancy and the waywardness which are ascribed to the volitions of those creatures who are capable of choice, the doctrine of Necessity is universally admitted, and is held, without exception, to obtain over the whole field of matter, in all its manifold varieties, in all its busy circulations.

7. The understanding of man would be revolted by the opposite doctrine, which were felt to be the denial of an axiom. The axiom is often expressed thus—that there is no effect without a cause. But this puts it into a form which might be well objected to, on the ground of its making it but an identical proposition—the one term being so related to the other as necessarily to imply that other, insomuch, that to affirm the separate and solitary existence of either were to involve a logical contradiction. The one were no cause but for the effect to which it had given birth; the other were no effect but for the cause from which it had originated. Now, what we mean to affirm as the ground of our reasoning, is not a logical, but an experimental truth; and so, instead of saying that there is no effect without a cause, we should say that there is no event without a cause—a proposition this which, though we have termed it an experimental one, is held universally among men, and is as much the object of their axiomatic faith as is the former proposition. It is true that, even in this form, it cannot be said to have been taught by experience, for it is the object of every man's conviction, from the first outset of his understanding. But though not taught by experience, it can be tested by experience, and therefore we call it an experimental truth—not learned by us in the school of experience, but carried by us into that school, and certainly not contradicted by any of the lessons which are given there. There is none

who believes not from infancy, that the same antecedent is not always followed up by one and the same consequent, and that the same consequent always takes rise in one and the same antecedent ; or, in other words, whether because predisposed by instinct, or tutored thereto by experience, there is among all men a universal faith in the constancy of nature, or which is the same thing, in the invariableness of nature's sequences. The understanding of man would revolt from the opposite doctrine. That there should be any one event in the kingdom of nature which started of its own accord into being, and originated in no one necessity which preceded it, were a proposition felt to be as violent as any of those paralogisms which involve, not a contradiction to truth merely, but a contradiction in terms—as that there should be an effect without a cause, a consequent without an antecedent—a fact that germinated in nothing, and was alike destitute of a link that connected it with anything which went before, or with anything which came after it. All our habits of inquiry are grounded on the opposite conviction. We take up with no one event as isolated ; and our whole philosophy, employed as it is in the investigation of causes, is one continued asseveration on our part of the doctrine of Necessity, at least in reference to the world of matter. It is with this instinctive faith that we commence the life and the labours of our intellect ; and accorded to as it is by all subsequent experience, it has banished the imagination of contingencies from the universe.

8. Now, it is when thus tutored and prepared that we enter upon the study of mind. And the question occurs, If it be possible that, in this department of nature, there can be a reversal of that constancy which obtains without exception in the other department ? Are the moral phenomena, unlike to all others, self-originated, and independent of such forces and such phenomena as preceded them ? More particularly, must every act of choice on the part of the human spirit be a mere act of chance ? and, while it is at all times a competent inquiry why a moving particle hath taken one direction rather than another, is it not a competent inquiry, but an inquiry pre-

cluded by the very nature of the subject, when we ask, why a willing and deliberating mind took one volition rather than another? In a word, are not all the successions invariable in the mental as well as in the material world?—and how can the former be made the subject of a philosophy at all, if, without the regimen of principles or laws to which its phenomena are referable, it drift uncontrollably away from all anticipation by a series of fitful and fluctuating movements for which no assignable cause can be given? Whatever the path or the velocity of any moving body may be, we never once imagine that they are not the determinate effect of certain motive forces which previously had been brought to bear upon it. And is it possible that there can be any direction which the mind takes, and of which no other account can be offered than that it just did so in the exercise of its own waywardness, and without any previous motive forces being at all concerned in the matter? The whole of the language currently employed by all, and misunderstood by none, seems to testify against this. There is nothing of which we more frequently and familiarly hear than of motives—motives acting on the mind—motives deciding and fixing the will to certain particular volitions; and what other can these motives be but the influence of certain circumstances operating on minds of a certain character? And do we not speak too of mind having a constitution as well as body; and how, in the name of mystery, can the volitions of this mind be explained but by a reference to this constitution, which, if not previous to the will's existence—the will in fact being itself one of the mental faculties, and so forming part of the mental constitution—is at least previous to the will's distinct and particular exercises? and if the state of matters be not so, then the whole of that incomprehensible enigma, an effect without a cause, or rather an event without a cause—a phenomenon without an antecedent, wherewith it stands in a relation that is invariable—a spontaneous and self-originated series of facts that come into being without the possibility of being anticipated even by Him who is conversant with all the powers and principles of our universe, and which, after

they happen, cannot be referred to any previous facts in the order of causation—I say, that without the doctrine of a necessity extending to mind as well as to matter, this most glaring of all paralogisms will come to be realized in that department of nature which is far the more noble and interesting of the two. And while the material world is upheld in all its ordinations by the laws which its Creator hath established, the moral or the mental world would become the sport of innumerable contingencies, which even Omnipotence did not overrule; and so from the government of the Eternal would be wrested the best and the fairest territory which belongs to Him.

9. The historian of human affairs, if he do not admit the doctrine of necessity, at least proceeds upon it, though it may be unconsciously. He cannot, in fact, construct his narrative without employing the language of causation. His is a narrative of sequences, and he cannot proceed in it a single foot-step without recognising the causal influence of one event upon another; nor does the intermixture of human volitions with the series, or rather as constituting parts of it, lead him in the least to relax this treatment of his subject, as if there did not run throughout a strict and continuous dependence of the consequent upon the antecedent, of the posterior upon the prior, although the choice and determinations of men form the chief materials of his history. He does not on this account exchange the language of causation for the language of contingency; but in his account of the deliberations and doings, whether of assembled or individual men, he as much reasons on the influence of the past upon the future as would the describer of any natural phenomenon. And accordingly, in the discharge of his vocation, he is sure to tell what the moving considerations were which swayed the counsels of the sovereign, or led to the resolves of the senate-house, or decided the minister in favour of his own policy, or led the warrior to adopt his plan of operations. Whatever the mental analyst might argue, the historian at least does not so conduct his narrative, as if he conceived of human volitions that they lay without the category of cause and effect. They

form, in fact, the great steps or turning-points on which there hinges either the biography of individuals, or the history of nations. Yet who ever thinks that either of these proceeds at random, or that there is not a concatenation which runs throughout the whole of human affairs, whether in the life of a single man, or in the progress of society from generation to generation? and it makes nothing against this that we find it a far greater difficulty to assign the courses of man on the stage of history, than to assign the courses of a planet in the firmament. We can even predict the latter; but who could ever, with a full sense of infallibility, predict the course which mind is to take, or the volition which it will form in given circumstances? There is nothing, however, in this consideration which makes against the doctrine of necessity, any more than against the doctrine of necessity in terrestrial physics, where, from the greater complexity of the movements and of the forces concerned in them, we find it more difficult to calculate on the velocity and direction of the movements which are taking place below, than on the velocity and direction of those great bodies that roll in the upper regions of space. Yet we never once think of the untraceable movements that they are less certain in themselves, though not ascertainable by us. We cannot always foretell the course of a material atom, from our ignorance of all the forces by which it is beset; and neither can we always foretell the courses, either of the individual or of the collective mind, from the very same cause—our ignorance of all the influences which are brought to bear upon it, and the exceeding difficulty or rather impossibility of calculating on the precise force and tendency of any of these influences. But though we should not for this reason be able to assign what, under certain specified conditions, will be the distinct and individual evolutions of our human nature—yet notwithstanding this, we ascribe laws to human nature, and indeed can speak as confidently and currently of the laws of human nature, as we do of the laws of hydrostatics and hydraulics—laws which determine the place and the path of every particle of water, however much these may elude any possible calculation of ours.

It is relative not to the thing itself, but to our ignorance of the thing, when we speak of the uncertainty that hangs over the movements, whether of matter or of mind. And even this uncertainty is giving way in the progress of observation and science. The more that we do know of our nature, the more correctly can we anticipate both the conduct of individual men, and those more ostensible changes which take their rise in the passions or the politics of general society. And in truth all reasoning on human affairs proceeds on the supposition that humanity is the subject of certain invariable sequences—that it has its processes which may be foretold, and its successions which imply a causal dependence of that which follows on that which precedes it. There could in fact be neither a mental nor a political philosophy without this. And if it is because the changes of matter proceed in a certain wonted order, that there can be a philosophy of matter—how, without the same wonted order, an order which the metaphysical liberty ascribed to the human will would utterly destroy—how can there be any such thing as a philosophy of mind?

10. It is on the strength of such considerations as these that the doctrine of necessity has been extended from the processes of the material to those of the mental world. The various steps which make up a process in mechanics, or in vegetation, or in chemistry, proceed, it is allowed on all hands, by an order of strict and undeviating necessity; and the same, by the advocates of that doctrine which now engages our attention, is predicated of those various steps which make up a process of human agency. When man deliberates, he is the subject of certain laws of suggestion; when he inclines, he is the subject of certain laws of pathology; and when he rejects, or when he prefers, still it is by the balancing of certain moral forces that have each a precise direction and intensity given to them from the circumstances by which he is surrounded, taken in conjunction with the peculiar nature or character of the subject mind upon which these operate. It is by such a balance between the strength of so many desires, and the strength of conscience, that the volition is at length formed, and the word

of command given forth to the instruments of human activity ; and so every movement of this willing, and living, and spontaneous creature, the necessary result of certain antecedent influences, is held to be as rigorously and mathematically sure as are the courses or the aberrations of every planet and of every particle. It is held, and you will admit most plausibly, that there is as little of the uncaused in the phenomena of mind as in the phenomena of matter. And if there be a necessary relation between a cause and its effect—if, in the one department as in the other, every antecedent has its invariable consequent—if that faith which man has in the constancy of nature have never been known to deceive him when he investigates the processes of the world that is without, and if the world that is within has also its processes and its laws, or is the befitting subject for a philosophy at all, insomuch that the same instinctive faith in the constancy of nature follows us into our investigations of the laws and processes of humanity—how can we escape the conclusion, that, just as in the one so in the other, there is a past history, every particular of which was fixed and realized by the pre-ordinations of that nature, the uniformity of whose laws extends over the whole domain of existence, or rather of that God by whom the laws of nature were established, and there is also a future history that is alike sure, and has its very minutest passages alike fixed and unalterable ?

11. The response which is given to this affirmation of a fixed necessity in the doings of man, is that there can be no such necessity, when I have the consciousness that I can do what I please. This universal feeling of liberty, it is said, is worth a thousand arguments ; and with this I stand exonerated from the task of unravelling all the metaphysics and the subtleties, by which it is attempted to darken what is resistlessly and overwhelmingly felt by all to be the truth. It is of importance to attend a little closely to what has been termed the instinctive sense, which every man has of his own free agency. There can be no doubt of such a sense being really in existence ; and you make an appeal to the consciousness of every breast on the



moment that you advert to it. When one says that everything is a matter of necessity, I can instantly meet him with this most intimate conviction, that I can do either one thing or another, just as I will. Now the advocates of the philosophical necessity fully concede such a feeling; and it will concentrate your regards more on the process by which volitions and actions are connected together, if we just inquire for a moment how it is that they dispose of it.

12. It may first be observed, that the affirmation, I can do what I please, must be so far restricted: I cannot do every thing that I please. I can stretch out my arm in a full rectilinear direction; but I cannot stretch it so that it shall bend backward at my elbow. There is here a limit to my power, beyond which I cannot do that which I please to do—and there are many thousand such limits. I cannot, though I should please, leap beyond a certain distance; I cannot at all fly; I cannot project a stone or any heavy body farther than my strength will enable me, even though I would. These are natural limits to the power of doing what I please—the barriers of a physical necessity, admitted by all parties in this controversy to be impassable by us, whatever the volition should be that we may form in regard to them. I cannot stretch my arm but just as the joints and the ligaments will let me—although within the precincts of the freedom which they have left, I can move it just as I choose, and turn it as I choose. I cannot overpass the maximum of my muscular strength in the throwing of a stone; but within this limit, I can throw it at longer and shorter distances, just as I feel inclined. With these modifications, that are refused by none of the controversialists, the affirmation holds good—that I can do as I please. It is an affirmation which you may be surprised to hear is fully and cordially admitted by the Necessitarians themselves; and the question still recurs, How, in consistency with their tenet, can they possibly dispose of it?

13. To say that you can do as you please is just to affirm one of those sequences which take place in the phenomena of mind—a sequence whereof a volition is the antecedent, and

the performance of that volition is the consequent. It is a sequence which no advocate of the Philosophical Necessity is ever heard to deny. Let the volition once be formed, and if it point to some execution that lies within the limits which we have just adverted to, the execution of it will follow. You please to do a thing, and you do it accordingly. The first step is your pleasure, the second your performance—a sequence, the example of a cause and its effect, just as substantially as an impulse and its consequent motion—as the falling of a spark among gunpowder, and the deflagration that comes from it.

14. In every voluntary performance of man, the act has an invariable antecedent, even the volition which went immediately before it; and the doing as you please just expresses, that according to the volition so is the act—according to the antecedent so is the consequent. This is fully given up by the advocates of necessity; and, according to them, it is this—it is the doing as he pleases that constitutes the whole of man's liberty—the whole of that which has been called the sovereignty or the control which a man has over his own actions. The most strenuous assertor of liberty in a commonwealth can imagine no higher liberty than just the liberty of doing what we please; and that which alone is liberty in politics, that and nothing else is held by the Necessitarians to be liberty both in philosophy and in fact. Let us strain our faculties to the uttermost, and we shall find it impossible to conceive of any other liberty than this. What other or what higher liberty is it possible that any man can please to have than just the liberty of doing what he pleases? If, in order to his making good the doing of a thing, a man has only to say, "Sic volo," that is surely all the lordship and all the liberty which heart can wish. There is another sort of liberty which our antagonists talk of, and which in argument they contend for; but which, if you attempt to figure in your minds as something distinct from the power or liberty of doing what you please, you will find to be utterly inconceivable. However, whether it have a reality or not, it is as well that it should have a name; and, accordingly, to distinguish it from the popular,

or, as we think, the only real liberty, it has been termed the metaphysical liberty, of the schoolmen. And in counterpart to this, there has been a distinction made between two kinds of necessity—a necessity external to the will, without the will, and which if brought to bear upon the will, overbears it, so that the man cannot do the things which he would ; and besides this vulgar necessity, which every man understands and admits of, there is a necessity in the will or with the will, and the advocates for which affirm of every volition, viewed as a consequent, that it is related by the tie of invariableness to some antecedent which went before it. And, in contradistinction to necessity in the popular sense of the term, or the necessity which carries it over or against the will, the other necessity, or that which carries the will along with it, has been termed the philosophical necessity. But to return to our subject—it is this, according to the advocates of a philosophical necessity, it is the doing as he pleases that constitutes the whole of man's liberty, and gives rise to the only feeling of it which is really ever entertained. But you will observe that all this might be admitted, and yet the question be untouched—whether, as the act has an antecedent in the volition, the volition has not an antecedent also in something that went before it ? Grant the existence of the volition, and we grant the execution of it that will follow ; but surely the granting of this does not preclude the inquiry, How came the volition into existence ? You tell me that the act is not an uncaused thing, for that a preceding volition is its cause. But then is the volition an uncaused thing ? Has it no antecedent wherewith it stands in that relation which binds together all the rest of successive nature—even the relation of invariableness ? A volition is an event ; and is this, we ask, the only class of events that has this mysterious singularity by which to distinguish them from all others—that they came into being fortuitously, without a principle and without a pedigree ? It surely is not necessary for the purpose of saving the affirmation that we can do as we please, to affirm further, that in the act of pleasing there was no causation and no previous or presid-

ing influence that had ought to do with it. Because an event is the antecedent of some one that comes after it, this does not prevent its being the consequent of some one that came before it. It is thus in fact with Nature in all her processes. Every single event is linked, and causally linked, both with one that precedes and with one that follows it; and so the history of our universe is made up of progressions, throughout the whole extent of which there runs a necessity that makes the state of things at any one moment the sure result, not merely of its state on the moment that immediately precedes, but, by a series of ascending footsteps, the sure result of its state at any the remotest moment of a distant antiquity. It is so, all do apprehend, in the world of matter; and it is so, some do contend for, in the world of mind. They would not cast the volitions of willing and intelligent beings into a state so anomalous as that of coming forth uncaused, and therefore not in any way to be accounted for. They contend that each volition has a predecessor in the train of causation—just as much as each wave of the ocean, or each breeze of the atmosphere. They say of the act of our so doing, that it is an event posterior to the act of our so pleasing. But they also say of the act of our so pleasing, that it is an event posterior to some condition or state of things by which it was determined; and they can see nothing adverse to this in that liberty, which is all in fact that is felt or is capable of being understood—even the liberty of doing as we please.

15. We fully concede, then, to the defenders of the metaphysical liberty, that within certain limits we can do as we please. But this still leaves the question untouched and undecided upon, Why is it that we so please? We may both admit that sequence by which it is that the act stands related as a consequent to the volition as its antecedent, and at the same time view this volition as the consequent to some other antecedent which went before it. It is not necessary, for our doctrine, to refuse the power which there is in the human will to overrule, by its determinations, all the doings of human activity. The deeds of the outer man are strictly and subordinately depend-

ent on the desires of the inner man ; but then these desires are just as strictly and subordinately dependent on certain earlier antecedents in the train of causation—else they come forth uncaused. They rise into being in a way that checks a faith as strong and as universal as that which we have in axioms, even the faith that every event hath had a cause by which both its nature and its existence have been determined. When this is announced, it seems to have all the force and certainty of an axiom, and in this general form is admitted with the most unhesitating confidence by every understanding. Now it is in exception to this unanimous and instinctive persuasion of our species, that those events which are denominated volitions should be regarded as the spontaneous and accidental things that are without descent, and have no progenitor whatever in the order of causation. They come unlooked for by Him whose intelligence can penetrate all other futurity but this ; and after they have made their transition from the future to the present or the past—uncaused things as they are, and springing up at random, as they have done, from the depths of contingency—there can no explanation of their origin be given, even by that Infinite Spirit who can so accurately philosophize the events of all other history. They would indeed be the monsters of our universe ; and because of them the moral world, ever teeming with shapeless and causeless progenies, would move in some headlong way of its own, till, in the course of ages, it had mocked all the anticipations, and wildered away from all the controlling forces of that Eternal Spirit by whom it was emanated.

16. To the question, What caused the act ? the answer is obvious—the volition which preceded it. But it is deemed a question equally competent with the former, What caused the volition ? The Necessitarian holds it enough for his doctrine that this volition has a cause in something exterior to the will, and antecedent to that particular determination of it which is the matter at issue. His opponent, for an answer to this question, has had recourse to what he terms the self-determining power of the will ; and it is when the two parties close together upon this argument that we deem the advocates of the philoso-

phical necessity, with Edwards at their head, to have won for themselves a position which, for aught we see, is utterly impregnable.

17. The specific object of the inquiry, you will remark, is the cause of that particular volition which preceded and gave rise to a certain given act. If, as the defenders of the metaphysical liberty affirm—if this volition has sprung from the self-determining power of the will, then it is the will that must have determined it. Instead of looking for the cause of this volition in something out of the will, they would have us to look for that cause in the will itself, and in the exercise of its own self-determining power—so that the will not only gave rise to the action, it would appear, but also to the volition that immediately preceded the action. But if so it must have been by an act of the will that preceded the volition which the will has given rise to. In the exercise of its self-determining power, it must have determined not merely that this must be the action which shall be performed, but that this must be the volition which shall go before it. To talk of the will determining without an act of determination, or of its choosing without an act of choice, or of its willing without that particular forthgoing of itself which we call a volition—this at best is but an unintelligible mystery; so that if the volition which comes directly before the action arises not from something out of the will, but from the will itself, it must have arisen from another and a distinct volition antecedent to itself, and the mind hath not only pleased what it shall do, but it hath pleased what it shall please. On the system of the Necessitarians, one volition is all which is requisite in any given action; but this self-determining power forces us to recur to at least two volitions—one of which is the immediate parent, as it were, of the action; and another of which is the immediate parent of that volition which is contiguous to the action, and is properly its grandfather.

18. But this retrogression of the acts of the will does not stop here. If the first volition in the order of ascent because not an uncaused thing, required an account to be given of its existence, the same is every way as applicable to the second as

to the first. To make escape from the absurdity of admitting a thing uncaused for the explanation of the first volition, recourse is had to a self-determining power, which conducts us to a predecessor volition that went before it. But it were equally absurd to affirm of this predecessor that it is uncaused; and we reiterate of it, therefore, what we said of the first, that it too must have had its origin, either in something out of the will or in the will itself. If in something out of the will, this is verily all which the friends of philosophical necessity contend for; but if in the will itself, if in the self-determining power of this faculty—then, as no faculty can determine without a determination, recourse must be had to another specific act of the will, to a third volition in the order of ascent, giving rise to the second, and that again to the first, and that ultimately to the action—which we hold to be completely entitled to the appellation of voluntary, if but one act of the will preceded it, but for which they deem it indispensable that there should be a succession of at least three distinct volitions, each proceeding from and determined by the one that went before it. Each voluntary act, it would appear, must not only have a father in one volition, but a grandfather in another, and a great-grandfather in a third. We think that all which enters into the popular conception of human liberty, is, that within certain limits a man can do as he pleases; but to satisfy the metaphysical conception, he must not only please what he shall do, but he must please what he shall please—nay, must please what he shall please that he shall please. Not only must he please that he should take the apple, but he must please that he should please that he should please that he should please that he should take the apple.

19. These sturdy Necessitarians, however, nothing appalled, do not stop here, but return to the charge. They feel no becoming reverence even for this venerable grandfather, but proceed forthwith, and without ceremony, to ask him to give an account of himself. They consider him in every way as fair a subject for their inquisition as any of his posterity, and so put the question without aught of delicacy or reserve, What brought

him there? and how is it that they see him standing where he is, within the field of their contemplation? It were a strange answer for him to make, that he came there uncaused; and that although the posterior volitions could look upward to a something which gave them birth, yet that to him, the great master volition, belonged the property of being self-originated, and therefore the privilege of being suffered to pass without any further reckoning. These pertinacious combatants will not be put off in any such manner; and so on him, too, they just reiterate the very argument which they employed on one and all of his successors. He is either an uncaused thing, or, like all the rest, he came into being in virtue of a cause either without the will or in the will. If without the will, this is all that the Necessitarians contend for—even that the will is determined to each and every of its separate acts by an influence exterior to itself; but if in the will, and by dint of its self-determining power, then it would appear that he, instead of being the last in the order of ascent, has just sprung from another of his own likeness; and so every single voluntary act which man performs must at this rate require an infinite series of volitions ere it can come into accomplishment. There is nothing in the system of philosophical necessity which at all infringes on the popular, and, we believe, the only real notion of liberty which is ever entertained—even the power which every man has, within certain limits, of doing what he pleases. This may be fully conceded by those who still affirm, that like as the act of doing springs from the act of pleasing, so the act of pleasing springs from a something anterior to itself. But the system of metaphysical liberty, on the other hand, would make the act of pleasing spring either from an anterior act of pleasing or spring from nothing at all. The only alternative with them is, either an infinite succession of acts of the will preceding every action, or an act of the will that comes of itself unbidden, and without any parentage whatever in the order of successive nature. There is no consciousness of the first, seeing that when any object of desire is presented, and there is a will to have it, the volition thus called forth springs immediately into being on the



sight of the object ; and which one volition, we hold, enough to determine the action of stretching forth our hand to lay hold of it. From the second term of the alternative, again, there is the revolt of all human sense and human experience. We familiarly admit a causality in will, as in every other department of nature. We should hold it indeed a monstrous exception to the harmonies of our universe, if there was any one department in it from which causality was banished ; and so it is, that feeling both the first and the second terms of the alternative to be inadmissible, there is felt to be no other recourse than to that system by which the moral is likened to the material world, in having its laws under which all the subordinate phenomena are sure, and all the sequences invariable ; and that though, as in many departments of external nature, so minute and so multiplied are the influences by which the will is beset, that the precise direction it shall take in every instance may clude the sagacity of man, yet that each single volition, however wayward to appearance, is most certain in itself, while by us perhaps not at all ascertainable.

20. The only rational conclusion then appears to be, that every voluntary act has but one volition in which it had its immediate origin ; and that that volition, instead of being the result of a self-determining power, is the result of such desires or such considerations as may have been directly suggested by the object of it. In other words, it arises from a certain affinity which subsists between the object that is without and the constitution of the sentient creature within—a constitution which, though not antecedent to the will, is antecedent to any of its particular acts or exercises. When the sweet and the sour apple are presented to me together, and I choose the former in preference to the latter, this preference is not without an antecedent and without a cause. The volition that impelled my hand toward the sweet apple was itself impelled by a something that went before it. It is as much the consequent of a higher, as it is the antecedent of a lower sequence ; and were we required to state what that antecedent is, we should look for it just in the agreeableness of the apple's taste—an agree-

ableness founded both upon its own constitution and upon the peculiar constitution of the palate to which, in the act of eating, it is applied. We have sometimes imagined a controversy between the Necessitarian and his opponent, with the sweet and the sour apple before them ; and that the former, in the confidence of his argument, predicted to the latter, from the knowledge he had of his preferences and tastes, that the sweet apple was the one he certainly would choose, when he again, to make practical demonstration of his own liberty, stretched forth his hand to the sour apple, and ate it before his eyes. Yet even this is not enough to dislodge from his position the stern advocate of a stern and severe necessity, who in this very exercise of liberty will discern the triumph of his own principle. Had the only force brought to bear on his antagonist been that which a delicious fruit exercised over his organ of taste, the event would have been just as he had predicted it ; but the very utterance of the prediction brought another force to bear upon his companion. The desire to eat of the apple was not so powerful as the desire to conquer in the argument ; and as the appearance of the apple brought the one desire into play, so the utterance of the argument brought the other desire into play, and proved him in every way to be as much the creature of circumstances as before. It was the addition of another element to this operation of human agency, and on the pure doctrine of necessity it must have led to another result. It makes nothing against the dependence which the direction of every moving body has on the impulse which is brought to bear upon it, that though sure to move in the simple line of but one impelling cause, it moves in another line altogether, should there be two impulses instead of one. Nor does it banish the system of necessity from the operations of chemistry, that whereas the sulphuric acid would combine with ammonia were it presented alone, yet if ammonia and potass were presented together, it would refuse the former and choose the latter ingredient. When two motive forces of different power are brought to bear upon the will, the weaker would have carried the volition had it been alone, but when only present along with the other, the

stronger has the preponderance. The sweet apple would have been chosen had the fruit alone been presented ; but the choice was fixed upon the sour apple, when the fruit and the argument together were brought into operation.

21. Such is a brief outline of the views on which the successions of the mental are held to be as fixed and invariable as are those of the material world. But resistless as the argument might seem which leads to this conclusion, it is far from having commanded the general acquiescence, and this, owing to certain doubts and difficulties which we now proceed to consider, and if possible to dispose of.

## CHAPTER II.

DIFFICULTIES ATTENDANT ON THE DOCTRINE OF NECESSITY, AS IF IT OVERTHREW MORAL DISTINCTIONS, AND DESTROYED ALL THE ACTIVITIES OF LIFE.

I. IF human actions be necessary, how, it may be asked, can they be the subjects of any moral designation? How are the epithets of virtue and vice at all applicable under the system of necessity; and if the deeds of man be as strictly the result of certain antecedents as are the deflections of a planet's orbit, how can the one admit any more than the other of being characterized either as morally good or as morally evil? For the sake of illustration, one can imagine a murder to be perpetrated, not by a weapon in the hands of its voluntary and therefore moral agent, but that he by a refinement of cruelty forced the instrument of death into the hand of a struggling friend, and so constrained him to the grasp, and so compelled the movement of his arm, that, by the dagger which he held, a mortal blow was inflicted on the man whom he loved. In the mental states of these two parties, you may read the distinction between one sort of necessity and another. The one is a necessity against the will—the other, according to the view that we have been contending for, is a necessity, too, but a necessity in the will or with the will. The former has been denominated a physical necessity against which the will strives; and the latter a moral necessity, which the will goes along with. The two necessities, whether rightly termed or not, it must be apparent to you, are, in fact, wholly distinct the one from the other; and when the question is put, Why should there be one feeling in the heart of the spectator towards the

real murderer, and another towards the ostensible or the constrained one—seeing that both, by the system of philosophical necessity, are under an absolute compulsor?—it can at least be alleged, that the objects which awaken these feelings are really distinct the one from the other. In the one case you see a man forced to the deed by an external cause against the whole bent of his inclinations. In the other case, you see a man hurried to the same deed, but under the power and urgency of his inclinations. These two are at least not the same objects of contemplation; and if, in every other quarter to which the attention can be directed, the view of different objects by the mind is followed up by corresponding but distinct emotions in the heart, why may not this take place in the quarter to which we are now pointing your regards? And if I have not yet shewn why an approving sympathy should be felt with one of these agents in this work of blood, and a moral indignancy should rest upon the other—if I have not yet proved that such are the right and appropriate emotions for these respective objects, I have at least proved that the emotions ought to be different.

2. After all there is a delusion on this topic somewhat akin to that which we have already adverted to, in regard to the very general feeling of liberty which obtains throughout the species. When we come to examine what this feeling really is, we shall find that there is nought of repugnancy whatever in it to the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and that the power of doing what we please, harmonizes to the full with the pleasure or the volition being in itself the consequent of something that went before it. In like manner, when we come to examine closely what that is on which the designations of virtue and vice do rest—what that is which actually calls forth the judgment that we pass, or the feeling that we entertain, either of the one or the other, we shall find that the judgment or feeling rests and terminates in an object which leaves the question of necessity untouched, and an object which is not affected by the determination that Necessitarians pass upon this question. Necessity, you may say, implies force; but go to an unsophis-

ticated peasant, who is just as vivid and correct in all his moral perceptions as the most accomplished philosopher, and in his estimation, the only force that exonerates from the guilt of a cruel or a fraudulent action, is a force that operates against the will, and not that force which powerfully influences the will to be either fraudulent or cruel. I will venture to say, that whenever necessity is complained against, as charging criminality on a man for that which he cannot help, there is always in the mind the subtle imagination of a physical necessity. There is obscurely figured to the eye of the observer, a poor struggling ill-fated criminal, who would be righteous if he could, but who, in spite of every inclination and of every effort to the contrary, is forced to succumb under a helpless necessity that compels him to be wicked. There is always a certain undefined fancy on the part of this moral objector to the doctrine of Necessity, that the will is against the appliances of vice—whereas, in fact, the will is on the side of these appliances. And so far from the necessity that we contend for—so far from the moral necessity being held in the common estimation of plain and unsophisticated men, over whom the seductions and the perversities of a philosophical system have had no power—so far from the moral necessity being held by such as an extenuation, the more in fact that this necessity is enhanced the more is the wickedness felt to be aggravated. For let there be two murderers, the one of whom could with far more difficulty be turned from his design of this horrid perpetration than the other. Let me be told of a thirst for blood twice more ravenous—of a delight and a satisfaction in the agonies of his wounded victim twice more savage and unrelenting—of a heart doubly steeled against the consideration of a slaughtered father and his distracted family—of a desperado who outruns his fellow in this, that on him the voice, whether of pity or of principle, falls with but half the energy; or that he, in virtue of more fell and fierce propensities, springs upon his prey, with twice the reckless glee, or twice the infuriated appetite, after both the treasure and the life of an unwary passenger. You will readily admit the double likelihood of a frightful and appalling

perpetration from him on the event of your falling into his hand, or, what is wholly tantamount to this, a surer and stronger necessity;—yet just because a necessity, not that overbears his moral system by a force from without, but a necessity wherewith all the principles of his moral system are in willing coalescence, is he in your eyes the greater and the fouler monster of the two. There is nought in such a necessity as we plead for, that should either blunt the moral feeling, or at all deafen the indignant energy of the moral voice. Every aggravation of that necessity, in virtue of which a man becomes more wilfully a thief or a murderer than before, just unfolds to my view a turpitude still more base, a villany still more execrable. And in accordance with the general feeling of society, whether the doctrine of necessity be in your head or not, you pronounce of him who is under the greater moral necessity to do evil, that he is the greater reprobate, and that to him most rightfully belongs the more emphatic condemnation.

3. And, on the other hand, you will perceive, that in proportion to the very strength of the moral necessity under which a man is to be virtuous, you enhance the admiration of his character. If there be such a recoil from falsehood in the bosom of the Godhead that He cannot lie, it is the energy of that recoil which gives Him the stronger claim upon your reverence for His truth. If the terrors even of death will not force a man to forfeit his integrity and honour, there must be a greater certainty or a greater necessity for uprightness in him, than in the man of feebler and laxer principles. But it is just this necessity which so many would conceive of as annihilating the virtue, that exalts it the more, and sheds over it an air of prouder chivalry. The terror of disgrace or of punishment that forced him to do honourably against his will, this is a necessity that would put all the honours of rectitude to flight. But the necessity that enlisted the will upon its side, and got firm and foreible possession of all its workings and of all its tendencies—the necessity in virtue of which a man could not deviate from truth and honour by a single hair-breadth, without his fine

sense of morality being agonized thereby to intolerable wretchedness—the necessity under which a man must acquit himself of every high and honourable obligation, or do the utmost violence to all the feelings and principles of his own righteous nature—this is not the physical necessity which would inflict a death-blow upon virtue; but it is a necessity which, in proportion to its strength, and most of all when the strength is such as to make it irresistible, would elevate virtue into the noble and the chivalrous and the godlike.

4. The virtuousness of a good, or the viciousness of a bad disposition, lies in the nature and not in the cause of it. We read its moral characteristics in itself, and not in its origin. We gather them, not from the antecedents whence it sprung, but from its own lineaments on the tablet of a character spread out before us as a thing of objective contemplation. It is true, that ere we can form our moral estimate of an action, we look to the volition which gave it birth. We have this one ascent to make but no more; nor are we required to trace our upward way any further along the pedigree of remoter causes. The moral rightness or wrongness of a disposition is, not a question of genealogy, but a thing of immediate observation or perusal—in the nature of the disposition itself, and not in the causes whence it took its rise. Had there been two Eternal Manichean principles of good and evil, we should have known how to denominate and how to appreciate each, from the characteristics that stood palpably before us; nor should we have needed for this to grope and to penetrate among the viewless and primeval depths of the self-existent and the uncreated. Whatever necessity may be involved in the idea of self-existence, it is a necessity which does not obliterate the attributes of morality, but enhances them to the uttermost. The impossibility of sinning in God is the perfection of His holiness. And even with man; would he be less, or would he be more virtuous—would he be the subject of a lower or of a higher moral reckoning, if you could count at all times on his goodness and truth with as firm assurance as you would on the constancy of nature? On the other hand, would a desperado in wickedness be the less, or



would he be the more obnoxious in your eyes, because lorded over by the malignant necessity of a nature fully set in him to do that which is evil? Would an irresistible propensity such as this be sustained as a palliative or plea in any court of justice; or rather, would not the general voice of society denounce the unhappy criminal who was under its power as all the fitter subject for the very highest of its punishments? There is a dogma of fatalism that would abrogate the distinctions between right and wrong; but there is a philosophical necessity that abjures the withering and gloomy speculation, and which, though sure as fatalism, yet with its grim and desolate and dreary scepticism, has no fellowship.

5. And here we shall have recourse again to the more precise, though prosaic argument of Edwards, who, though not the first that entered on the field of this philosophy, was the first that entered it with the might and the prowess of a conqueror, and has made it all his own. His is far the highest name which the New World has to boast of; and if aught can enhance our reverence for the achievement by which he distanced so immeasurably all the speculations of all the schools in Europe, it must be that it was an achievement consecrated by the deepest sense of religion, and performed by a man who, almost unconscious of science, or at least unambitious of all its honours, was prompted to the task which he fulfilled so admirably, by his devotedness to that cause which, as a Christian minister, he felt to be the dearest and the best. There is indeed a wide contrast between the unlettered people among whom he laboured as a pastor, and the philosophers with whom, as an author, he held converse; and something most touchingly beautiful in the adaptation that he made of himself to both—giving rise to a corresponding contrast between the plain ministrations of his Sabbath, and the profound musings and inspirations of his solitude. His book on the Freedom of the Will, with a homeliness of style that represents the worth and the simplicity of his private life—by the fine staple of its thoughts, and the whole texture of its wondrous argument, is an undying testimony to the superiority and unrivalled strength of his

metaphysical talents. Never was there a happier combination of great power with great piety; and were it not for the higher examples, and the surpassing volume wherewith heaven has directly furnished us, I would hold it as the brightest eulogy both on the character and the genius of any clergyman, that he copied the virtues and had imbibed the theology of Edwards.

“ One main foundation of the reasons which are brought to establish the forementioned notions of liberty, virtue, vice, &c., is a supposition, that the virtuousness of the dispositions or acts of the will, consists not in the nature of these dispositions or acts of the will, but wholly in the origin or cause of them: so that if the disposition of the mind, or acts of the will, be never so good, yet if the cause of the disposition or act be not our virtue, there is nothing virtuous or praiseworthy in it; and, on the contrary, if the will, in its inclination or acts, be never so bad, yet unless it arises from something that is our vice or fault, there is nothing vicious or blameworthy in it. Hence their grand objection and pretended demonstration, or self-evidence, against any virtue and commendableness, or vice and blameworthiness, of those habits or acts of the will, which are not from some virtuous or vicious determination of the will itself.

“ Now, if this matter be well considered, it will appear to be altogether a mistake, yea, a gross absurdity; and that it is most certain, that if there be any such thing as a virtuous or vicious disposition, or volition of mind, the virtuousness or viciousness of them consists not in the origin or cause of these things, but in the nature of them.

“ If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness, and of viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature of the dispositions or acts of mind, which are said to be our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is certain it lies nowhere at all. Thus, for instance, if the vice of a *vicious* act of will lies not in the nature of the act but the cause, so that its being of a bad nature will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of ours, as its cause, or something in us that is our fault—then, for the same reason, neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing

itself, but in *its* cause: that evil determination of ours is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blameworthiness lie in the nature of *this cause*, but in the cause of *that*. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is, thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence anywhere in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil, cannot consist in any thing that is an *effect*; because *fault* does not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their cause: therefore the cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie *only in that cause*, which is a *cause only*, and no effect of any thing. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of ours, nor any thing faulty in us which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no cause*. And thus, he that will maintain it is not the nature of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

“ This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their nature, or from any thing inherent in them, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be on account of the *badness* of the cause: a bad effect in the will must be bad, because the cause is *bad*, or *of an evil nature*, or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: and a *good* effect in the will must be *good*, by reason of the *goodness* of the cause, or its being *of a good kind and nature*. And if this be what is meant, the very supposition of fault and praise lying not in the nature of the thing, but the cause, contradicts itself, and does at least resolve

the essence of virtue and vice into the nature of things, and supposes it originally to consist in that.—And if a caviller has a mind to run from the absurdity, by saying, ‘No, the fault of the thing, which is the cause, lies not in this, that the cause itself is *of an evil nature*, but that the cause is evil in that sense, that it is from another bad cause.’ Still the absurdity will follow him; for if so, then the cause before charged is at once acquitted, and all the blame must be laid to the higher cause, and must consist in that being *evil* or *of an evil nature*. So now, we are come again to lay the blame of the thing blameworthy, to the nature of the thing, and not to the cause. And if any is so foolish as to go higher still, and ascend from step to step, till he is come to that, which is the first cause concerned in the whole affair, and will say, all the blame lies in that; then at last, he must be forced to own, that the faultiness of the thing, which he supposes alone blameworthy, lies wholly *in the nature* of the thing, and not in the original or cause of it; for the supposition is, that it has no original, it is determined by no act of ours, is caused by nothing faulty in us, being absolutely *without any cause*. And so the race is at an end, but the evader is taken in his flight.”\*

6. There is something quite irresistible, I apprehend, in this argument of his on the virtuousness of any disposition or act of the will, lying either in the nature or in the cause of it. If in the nature of it then our object is gained. Let but its nature be given, and then we have its moral character—whatever question may be started as to its cause, or as to the way in which it originated. But if you will have the virtuousness of the thing in question to lie in its cause, and not in its nature, let us even go up to that cause, and put the inquiry—Wherein does its virtuousness lie? Either surely in the nature or in the cause of it. If in the nature of it, still the Necessitarian has his point secured—which is, that a thing may be virtuous without respect to its cause, and therefore virtuous, although for that cause we must recur to an antecedent necessity. If still, however, his antagonist will not rest at this stage

\* Edwards on the Freedom of the Will. Part iv. sec. 1.

of the argument, he may be pursued in the very same way, from step to step, even *ad infinitum*. He will have a race to run which never can be terminated, or can terminate only in this way—that either virtuousness is banished from the world; or if admitted, as the Necessitarian I am sure does most zealously and cordially, it will at length be found to lie in a something because of its nature, and irrespective of its cause. We admit of one step in the order of ascent. There is nought of the virtuous in the mere deed of the hand; but in the deed as arising from, and coupled with, that disposition of the mind from which it emanated. But after you have come to this disposition, it appears as little necessary to mount any higher, in order to secure for an act of moral rectitude the character of virtuous, as in a former argument, it was necessary to mount any higher, in order to secure for it the character of voluntary.

7. It must not be disguised, however, that, at this stage of the argument, it is more difficult to bring the sympathy or the conviction of men along with us. Many there are who can follow the demonstration, that man might be a voluntary and yet a necessary agent, but are not able to comprehend how man might be a necessary and yet a moral agent. Dugald Stewart speaks of the argument which would reconcile the doctrine of philosophical necessity with the moral character of actions, as a subtle and shadowy reasoning; and further affirms, that among the proselytes who have been gained to the first part of the creed, there is not one in a hundred who will subscribe to the second. He greatly exaggerates the number; but it must be admitted, that there are some who have been made proselytes to the doctrine of philosophical necessity in itself, yet remain at a loss to perceive, how, under such a system, vice can be still the proper object of condemnation and punishment, or virtue the proper object of reward and moral approbation. We believe, however, that in the vast majority of instances, the difficulties, even of the latter demonstration, are not felt to be unconquerable; and that when a strenuous attention is given to it, not only has it proved satisfactory in itself to profound thinkers, but that so far from being of the subtle

and shadowy character which Mr. Stewart has affixed to it, it makes out clearly and convincingly of this dogma, even in its moral aspect and bearings, that it neither conflicts with the principles of our nature nor with the universal sense of mankind.

8. And there is one very serious misconception involved in this assertion by Mr. Stewart, if he mean by it, that for every hundred who have been converted to the truth of the doctrine, there is not one who retains the conviction any longer of his being a moral and accountable agent. There cannot well be imagined a wider departure from truth and soberness. Of the many who have adopted the tenet of necessity, there are some who are at a loss to make out its consistency with the ascription of a moral character to the acts or the dispositions of men. But have they therefore abjured the voice of conscience, or flung its lessons away from them, because simply at a loss to reconcile the doctrine of necessity with the moral character of actions? Have they therefore given themselves up to a moral scepticism, and so look on moral responsibility as a nullity and a delusion? We allow that while many have surmounted the difficulty which occurs at this stage of the argument, there are some who have fallen behind; yet though unable to reconcile the doctrine of necessity with the morality of human actions, does it follow that they reject either of them? They admit both; and though they see not how it is that the two stand together, they are sure that so it is. They have come sooner than their fellows to the limit which separates their known from their unknown, a limit which all must at length arrive at. But they are not of the number of those who give up the reality of a doctrine, because of the difficulties which attend the rationale of it, nor will they suffer any unresolved mystery which lies in the ulterior of their more limited contemplation, to darken or disturb the powerful intimations of that moral sense, which, in the midst of man's most bewildering speculations, will ever claim and continue to receive from all well-constituted spirits, the deference that is due to the highest faculty of our nature.

9. Let our ultimate resort then be to the genuine and uni-

versal feeling of our species. Let us observe how it is that the moral judgment or emotion arises in the heart of an unlettered peasant, when a deed, whether of virtue or vice, is presented to his observation—a deed prompted by the will to do what is morally right, or to do what is morally evil. We hold it to be the undoubted and unexcepted fact, that his moral feeling, whether of approval on the one side or of condemnation on the other, arises immediately on his contemplation of the object thus placed in his view, and without any regard whatever to the antecedent train of causation that went before it. He does not look beyond that which stands in direct exhibition before him, nor for the making out of his moral estimate, which he does most promptly and most powerfully at the moment, does he hold it necessary to investigate into the priorities of that series at all, which has terminated at length in the display of worth or of wickedness that he is now looking at with his eyes. He is unconscious of the whole argument about necessity on the one hand, or contingency on the other. It matters not to him how that controversy is decided. The truth is, that our feelings and our judgments of the morality of any act or disposition are not affected by any determination which philosophers shall make respecting the remote and anterior processes which have given birth to it. In other words, grant but a will, we do not say forced against its own inclinations to that which is good or evil, but bent with all its inclinations either to the one or the other; and without any question of—How it came to be so bent, or what hath so bent it? you pronounce immediately upon it—either as the will of a virtuous man, or the will of a reprobate. The sense of these moral distinctions arises immediately on the view of the object—affected only by the nature of that object, without regard being had to its cause. Such is the universal fact; and it affords as broad and as solid a basis for the moral distinctions to rest upon, as do any of the ultimate feelings or perceptions of the mind. I cannot say why it is that a black colour impresses its particular sensation on the retina, and a white colour another and an opposite sensation: I cannot explain how it is, but I know from my own conscious-

ness and the unexcepted observation of all my fellows, that so it is. And in like manner, I cannot tell in any other way, but that such is the constitution of my nature, why a deed of unequivocal villany lights up such a quick and instant indignancy in my heart; or a deed of an opposite character my as quick and instant admiration. I am only sure that it does so, and does so without any process of inquiry on my part into that order of causation which preceded the phenomena that are under my contemplation. At least the inquiry goes no farther than to ascertain, that in each of the actions, the will of the heart was in sympathy with the work of the hand, or rather was the impellent thereto. After this the controvertists on the theme of man's free agency may settle their own questions as best they may; but meanwhile, every plain man has enough to call forth both his clearest judgments and his most vivid emotions of morality, in the act of simply regarding the characters which are submitted to him as things of objective contemplation; and so to ascertain, not how they were originated, but what they are in themselves. The judgments given forth on such a contemplation as this, are as much to be relied on as are any of our simple and ultimate perceptions in the other departments of truth. We cannot overturn the distinctions between right and wrong, as based on these judgments, without pouring a darkness and a distrust into all the original principles of our nature, and so opening the way to universal scepticism.

10. I regret that at present I can expatiate no further on the reconcilableness of the doctrine of necessity with all the wonted and received distinctions that obtain among mankind between the morally good and the morally evil. By far the most conclusive piece of reasoning on this single topic that I ever met with has been compressed by Edwards within half an hour's reading in an appendix at the end of his book on the Freedom of the Will. I will not answer for your understanding of this masterly argument without having beforehand perused and pondered well the views and arguments of the book itself; and so having become habituated to that peculiar language in which he unites the plainest of all styles with the profoundest of all



dialectics. The history of this appendix is curious. It has only been subjoined to the later editions of his work, and did not accompany the first impression of it. Several copies of this impression found their way into this country, and created a prodigious sensation among the members of a school then in all its glory—I mean the metaphysical school of our northern metropolis, whereof Hume, and Smith, and Lord Kames, and several others among the more conspicuous infidels or demi-infidels of that day, were the most distinguished members. They triumphed in the book of Edwards, as that which set a conclusive seal on their own principles, and upon which they might build, as upon an impregnable basis, the moral scepticism by which the distinction between vice and virtue, with all the corollaries of a Judge and of a judgment-seat, and of all the responsibilities to a moral Governor that flow from it, might be most effectually overthrown. Dr. Erskine, of Edinburgh, the correspondent of Edwards, gave him the timely information of what was going on; and to prepare him more effectually for the extinction of the impending mischief, sent him a copy of Hume's Essay on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion. The reply from America came in an ordinary post-letter to Dr. Erskine, I believe without any view on the part of the great American philosopher and theologian to the publication of it; but Dr. Erskine saw its value, and properly determined on its publication, and that immediately, though in a separate form. It was in the original pamphlet, presented by Dr. Erskine to one of his personal friends, where I first met with this very powerful and precious argumentation—the importance of whose object can only be equalled by the triumphant success of its execution; and as by it he may be said to have completed the philosophy of this subject, it now properly appears as an appendix to the larger work.

11. I will give you no further extracts than merely the three first paragraphs as a specimen of the whole. But I would only apprise you of the length to which his victory is carried—even to that of demonstrating that the system of philosophical necessity is the only one respecting the will that is at all consist-

ent with those moral distinctions which it is alleged to have overthrown—that in fact every other system opposite to, or different from this, involves in it the very mischief wherewith his own has been charged :—“ The intimations you have given me of the use which has by some been made of what I have written on the Freedom of the Will, &c., to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity, by the author of the Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, has occasioned my reading this author’s Essay on that subject with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one that has read both his Essay and my Inquiry, that our schemes are exceedingly different from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

“ This author supposes, that such a necessity takes place with respect to all men’s actions as is inconsistent with liberty, and plainly denies that men have any liberty in acting. Thus, after he had been speaking of the necessity of our determinations, as connected with motives, he concludes with saying, ‘ In short, if motives are not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact, we can at bottom have—NO LIBERTY.’ Whereas, I have abundantly expressed it as my mind, that man, in his moral actions, has true liberty ; and that the moral necessity which universally takes place, is not in the least inconsistent with any thing that is properly called liberty, and with the utmost liberty that can be desired, or that can possibly exist or be conceived of.

“ I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men’s volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty denied ; that though it be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the will, and a liberty of contingency and indifference, hold a higher sort of freedom than I do : but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

“ Liberty, as I have explained it, is *the power, opportunity, or advantage that any one has to do as he pleases, or conduct himself*, IN ANY RESPECT, according to his pleasure, without

considering how his pleasure comes to be as it is. It is demonstrable, and, I think, has been demonstrated, that no necessity of men's volitions that I maintain, is inconsistent with this liberty; and I think it is impossible for any one to rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than this: If any imagine they desire, and that they conceive of, a higher and greater liberty than this, they are deceived, and delude themselves with confused ambiguous words, instead of ideas. If any one should here say, 'Yes, I conceive of a freedom above and beyond the liberty a man has of conducting himself in any respect as he pleases, viz., a liberty of *choosing* as he pleases.' Such an one, if he reflected, would either blush or laugh at his own proposal. For, is not choosing as he pleases, conducting himself, IN SOME RESPECT, according to his pleasure, and still without determining how he came by that pleasure? If he says, 'Yes, I came by that pleasure by my own choice.' If he be a man of common sense, by this time he will see his own absurdity: for he must needs see that his notion or conception, even of this liberty, does not contain any judgment or conception how he comes by that choice, which first determines his pleasure, or which originally fixed his own will respecting the affair. Or if any shall say, 'That a man exercises liberty in this, even in determining his own choice, but not as he pleases, or not in consequence of any choice, preference, or inclination of his own, but by a determination arising contingently out of a state of absolute indifference;' this is not rising higher in his conception of liberty, as such a determination of the will would not be a voluntary determination of it. Surely he that places liberty in a power of doing something not according to his own choice, or from his choice, has not a higher notion of it than he that places it in doing as he pleases, or acting from his own election. If there were a power in the mind to determine itself, but not by its choice or according to its pleasure, what advantage would it give? and what liberty, worth contending for, would be exercised in it? Therefore no Arminian, Pelagian, or Epicurean, can rise higher in his conceptions of liberty than the notion of it which I have explained: which notion is per-

fectly consistent with the whole of that necessity of men's actions, which I suppose takes place. And I scruple not to say, it is beyond all their wits to invent a higher notion, or form a higher imagination of liberty; let them talk of *sovereignty of the will, self-determining power, self-motion, self-direction, arbitrary decision, liberty*, ad utrumvis, *power of choosing differently in given cases, &c. &c.* as long as they will. It is apparent that these men, in their strenuous dispute about these things, aim at they know not what, fighting for something they have no conception of, substituting a number of confused, unmeaning words, instead of things, and instead of thoughts. They may be challenged clearly to explain what they would have; but they never can answer the challenge."\*

12. I am quite aware that this whole argument on the subject of philosophical necessity may have stirred up many difficulties in the minds of those to whom it has been addressed, and that the conclusive removal of these may require, both a more profound and a more prolonged attention on your part than it is possible to bestow on a few rapidly delivered lectures. I shall therefore state, and that very succinctly, what a few of these difficulties are, and how they may be met; for we must now hasten on to the more strictly theological part of the argument, and the relation in which it stands to that great and presiding Divinity, by whom it is that both the material and the mental economy are upholden.

13. There are some then who associate with the doctrine of necessity a helpless acquiescence in all moral depravity and disorder, and who regard it as a death-blow to every practical expedient for the amelioration of our species. A little reflection will convince you that this is indeed a most strange and unwarrantable perversion to make of the system. It is by the instrumentality of means that any desired effect is produced, whether in the world of matter or of mind. And we would ask, where is the discouragement to the use and the application of means on that principle which affirms the certainty of the relation that obtains between the antecedents and the

\* Edwards on the Freedom of the Will. Part iv. sec. 15.

consequents of that world which is the theatre of all our experiments and of all our devices? I am aware of nothing that should more paralyze our hopes and our efforts towards any specified result than the whole doctrine of contingencies; and nothing again that gives such a significance and an encouragement to these efforts as the doctrine of a strict causality—by which it is made sure that, on the combination of certain elements, a certain result is to ensue. We should never feel induced to put these elements together, if that causal influence which, by the doctrine of necessity, we are led to ascribe to them, were exposed at every unknown and unforeseen turn to the breaking forth of some random contingency which should reverse every former experience, and defeat every present anticipation. It is the constancy of nature that gives such confidence to the experimental philosopher in the manipulations of chemistry. And it is just the same constancy in the world of mind, or because of the doctrine of necessity realized there also, that we enter with any comfort or confidence on the management of human nature. It is because of this, that in our treatment of the human spirit, we ply all those various elements of hope, and fear, and conscience, and a sense of interest, and everything else that we have found to be of efficacy in leading our fellows on to the determinations of prudence and of virtue. The metaphysical liberty of the schools would stamp an insanity on these processes, whether of a refined policy or of an earnest and moral persuasion, to which the doctrine of necessity, and it alone, restores a consistency and a meaning. In every attempt to mould a human creature to your purposes, you bring together certain elements for the production of certain effects; and surely there is nought to discourage this attempt, but the contrary, when told—as we are by the system which we have advocated—that these elements have a precise and determinate operation. It is because of a doctrine of necessity in the vegetable world, because of a strict dependence there between the antecedents and the consequents, that the nurseryman enters with rational expectation on the task of training a tree; and without this doctrine of necessity in the

moral world, there would be neither rationality nor hope in the training of a human creature, when plying all those devices by which he may be effectually nursed to the habits of piety and virtue. Under this system, there is the same busy play of passions, and interests, and reactions between man and man as before ; and the lover of virtue will pour into this busy effervescence all those ingredients that might temper the mighty fermentation, and turn it in the direction of principle and the public weal. The world will move as before ; and the only difference between the Necessitarian and other men will be, that confident as he is of a strict affinity between means and their ends—between causes and their consequents—between things present, even in the moral world, and the futurities that are to emerge out of them—he will address himself to the management of these things with all the more intense and hopeful interest than his fellows. And in every walk, whether of business, or of politics, or of philanthropy—he, on the very principles of his school, will be the most persevering of all and the most practical of all.

14. It is an utter misconception of the whole subject, if it be thought that vice will not meet as effectually with its checks and its resistances under this system as under the one that is opposed to it. When the outrages of human wantonness and mischief meet with their legal correction—when cruelty finds its chastisement in the execrations of an indignant public—when the outbreakings of depravity are restrained by a sense of decency and honour—when the rival forces of light and darkness stand in battle array against each other, and the friends of truth and virtue and religion combine in firm and determined phalanx to uphold the interests of righteousness in the world ;—there is nought in all this which the doctrine of necessity supersedes, for in truth they, one and all of them, are the evolutions of that necessity which balances and binds together the actual economy of things. The world exhibits under this doctrine of necessity the same busy game of passion and principles and manifold feelings and interests as before ; and virtue has the same encouragements, and vice the same, and

in every way as effectual, correctives as before. If ever the individual necessity under which one man lies to be wicked shall be pled in mitigation of his crimes, there will be some other necessity with the man he has injured, or the state whose laws he has broken, or the public whose feelings he has outraged, that shall be as ready as before to meet and to overmatch it. You may have heard the story of a certain fierce and fiery countryman of our own—all in a flame with the nationality of his feelings, and most painfully alive to every reflection that could be construed into the prejudice or disgrace of his beloved Scotland. He happened to sit down to table with a company of gentlemen abroad, one of whom was remarkable for his antipathy to Scotland, and took every opportunity of pouring forth his ridicule and his raillery against it. Aware of his propensity, and also of the presence of our dauntless adventurer, he gave intimation of his peculiar and besetting foible, and hoped that if any Scotchman was present, he should be forgiven for the invincible tendency, and more particularly after the glass had circulated, to discharge his jests and invectives upon Scotland. This was not enough, however, for our choleric and high-minded compatriot; and he thought it in every way as fair that, as one member of the party had craved its indulgence for his one necessity, he should crave its indulgence for another, and accordingly made it known as his invincible propensity, and more especially after the glass had circulated, that when he heard any person open his mouth against Scotchmen or Scotland, he could not help the propensity that seized him to kick him down stairs. It so turned out that this second necessity most effectually overruled the first one; and from this example of the reaction that obtains even among the grosser elements of the moral system, you may perceive how, in the rivalry of those powers and principles which make up the mechanism of a spiritual economy, the grand purposes of a moral administration may at length be worked out, and the stability of a wise and righteous government be upholden.

15. And it is a strangely mistaken view of the doctrine of necessity, that there is aught in it which should blunt the ear-

nestness and the energy of him who, anxious for the virtue of children, or of pupils, or of friends, lifts in their hearing his admonitory voice. You must all be sensible that the necessity of which I speak is not that which withstands moral suasion, but that which gives effect to it—not that which abrogates the law, whereby the moral earnestness of one man finds way, by the vehicle of his expressed words, into the heart of another, and often bears him on to some great and lofty determination; but is in fact a necessity constituted by the laws of human nature, and whereof the power of one man's persuasion over another man's purposes and acts is one of the most important. Were such a necessity as this done away, and a fitful and fluctuating contingency substituted in its place, we should be left without one rational incitement to operate upon any of our fellows, just as there would be an end to all physical experiment were there an abolition of the constancy of nature. The steersman would abandon the pilotage of his vessel were there no dependence between the direction of its course and the position of the helm. And the moral steersman—the Mentor, let us say, of a youthful generation—the man who, from some high station of ascendancy, could bear down with effect upon their purposes, and give that inspiring touch which might kindle within them the high and honourable resolves of principle—he might well, without the doctrine of necessity, without a sure dependence of the consequents which take place in the moral world, or the antecedents which go before them—he might well give up in despair the application of that antecedent wisdom and eloquence and fervour which, if brought to bear in time on the susceptibilities of the juvenile spirit, might have arrested many a hurrying course of dissipation, and reclaimed many a wanderer to the paths of immortality and honour. It is just because he knows of an influence that, however mixed and modified by other influences, cannot be altogether lost—it is just, and even without any formal recognition of necessity, because he really believes that it is the causal, and not the contingent, which bears, after all, the supremacy over the desires and the doings of man, as well as over that external world by



which he is surrounded—it is just because, even while speculatively perhaps a strenuous advocate for the metaphysical liberty, he is in truth a practical Necessitarian, that he comes forth with any attempt whatever over the passions and the purposes of other minds than his own. The Necessitarian, of all men, ought to be the most zealous of educationists. It is he who, chiefest among his fellows, should ply with all assiduity every engine of ascendancy over the human spirit—it is he who should knock most unceasingly at the door of every conscience, and summon all the powers of friendship and eloquence and wisdom to a holy warfare against that moral evil which so desolates the world.

16. We can afford to say little more on this part of our subject. I have already directed your attention to the distinction which obtains between one kind of necessity and another. Both are alike absolute and certain, and the distinction between them is founded altogether on the kind of subject upon which it is that the necessity hath its fulfilment. The results of chemistry are just as certain and necessary as those of mechanics ; but there is a difference in the forces by which this necessity is accomplished—and therefore it is, that when you aim at a chemical and not a mechanical result, you make use of different instruments, and address yourselves differently to the task. The doctrine of necessity does not liken a man to a machine, in the common sense that you affix to the latter term. Each has its own proper constitution ; and after the doctrine of necessity is admitted, the distinction founded upon this remains—so that each is practically managed according to its own constitution as before. A man is differently treated from a machine, not because of a strict necessity in the processes of the one, and of the metaphysical liberty which throws into a state of looseness and uncertainty all the processes of the other, but simply because of the difference that obtains between the one and the other in regard to the respective springs and principles of their mechanism. It is on this account, and on this only, that you treat the one as a moral being, and the other as a piece of unconscious mechanism. And here it occurs to me to say in

illustration of the two kinds of necessity, that if I wanted a clock to go faster, I could accomplish this object in two ways: I could either keep up a continued pressure upon its handle from without, or I could shorten the pendulum, and then leave it to its own swing and natural influence on the wheelwork of the inner mechanism. In the former way, or by the application of an external force, I would be evidently doing violence to the mechanism of the clock—I would be overbearing what may be called its natural methods and principles of operation—I would be forgetting the kind of treatment that is due to such a piece of machinery, and the proper way in which it ought to be addressed. By simply shortening the pendulum I leave all the operations of its mechanism entire—I pay respect to the constitution of the machine. The weights continue to operate as before, and the motion is communicated from one wheel to another as before, and the pendulum, now quickened in its vibrations, regulates the velocity of the whole movement as before; and the index on the dial-plate, not impelled by a force from without, but sweetly and naturally, as it were, constrained by the old and familiar influence from within, is now made to revolve with accuracy, and to accomplish the purposes of its formation.

17. It is thus that you may come to comprehend the difference between one kind of necessity and another, when brought to bear on a human mechanism. I could conceive a human being haunted, and at all times overborne by a mechanical impulse from without, and so constrained to walk in a path of uprightness, and forced with his hands, and other instruments of motion, to deeds of generosity; and I know that this is the degrading conception which many have of the system of necessity. But there is another and a more excellent way. Instead of a mechanical influence bearing upon me from without, there is an influence that might address itself to the springs and natural workings of the machinery within. The understanding may be enlightened, the conscience may be urged by the suggestions of principle, the heart may be awakened to kind and generous emotions, the inner man may be set on its free process of de-

liberation—and we make use of the term freedom, because to whatever the will listeth the faculty of attention within may turn itself, and the faculty of action without may conform. In the whole of this procedure, he is addressed not as a machine, but as a man. The reason deliberates, the judgment decides, the conscience admonishes, the will determines, and the executive power carries forward the determination to accomplishment ; but in every step of the operation, it is still the mechanism of the human spirit that has been at work, and the distinction between it and a machine lies in the kind of mechanism, and not in a laxer dependence with the one than the other between the steps of the respective processes. Man feels, and deliberates, and acts, and wills as a man ; but all-sovereign, and spontaneous, and self-moving as he looks, even he walks in that sure and undeviating path to which he has been carried and constrained by the principles of his nature.

18. We trust to have made it palpable that there is nothing in the doctrine of philosophical necessity, when rightly understood and acted on, which is fitted to lay arrest or disturbance on the management of human affairs, and more especially on the all-important business of education, whether the education of prudence or of principle. All the objects of desire retain their wonted power and force of operation, with or without this dogma ; nor is their relative worth and eligibility in the least affected by it. And surely there is nothing to deaden or to misdirect our activities, but the contrary, in the doctrine of a strict causality between the means that we adopt and the end that we are labouring to accomplish. There is scarcely a business of life where we do not require to operate on the volitions of men ; and if these were subject to no law, what were the possible guidance, or where the encouragement for addressing ourselves to the task ? It is true that from the number and complexity of the influences, often unseen, which have to do with human agency, we cannot be so sure in this department either of the processes that should be set agoing, or of the results in which they would terminate. But that is not to say that these are less certain in themselves, though less certain to us, be-

cause more beyond the reach of our calculation or foresight. It were a mighty aggravation to this helplessness, if, beside the difficulty of ascertaining either means or ends in the world of mind, they had no certainty in themselves; and that our likeliest and most rational anticipations were ever liable to be frustrated by the breaking forth of a random contingency, which set all the reckonings of human sagacity at defiance. It is the doctrine of Necessity, and that alone, which can give hopefulness or rationality to any enterprise with which men and the volitions of men have to do; and passing from this to the cognate doctrine of predestination, it will be found of it, too, when rightly understood, that instead of the withering influence which many conceive of it, it perfectly harmonizes with all the urgencies of ministerial exhortation on the one side, and on the other with all the activities of our own required and incumbent obedience.

## CHAPTER III.

## ON PREDESTINATION.

1. THERE is nought that contributes more to the soundness of one's philosophy than an accurate perception of the limit between the known and the unknown, or rather, between the knowable and the unknowable. Let the human mind put forth its uttermost strength of investigation, and still beyond the field of its widest and most extended survey there will lie mysteries, which, in the present order of things, and with the present order of its faculties, it never can resolve, and questions in which it will lose itself among the intricate and interminable mazes. There is immediately about it a region of light, and, ulterior to this, a region of inaccessible darkness. Now we deem it a most useful, as it is one of the highest achievements of intellect, to trace the line of separation between the two regions. It is almost a compensation to us for our exclusion from that territory against which we are hopelessly barred, if we can assign the length and the breadth, and lay down the circumference of that territory over which we are permitted to expatiate. He would be of preternatural faculties who should transcend this barrier; but if it be indeed a barrier that can neither be forced nor surmounted by any of the children of humanity, then the next and greatest achievement were to discover the boundary of our possible knowledge, seeing that we cannot discover the truths which lie on the other side of it; it were to tell the loftiest flight of which humanity is capable, or to trace that line of demarcation, along which the philosopher of mind might say to all his fellows, Thus far they can go, but no farther. Now this might be done long before

all the possibilities of human discovery are realized, just as the coast of any island might be surveyed, or the borders of any territory be delineated, before its interior has been thoroughly explored. It is thus that the sound and masterly speculations of Lord Bacon on the limits of human discovery preceded the actual discoveries which, within that limit, were made by Sir Isaac Newton, who sometimes trod, however, upon the margin that had been assigned by his great predecessor, and even, as in some of his Queries, made a darkling and a fruitless effort beyond it. It offers a solace to the mortification which we feel as we look towards the dimness and the distance of those heights which are inaccessible, or of that great expanse where all is obscure and fathomless, when made to know what is the loftiest summit which the spirit of man can attain, or what the extreme margin of those journeyings which it is able for. The adventurous voyager may have swept the barrier which might be termed the *ne plus ultra* of discovery, and yet have left within that barrier enough of still unexplored geography, and enough of the materials of every science for the exercise and discovery of many centuries to come; and so it is in the territory of human thought. The confines of this territory admit of being delineated long before the contents of it have been thoroughly ascertained. But still it is good to have an eye upon the confines to know what that is which is the end and the perfection of human knowledge, and to look towards its supreme altitudes, even before that we have reached them. It at once restrains and regulates the ambition of the human spirit when it is thus enabled to define the outskirts of its own acquirements; and if, on the one hand, it be humiliating to learn that beyond the circle of visible things there is a vast and interminable region, which, under our existing economy, shall ever remain to our species a land of mystery and silence, it carries a certain mastery over the actual and the hopeful province of human thought, if, while told of the infinite number of truths which we can never know, we are at the same time made to know the limit which marks off and encloses all the possibilities of the human understanding.

2. And there is such a limit in the speculation which at present engages us. There may be a difference of opinion as to whereabouts it lies ; and some do feel that they are treading on firm ground a much farther way in this argument respecting Necessity than others can venture to go along with them. There is enough, we think, of sure and experimental light to convince us, in the first instance, of the truth of the doctrine. There is enough to demonstrate its consistency both with the prevalent notion of liberty which obtains among mankind, and also with all those activities in the business of life, which many have conceived that this system of fatalism, as they term it, is calculated to overbear : And further, we hold ourselves to be still within the limit of separation between the known and unknown, when we affirm that under the system of necessity an action may be as justly denominated virtuous as it may be denominated voluntary. We are sensible that here it is where many who have hitherto kept by our side are inclined to fall away. It is at this place in the argument that they feel as if entering on a region of perplexity ; and while they cannot refuse an evidence that looks almost demonstrative for the determinations of the will being like unto all other events, in that they are not uncaused, but that—so many consequents—they stand to as many antecedents in the relation of invariableness : with a most luminous perception and belief of the matter thus far, they are baffled to comprehend how the acts or determinations of the will, now proved to be necessary, can admit of having any moral characteristic assigned to them.

3. We, on the other hand, hold that the doctrine of necessity leaves all the received distinctions between one act and another, or one disposition and another, quite unimpaired ; nor think, while so doing, that we have yet passed the frontier of separation between the land of experimental light and the land of unfathomable mystery. The moral part of our nature is in every way as distinct and accessible a subject for observation as the imaginative part. In framing a philosophy of taste, we consider what the objects are, and what the sensibilities and emotions which are awakened by them ; and we do the

very same thing in framing a philosophy of morals. We first consider the objects, and then the moral feelings and judgments which they call forth. The one philosophy, like the other, may require for its completion, and more especially when dealing with the objections of adversaries, an extensive induction of the phenomena of our nature. Not that we are to confound the moral faculty which takes cognizance of the *quid oportet* with the observational, which takes cognizance of the *quid est*; but when a question arises as to what the decisions of the moral sense really are, and what the objects of these decisions, then we are clearly employed on a matter of observation. Now to these phenomena, the phenomena of moral judgment and feeling, we have access, both by the eye of consciousness, or of internal observation, when directed towards our own minds, or the eye of observation directed outwardly to the manifested emotions and judgments of our fellow-men. And as the fruit of such an induction, we affirm, that in the only moral judgments which are ever felt, the object which is in the mind's eye is an action to which man has been prompted by his will, and that the only kind of necessity which prevents this judgment from being formed is that which compels the action against the will. Grant but the fact that the will is on the side of the action, and the moral sense needs no more, and seeks no more, to make up its estimate. It looks upwardly but one step to see whether the action had a volition for its antecedent; but it is in the nature of that volition, and not in its cause, that it reads, and reads immediately, the character, whether of moral worth or of moral turpitude, which the action bears. That man be a befitting object for moral approbation or moral blame, it demands for him no other liberty than the liberty of doing what he pleases. If there be only the one sequence of a volition and an act, this is enough, either for the admiration it holds to be due to virtue, or the vivid disapproval that is due to vice; nor does it regard as necessary that anterior progression, made up of many terms and many sequences, wherewith the liberty of a self-determining power would usher in every separate doing in the history of man. And even after



the argument for the truth of necessity has overpowered one's convictions, the unabated resentment he still feels in his own heart against the villany of another—the remorse which in spite of himself embitters the sense that he has of his own worthlessness—the consciousness of a more profound admiration for the character of him who is compelled, not by a force that is without, but by the necessities of a nature within that painfully and powerfully recoils from all which is criminal and base; and, on the other hand, a keener and more contemptuous loathing for the worthlessness of him who has been driven thereto, not by the strong hand of an external compulsion, but by the strong bias of his own inherent depravities—all these go to satisfy at least our own minds that the same action may combine the two characteristics of being at once necessary and moral, and that after the doctrine of Necessity has been established, the distinctions of morality remain in every way as stable as are the laws of that constitution which God hath given to us.

4. It is in the utterance of this high name that we are reminded of the difficulties of our subject. The path we hold to be clear and firm which we have travelled hitherto; but we pass the frontier of observation and philosophy, when we connect this doctrine with the plans and the purposes of that Eternal Spirit who holds the destinies of the universe which He has formed. However triumphant our confidence, when we view the question apart from the designs of the Creator, and the destinies of His subject world, we confess the helplessness of children, when called on to unfold the inscrutable policy of heaven; or to resolve that most impracticable of all mysteries, the origin of evil. We shall not attempt to unriddle this difficulty; but much remains to be said on the bearing and relationship of the topic which has engaged us so long, to the Divinity who framed us.

5. But there ought to be a distinction made here. On passing to the theology of this question, we shall be brought into converse with even greater and more impracticable difficulties than before. But by this very movement, we shall receive a

large accession to our proofs ; and so to the stability and force of our argument on the whole. There is no incompatibility in these things. It has been well said, that the more we enlarge the diameter or sphere of light, the more, too, do we enlarge the circumambient darkness—so that with a wider field of light on which to expatiate, we shall have a more extended border of unexplored territory than ever ; or, which is the same thing, a greater number of unresolved, nay, of unresolvable questions to grapple with. It is thus that along the margin of his wider and larger discoveries, there is none who has planted so many queries, or, which is tantamount to this, so many confessions of ignorance, as Sir Isaac Newton—no impeachment this, at the same time, on the clearness and certainty of those actual, those glorious additions, which were made by him to the stock of human knowledge. It is on experience such as his, that the modesty of true science is founded—the experience that in proportion as we enlarge the magnitude, so also we enlarge the boundaries of the *terra cognita*, and come thus more largely into contact with the vast and fathomless ulterior, which stretches in darkling recesses to the regions of infinity. It is thus, as will be found we believe in every instance, that, whenever a right philosophy and a right principle go hand in hand, every new accession of truth brings a fresh argument along with it, for a more deep-felt humility than before. And it is thus, too, that in the higher orders of intelligence, in very proportion to their larger vision, is their profounder and more prostrate adoration of Him who sitteth on the throne, till the highest archangels—they who occupy the summits of created being—hide their faces under their wings, in the view of that Infinite Mind, who alone embraces all truth and comprehends all.

6. Let us not wonder, then, if in passing onward from the merely human science to the theology of our present question, we shall meet both with new proofs and with new difficulties, so as at once to confirm us still more in the truth of the doctrine, and yet add to the number of those unresolved mysteries which follow in its train. Indeed we no sooner enter within

the threshold of this higher department, than there occurs one general consideration, which is altogether on the side of that necessity in the world of mind for which we have been contending. It is clear, that were there no such necessity in the world of matter—did it not in every instance take a precise direction from the laws and the forces which the Deity hath established over it—were there any of its phenomena, whereof no other account could be given, than that they sprung from a random contingency, in virtue of which another set of phenomena might have as readily occurred as the actual ones ;—then, at this rate, the world of inanimate things would drift uncontrollably away from the authority of its God ; nor would it be any longer His will that overruled the condition and the history of the universe which He formed. Now it is the very same with the world of mind, should there be introduced within its confines, not the liberty of doing according to our volitions, for this is palpably in exercise with every creature who lives and has a will, but that metaphysical liberty of the schoolmen, by which the volitions themselves are strangely regarded as events that have no progenitor, no antecedent influence to which they can be traced, and in which they have originated. If this class of events, if the movements of intelligent and animated nature, can be referred to no moving forces directed by and dependent upon Him, of whom we have been taught to believe, that He hath ordained the mechanism of the spiritual world, and presides over all the evolutions of it—if amid the diversity of the operations by which we are surrounded, those of the will and of the mind form an exception to the doctrine that it is God who worketh all in all—then, by far the most dignified and interesting of all His creations is wrested from the dominion of Him who gave it birth. Let matter be passive and obedient as it may, yet if essential to the constitution of mind, that it shall be left to its own fitful and undirected waywardness, and so to wander without the limits of His power and His prescience—then is the very best of nature's domain abandoned to the misrule of an anarchy the most wild and wanton and wavering. Things grow up in it from the dark

womb of nonentity, which Omnipotence did not summon into being, and which Omniscience could not foretell; and in the most emphatic sense of the term might it be said, that there is a universe without a Lord—an empire without an Imperial Sovereign to overrule its destinies.

7. Both the power and the prescience of God are involved in this question. It seems strange that the Creator of all should not be the governor of all; or that the universe which proceeded from His hands should have been so constituted in any of its departments, as to have an independent history of its own, placed beyond the sovereignty and the control of Him who gave it birth. But so it would be on the hypothesis of a self-determining power in any of the creatures. Their movements at least would proceed at random, because under the dominion of a wild and lawless contingency, which indeed is no dominion at all, but the anarchy of a chaos. At this rate, events would come forth uncaused from the womb of nonentity, to which Omnipotence did not give birth, and which Omniscience could not foresee. But indeed these attributes would be misnamed, or have no place in the nature of God, who could not be said to have either all power or all knowledge, amid millions and millions more of volitions, springing up every day in the world of living and intelligent beings; and of which no other account can be given, than that they originated in veriest caprice and waywardness, incapable from their very nature of being traced any further back in the order of causation. And what is the territory of creation which should thus be wrested from the management of its Creator? Brute and unconscious materialism would still remain under His sway. All that took place in the physics, whether of the heaven above or the earth below, might, so far at least as they were beyond the intrusion and inroad of creatures who had a will, still be the invariable result of the properties and the powers wherewith God had endowed them. But on the system of the metaphysical liberty of human actions, these are the effects not of the properties or powers wherewith God has endowed His creature man—for they come forth uncaused, or at least can be traced

no higher than to an inherent and independent power in man himself. Who does not see, that, on this supposition, there would be wrested from the grasp and governance of the Almighty, far the most dignified and interesting portion of His works? He would be the Almighty no longer; and whatever sovereignty remained to Him over other territories in nature, at least the moral world, under the mercy of a whole host of petty but yet spontaneous and self-regulating forces, would drift uncontrollably away from Him.

8. This consideration is greatly strengthened when we take a view of the actual constitution of our world, the history of which is made up of sequences; and where events, instead of standing alone, are so closely linked and implicated together, that on the minutest incident there often hinges a big and busy progression, reaching onward to future ages, and affecting the state and character of nations for many centuries to come. Such concatenations, it is quite palpable, do obtain in the moral as well as the material world—or when the determinations of voluntary agents are concerned, as well as in that other great department of nature, where all the results are made good by the evolutions of a sure and unerring mechanism. It is possible, nay frequent, that on a hasty utterance on what some would call a random emotion, on a choice in the form of a wanton and wayward caprice of one individual, consequences of the utmost moment both to himself and others, are often made to turn. The whole of human life, the occurrences of every single day, supply ample materials for the illustration of this matter. On the volitions of men, countless in multitude, and acting with infinite variety of influences on each other, the history of every nation and every family is suspended—and this by innumerable trains of causation, where the minute and the momentous are so intermingled, that, on the slightest change in some term of the series, a new train of events would have arisen, and the world have presented a different aspect from that in which it now stands before us. It is obvious of such a world, that if each human volition were not a certainty, but a contingency, it would drift uncontrollably

away from God. A mighty host of petty but independent forces, which Himself had brought into existence, would wrest from His hand the sovereignty of His own creation, which, abandoned to its own spontaneous evolutions, and placed beyond the reach of Him who alone can regulate all, and control all, would, instead of a goodly and well-ordered universe, lapse into an inextricable chaos. Without a providence so universal and pervading as that which numbers the hairs of our head, and determines the fall of every sparrow to the ground, all would be anarchy and wild misrule; and the Lord of heaven and earth would be a helpless looker on, in the midst, if not of those self-derived, yet of those self-directing elements which He Himself had summoned into being.

9. To avert this conclusion, all must be determinate, and all, both in the mental and material world, be under the absolute control of Him who made all and who upholds all. Nor is it necessary to entertain the question, whether in the formation of this mundane system God ordained its mechanism at the first, and then left it to the development of those principles and powers wherewith He had endowed it, when He ordained the properties of every being, and established the laws of nature; or whether His constant and immediate agency be not at all times indispensable, so that the secondary forces of creation are but the modifications and the forthgoings of a direct power emanating at first hand from the Divinity Himself, and on the withdrawal of which an arrest would be laid on all the operations of the universe, or rather the universe itself would be annihilated. Without deciding on either of these suppositions, let it be remarked, that even under the latter we might still account for the uniformity of nature, or that obvious regimen of general laws under which it is conducted, the result, it may be, of that unsearchable wisdom whose property it is always to act in the same manner when in the same circumstances. This speculation is not necessary for our argument, and may be left in abeyance. Enough for us, or in favour of our doctrine, that there reigns as great a certainty in the world of mind as of matter—enough that the denial of this would

trench on the power and sovereignty of the Most High—that it goes, if not to exclude, at least to limit the Almighty, so that He would cease to be the entire and absolute Monarch of His own creation—a limitation, too, in the highest of His works—insomuch that the moral empire would, instead of being all His own, be shared between Himself and that host of innumerable agencies derived from, yet not so dependent on, the Author from whom they spring, but that each is the primary fountain-head of its own operations.

10. And any abridgment on the prescience of God seems as incongruous with all our conceptions of Deity as the abridgment of His power. We are aware of the argumentations which have been employed to reconcile human liberty with Divine foreknowledge—we mean liberty in the scholastic or metaphysical sense of it, and which reduces volitions to contingencies. The knowledge beforehand of what either may be or may not be is the paradox which our adversaries labour to demonstrate—and this to shew that their self-determining power infringes not on the omniscience of the Godhead. The only intelligible consideration which they advance on behalf of this strange affirmation is, that the foreknowledge of an event has no more influence, no more power, to necessitate the event than the after-knowledge of it; and that therefore, if we can look back on human volitions, and contemplate them as matters of historical certainty, without any inroad on their contingency, why may it not be possible to look forward on them as matters of prophetic certainty, and yet these volitions be free, and that in the sense of contingent, notwithstanding? It is very true that the knowledge, whether of a past or a future event, does not cause the certainty of that event; but it is quite enough for our object if it indicate this certainty. When we look in retrospect to that which is past, we can say of any event in that direction, that at its time and place this event and no other has been. And when we look in anticipation to that which is future, and are sure of any event in that direction, we can say, that at its time and place, this event and no other shall be; and all we contend for is, that what

certainly shall be, certainly must be. If there be any distinction between these, it needs a finer discrimination than ours to be capable of perceiving it. What God knows beforehand shall be, that and no other must be ; and therefore if, instead of being certainly to be this, it may be either this or that, it lies without the scope of the Divine foreknowledge. It is thus that from this question, too, Necessitarians fetch another accession to their argument. If God knew beforehand all that shall take place in His own universe, then all, they contend, must take place necessarily ; or if they do not, then is the Deity ignorant of many, and these the most interesting, futurities of His own creation. Under this system, the Creator is represented as waiting on the uncertain determinations of the creature—unable to descry the coming evolutions in the history at least of the moral world, till the sovereign man has thrown light upon it by those self-deciding acts of which he is regarded as the sole originator.

11. And here it occurs to us to say, that there are some who quarrel with our doctrine in its present form, but profess that they would be quite reconciled to it would we but adopt a different nomenclature, by substituting certainty for necessity. We should not object to this change. Grant but a certainty as absolute in the mental as in the material world, and we require no more. Enough for us if it be conceded, that in like manner as every planet and every particle shall have their definite progress throughout all futurity, and have their definite place in every point of it—so every society, and every individual of living creatures, have their place and progress equally sure throughout all past, and will have throughout all future ages. All we desire to have granted is, that the mental world proceeds according to regularities and invariable successions of its own, just as the material does. And perhaps it were better to be rid of the term Necessity altogether in connexion with this subject, as it is ever suggesting the idea of compulsion, and of a compulsion too against the will, which latter conception is in no way involved with our doctrine, that the will itself, like every other element or agency of nature, is



the subject of laws and processes of its own, so as to be within the universal category of cause and effect. If it be only admitted that volitions are things of such certainty as that they are not things of contingency, we are willing to forego the assertion that they are things of necessity. The substance of our doctrine would not be in the least affected by this change of phraseology; and we should gladly make surrender of a name that misleads others into a false or injurious imagination of our principle—as if deliberation and choice, and the dictates of conscience, and the considerations of wisdom, were all overborne by the impulses of a blind and mechanical necessity; whereas all the functions and all the prerogatives of a living percipient, rational, and spontaneous creature, are preserved entire under a system which simply affirms regularity of procedure in each class of beings, but amply secures the distinction between them by ascribing to each its own properties and its own powers.

12. But it is for philosophy thus to reason on the powers and properties of the creature; and apart from the consideration of God, she educes the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. Theology rests her argument mainly on the powers and prerogatives of the Creator; and she educes her doctrine in another form, and under another title, even Predestination. The former grounds the certainty for which it pleads on the universal constancy of nature, or on the regimen of cause and effect, which governs all its processes; the latter grounds the certainty of all things on the sovereignty of God in all things, and so bears respect to the decrees of the Almighty, and to the sureness of their fulfilment—a fulfilment carried into effect either by the direct operation of the Almighty's will, or by the evolutions of that mechanism ordained by God when He set up the mundane system, and endowed it with all its properties and laws. It is one and the same doctrine in different aspects, or with different relations—in the one viewed with relation to nature, in the other with relation to God. By the latter we are involved in higher speculations, from which it will be found that it is at length our best wisdom to retire; and it truly con-

cerns us to know what is the limit of our safe and profitable inquiries. Nevertheless there is a certain way along which the philosophers and theologians have a common ground to walk upon. They, to a great extent, can avail themselves of the same arguments; and in the management of difficulties, or in combating the objections of adversaries, there is much of the reasoning that is common to both.

13. More particularly in disposing of the moral objection, as if the doctrine, whether of necessity or predestination, took away all distinction between virtue and vice, and made either the praise of the one or the condemnation and punishment of the other alike unreasonable—this objection is met on either ground by the considerations already stated in the course of our previous argument. If the virtuousness of an act, or rather of a disposition, lies in its nature and not in its cause—then let the cause be what it may, the nature remaining the same, our moral estimate will be the same; and our feelings, whether of blame or approval, wherewith we regard it, will also be the same. If the moral quality of any disposition lie in the nature and not in the cause of it, then the disposition to injustice or cruelty, or any sort of wickedness, will ever remain the object of our blame and condemnation in whatever way it may have originated, or whatever be the antecedents in the previous order of causation from which it may have sprung. These antecedents can be traced a certain way back by the observant sagacity of men who have made a study of the human character and of human affairs, and generally are traced no farther back by those who, confining their treatment of the question to one purely of science, regard it in no other aspect than as the doctrine of philosophical necessity. And certain it is, that let our discoveries be what they may of those prior influences which have given birth to a moral disposition, our estimate of the disposition itself, whether it be in the form of a judgment or of a sensibility, remains unaffected by it. But our theologians carry their investigation farther back than do our men of science. They recognise Him who is the cause of causes; and viewing our question in its higher aspect as the doctrine of

predestination, they ever bear in their contemplations a reference to Him who ordains all or controls all. But most assuredly there is nothing in this higher, this ulterior ascent, made by theologians, which can at all modify, or far less reverse, that law of our moral sensibilities in virtue of which a disposition is pronounced upon as morally good or evil, according to the nature and not according to the cause of it: and therefore, although carried up to Him of whom it is said, that He hath made all things for Himself—why even the wicked for the day of evil—our sense of the wickedness, our sense of the evil, will remain unaffected. And thus, though it be said of God that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, this blunts not the edge of that indignation wherewith we regard the haughty and unfeeling tyrant, who issued from his barbaric throne another and another oppressive mandate against the weeping families of Israel. The narrative may leave in deeper enigma than ever the character of God; but most unquestionably there is nothing either to suspend or to repeal the law of man's moral nature, which gives the same response as before to the exhibition of a despot's pride and a despot's cruelty—alike abhorring his character, and alike rejoicing in his fall.

14. And predestination is on the same vantage-ground with philosophical necessity, in repelling that other objection which has been preferred against the doctrine, as if it chilled and superseded all the activities of human life, and made the adoption or the prosecution of means for the attainment of any end to be altogether useless. It looks very plausible to say, that if all have been thus settled, and made sure in the counsels of eternity—where lies the conceivable motive to any exertion on our part, or why struggle against an adamantine necessity or adamantine decree, in virtue of which all is fixed and all is irreversible? There might be reason in this, if the necessity were made good, or the decree carried into effect, irrespective of all that took place anterior to its fulfilment, nay, and causally essential to its fulfilment. A Turkish predestination, which isolates every event whether in nature or history, and regards it as the object of a separate decree made fast

in heaven, and therefore sure to take place as if by an iron fatality, independent of all that was doing or could be done upon earth—such a predestination as this is wholly dissimilar, either to the philosophical necessity or the Christian predestination, which contemplates every event as the result of a process, or as the term of a series, every prior term of which must be made good, else the event in question would not be made good. The amount of my earthly fortune may have been fixed and ascertained from all eternity; but this without dissolving the alliance which in general obtains between industry and care on the one hand, and the accumulation of wealth upon the other; and so the law holds just as true under the system of our predestination as any other—that, in order to realize a fortune, there must be a previous and persevering habit of diligence, and economy, and prudent calculation. The character of my child, and so his everlasting condition, may have been already recorded in the book of destiny, but this without breaking up the connexion which obtains between the education of youth and the habits or principles of manhood; and so, with or without the doctrine of predestination, the same practical impulse lies upon me for the right training and discipline of my family. We have no doubt that the exact produce of the next year's harvest has not only been foreknown by the Supreme Intelligence, but has been ordained by the Supreme Power of our universe; and yet it is a harvest depending on moral as well as physical elements—not only on the successions of the coming weather, but on the agency of human hands, on the skill, and industry, and busy appliances of an active, and toilsome, and persevering agriculture. Let the preordinations but extend to the means as well as to the end; and then that the end be made good, the means must be made good also. The history of our creation is made up of innumerable progressions. Were there but a loose and fluctuating dependence between the terms of each series, and this in virtue of a contingency which, in some random and unknown manner, changed and unsettled the successions we might otherwise have counted on, we should feel less constrained to any sort of

exertion for the purpose of making good a prior term, in order that its posterior term may follow in the train. But let us only imagine that contingency were altogether banished from these processes, and a rigid, unfailing certainty substituted in its place; and then we should have good reason to address ourselves with all hopeful alacrity and diligence to the task of securing the antecedents in the order of causation—because now made sure, and this just by the doctrine of necessity, or preordination, that the consequents which should come after them would come, not according to any capricious or variable order, but in the precise order of an established cause, or according to the constancy of nature. It is thus that our doctrine when rightly understood, so far from acting as a sedative, would operate as a stimulus and an encouragement to exertion. An absolute predestination in a universe, where each event had its own separate decree, and stood alone or unconnected with all others, might well absolve us from all care and calculation; and to labour for the production of any event in these circumstances, were a vain expenditure of strength, and a sullen acquiescence in a necessity which we could not help were the true philosophy of life in a universe so constituted. But in a universe like ours, where every fulfilment can be traced upwards through anterior conditions, and every condition leads to an ulterior fulfilment—let there be a predestination inclusive of both; and then with our powers of observation and foresight, it is the very constitution of a world in which we ought to be cast, that we might ply with all effort and expectation our busy expedients for the attainment of the objects which our hearts are set upon. In a disjointed world, where each event stands isolated from its fellow, a predestination on the part of God might render altogether void and meaningless the activities of man. In a world where all is concatenation—where each event is both the descendant of a former, and the parent of a future one, and where the doings of voluntary agents form parts of the series, we shall behold men, just because of such a predestination, labouring with all their might to realize certain antecedents, because of

the certain consequents which spring from them. Here the absolute does not exclude the conditional, and predestination intelligently viewed and proceeded on, so far from undermining the system of human activity, is the groundwork or the foundation on which it rests.

15. These views are of pre-eminent force and application in the concerns of practical Christianity. I may be a child of election, and have been predestinated to everlasting life ; but not most assuredly without the faith and the repentance which go before it. It may be sure as fate that I shall enter heaven hereafter ; but then it is equally sure that I must be conformed here to the image of the Saviour. It may be already written in the book of life, that I am to spend my eternity at the right hand of God, and amid the beatitudes of His immediate presence ; yet heaven and earth shall pass away, ere any of the words to be found in the book of Revelation pass away ; and there it is written in characters indelible, that without holiness no man shall see God. It is well that we look onward to the future heaven, but the matter on hand is the present holiness ; and it is by making sure of it that we make our calling and election sure. Both the decree that is behind, and the destiny that is before us, lie far out of sight ; and our history in the world forms the intermediate chain or progression that is between them. The links of that chain which are within our reach, and which we can lay our hands upon, are what we have immediately to do with. It is well to have received by faith the promises, and though their fulfillments be afar off, to delight and dwell upon them as the objects of our believing contemplation. But we have a part and a performance in the day that rolls over us ; and our present work, now that we have received these promises, is to cleanse ourselves, and perfect our holiness in the fear of God.

16. When our modern astronomy first made its wondrous revelations, the difficulty was to understand how, in the inconceivable speed of our planet, as it wheeled its rapid flight among the orbs of immensity, puny man, instead of being hurled from off its surface, could maintain his footing and pro-

secute his daily movements with as great ease and safety as if the earth were at rest. The explanation is now perfectly understood ; but there is a kindred difficulty, admitting of a kindred explanation, in the subject before us, when, in viewing the magnificent cycles of the spiritual economy, we feel at a loss to conceive what the part and what the agency which man can sustain amid these mysteries of a predestinating God, whose lofty administration begins with the decrees of the past, and reaches to the fulfilments of the coming eternity. Nevertheless man has a place to stand in ; and a path and a performance are assigned in the Bible for Zion's humble wayfarers, things to be believed and things to be done, of which, if they rightly acquit themselves, they shall never fall.

17. Before I proceed to consider the informations of Scripture on this high topic of Predestination, let me hope that even now the unquelled difficulties of some may have been set at rest. Even although the sublimer mysteries of that transcendental region on which we can but enter a certain way, although these should still be shrouded, and always may on this side of death, in all their wonted obscurity, from the eye of your intellect, I trust that this will not embarrass the course of that daily walk by which you are guided to every object that is desirable in this world, and which, if persevered in under the direction of an urgent and obvious principle, will at length conduct you to the light and liberty of heaven. Some of you perhaps may have caught a new glimpse of this recondite speculation, and can perceive how it is that the great Eternal Spirit may sit enthroned over the moral world, and guide it onward through all its transitions to its final destinies with as firm and unfaltering a hand as He wheels the planets in the firmament ; and yet that this entire and unexcepted supremacy on the part of God leaves to man all those activities which either prudence would enjoin, or the prospect of some distant and ulterior good would inspire him with. This will be enough for him who does not want to push his philosophy, or his theology either, beyond the outskirts of accessible truth. He is satisfied if he find that this doctrine, whether of Necessity or Predestination, neither overshadows

the characteristics and distinctions of morality, nor should repress the generous ambition of him who, fired with the love of virtue, or the prospect of that blooming paradise where virtue flourishes in immortal vigour, sets himself, and with all the energies of a high and holy determination, on that career opened up in the gospel, and which leads to glory, immortality, and honour. He sees enough in the little sphere that is around him for the guidance of his present history, and enough, too, of assurance, that as he moves onward in the career of an imperishable spirit, this light will grow and gather upon his path—that the day is coming when the mystery of God will at length be finished, and break out into open manifestation. Meanwhile, and amid all the obscurity which rests on the primitive decree and the ultimate destination which belong to him, he is content to find that there is a clearness in the present duties, and along the immediate links of that chain which is lost at either extremity, both in the eternity behind and the eternity before him; and while he postpones the lofty speculation on the origin of evil as wholly unresolvable at this moment by his understanding, he is content to think, that if he gives his will to the plain and practical directions of Christianity, he will reach those shores of light and blessedness where he shall know even as he is known.

18. And here, though yet perhaps it be somewhat premature, I cannot avoid making one allusion to the characteristics of our Scottish Theology—more profound and speculative, certainly, than that of our sister kingdom, and tinged throughout all its articles with the metaphysical genius of our nation. We have long thought of philosophical necessity, that it furnished the best clue to the theoretical difficulties of its creed, while, if rightly understood, it should leave the practical energy of its ministers, and of their ministrations in the cause of righteousness, wholly unimpaired. It is a doctrine, at the same time, about which, however attached to it, I feel no intolerance; and have occasionally met with the best of men, especially on the other side of the Tweed, who shrink from it with antipathy almost nervous, and that certainly partakes much more of the sen-



sitive than of the rational. There are many, even the saintliest and most devoted among the clergymen of England, who talk with the sincerest horror of our gloomy and repulsive Calvinism. You perhaps recollect how yourselves felt when eyeing with dismay some erudite and enormous folio, whose scowling frontispiece gave, in the costume and gravity of other days, the representation of him who penned it—a man who grappled with whole libraries, and then bequeathed some mighty tomes of his own by which to enlarge the stock and overgrowth of our body of divinity. With somewhat of this kind of dismay our northern theology is regarded, and this awful predestination is emphatically denounced as far the harshest and most offensive feature which belongs to it. I should have deemed it so too, had it not been for my thorough conviction that it left the offers of mercy, and the calls to righteousness, and all the motives and all the urgencies to a life of virtue, on the very footing in which it found them; and as to any other mischief of the doctrine itself, I think that the best proof upon this and upon any other topic is an experimental one, whenever we are able to find it. Ere I can admit the charge of our national doctrine being hostile to the great interests of virtue, I must first inquire into the state of our national character at the time when that doctrine was most zealously professed by our people, and most faithfully preached in our pulpits. We know not a broader and a stronger experimental basis on which to try this question, than a whole nation of Calvinists. And if it be true that the theology of our pulpits is fitted to shed a withering blight on all the moralities of the human character, what is the explanation which can be offered, if it be found, notwithstanding an influence so baleful, that Scotland, at the time when that theology most flourished and prevailed, lifted, throughout all her parishes, so erect a front among the nations of Christendom—not for the intelligence alone, but for the worth and practical virtues of her population.

19. There are many who can tastefully admire the loveliness of a cultivated scene, but have neither taste nor skill for the coarse operations of husbandry; and there are many who can

gaze with delight on the beauties of a moral landscape, while they utterly nauseate the principle which sustains them. Let not the deep and didactic theology of our land be exchanged for one more slender than itself, if on its basis the charities and the integrities and the sobrieties of its people are upholden ; nor let us think lightly of that culture which yields an efflorescence so precious as that of a virtuous and well-trained peasantry.

20. And if there have been indeed a degeneracy among our population—if not so sturdy or so well-built in the cardinal virtues as their fathers of a former age, there are undoubtedly other causes for this than that we have kept too closely by, or infused the minds of our people too deeply with the olden theology of Scotland. On the contrary, in as far as theology has had to do with the melancholy declension, it is because of the meagre and superficial theology, which, during near a century of withering and dreary Moderatism, had replaced the evangelism of other days. And most assuredly, if aught is to arrest this degeneracy, it will not be the importation of its theology from England, and as little by a supply from the south of its altars, or its surplices, or its gorgeous candlesticks, even though aided by the mystic charm, either of pulpits with their faces to the south-west, or of ministers performing some unknown evolutions with their backs to the people. Least of all, will the figment of an apostolic succession be of aught avail against the chilling influences of a jejune and lifeless ministration.

21. Before proceeding to consider the scriptural testimonies upon this subject, let me assure you that the purpose of my argument for these few days has not been so much to school you into the belief of our dogma, as to prove that, with all the weight of an evidence in its favour, which I deem to be utterly resistless, and employed though it has been to assail the moral system, and to overturn it, yet it leaves that system, whether viewed as a system of practical ethics or practical Christianity, in an attitude as entire and impregnable as before, with all its obligations unimpaired, and all its motives as fresh and operative as ever for the observance of it. Let the doctrine of Philoso-

phical Necessity, or, theologically speaking, the doctrine of Predestination, be as firmly established as it may, there is nothing in it which should efface that distinction between good and evil that stands so clearly engraven on the character of man, and nothing in it to deafen the energy of that voice by which the homage of our immediate admiration is rendered to virtue, and the quick indignancy of our execration and contempt is rendered as immediately to vice. My anxiety is to prove that both ethical science and practical Christianity stand on a basis as secure, even in conjunction with the doctrine of Necessity or Predestination, as in conjunction with the doctrine that is opposed to it ; and that under this system the whole economy of our moral feelings and moral judgments is every way as fully and busily in play. I do not want so much to satisfy you of the truth of the doctrine, as to satisfy you, that even though admitted to be true, there is nothing in it of that withering influence which sceptics on the one hand, and the advocates of the metaphysical liberty on the other, have chosen to ascribe to it ; and that still under the regimen of this universal causation, virtue remains a plant as beautiful and immortal as before—and vice that thing of utter loathsomeness, against which the wise and the good will never cease to maintain their unsparing and implacable warfare. There is just as little in this doctrine to annul the distinction between virtue and vice in character, as to annul the difference between beauty and deformity in landscape. There is nought whatever in it to paralyze the energies of man ; and the various objects of his desire and preference stand, both to himself and to each other, in the very relation which they had before. And so we have seen a sturdy Predestinarian, the champion of a necessity as absolute and irreversible as fatalism, yet, in perfect consistency with his own principles, the most aspiring and practical of men, plying his assiduous labours along the career of a progressive excellence ; and, under the energies of a moral ambition the most untired and unquenchable, moving onward from one habit and acquirement to another, till his holiness has ripened him for heaven, and heaven, that is never opened but for the en-

trance of holiness, welcomes him to her immortal habitations. "Without holiness no man shall see God."

22. It does not follow that because the theoretical exposition of this doctrine comes suitably from the academic chair, it is equally suitable for the pulpit. There I have ever thought that there should be the utmost delicacy and reserve in the introduction of it—the proper business of its ministrations being to ply men with the proximate and contiguous inducements for entering upon or persevering in a religious course, or to urge them on to that practical movement, by which they turn from sin unto righteousness. It is a doctrine in fact which has less to do with the outset of the Christian course, than with the progress or the close of it; and it certainly serves at times to thicken those initial perplexities which beset the path of an inquirer. It is not with the decree that is behind him—it is not with the destiny that is before him, that the man who meditates an entrance on that career which leads to a blissful eternity, has properly to do. It is with the work of the day and the warfare of the day—it is with the prayers and performances of his current history—it is with the offers of pardon, and the calls of penitence—it is with the dangers of his irreligious course, and the urgencies of his instant reformation,—these it is the part of every minister to ply upon his people; and while he pours forth of his fervour and sincerity upon them—this doctrine, at the very moment that it is exemplified, may not be recognised. The time, in fact, of its most beneficial application, is not at the commencement, but towards the conclusion of the Christian course—after the struggle is drawing to a successful termination—after the virtue is well-nigh perfected, and the victory has been won—after the inferior principles of our nature have been subjugated, and a high and heavenly morality has gotten the ascendancy over them. It is then that the charm of this doctrine is felt—when that hand of election and superintendence by which he has been led, only reminds him of the gratitude that he owes for the advancement of purity and principle to which he has been preferred, and for the now brightening prospect that lies before him.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON THE SCRIPTURAL NOTICES OF PREDESTINATION.

1. THE Scriptural argument for the doctrine of Predestination, like that for the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ, hinges not on the exclusive and unexcepted meaning of certain words, but on the undoubted meaning of these and other words which no one thinks of controverting in certain passages. Over and above this there is the impression, and that not a groundless or vague one, but perfectly legitimate and well warranted, which every plain reader gathers from the general scope and strain of the sacred writings. The terms *προορίζω*, *προθέσις*, *ἐκλογή*, *ἐκλεκτοί*, may all have meanings in the places which our adversaries point out which do not avail for the establishment of our dogma ; but enough for us if they do have the available meaning in other places which can also be pointed out ; and, besides this, if there be statements and allegations in the Bible which are abundantly distinct and decisive in our favour, without the help of these terms at all. It is thus that there might be a most effective evidence lying too near the surface to admit of any profound or critical treatment at our hands, and which surely is not the less valuable, because philologists and scholars are disappointed of their favourite exercise in the treatment of a doctrine which can be settled without them. It is not philosophy—it is sheer pedantry, or what I should call senseless and unintelligent scholasticism, to undervalue proofs and testimonies merely because they are patent to the eyes of all men.

2. Our first observation is, that throughout the Bible there is ascribed to God not merely the universal creation, but the

universal government and disposal of all things :—" Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things."—(Rom. xi. 36.) " Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not ?"—(Lam. iii. 37.) This is the clear assertion of a supremacy in the moral world. Men are the instruments. Whatever cometh to pass because men did it, or men gave the order for it, cometh to pass at the bidding of the Almighty. " He hath done whatsoever he hath pleased."—(Psalm cxv. 3.) And that this pleasure extends to, or rather takes a more special direction to, and interest in, the acts of living and willing creatures, we are told in Phil. ii. 13—" For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." " I laboured more abundantly than they all ; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."—(1 Cor. xv. 10.) The passages which are most to our purpose are those where God is represented as acting in and through men—as when the psalmist prays against being made the reproach of the foolish ; and, when he was made their reproach, says, " I was dumb, I opened not my mouth ; because thou didst it."—(Psalm xxxix. 9.) We have the same lesson in the direct history of David, when Shimei cursed him, and he acquiesced, because he looked on this as coming from the Lord, who made use of this evil man as His instrument ; for that the Lord had said unto him, Curse David, the Lord had bidden him. There are many other testimonies to the same effect : see Isa. xlvi. 10, 11 ; 2 Sam. xvii. 14 ; Isa. xiv. 26, 27. The affirmation of Eph. i. 11, that God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, carries in it the doctrine of Predestination, and in terms, too, which stand clear of all controversy. We are told in language too plain for the disputations of philology, that all things are worked by God, all events are brought about by Him, because His will and His counsel extend to everything—marking a sovereignty as absolute, and an agency as unexcepted and entire, in the things of the mental as in those of the material world. In like manner, we read in Prov. xix. 21, that the devices of a man's heart are many, but that the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Now these devices of man relate, in the general, to acts and

purposes of his own, or to what he should determine, and what he should do in given circumstances. Nevertheless, and however he shall determine and do, it is the counsel of the Lord which always comes to pass; yet not always in opposition to man—for his counsels, and wishes too, have often their fulfilment, and such a fulfilment as must be at one with the counsel of the Lord which ever stands. In other words, God not only prevails over man when opposed to him, but He must overrule all his volitions and doings universally. If everything falls out according to the will of God, then, whenever an event is the result of man's purposes and doings, these purposes and doings must have been controlled by the Almighty—nay, are the very steps by which He accomplishes His pleasure.

3. But, secondly, this foreknowledge, and, of consequence, this preordination and control of the Divinity over human affairs, and so over human volitions, is strikingly evinced in the prophecies of Scripture. It is not of these, as an evidence for the truth of our religion, that we now speak—seeing that the events predicted, so remote from all calculation, and depending on such a number of unseen incidents and forces, were utterly beyond the reach of all natural prescience; but it is of this prescience, as a token of their certainty, or that they were the objects of a knowledge anterior to themselves, and thus of a power anterior to themselves, and which gave birth to their fulfilment. It greatly enhances the proof, when we find that it is the moral world which is the great theatre of almost all the prophecies. The revolutions which take place there, the victories of one nation, the judgments to be inflicted on another—and these not in the form of earthquakes or inundations, though sometimes of pestilences and famines, and of which the agencies are material; but far oftener in the form of wars, the fruits of men's policy or ambition, and the issue of which, as dependent on the resolves of many thousand heads and the movement of many thousand arms, implies the operation of countless mental agencies, all of which are foreseen, and therefore all of them controlled. It is difficult to make the best selection out from such a multitude of prophecies, all illus-

trative of the truth of this observation. Take, as an example, the prophecies respecting Cyrus in parts of the forty-fifth and forty-sixth chapters of Isaiah; or that respecting Nebuchadnezzar, as given by Jeremiah, xxvii. 4-8. There is, no doubt, a foretelling of pestilence and famine, but just as confidently a foretelling of defeats and victories; and not only so, but an express claim, on the part of the Almighty, of as thorough a control, by His great power and outstretched arm, over man and beast, as over all the inanimate things of creation; and this, not only in that He made them, but in that He directs and disposes of them at pleasure—giving the earth to whom he saw meet;—a distribution this which implies the subordination of myriads of wills to the Governor of all, the wills of those rulers and their subject hosts, by whom these various countries of the world have been won in war, and by whom they continue to be occupied. “And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant; and all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son’s son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.” See to the same effect another manifestation of the same sort in Ezek. xxx. 24, 25. But we can allege nought more striking than our Saviour’s prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, unless it be the predictions relative to the place and time of His own birth, and the circumstances of His death and burial, turning, as they did, on the minutest incidents; but proving that the humours and impulses of the human spirit were as much in view of the Divine intelligence, and as much under the control of the Divine power, as are the elements of the material world. This the actual presentation of the two following verses will impress more clearly than any description of ours can, as marking how it is that the doings of man take their rise in the counsel and predetermination of God:—“For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”—(Acts iv. 27, 28.) “But



those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."—(Acts iii. 18.) "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."—(Matt. xvi. 21.) "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."—(Acts ii. 23.)

4. In these last quotations, we have examples of the prophecy of evil; and if the foreknowledge of an event imply the necessity of that event, it would seem to warrant the assertion, that if evil be prophesied, this implies that evil has been predestinated. Now, with most minds, it is this which forms the great stumblingblock in the way of their receiving the doctrine of predestination. They shrink from the conclusion which it seems to involve, that it would make God the author of evil, even of moral evil—of the wickedness, for instance, of those who crucified the Saviour, an event which took place by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Before that we enter on the direct and immediate testimonies for this said doctrine, and in order to its establishment as one of the articles of our theology, let us inquire if there be any averments of the word of God which connect His sovereignty, whether in the way of permission or appointment, with any of the evil that has ever occurred in history, or that exists anywhere in the world. We have, then, in the first place, Is. xlv. 7—"I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these things." And again, "Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?"—(Lam. iii. 38.) And again, "Shall the trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?"—(Amos iii. 6.) Further, Matt. xviii. 7—"Wo unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh." We are told in this passage that there is a need be for offences—a need be, it would appear,

for temptations to moral evil—a necessity still deep and mysterious to us, for it is not explained here and nowhere else in the Bible; but without an explanation, we are expressly told that necessity there is for a seducing influence on the part of some men, the tendency of which, and often the effect of which, is to lure other men into the ways of disobedience and destruction. The reason, or the principle of a dispensation so profoundly enigmatical, has in it all the difficulty and all the darkness wherewith the question of the origin of evil is encompassed. There is a need be—thus much we are told, and it is most important information coming from the mouth of the Son of God—a need be, both for offences and for the consequent wo which they bring upon the world, and most of all upon him by whom the offence cometh. We know by our own observation, the existence of evil; and we know from this telling of our Saviour, that there is a necessity for its existence—and, indeed, but for such a necessity, it would have been as much beyond the possibility of our comprehension why an all-powerful but at the same time all-wise and all-good God should have permitted evil, as why He should have created or ordained it. It is well for man to know the limitation of his own faculties, and be prepared, with all the docility of his own conscious ignorance—like the scholar who is sensible that he has everything to learn—for the lessons of an authoritative revelation. On this principle we not only read, but receive simply as it is written, the announcement, that “The Lord hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil,” (Prov. xvi. 4;) and more especially when told that there is a purpose served by the evil passions of humanity, as in the following sentence, “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee,” and, in so far as it does not contribute to this end, the remainder or excess of that wrath shalt Thou restrain.—(Ps. lxxvi. 10.) Regarding this subserviency of evil to good, we are favoured with a sort of alleviating glimpse, though very far from a full manifestation, in the history of Joseph, who, in converse with his brethren, said, that “As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this

day, to save much people alive.”—(Gen. l. 20.) We are sensible that this does not resolve the general problem ; but when thus expressly told of this particular instance or passage in the world’s history, that evil was permitted or brought to pass by the Almighty, and that for the production of a general good—is it for us to deny the possibility or even the likelihood that what is thus true of evil particular, may also hold true of evil universal ? In my utter ignorance and utter incompetency to pronounce on this question, I recoil not from any of the informations which our well-accredited Scripture sets before me. When God says that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, we take the statement plainly as it is given, and can have no doubt either as to the fact or the purpose of the fact, a purpose which—reaching beyond what is declared to distant and unknown consequences, far beyond my powers of vision—may, for aught I know, be consistent with the perfection of a Being possessed of the highest wisdom and the highest moral excellence. The narrative is given thus:—“ And the Lord said to Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh ; for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show thee my signs before him ;” and here follows the immediate and declared though not the whole purpose—“ and that thou mightest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son’s son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them ; that ye may know that I am the Lord.”—(Exod. x. 1, 2.) It is thus lessoned and thus prepared by these palpable informations of the Bible, that I would have you to enter on the study of what it discloses and tells respecting the doctrine of predestination.

5. The following are the words in which its principal testimonies are couched : *προορίζειν*, a word in Acts iv. 28, already quoted, and marking what God had purposed or determined before. Then in Rom. viii. 29, 30—“ For whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate (*προώρισε*) to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” On the

one hand, there are some friendly to the doctrine, who imagine it as being of such an absolute and unconditional quality, that it supersedes human effort, and makes human character an element of utter insignificance in regard to aught like a bearing on eternity. On the other hand, we are told by those adverse to the doctrine, that predestination is based upon character, and that all which it amounts to is God's previous decree, or as when He promulgates His law, His declaration to bestow everlasting life upon the good—leaving it for man to work out this condition on the strength of his own free agency. We cannot imagine a testimony more fitted than that we have now given, and this by one and the same utterance, to rectify both of these misconceptions. On the one hand, we read here of predestination, that, so far from annulling the condition, it confers upon it the same irreversible certainty which it does on the ultimate fulfilment. They who are predestinated to eternal glory in the heavens, are as much predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Saviour. To make sure of the one predestination, we must make alike sure of the other—there being as much of a fixedness, of a settled ordination, in the means as in the end—so as to make it very sure, that if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of His; and very necessary, nay indispensable, that we should walk in the steps of Him whom God hath set forth as our example, and that the same mind should be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. On the other hand, it is clear, and from this passage, that, instead of the predestination being founded on the character, the character is founded on the predestination; and that the necessity of our anterior holiness, ere the happiness of eternity can be ours, so far from impairing the sovereignty of God, when rightly understood, has just the effect to confirm and to extend it. We can allege no place in Scripture more decisive than this for the twofold purpose, both of proving the doctrine, and of proving that it is a doctrine according to virtue and to all godliness. But again, Eph. i. 5—“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.” From the preceding

context here, we have a remarkable confirmation of the lesson given forth in the last quoted verses. He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, marking the eternity of the ordination; but ordination to what? not only to an inheritance in heaven as the children of God, but to an essential and personal qualification for heaven, even "that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Before leaving these instances, let me refer you to Luke xxii. 22, (*ἀρισμείνον,*) where the word occurs without the preposition, and so means determined, without expressing that it was so determined beforehand.

6. Another word that meets us in the course of these investigations is *πρόγνωσις*, as in Rom. viii. 29, already quoted—Whom he did foreknow, them also he predestinated. Our opponents would have it, that all whom He foreknew would be penitent, or virtuous, or obedient, them He did predestinate to eternal life—thus subordinating the decrees of God to the doings of men. But unfortunately for their view, the predestination here is a predestination in the first instance to the character of saints, ere they should be translated to the glory of the inheritance of saints, so as very clearly to subordinate the doings and the moral state of men to the preordination of God. And in regard to foreknowledge, it has been well remarked, that to be known of God, is often synonymous in Scripture with being loved by Him: as when, in the first psalm, it is said, that He knoweth the way of the righteous. He owneth their way, He approves of it, and the righteous themselves are the objects of His affectionate recognition; whereas He seeth the wicked afar off, marking them to be outcasts from His favour, to be the aliens from and the enemies of God. For some examples of the term knowledge being used in the sense of affection, see John x. 14, where Christ says, "I know my sheep;" and 2 Tim. ii. 19, where we read, that "God knoweth them that are his." In counterpart to these instances, where "to know" is equivalent to own with complacency and regard, we are told in Ps. cxxxviii. 6, that the Lord "knoweth the proud afar off." Many other such instances might be given;

but let us satisfy ourselves with the three following, which stand in more immediate relation to our doctrine:—Rom. xi. 2, “God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew.” These people are afterwards designated the “remnant according to the election of grace,” or were the objects of God’s electing love, and so were not only foreknown in the bare intellectual sense of the term, but were predestinated also. Then we have 1 Peter i. 2, corroborating the explanation now given—“Elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father.” But here I cannot refrain the lengthening out of this quotation, because of another precious testimony to this our doctrine being altogether on the side of all moral excellence—“Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth”—an election carried into effect by that Spirit whose fruit is in all righteousness, and goodness, and truth. The last example we shall give is taken from the same chapter, (1 Peter i. 20,) where, speaking of Christ as a sacrifice, it is said, that “Verily he was fore-ordained (*προεγνωσμένον*) before the foundation of the world.” This marks at least how much our translators understood the foreknowledge to be identical with the predestination;—not but that we regard this foreknowledge, even in its intellectual sense alone, as being decisive of the certainty of an event, and alike decisive on the principle of God being the Sovereign of all, of its having been decreed in heaven.

7. The next word that we shall notice is *πρόθεσις*, which, even without the preposition, illustrates its own meaning in the following instance, 1 Thess. v. 9—“For God hath not appointed (*ἔθετο*) us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. ii. 8—“And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed.” Then, with the preposition, and when there is a more direct bearing upon our doctrine, the appointment becomes a determination beforehand, which seems the very signification of the word *purpose*. For examples of this, take Rom. viii. 28—“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his pur-

pose." (*κατὰ πρόθεσιν.*) Then we have Rom. ix. 11—"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, (*πρόθεσις τοῦ Θεοῦ,*) according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Yet let us here note, however, that though the election be not of works, yet it is an election to works. The primary fountain-head is election, and not works; but works form the invariable result of an election to everlasting life—and so the predestinated are chosen to be holy and without blame before God in love; and the chosen are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. If the question relate to the first original cause of our eternal blessedness, it is of God, who sheweth mercy, and not of man who willeth or runneth; but it is not the less true, that God worketh in every such man both to will and to do, and that every such waiteth on the Lord for strength to run, and not be weary: and the consequence is, that he so runs as to obtain the eternal life, even that eternal life to which he has been chosen before the foundation of the world.

8. There are words of another class, nearly connected with the subject, and of very frequent occurrence in Scripture. *Ἐκλογή* is used to denote election to an office, as in 1 Sam. x. 24; John vi. 70—"Have not I chosen you twelve?" (*ἐξελέξαίμην*); see also Deut. iv. 37. But the following relate more closely to election unto life: Matt. xx. 16—"Many be called, but few chosen," (*ἐκλεκτοί*); Rom. xi. 7—"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election (*ἐκλογή*) hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." This is a very decisive verse against those who contend for a national to the exclusion of an individual predestination. We have no doubt that the main design of the Apostle, throughout the whole of this reasoning, was to vindicate the calling of the Gentiles, or their admission along with the Jews to an equal participation in the blessings of the gospel. But though this was his chief purpose, and he has made it manifest that by a national election there was a division of Israelites from Gentiles—yet when our adversaries would maintain that there is nothing more than this, the further subdivision of these Israelites, between

those of the election and those who were blinded, is fatal to their argument. I would have you to mark the next testimony, as being particularly strong and clear upon this point, 2 Thess. ii. 13—"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The word for "chosen" here is *εἴλετο*: He hath taken you—selected, segregated, separated, from the mass. The first antecedent, as it were, in the process of their salvation, is the assumption of them by God—the first term, if we may so speak, of the series; but the intermediate terms are not unnoticed. Nor even here, where the doctrine is propounded in the most absolute form, do we find that on that account the conditional is excluded; and we may learn from the means here specified—the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth—for carrying the purpose of God into effect, that the repentance and faith of the elect are in every way as indispensable as the bliss of their eternity is sure. We have a similar progression conjoined with the first purpose and predestination of God, and emanating therefrom, in the verses already quoted from the Romans—"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." In connexion with this term, see Titus i. 1; Ephes. i. 4; Matt. xxiv. 22; Mark xiii. 20, 22, 27; Luke xviii. 7; Rom. viii. 33; Col. iii. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 10; Rom. ix. 11. This last is a very decisive testimony as to the origin or first cause of election. It comes of God, and not of man. Its fountain-head is not man's character or work, but God's purpose—hence termed in Rom. xi. 5, "the election of grace;" and they who are its objects are called the elect of God. This last expression is in full harmony and keeping with what Christ says in John vi. 37, 39. The only other testimony I shall quote here is in Acts xiii. 48—"As many as were ordained (*τεταγμένοι*) to eternal life, believed." To evade the force of this testimony, the Arminians would say,—As many as were disposed to eternal life believed. Even though this interpre-



tation were admitted, we should still appeal to this verse in evidence of our doctrine. We do not refuse that it is through the medium of man's dispositions that he attains to faith, and reaches at last his destination of eternal blessedness—receiving as the end of his faith the salvation of his soul. But we look upward to the cause of these dispositions, or of this disposedness on the part of man; and we can refer it to nothing but the good pleasure of God. And accordingly the verb is here given in the passive form, representing man as operated upon; for who in fact has made him to differ, and what has he that he did not receive? It is the hand of God who works in man both to will and to do; and His own people receive the disposition which leads to faith—the faith which leads to life eternal.

9. But this last observation prepares the way for another class of Scripture proofs, with a few of which we shall conclude this part of our demonstration. The decree, the purpose that such men shall be saved, may be referred to the past eternity. The steps which lead to and are preparatory for this salvation, may be looked upon as performed in time, and many of them along the course of their history in the world; and more especially that great step which is denominated conversion, and by which men pass from death unto life, from the state of condemnation to the state of acceptance with God. Now, if not only at the passing of the decree God stood alone, but at conversion, which may well be regarded as the execution of the decree, God does all, and man nothing but as an instrument in His hands—this may well be regarded as a corroborative, nay, in itself as a decisive proof in favour of our doctrine. How little, or rather how absolutely nothing, man can do in this transition may be gathered from the following verses—1 Cor. ii. 14; iii. 5, 7; John vi. 44; Rom. viii. 7, 8. Contrast these with the following passages, in which God is represented as the sole efficient in the great work of our translation from a state of nature to a state of salvation—Ezek. xxxvi. 26; John iii. 5. This testimony has a twofold force in it, seeing it both tells what man cannot do without the Spirit, and what he can be made to do by the Spirit. Eph. ii. 10—this, too, is a very pregnant verse, representing those who are saved as, in respect to

their new habit and state, the created, or the workmanship of God, so as to be now made capable of good works—which works, so far from being superseded by any preordination, He hath ordained beforehand that we should walk in them. Here God's strict and absolute predestination set forth in His decrees, and man's busy performance of all his duties, so far from conflicting with each other, are most thoroughly at one. See further Eph. i. 19 ; and, again, though already quoted, Phil. ii. 13.

10. After reading the various passages wherein the predestinations of God are associated with the blessings and beatitudes of eternity, thus falling in with the statement of the Apostle James, that "every good and perfect gift cometh from above," theologians are apt to shrink from the contemplation of such an entire and absolute sovereignty on the part of the Supreme Being, as might lead to the conclusion, that without His appointment—though many would rather say without His permission—no event, of whatever character, could have happened, be it good or evil, and no being, whether righteous or wicked, could have been made such as he is—though many would rather say, could have been left to become such as he is—but because God in His pleasure, and according to His power, willed it to be so. We confess no fellowship with the difficulties, or the sensitive recoil, of these theologians ; and whether the information of Scripture be to the effect that evil, physical or moral, obtains in this universe of God by His ordination, or by His sufferance, we are ready to abide by that information simply and literally as it is set before us. We have already given testimonies in regard to the present evil that obtains in the world as connected with the appointment and agency of God ; and for ourselves we shrink not from these, but take them as there set before us. As little do we shrink from similar testimonies bearing on the future and final condition of those whom God hath not elected to life everlasting. On a subject far too unwieldy for the comprehension or the grasp of my puny intellect, I feel that it is not for me to question or to resist the statements of an authoritative revelation ; neither will I be dislodged by any semblance of harshness or severity, from my conviction both of the perfect goodness and perfect

intelligence of God. They are but ephemeral passages in the history of this world, itself but a speck in the universe of being, to which my observation extends; and yet even in these brief and partial evolutions, I can perceive, as in the case already quoted of Joseph and his brethren, the subserviency of evil to good. And is it for me to say, in the multitude of unknown relations around me, of distant and unknown consequences before me, that the same will not be realized in the great scale of eternity? On the whole of our doctrine, therefore, even in its most mysterious, and, as many would say, its most repulsive form—we mean the form of reprobation, we shall be guided by the few, for they are but few testimonies of Scripture. Even these afford but glimpses of the doctrine, or incidental bearings upon it, rather than naked and absolute statements of the doctrine itself; yet they cannot, in my view, be evaded without a disingenuous treatment of the plain sense of Scripture—1 Thess. v. 9, “For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ;” whence the inference is, that all who are not appointed to salvation are appointed to wrath. The great bulk even of our orthodox theologians, would rather view and express the matter in this way, that those who are not saved are simply left to their own natural inheritance as the children of wrath, and are therefore let alone. 1 Peter ii. 8—“Them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.” This, too, the adversaries, and also the modifiers of our doctrine, would try to get the better of, by restricting the appointment to the consequences of disobedience, viewing the disobedience itself as the act solely of the creature. Jude 4—“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men,” &c. And so of this passage, too, both they who deny, and they who blink our doctrine in the form of reprobation, will tell us that these ungodly were of old ordained not to their ungodliness, but, being ungodly, they were ordained to the condemnation that follows it. I shall give one testimony more, and that perhaps the most difficult of all to be disposed of, by those who, in the handling of this argument, would soften the representations of Scripture down to the

standard of their own conceptions and their own taste: Rom. ix. 18—"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." This looked to in connexion with the narrative of God hardening the heart of Pharaoh, does seem to imply a counterpart operation to that of the grace which carries into effect the decree of a favourable predestination. Those whom God hath ordained to eternal life He also ordains to the character that is meet for it; and accomplishes this ordination by the work of the Spirit, who takes the heart of stone out of those whom God hath chosen to everlasting blessedness, and gives them a heart of flesh. And in contrast with this, does it not appear, as if upon those who are the objects of an adverse predestination, He puts forth a contrary operation—not softening, but hardening? and as if there were as much of positive efficiency on the part of God in conducting the one operation as the other, it is likened to the respective operations of the potter over the clay which he moulds at will into vessels of any use or form that pleases him: Rom. ix. 21—"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Here the Apostle stops, as if he had reached at last the human confines of the territory, and could proceed no further. What he now says is in the form of questions, What if God willing? and, Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? If we might compare the sacred with the secular, the manner in which he leaves off reminds us strongly of the queries by Sir Isaac Newton, who, after he had reached the limits of his *terra cognita*, planted it round with so many queries, which we might well call the confessions of ignorance. It is interesting thus to compare the philosopher standing at the utmost verge of his discoveries, with the Apostle standing at the utmost verge of his revelations, at which their respective positions they cease to affirm, and venture only to interrogate—the one with the modesty of true science, and the other with the modesty of true religion—each now arrived at the extremity of his own illuminated region, and satisfying himself with casting an inquisitive, though intellectual glance at the region which lies beyond it.

## CHAPTER V.

ON THE TRANSCENDENTAL VIEWS WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN OF  
PREDESTINATION BY THOSE WHO HAVE VENTURED TO SPECULATE  
ON THE PART WHICH GOD HAS IN IT.

I. WE now confess that our own views, both of the general and the Christian philosophy, would lead us to desist entirely from any further speculation, at least as far as the object is to vindicate the Deity, or to theorize at all on His purposes and ways. We have long admired the aphorism of Butler, and should ever like to proceed on it, that, on every theme in theology, it greatly more concerns us to know man's part in it than God's part in it; and this not merely because of a near practical and personal interest in the former, but because of its lying more within our reach, and therefore presenting us with a clearer and more accessible, and so more legitimate topic for the exercise of our limited faculties. For ourselves, then, we feel no demand, and have almost no curiosity, respecting the attempts of those more daring transcendentalists who have ventured on the depths and mysteries of that arduous doctrine, in the consideration of which we have been engaged so long. We are satisfied with the final deliverance of Paul on the interrogations of those who sought in his time to arraign the inscrutable policy of heaven:—Who art thou, O man, that replest against God? Who art thou, O creature of a day, and whose vision extends but a little way around in the vastness of immensity—who art thou that would seek to pronounce or even to probe into the counsels of the Eternal, and He the Creator and the Sovereign of all worlds? We are not ashamed to say, for we hold it accordant with all that is soundest and

best in science, that the statements of Scripture are quite enough for us, and that we should like to stop where it stops. And yet there are certain plausibilities, certain conjectures of profound and ingenious men, who have at least attempted a deeper fetch than others among the arcana of the subject, and which I should like to place before you, not to regale the curiosity or imagination, but for the sake of certain practical uses, which even an unproved, if only not a disproved hypothesis, might subserve in theology. The men whom I have chiefly in view are Leibnitz and Dr. Williams, and perhaps more cautious than either, Jonathan Edwards—all friendly to revelation, and who were prompted to their enterprise chiefly, we believe, by a desire to alleviate those sensations of revolt which the naked statements of Scripture have awakened in many a bosom ; and to vindicate the Deity from the infidel charge of having been the author of sin, or the direct and efficient cause of moral evil.

2. The first of these devices, for we can view it in no other light than as a device of speculation, not unlikely, however, and not capable of being overthrown at the hands of adversaries, which had its first origin with the schoolmen of the Middle Ages, is what they term the privative character of evil, whereby it is meant to affirm that evil—moral evil is chiefly intended—is not a thing of positive character or agency at all, but a mere negation. This, however, had best be illustrated by examples. Cold is deemed by the greater number of those philosophers who have to do with the physical sciences, as a mere negation. According to this view of it, cold is not to be regarded as a thing of positive or direct efficiency, but as implying no more than the absence of heat. Heat and cold are not conceived of as two distinct and positive agents, endowed with adverse and opposite properties to each other ; but that heat is the only agent, and that cold, not a thing of efficiency but of deficiency, is the mere want of heat. Popularly, we may speak of heat and cold, and conceive of them as two contrary forces ; but properly and philosophically there is but one force, and that is heat, while cold is only the weakness or the want of heat. Along the scale of temperature, there is a point

of separation between what we should deem to be heat and what we should deem to be cold, which we therefore distinguish from each other, and give these respective names to them. The point at which, when rising to the higher temperature, we should pronounce it warm, or when sinking to the lower temperature, we should pronounce it cold, is regulated by the natural heat of our own bodies. If a substance of higher temperature than ours be applied to us, we gain heat from it, and feel it to be warm—if a substance of lower temperature than our own, we part with our heat to it, and feel it to be cold. At this rate heat and cold but indicate greater and less degrees of heat; nor are these feelings of ours of any force or avail against the doctrine that there is a universal caloric which pervades all things, and which more or less resides everywhere; or should there be anywhere an entire and absolute zero, still this but indicates a total negation of heat, and is not incompatible with the assertion, that no such thing as an affirmative or substantive cold exists in the universe.

3. Analogous to these views of heat and cold, are the views given forth of moral good and moral evil—and this for the service of our present argument. Sin is held to be a mere negation; and even to be wicked in the highest degree, is only to be lowest in the scale of character. Extreme depravity is but the extreme destitution of all that is good—not the opposite of virtue, but the utter and entire want of it. There is more of likelihood in this speculation than may appear at first sight; so that instead of a mere scholastic conception, it can often be held forth in the light of a practical and living reality. The worst characteristics of our nature can be described by negatives—as ungodliness, impiety, irreligion, injustice, insensibility, heartlessness, and being without natural affection. There is neither vice nor virtue in the mere love of self; but the very perfection of social virtue lies in a love of our neighbour equal to the love of self—so that to love our neighbour as ourselves, were the highest fulfilment of the second great commandment of the law. We have only to imagine successive deductions from the strength of this positive and good affection, so as to

effect successive deprivations on the character of man, plunging it deeper and deeper in moral evil, till the last and lowest extremity of wickedness, the moral zero were reached, by the utter extinction of this right and good principle from the bosom. It is thus that the inhumanity—a negation—of the most inhuman monster on earth could be realized. The man who to possess himself of his father's wealth, could plunge a dagger into his bosom, would rather have dispensed with the crime, if without it he could have attained his object. The enormity here does not lie in the love of the money; for one can imagine an equal love of it in the heart of another, but in whose heart there was all the strength of filial regard which kept it effectually in check—in which case the stronger his love to the money was, the stronger did it prove the counteractive force of the good and the right affection to be, the greater in fact the ascendancy and power of the virtuous principle within him. The vice lies in the weakness of this principle; and it is consummated, and brought as it were to its acme or maximum, by the utter want of it. We believe that many, perhaps all the phenomena of human wickedness, admit of explanation upon this theory—that moral evil is not the active and efficient adversary, but the negation of moral good; and that just as in the scale of physical temperature, every successive descent marks not, philosophically speaking, the increase of cold, but the diminution of heat, till we arrive at the natural zero, or what would popularly be called the greatest possible cold, but which is only the state of least possible heat, or rather the utter privation of it, because then its last remainders have disappeared; so in the moral scale of temperature, if such an image and expression be allowed to us, the moral zero, or greatest possible vice, is but the least possible, or rather the entire privation of virtue. We cannot tarry now at the work of giving all the requisite explanations, by which the difficulties in the way of this hypothesis, startling, we admit, on the first announcement, might be at least greatly mitigated, if not wholly done away. Before you pass on to a sentence of summary rejection, I would have you to consider how frequently,



even in our own language, the worst attributes of guilt are described by such negative prepositions as the *a privativum* in Greek; and in Greek itself there cannot be a more frequent and familiar phenomenon. In the catalogue, for example, of those monstrous vices which are presented to us with such frightful detail in the first chapter of the Romans, how often are they described by negatives, as *γονεύσιν ἀπειθεῖς*, disobedient to parents; and then follow in the next verse *ἄσυνέτους, ἄσυνθέτους, ἀστόργους, ἀσπόνδους, ἀνελέημονας*, rendered into English—without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. The negative character of these various properties is nearly preserved throughout in our own translation; while in the original, this unvaried reiteration of the *a privativum* is at least in keeping with, if it do not confirm, the scholastic idea of the privative character of evil. There is a great deal more in the hypothesis than many would at first sight allow; and beside the phenomena of language, there is much to be gathered in support of it from the phenomena of real character and life, from the *ipsa corpora*, if we may so speak, of the question now before us.

4. It is on the strength of this analogy, that the advocates of predestination and necessity reply to the charge of God being, by their system, the author of evil—that He is no more the author or efficient originator of evil than the sun is the author of cold. Were this luminary the only source of heat to our world, then but for him, or apart from his influences, the temperature of the whole planet, and of all the substances in it, were in the state of absolute zero; but in virtue of his emanations, operating with various degrees of force in the places more or less exposed to them, all substances might be somewhat elevated above the greatest possible cold, though some to greater and others to less degrees of temperature. In the gradation which thus ensues, a point can be imagined, such as the natural heat of the human body, above which all that is external to us, as sending heat into our frames, would feel warm, and all beneath us, abstracting from this heat, would feel cold. And so might we speak of the heat and the burning sands of Africa, of the cold and the icy

regions of Greenland; and yet it is very true, that the same sun which communicates all its heat to the former, communicates heat, too, and certainly sends down no cold, to the latter of these territories. No other emanation than of heat proceedeth from him, although in larger and lesser supplies to various places, so that some are higher, and others not so high, above the lowest level of an extreme or absolute negation. In like manner, He of whom we learn from the Apostle James, that He is the author of every good and of every perfect gift, sends no evil influence down upon His creatures, tempting or leading them to evil. Nothing but what is good descends from above; yet descending in various degrees on various creatures, there obtains a scale or gradation of morality amongst them. Yet they whose place is at the bottom of the scale, can only be said to have less of goodness than their fellows; or rather, are the least and lowest in goodness. But moral evil, by our hypothesis, being a mere negation, the lowest degree of goodness is tantamount to the highest degree of wickedness—a wickedness, however, which proceedeth not from the throne of God, but is altogether the creature's own, his greater wickedness only arguing him to have less of the celestial element, or celestial emanation, which cometh from above. He who is worse than his neighbour, is still better than he would have been but for the descent of a good influence, though in less degree, upon him also. We may say that there is more of evil, but this only means that there is less of good in him; and the worst of men, or he whose place is at the very bottom of the moral scale, is only there, or at zero, because of the utter destitution of all goodness. In a word, it is imaged that to the creature there belongeth nothing but privation, negation, impotency; while from the Creator there proceedeth nothing but what is positive, and that this positive is all on the side of grace and goodness. So far from God being the author of human sinfulness, or so far from this sinfulness having come out of the upper sanctuary upon our world, there is nothing which cometh thence but what is fitted to alleviate and to lessen it; insomuch, that however sunk in wickedness we may be, it is altogether due to an influ-

once from above, some of it perhaps descending even on the worst of men, that we are better than, or not so bad as we might otherwise have been—that men are not devils, or that the earth is not filled with all the atrocities and horrors of pandemonium ; so that, according to this conception, the existence of evil is owing to gradation, and, in this instance, is the gradation of goodness carried downwards, so that the greater degree of what is evil is but the less degree of what is good. The policy of such a system of things may be to us inscrutable, but still it is of a piece with that variety which, so far as we have access to know, forms throughout among the different classes of being, in their different degrees both of magnitude and quality, a reigning characteristic of the universe of God.

5. And the same idea is supported by other analogies. We should not say of the sun that he is the author or cause of darkness—the proper cause of night, for example, being the interposed earth between us and the sun, to whom, in fact, we owe that even our thickest darkness is somewhat alleviated. Even at midnight we have the benefit of his reflected light ; and so also is there a secondary influence from those on whom the grace of God hath directly operated, and which tends somewhat to temper and elevate and refine the character of others who are around them ; so that, in spite of the disruption which has taken place between God and the world, or that screen of interception by which the Creator is separated from the rebellious family of man, still, from His own peculiar people, from those whom He has selected as the children of light, shining like lights in the world, there does proceed an influence which tends to mitigate the moral depravity, or, as it may be termed, the moral darkness of our earth—depravity and darkness, or darkness, whether in the moral or natural sense of the word, being alike viewed as negations. Whatever, then, is of negation, is altogether of man ; whatever raises man above this negation, by however so little, comes altogether from God. He chooses so to raise them in greater or less degrees ; and of this we might not be able to give an absolute explanation, but we can at least say, that it falls in with a universal analogy. In

descending beneath the surface of the ocean, there is such a gradation of light, each stratum absorbing so much of the sun's rays, so that with every descent the light lessens, or the darkness is aggravated, till at length it is said to become total and entire, without the least alleviation, at the bottom of every deep sea. It is not the sun which causes this profound darkness, but the absorbing medium through which it passes; and neither is it contended, is it the great moral and spiritual luminary, the Sun of Righteousness above, who is the cause of the wickedness below—which wickedness is conceived to lie not any more than darkness in aught that is positive or efficient, but in the low degree, and at length when aggravated to the uttermost, in the entire privation of all goodness.

6. But the most plausible, perhaps the most effective, illustration of any, yielding at least the semblance, I could almost say the probability, of a vindication for the existence of evil, is that which is taken from the *vis inertiae* of matter. Some contend for this as an essential property of matter; and, for aught we know, it may be so. We often hear of moral and mathematical and logical necessities being alleged as so many limitations to the power of the Deity, which should rather be spoken of as impossibilities because they are contradictions, than as impossibilities beyond even the reach of Omnipotence, as if any attribute of the Godhead were thereby infringed upon. The impossibility lies in the thing itself, and not in any defect or limitation on the part of the Deity, insomuch that we hold it an incorrect way of putting it, to say that God cannot make a thing to be and not to be at the same time, or that he cannot change the properties of figures or numbers so as, for example, to cause that two and three shall be equal to seven, or three angles of a rectilinear triangle to be greater or less than two right angles. And there is one such necessity or impossibility which, so far from attaching defect or infirmity to God, forms an evidence of highest perfection, even of a truth so inflexible that He cannot lie. Now, for anything we can say, there might be physical as well as moral necessities, more than we are able to assign, though we might imagine some of them.

For God to make a being equal to Himself, might just be as great an impossibility as it were to lessen and impair any of His attributes. There are perfections of His which might be incommunicable to another, so as that in the act of creating there should be a necessity for beings inferior to Himself; and yet creation, with all the essential defects and infirmities which come along with it, be a glory and a blessedness notwithstanding. And so in the creation of matter, its *vis inertiae*, as essential to the very being and constitution of such a substance, might form the necessary condition of its existence—not an active property, but a thing of entire passiveness. It supplied Leibnitz with one of his happiest illustrations.—A laden vessel will be borne down the river with a slowness proportional to the burden which it carries. But this slowness does not proceed from without, but from within. So far from the slowness in its motion being caused by the stream, the stream is the cause of all the velocity which there is in the motion; or, in other words, the velocity cometh from the stream, and the slowness from the cargo. Now this illustration of Leibnitz is throughout the argument of Dr. Williams. His reasoning proceeds wholly on the idea of what may be termed a moral *vis inertiae*, or, as he calls it, the essential defectibility of the creature. All virtue in man, be it great or little, cometh, according to this view of it, from the grace that is above, just as all motion in the vessel, be it quick or slow, cometh from an impulse that is without. Vice is but the defect of virtue, just as slowness is the defect of velocity; and vice in its greatest possible aggravation is but the total want of virtue, corresponding to rest, which is but the total want of motion: and so God is not the cause or author of sin, any more than the stream on which the vessel moves is the cause of slowness. Whatever is given by the stream adds motion to the vessel—whatever cometh from God adds virtue to the creature. The slowness arises from the essential *vis inertiae* of the dead matter—the sin arises from the essential defectibility of the created though living agent. It is thus that our ingenious transcendentalists make their escape from the revolting conception

that God is the author of sin. He is the author and dispenser, they allege, of nothing but grace, the alleviator and antagonist of sin. And all for which He is responsible is, that He dispenses variously, observing the same rule or method of gradation here which is discernible everywhere, or throughout the universe at large. It is thus they can avoid the offensive imputation of God being the originator of moral evil. They can express it otherwise, and thus soften what might else be a harsh and offensive representation. They speak of God permitting evil, but not ordaining it. They speak of His withholding grace from some, which He bestows on others, but never of any positive operation by Him that tendeth to evil. It is true that He has positively willed the creation into existence; and thus, with all its necessary defects and disorders, hath He given birth to an infinite and overpassing blessedness. All the blessedness and all the virtue proceed from Himself; all the misery and all the sins, or privatively speaking, all the shortcomings, proceed from the essential defectibility of the creature.

7. This hypothesis is in good keeping with Leibnitz's speculation on the optimism of our universe. It might, according to him, be the best possible, notwithstanding the evil that is implicated therewith; and as such was selected amongst all the other conceivable forms of a creation, not because of its evil, but because of its greatest possible good, or because yielding the greatest possible amount of virtue and happiness. This he represents as the motive on which the Deity gave birth to our actual world, not because of the evil necessarily and by the constitution of the creature bound up with it, but because of all schemes for an order of created beings it was the best that could have been determined on. He would thence conclude, that God did not create our world because of its evil, but, in harmony with the perfect benevolence and all the other high characteristics of Deity, because of its greatest good. He created our universe because of the greatest good that was in it, and not because of the evil that was in it. The end of God in creation was not that evil should exist, but the greatest possible good. This was the direct object; the evil is the inci-

dental accompaniment—not in being because desired of God, but owing to the essential defectibility of the creature, or to what Leibnitz and others have termed its defective receptivity. All, then, which was positive in the will of God when He made the world had respect to the good that was in it, its greatest possible good, and not to the evil. He formed it *because* it was good, and *though* it was evil. It was the good and not the evil which formed the moving impulse in the heart of the Deity when He determined to create our universe. He so determined *because* of the greatest good that was in it, and *although* there was evil in it—which evil, for aught we know, could not have been detached from our present complex system of things without a reduction of happiness and virtue on the whole. He created our world for the sake of its good, and notwithstanding its evil; and only permitting the evil because of its subserviency, from the relations and consequences of things, to the greatest amount of good. Now it is that for the sake of which, and not that notwithstanding which, He created the universe, which fixes and determines the motive of the Deity in creation, and that alone, therefore, which forms the indication or exponent of the Divine character. It is on the strength of such ingenious, but as they appear to us at the same time such forcible and substantial considerations, that Leibnitz grounded his reconciliation of the all-perfect character of God with the existence and origin of evil. Nothing can be regarded as properly the emanation of His will, but the good that is in the universe—a universe which He willed into being because of its greatest good, or because the best of all possible universes; and not because of its evil, the necessity for which can be no more detached from the creature than its *vis inertiae* from matter. And thus He did not properly produce, He but permitted evil—the permission, and not the thing permitted, being the proper object of the Divine determination.

8. After all, this is but a hypothesis, with not enough of strength and evidence for the positive establishment of itself, and yet with enough of strength for all that we expect or desire at its hands—which is, to neutralize the objections of infi-

delity. For ourselves, we have no such demand for any such solutions of this great mystery—the origin of evil—as have been attempted either by Leibnitz and others of modern times, or by the speculatists of the Middle Ages. We are quite content to adjourn the question till the day shall declare it—the great day of manifestation, when, it is said, that the mystery of God shall be finished, and time shall be no more. And yet such hypotheses, frail and unstable as they may be in themselves, we have long held to be of great logical value in our science. They may not be upholden by such proofs as shall authorize us to say of them, that they are certainly and absolutely true; and yet such might be the plausibilities, or, lower down than this, such the possibilities, which can be alleged in their favour, as shall authorize us to say of them, that, for aught we know, they may be true. Now we feel that we can say as much both of Leibnitz's optimism and the schoolmen's theory respecting the privative character of evil; and cognate, if not identical with this last, the hypothesis which runs throughout the well-reasoned book of Dr. Williams on the Equity and Sovereignty of God, and which he terms the essential defectibility of the creature. We cannot say regarding any of them that it is so; but of all we can say, that it may be so. Now, though this be not sufficient to supply us with a logical foundation for erecting any of these hypotheses into a positive dogma, or for admitting it as an article either into our philosophical or theological creed, it is perfectly adequate and sufficient for taking all logical force out of the infidel argument, when the existence of evil is alleged to the prejudice of religion, whether natural or revealed. Let the assertion of our enemies, and the counter-assertion of our friends, each relating to a topic which lies in the far ulterior of human observation, or taken from the dim and lofty region of transcendentalism, let each be weighed in the balance by itself or on its own merits, and we care not though both are found to be alike wanting. Enough, if when weighed in the balance against each other, they are found to countervail, so that, between their small but equal weights, there might take place a mutual



cancelment, and both be put out of the way. There remain in our favour the definite certainties and proofs which lie within the confines of our *terra cognita*—the bright inscriptions of design, and so of a divinity that may be read in such profusion both within us and around us throughout the volume of nature—the rich accumulation of evidences, whether critical or historical or experimental, that bespeak a like reigning and inspiring divinity throughout the volume of our alleged revelation. Just as the spectral warfare of the clouds in the heavens affects not the stability of those forts and battlements which repose on their solid foundations underneath, so let the inquirer but place himself within the citadel of the Christian argument, and as he tells the towers and the bulwarks thereof, the goodly array of munitions by which he is surrounded, he will find in the serene confidence and security of the position which he has taken, that the shades and visions of transcendentalism will pass innocuously over him.

9. We shall attempt no further search, or, as it were better called, no further speculation in the deep things of God. It is the fine observation of Bishop Butler, and not less profound than practical—that what should concern us most in every theological question, is the part which man has in it, and not the part which God has in it. Let us therefore pass onward to this safer and more profitable treatment of the question which now engages us; and deferring to the time of the revelation of hidden things, all further attempts to grope our darkling way among the arcana of the divine policy and the divine purposes, let us seek now how our own duties and our own prospects are affected, either by what philosophy tells of the necessity of human actions, or the Bible of the doctrine of Predestination.

## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE PRACTICAL VIEWS OF PREDESTINATION, RELATING TO THE PART WHICH MAN HAS IN IT.

I. ACCORDING to those doctrines which neither reason nor Scripture will permit us to doubt, but which both compel us to believe, the decrees of God in the eternity that is past, respecting the final destinies of men, must have their sure and irreversible fulfilment in the eternity that is to come. Between these two extremes, the beginning and end of the chain, there is a series of events which link together the first and the last by a sure and unbroken concatenation ; but not more sure than is the connexion which subsists between each single link and the one either before or behind which is immediately contiguous to it. The connexion between the first and the last of this mighty progression—a progression made up of sequences, which takes its commencement in the viewless depths of the eternity that is behind, and has its ultimate landing-place in the alike viewless depths of the eternity before us—this connexion between the beginning and the ending, sure and irreversible though it be, is not more sure than the connexion between the terms close to each other, of the intermediate sequences, is sure. It is somewhere along this line, losing itself, at least to our observation, in that darkness of the unknown and the infinite on both sides of us, that man has his place assigned to him in this world, and his part to perform in it. He does not see far in either direction, though he may see a little way in both of them. He has no access to the book of life that is up in heaven, so as to ascertain, by an act of direct inspection, whether his name has been inscribed there from all eternity.

And the like darkness rests on the everlasting futurity whither he is going. He can only have access, at least, by direct and immediate observation, to such terms or such sequences as those among which he himself is implicated at the point of time which he now occupies, or throughout the course of his history in the world. It is with these sequences, and with that part, that brief intermediate part, of the vast progression along which he is at present moving, that he has proximately and personally to do. It is among these in fact that lie what with him are the matters on hand. It is true that he occupies a narrow space, and that his is but a little day; yet let us not forget, that through and within the sphere of his own personal doings and personal duties, there runs the chain of his own destiny, and that at this part of the chain, the connexions are as unalterably sure as is the connexion between the primary decree and the ultimate destination. Let us study then what these connexions are; and see what influence or effect the view of them is fitted to have on the practice and the prospects of men.

2. Of the successions then which compose this mighty train that begins with the first purposes of the uncreated mind, and ends with man's ultimate destination, let us select a few of those of which, at least one term, if not both, has its place in the life that now is, or among the doings of our present history in the world. The one that immediately occurs to us we give in the words of a most distinct Scriptural affirmation—"He that seeketh findeth." The prior term of this succession has obviously its place here, and at this moment indeed might be set about, whether as the consequent to a prior term, call it the moral suasion which comes before it—or as the antecedent to a posterior term, to the promised fulfilment, to the finding which the Bible states, (and what better authority can we have for a statement,) the finding which is to come after it—and this, too, in an instance where both terms might have their realization on this side of death. We could not say this of a prayer for eternal life—a prayer, the fulfilment of which has its place in the regions of immortality; but we could say it of

a prayer for the favour of God, which might be obtained now ; and which, when obtained, is the sure guarantee for all blessings, whether for time or for eternity. But let us specify rather the very blessing which our Saviour had in view when He made the gracious utterance, That he who seeketh findeth. Your Father who is in heaven, He saith, will give the Holy Spirit to them who ask it—which, if not itself the inheritance of the saints, is at least the earnest of that inheritance. Let us no longer hear then of this predestination, that it overlays and might well set aside all human exertion ; for, do what we may, all is already settled and made sure in the counsels of eternity : nor can we break the chain which indissolubly binds the decrees of the far distant past with the destinations of the alike distant future, and makes such a fixture of our everlasting state as we cannot possibly reverse in any way. The beginning and the ending are all settled and made sure—this first and last in the chain of destiny, if you like so to call it—but not more settled, not more sure, than is the connexion throughout between the contiguous links of the chain ; and one of these connexions is just that which we have announced—“ He who seeketh findeth.” This truly is our matter on hand. The links within our reach, and in the midst of which we have been cast, composing that part of the chain which runs through our personal history in the world—these are what we have immediately to do with. Some delight in expatiating over a wider range, and casting an eye of speculation over the ulterior spaces ; and on this domain, on these high fields of the transcendental theology, we hold the Calvinists to be right, when affirming the certainty, the irreversible certainty, of the connexion which obtains between the decrees of the past and the fulfilments of the future eternity ; but not more certain than the intermediate connexions on which we are called to lay our hand, and be fellow-workers with God in the high office of making them good. More particularly does it hold of the connexion here affirmed between the seeking and the finding. Heaven and earth shall pass away sooner than can this connexion, or indeed any of God’s words, pass away. But let me

not only prize this connexion, let me proceed upon it—ask till I receive, seek till I find, knock till the door be opened to me.

3. But this absolute, this adamantine necessity, if you will, of these connexions, is fitted to engage our activities as well as our prayers. And to instance again the connexion between our seeking and our finding: in this business of seeking, there is not an asking only, but a working—more especially when seeking after that highest of all objects, the truth which is unto salvation, the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, which is life everlasting. For this we have to dig, as for hid treasure, in the word of God's testimony—in other language, to read the Bible, as well as to pray over it, and with all earnestness and endeavour, giving heed thereto; and for how long?—till the day dawn, and the day-star arise in our hearts. There is a languid, inert, and but formal style of seeking, which will terminate in nothing. Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able. And how is this to be amended? Not by an abandonment of the seeking—not by the substitution of something else in its place, or by any other addition to this exercise than just to make a more busy and intense work of it than before—that the seeking may become striving, and we so strive to enter in at the strait gate, that the kingdom of heaven may suffer violence at our hands, and we violently take it by force. To realize the benefit of seeking, we have not to add anything else to it, but just to seek more intently and perseveringly than before—even as to realize the benefits annexed to faith, we have not to make the addition to it of another and a different ingredient, but so to exercise our minds, and so to ply the appropriate means for our faith itself growing exceedingly, as that what was before a seeming or a weak, may become a real and a strong faith.

4. But not only is there connexion between two things, both of which have place in time, as prayer and the gift of the Spirit—prayer and forgiveness—our forgiveness of others, and the forgiveness of ourselves by God—our earnest and prayerful reading of the Word, and the dawning in our hearts of the marvellous light of the gospel. Besides these and many other

connexions which might be stated, where both the terms are realized before death, there are others where, if the one term be made good on this side of death, the other, after a long and distant interval it may be, will be made good on the other side of it. Let me instance the beatitudes in our Saviour's sermon on the Mount. If poor in spirit, ours will be the kingdom of heaven hereafter ; if pure in heart, we shall see God ; if we suffer for Christ, great will be our reward in heaven ; if giving all diligence, we add to our faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, and the other graces of the Christian character ;—doing these things, we shall never fall, but have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Surely there is nothing in the certainty, the unfailing certainty—call it the irrevocable and iron necessity between the prior and the posterior of this connexion—that should relax or supersede, but stimulate and give all earnestness to our endeavours for making good the former, and this in order that the latter might be realized. The more stringent the doctrine in fact, the more binding should the obligation to effort and activity be felt ; for it tells us, that to make sure of the consequent hereafter, we should make good the antecedent here. Had the economy set over us been that of a Turkish predestination, where each event, separate and detached from all others before or after it, falls out on the strength of its own solitary fatalism, and irrespective of all its fellows—then might our habit all life long have been that of torpid indifference, of calm or sullen apathy.

## CHAPTER VII.

## ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL.

1. I CANNOT but think that the doctrine of Particular Redemption has been expounded by many of its defenders in such a way as to give an unfortunate aspect to the Christian dispensation. As often treated, we hold it to be a most unpractical and useless theory, and not easy to be vindicated, without the infliction of an unnatural violence on many passages of Scripture. The comparison which has been instituted, and in a somewhat arithmetical style, too, between the quantity of suffering which entered into the atonement and the number of those who shall be saved, is, to say the least of it, a very uncalled for, besides being an untasteful speculation. But far its worst effect is, that it acts as a drag and a deduction from the freeness of the gospel. Its ministers are made to feel the chilling influence of a limitation upon their warrant. If Christ died only for the elect, and not for all, they are puzzled to understand how they should proceed with the calls and invitations of the gospel. They feel themselves disabled from addressing them to all; and this, in their utter ignorance of the elect and the reprobate individually, seems tantamount to their being disabled from addressing them to any. If the efficacy of Christ's blood be only commensurate to the salvation of a chosen few, how can they expatiate on the virtue and peace-speaking power of that blood in the hearing of the general multitude; and more especially, as might lead all or any of that multitude to venture their reliance upon it. It is thus that the bearers of heaven's welcome and heaven's good-will to the whole human race, have had a sore embarrassment laid on the very outset of their un-

dertaking. In the execution of what might be thought their very obvious task, they have got entangled with speculative difficulties. A topic has been fetched from the high and hidden counsels of God wherewith to mystify the plainly prescribed conduct of man. And a message so constructed, as that it might circulate round the globe, and by which the blessings of the upper sanctuary are made as accessible to one and all of the species, as the light, or the air, or any of the cheap and common bounties of nature, has now, since its wings of diffusiveness and glory have been clipped by the hands of controversialists, shrunk and shrivelled into the dimensions of their own narrow sectarianism.

2. There must be a sad misunderstanding somewhere. The commission put into our hands is to go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven ; and the announcement sounded forth on the world from heaven's vault was, peace on earth, good-will to men. There is no freezing limitation here, but a largeness and munificence of mercy boundless as space, free and open as the expanse of the firmament. We hope, therefore, the gospel, the real gospel, is as unlike the views of some of its interpreters as creation in all its boundlessness and beauty is unlike to the paltry scheme of some wretched scholastic in the Middle Ages. The middle age of science and civilisation is now terminated ; but Christianity also had its middle age, and this, perhaps, is not yet fully terminated. There is still a remainder of the old spell, even the spell of human authority, and by which a certain cramp or confinement has been laid on the genius of Christianity. We cannot doubt that the time of its complete emancipation is coming, when it shall break loose from the imprisonment in which it is held ; but meanwhile there is, as it were, a stricture upon it not yet wholly removed, and in virtue of which the largeness and liberality of heaven's own purposes have been made to descend in partial and scanty droppings through the strainers of an artificial theology, instead of falling, as they ought, in a universal shower upon the world.

3. We hope you may now understand that there is no-



thing in the doctrine of Predestination which should at all limit the universality of the gospel offer; and that in spite of that doctrine it is still this offer, honestly and affectionately urged on the one side upon each and upon every man, and received on the other in the very sense and character in which it is propounded—that is the great practical engine of all the success which Christianity meets with in the world. It is at this stepping-stone where the transition is made from condemnation to pardon, from sin unto righteousness. The names and number of the saved may have been in the view, nay even in the design and destination of God from all eternity; and still the destination is carried into effect, not by means of a gospel addressed partially and exclusively to them, but by means of a gospel addressed generally to all. A partial gospel in fact could not have achieved the conversion of the elect. It is not in the act of looking to the gospel as intended solely for the benefit of themselves, but in the act of looking to it as intended for the benefit of all who will, that they are prevailed on to venture upon its assurances both the hopes and the preparations of their eternity. It is not on having had their names presented to them as written in the book of life, but on having had the calls and invitations of the gospel presented to them as written in the book of revelation, that they were translated from darkness into marvellous light—a light which shines equally around all, but with this difference, that whereas they opened, the others shut their eyes against it. Their conversion hinged not upon their belief of any decree made by God in heaven, but upon their belief of the declaration made by God's messengers on earth—which declaration all the rest of mankind did wrong in not listening to, and which declaration all mankind are fully warranted to make the same use of that they did—that is, enter on the path of present obedience, irradiated by the hope of future glory. It is not from the secret counsels of heaven that believers extract the assurance of their faith, for of these all men are equally ignorant. It is from the open communications of that word which lies equally patent to the observation of all, and of which all are not only equally entitled

but equally obliged, in point of duty, to make the same appropriation. All Scripture is profitable, but different parts of it are profitable for different ends. Now for the specific end of conversion, the available scripture is not that Christ laid down His life for the sheep, but that Christ is set forth a propitiation for the sins of the world. It is not because I know myself to be one of the sheep, or one of the elect, but because I know myself to be one of the world, that I take to myself the calls and promises of the New Testament. There is not, we say, a human creature, whatever page in the book of destiny his name is entered upon—there is not a human creature who breathes that has not just as good a title to appropriate to himself these promises and calls. In the gospel the flag of invitation waves in sight of the whole species. It is not inscribed there, Whosoever of the elect will ; but, Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the waters of life freely. Neither do we read, Look unto me, ye specified and selected few ; but, Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved. It is not in the capacity of an elect sinner, but in the capacity of a sinner, that he who is eventually saved entertains the overtures of reconciliation. These overtures are not made to him as one of the children of election ; they are made to him as one of the children of humanity. It is on the stepping-stone of a universal offer that each man reaches and realizes his own particular salvation. The particular redemption of all who are saved is made good by their right entertainment of those texts which are alleged in behalf of universal redemption ; and it is the very entertainment which the advocates of this doctrine would have all men to bestow upon them. And so, I am sure, would we. We should like each individual of the world's population to assume specially for himself every passage in the Bible where Christ is held forth generally to men or generally to sinners ; and should assure him that, did he only proceed upon these, he would infallibly be saved. The advocates of universal redemption are quite at one with ourselves as to the reception which the universal offer should meet with from all men. It should meet with universal acceptance, and should be pressed,

too, on universal acceptance. We are quite at one with them in what may be termed the practies of Christianisation. We only differ from them when we come to speculate on the results, and connect these either with the processes of cause and effect, or with the preordinations of a God of whom we conceive that He foreknows all and overrules all. We agree in respect to the part which man has to do with the question. We differ in respect to the part which God has to do with the question. There is not an Arminian or Universalist who contends more zealously than we for the duty of the preacher to urge the offers of the gospel upon every man, and the duty of every man to accept of these offers. God has made the salvation of the gospel universal in point of proposition: the fault is man's if it be not universal in point of effect. God hath made the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing under His wings in the sight of all the nations, though we may shut our eyes against it. He hath lifted the widely sounding call, though we may shut our ears against it. He hath made demonstration of unexpected goodwill to the species—the condemnation is ours if we do not look and do not listen to it.

4. By implicating, as some theologians most unwisely do, the doctrine of election with the primary overtures of the gospel, they, instead of pointing it with sure aim to any, do in fact place it beyond the reach of all. In no place of the Bible is pardon addressed to any man on the footing that he is one of the elect; but in all places of the Bible pardon is addressed to every man on the footing that he is one of the species. On the former footing, there would be no warrant to any for the faith of the gospel, for no man knows at the commencement of his Christianity that he is one of the elect. On the latter footing, there is a distinct warrant to all, if they so choose, for the faith of the gospel—for every man knows that he is one of the human race. It is most assuredly in his latter capacity, and not in his former, that the calls and offers and entreaties of the gospel are brought to his door. If the announcement of the gospel were forgiveness to the elect, it would not be the bearer of glad tidings to a single human creature, for all are at first

in the dark, whether they belong or not to the class that would be thus signalized. But the announcement of the gospel is forgiveness to the penitent, and the promise to all who turn unto God that He will pour out His Spirit upon them; and this should be glad tidings of great joy unto all people. Were the gospel of Jesus Christ so framed as to hold forth its peace and its pardon only to the elect, there is not a creature who breathes that could take this as an intimation to himself; for who on earth has access to the book of God's decrees, or can read his own name there on its bright page of immortality? But the gospel of Jesus Christ is so framed as to hold forth its peace and its pardon to all; and there is none on earth who might not take this as an intimation to himself, for every man might have access to the book of God's declarations, and might there read, Whosoever calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved. If the appropriating warrant by which I might take to myself the hopes and immunities of the gospel be found anywhere it is found in Scripture; and it lies enveloped there, not in special and exclusive but in general declarations. To found appropriation on the one, it is enough that I know my own condition as a man upon earth; but ere I can found appropriation on the other, I must know the secret counsels of God in heaven. It is thus that no man can trust for himself individually, but on the ground of those declarations which are made to mankind generally. There never was a more injudicious management than to mix up the doctrine of election with the first overtures of the gospel, as if this would give a more pointed and particular application to them, instead of which it is the direct road to a darkening of the whole message, and making the application of it impossible. The announcement of good-will to men might tell in lighting up a joy in the hearts of all who believe it, for all know themselves to be men. The announcement of good-will to the elect would light up joy in the hearts of none, even though they believed it, for none know themselves at the outset of their Christianity to be elect. They might believe it as a general proposition; yet ignorant whether they were included in it, they could fetch from it no tranquil-

lizing assurance to their own spirits, and no hope or confidence for themselves. It is thus that by not rightly dividing the word of truth, and by not giving it to every man in season, a clergyman might so misplace this topic of election as altogether to mystify the gospel, and give a world of alarm and perplexity to his hearers.

5. We ought therefore to proceed on the obvious representations which Scripture gives of the Deity, and these beheld in their own immediate light, untinged by the dogma of Predestination. God waiting to be gracious—God not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance—God swearing by Himself that He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that all should come unto Him and live—God beseeching men to enter into reconciliation, and this not as elect, but simply and generally as men and sinners;—these are the attitudes in which the Father of the human family sets Himself forth unto the world—these the terms in which He speaks to us from heaven. Now what we affirm, what we zealously affirm, is, that the gospel is not adequately rendered, if the full and natural force of these exhibitions be not brought to bear on the hearts of all men. It is a distorted gospel, if through any doctrinal medium whatever, the spectacle of a God beckoning their return to forgiveness be at all darkened or transformed. Any charm which there is in Christianity to recall or to regenerate some, lies in those of its overtures which are so framed as to hold out the offered friendship of God unto all. We strip our religion of its moral efficacy if we do not so represent it. It is not a limited, it is a universal offer in the gospel, which is the instrument of every particular conversion. This is not superseded by the system of necessity. The same God who makes the manifested good-will of one man an instrument for gaining the confidence and affection of another towards him, makes His own manifested good-will the instrument for gaining the confidence and affection of sinners unto Himself; and it is an instrument, we repeat, which may be brought to bear upon all. It is an open manifestation on which every man is invited to look, and in which all have an

equal warrant to trust and to rejoice. All that necessity does is to make sure the concatenation between antecedents and their consequents, between means and their ends; and this it does whatever the antecedents and whatever the consequents are. There is nothing, therefore, in necessity, or to substitute the theological term, there is nothing in predestination, which hinders the antecedent in the work of conversion from being the general offer of pardon to all men, and the consequent from being the repose of a confiding acceptance on the part of all or of any who are willing to enter on the path of reconciliation. The index to this path is lifted up in the sight of all. The bidding to walk in this path is addressed unto all. The Sun of righteousness hath arisen for the general behoof of human spirits, just as much as the sun of nature hath arisen for the general behoof of human eyes. We can imagine so violent a perversity as that of shutting one's eyes against the light of day, and so walking wilfully in darkness. And we are not left to imagine, for we see it exemplified of thousands, that they shut the eyes of their understanding against the light of the gospel, and so walk wilfully in spiritual darkness. He who doeth evil cometh not unto the light, says our Saviour. It is because of our own perversity, it is because of our own resistance, if we do not obtain the pardon of the gospel. We have it for the taking. The book of revelation is open to us, and we may read our welcome there, even in the very passages where the elect read it, for they have no more access than others to the book of destiny. The demonstration held forth in the gospel is that of a God not only commanding but even beseeching His strayed creatures to return unto Him. If one man be carried by this demonstration and another resist it, it is not because the external demonstration has been differently given to the two men, but because it has been differently received by them. God, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, holds forth the very same overtures to both; and the only distinction is, that it is not responded to in the same way by both. The command on both to believe is alike imperative. The entreaty for both to return is alike importunate. The love wherewith God loved

the world so as to send His only begotten Son into it, ought to be urged on both these inhabitants of the world—in the very same style of entreaty and unreserved assurance—and that for the purpose of awakening in them the same confidence, and calling forth the same gratitude for the good-will from heaven thus manifested to the one just as it is to the other. We are aware that there may be and often is a difference in the result, but the cause of this must be looked for inwardly, to a difference between the men, and not outwardly, to the application that has been brought to bear upon them. The application is a free pardon held out for acceptance to them both—the assurance of God's readiness in Christ Jesus to forgive, coupled with the call of repentance to them both—the declaration of a blood that cleanseth from all sin, and that will most assuredly cleanse them from their sin if they will only put their trust in it, made equally to them both—the proclamation of an open way of access, towards which our very first movement will cause joy in heaven, and God Himself—like the father in the parable—to meet them with the encouragements of His parental welcome, lifted up in the hearing of both, a longing affection on the part of their Creator, lifted up in such touching expressions as—Oh, that they would remember the things which belong to their peace; and, Oh, that there were a heart in them to keep my commandments, this, we say, pointedly and with the same force of moral earnestness addressed to them both. Such is the outward engine made to play on the hearts of each; and that minister is untrue to his commission who does not bear it indiscriminately round, and cause it to operate with equal freeness and importunity at every door. We are aware that the effect within will not be the same, but the application from without ought to be the same; and that theologian has wildered himself among speculations which he knows not how to manage, and which therefore as too high for him he had better let alone, who suffers his views on necessity, on predestination, on the sovereignty of Divine grace, or the decrees of a past eternity, to embarrass the plain work that has been put into his hands, which is to make full tender of the mercy of God in

Christ to all who will; and an equally full tender of the strength from on high, by which he might perfect the indispensable repentance of the gospel to all who will.

6. There is nothing in the doctrine of necessity to set aside this process. The doctrine of a strict causation in the process of conversion does not discourage, surely it should rather animate our diligence in plying the particular and the proximate cause of this great event in the history of the human spirit, whatever the cause may be. In other words, it is no less our part under the system of necessity than under any other system which may be specified, to bring the word of God's testimony to bear on the hearts and the consciences of men—even that word which is addressed equally unto all, and which contains in it both the promise and the power to save every one who receives it. In as far, then, as man's part in the transaction is concerned, all is clear—it being the obvious duty of the minister to bring the message of the gospel alike to every man, and the as obvious duty of every man to prize that message as worthy of his special acceptation, and to proceed upon its truth. But we are told that this cannot be done without a special interposition on the part of God—that it is both His grace which imparts to the word all its efficacy, and which opens the heart of man to receive it. We admit this, yet see we nothing in it to embarrass, but everything in it to guide and to encourage man. His part remains still an obvious and a plain one; and he may address himself to the work of Christianity with as great alertness, and still greater hopefulness than before. This indispensable grace is given most willingly and most liberally to our prayers. And on the authority of the one saying, that he who seeketh findeth, we may rest assured of the gospel and of all its blessings, that they are placed within the reach of every man who embarks in good earnest in the enterprise, with a heart of desire and with hands of diligence. It is a cruel perversity, if such clear, and withal such important simplicities as these, should have a darkening shroud thrown over them by an ill-understood speculation; or if any clergyman shall, among the rigidities of his formal and well-argued



system, forego those topics which, when urged with Apostolic simplicity and fervour, have been the mighty instruments for the conversion of human spirits in all ages.

7. Deep and mysterious, then, as the doctrine of predestination is held to be, still all is patent and luminous that respects the conduct of men. The inexplicable thing is the part and the procedure that God has in it. This is what we find to be too large and lofty a subject for our puny optics; and this is the real secret of all our difficulties. We will be prying with restless and unsatiated curiosity into matters beyond our sphere; and not content with a clear and accessible path to heaven for ourselves, we must theorize on the policy of heaven's high Sovereign, and would stretch our ambitious gaze both to the counsels of the past and the consummations of the future eternity. There is certainly a comfort in thinking that Christianity hath shed a light so clear and satisfying over man's incumbent walk—having brought a distinct call to happiness and heaven within the reach of all, and prescribed the way in which every man who will may realize it. There is nothing, we repeat, in the system of a Divine preordination which should unsettle in the least the duties and the conditions and the prospects of humanity. But this is not enough, it would appear, for many a daring and excursive spirit, that, not satisfied with having discovered a safe and humble pathway for man, would ascend to the generalities of the Divine administration, and seek to resolve the mystery of God.



## SUPPLEMENTARY LECTURES.

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[THE FOLLOWING LECTURES REMAINED TO BE REMODELLED AND EMBODIED IN THE INSTITUTES; OF WHICH, ACCORDING TO THE ARRANGEMENT ANNOUNCED IN THE INTRODUCTION, THEY SHOULD HAVE FORMED THE CLOSE.—W. H.]



# LECTURE I.

## ON THE TRINITY.

THE first thing which occurs to be said on the doctrine of the Trinity is, that in no other is an adjustment more necessary to be made between the respective prerogatives of reason and revelation. This is the place of all theology where the rights of the former and the authority of the latter come most directly into contact, we had almost said into collision, with each other. Independently of the interest which attaches to the doctrine itself, it possesses a high general interest as a question of adjustment between the light of a man's natural understanding, and the supernatural light of all that information which has come to us from heaven. It is a subject on which philosophy and principle are put to their extreme resources in settling how far revelation on the one hand might put forth her peremptory dictations as to the articles of the prescribed creed, and in how far reason upon the other might be entitled to demur, or at least to demand the explanations by which she might be satisfied. It is evident that the pretensions of the one do not annihilate the rights of the other, but that each has an inviolable territory of its own, and there must be a line of partition somewhere between them. Did revelation, for instance, tell that two and three made four, reason might well reclaim against the arithmetical falsity of the assertion ; and even though the evidence for its credentials should be quite

overpowering, yet with the evidence against its contents being alike overpowering, the human mind would be landed in an inextricable dilemma. But again, should reason presume to resist, or to qualify the statements of revelation in matters beyond its province, revelation might well resent, and rebuke the intruder, and, on the basis of its credentials, might demand an implicit faith in the informations which it offers. It is thus that we should hold a sound state of opinion on the subject of the Trinity, if indeed the fruit of a vigilant and exercised intellect, to be not the test of orthodoxy alone, but the evidence of a rightly constituted mind that could discriminate for itself the way of wisdom and of safety over the whole Bible, giving to reason the things that are reason's, and to God the things that are God's.

On the side of revelation, then, it must be confessed that there is no subject within the compass of the sacred volume more exclusively its own than that which is now before us. It may be said to stand at the distance of infinity from human observation. The question relates not to the character of God, for there is a conscience within the breast of man which could depon somewhat to that; but the question relates to the constitution of the Godhead—a matter which of all others is mantled in deepest secrecy from the view of nature. There is a dark, to us an impracticable gulf of separation that lies between the corporeal and the seen, and all that is spiritual. Our thoughts, our imaginations, our language, on spirit and spiritual things, are all tainted with materialism. We speak of the substance of the soul, of the substance of God, yet we cannot make the attempt of conceiving a notion or an image of the term without the idea of some material property irresistibly obtruding itself upon the mind. We cannot think of the omnipresence of God without figuring to ourselves extent, which is one property of matter; nor think of His ubiquity without figuring to ourselves locality, which is another property of matter. Even when we labour our uttermost to spiritualize the conception, we can reach no further than to some such distinction as after all but marks a diversity between one kind of matter and another

kind of matter. We but etheralize matter; and the term *πνεῦμα* in Greek, or *spiritus* in Latin, goes no further than to affix to the Divinity that which distinguishes the aerial from the solid. In short, we feel ourselves in this subject to be pressing on the confines of an impracticable mystery. We stand at a vastly greater distance from the properties of a disembodied spirit, than a blind man does from the visible properties of body. The two elements are wholly incommensurable, and yet it is invariably in the terms of our own grosser element that we speak, and conceive, and argue of the other. To theorize on an unknown world within the limits of materialism, is not so extravagant as to theorize on mind existing apart from matter. We can have no idea of it. It is beyond the comprehension of all our faculties, and it makes it all the more baffling, all the more hopelessly transcendental, when it is to the infinite and the eternal mind that we are lifting our regards, and that with a view to seize on the mysteries of His constitution and His being. The subject altogether eludes our grasp, and on every attempt to lay hold of it constantly withdraws into deeper retirement than before, lost in the dark recesses of the everlasting behind, or lost in the viewless immensity of the space that is around us. The subject is that of all others which revelation might well monopolize, for we have not only no anterior knowledge, we have not even one anterior imagination of it, wherewith to confront her. It is a subject profoundly situated among the depths and the difficulties of a region unknown; and should one, fresh from that region, and the bearer of satisfactory credentials, come fraught with the revelation of its secrets, never was it more distinctly the part of reason reverently to listen and reverently to acquiesce.

Yet to reason belongs a prerogative notwithstanding. On the facts of any distant and unexplored region, it yields itself up with all passiveness to the lessons of any competent informer; but there are incredibilities which no evidence whatever can force upon its convictions. It will not submit, for example, to the report of any mathematical, or moral, or logical falsity, though, brought to us from the most distant places

of the universe, they lie beyond the utmost possibility of its observation. In spite of every contrary demonstration would it maintain as a certainty that nowhere is falsehood a virtue ; or that nowhere do the three angles of a rectilineal triangle amount to more or less than two right angles ; or that nowhere is it possible for a thing to be and not to be at the same time ; or finally, that nowhere could three individuals make up a unity which shall be the same in all respects with each of the three viewed severally and apart, or that one individual can be resolved into three unities, each of which shall be the same in all respects with the individual into which they all enter. The most zealous Trinitarian affirms of the triune God that He is not the Father, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; neither is He the Son, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ; neither is He the Holy Ghost, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is a very general statement, we allow ; nor do we think that Scripture warrants a more special description of the Trinity : and most surely if Scripture do not, reason ought not. But general as it is, it enables the orthodox to propound their article, and to propound it in terms which involve no arithmetical contradiction.

On this subject there is much shrewdness and practical good sense in a sermon of Dean Swift's on the Trinity, prefaced, we admit, with exceptionable matter, and written altogether in a certain tone of levity that is painfully dissonant with the awfulness of the subject, and the undoubted wisdom and orthodoxy of the writer's own sentiments. It is founded, no doubt, on a text now generally exploded, a famous verse in John, about the three persons bearing record in heaven. He discovers no acquaintance whatever with the literature of the question, and in all likelihood never read a single treatise, whether didactic or controversial, upon the subject ; yet he does pronounce himself like a man of observation and good sense on the matter notwithstanding, and perhaps the more so that he had not wrought himself by the labour of any special investigation into an undue sense of the importance of that human or artificial



nomenclature that was devised, not to propound the doctrine with a more didactic clearness than Scripture had done already, but to put down the heresies of those who perverted Scripture, and resisted its clearest intimations.

And now it may occur to the minds of some, if a subject which can only be treated with so much generality and reserve, can, after all, be essential to the system of religion. Can there be any practical necessity for touching frequently, or touching at all, on a theme which seems quite unsafe to meddle with, or on which, should we venture too far, though ever so little a way, we are sure to express ourselves wrong, or in language without meaning. We have often heard of Christianity, that, in as far as it is essential to be known, it is a revelation of plain things for plain and popular understandings. Can this arduous and lofty speculation be included among those plain things? and if not, how comes the doctrine of the Trinity to be ranked by all the orthodox Churches as a fundamental article of the faith? Surely a doctrine which requires to be touched with so tender and delicate a hand is not for everyday usage; and, instead of being cherished, it may be thought, as a topic of fond and ever-recurring contemplation, the disposition should be rather to retire from it with a certain sense of fearfulness, lest, by giving it too close or serious entertainment, we should venture beyond our depths, and so get into some deadly and irrecoverable error. How can a doctrine be turned to any practical purpose which, to avoid the risk of misstatement, must be expressed in language of obscurest generality, and which, neither by the light of reason nor the light of Scripture, we can brighten into any degree of greater distinctness? There is something here which requires explanation; and we trust that, by discriminating aright among the things which differ, you will be led to perceive that all which is plain in this doctrine is of vital importance, and that all which is of vital importance is plain. There is a part which the light of Scripture luminously shines upon, and which the humblest of our peasantry understand; and there is a part which shades off into the dark unknown, a margin of dimness and mystery,

on which there sitteth an impenetrable haze—the attempt to disperse which, by human explanations, has only deepened it the more, for it has only raised the dust of controversy by which to aggravate the natural and inherent obscurity of the subject.

To distinguish, then, between what is scripturally plain and what is scholastically or scientifically obscure in this question, let it first be considered that there is nothing in the individual propositions of the Father being God, of Christ being God, of the Holy Spirit being God, which is not abundantly plain. There is nothing obscure either in the general ascription of the divinity, or in the special ascription of some one or other of the attributes of divinity to each of these persons. When it is said that Christ is God, we know what is meant by the subject, and what is meant by the predicate, and what by the copula, of such a proposition. The meaning is perfectly distinct, and just as distinct, too, when either the acts or the perfections of Deity are ascribed to Jesus Christ. We cannot misunderstand the statements, that Christ pre-existed the world, that He made the worlds, that by Him all things are preserved—that He is the Almighty, the First and the Last; neither can we misunderstand the assertions of Scripture when it affirms a distinct personality for the Spirit, or when it affirms His omniscience, or, lastly, when it affirms His Godhead. Viewed as separate propositions, there is nothing incompatible in these sayings of Scripture, and there is distinct, and, at the same time, weighty information conveyed by them to the understandings of all men.

But there is another proposition equally distinct, and in itself equally intelligible—it is, that God is one. Viewed apart from all the other sayings, there is nought obscure surely in this particular saying. There is a comprehensible meaning in each of the four propositions, that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that God is one. We say there is a lucid and comprehensible meaning in each of them when viewed in their individuality. Each conveys a sense which the common sense of the people can easily apprehend or lay hold of. In as far as those scriptural informa-

tions are concerned, there is not one of them which in itself is chargeable with being either mystic or meaningless. There is not one of those sayings a dark saying ; and whatever darkness may arise out of our attempts to compare or to combine or to form a scheme out of them, in each deliverance, singly, of Scripture, there is a plain averment not to be mistaken by the plainest understanding.

What, then, is that which is commonly termed mysterious in the doctrine of the Trinity ? for if we but limit ourselves to the propositions which we have yet specified, and which may be said to form the primary materials of the doctrine, there is nothing in any one of them, by itself, that is at all mysterious. The whole mystery is raised by our bringing them together, and attempting their reconciliation. But the Scripture does not itself offer, neither does it ask us to reconcile them. It delivers certain separate propositions, and thus it leaves them, to each of which it of course requires our faith, but each of which, it must be observed, is in and of itself, perfectly level to our understanding. It is when we take them up and endeavour to form a system or a harmony out of them that we involve ourselves in a labyrinth of difficulties. It is when we attempt that which Scripture has not attempted that we plunge ourselves into difficulties, and then complain of the difficulties of Scripture. The Bible tells us of the Trinity in separate portions only ; for out of the single propositions it has not even formed any general and conjunct proposition that is comprehensive of them all, the only semblance of this being contained in that verse of the three bearing record in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and those three being one, which, by the generality of critics, is now admitted to have been the importation of a formal deliverance from some of the compends of orthodoxy. It is as if the whole face of heaven were shrouded from the view of mortals here below, save where an opening here and there admits the sight of some one or other of the heavenly things which lie behind it. Each of the detached and individual things which we are thus permitted to behold may be distinctly perceived by us, but if we attempt to trace the connexion be-

tween them, the ligaments that run behind, as it were, the unopened spaces that are therefore intercepted from our view, we shall unavoidably be landed in dim and shadowy speculation—not, however, because revelation is dark, but because of the things which we are vainly attempting to explore there is no revelation. The openings might be perfectly luminous, and what is separately seen through them may be perfectly distinct, and yet they may suggest to us many a recondite speculation, because we strive to ascertain what that is which is between the openings. And so of Scripture. It were well that you distinguished what of the mystery complained of is due to the darkness of its revelations, or, which is a very different thing, to the partiality of its revelations. Its statements may in themselves be distinct, but we may land ourselves in the indistinctly and dimly conjectural by attempting to combine and to reconcile the statements. Through each separate opening or disclosure which it chooses to make, we may descry what in itself is a most lucid proposition, and yet we may find ourselves utterly bewildered among the perplexities of a hypothetical region when we attempt to construct a harmony out of them. What is written may be abundantly perspicuous; but in straining to be wise above what is written, we may conjure up a thousand questions which may be most impracticably profound. The Scriptures may have distinct things for our faith, but out of these things the meddling and ambitious curiosity of man may germinate an infinity of darkling speculation.

In the idea which I have now advanced of revelation coming to us in isolated portions or particles, while the revelations between them may still be hidden from the view, there is a great resemblance to the following representations by the author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm* :—

“ The mode in which the necessarily incomplete revelation of that upper world is conveyed in the Scriptures, is perfectly in harmony with that in which the phenomena of nature offer themselves to our notice. The sum or amount of Divine knowledge really intended to be conveyed to us, has been broken up and scattered over a various surface; it has been half-hidden

and half-displayed ; it has been couched beneath hasty and incidental allusions ; it has been doled out in morsels and in atoms. There are no logical synopses in the Bible ; there are no scientific presentations of the body of divinity ; no comprehensive digests ; such would have been not only unsuited to popular taste and comprehension, but actually impracticable, since they must have contained that which neither the mind of man can receive, nor his language embody. Better far might a seraph attempt to convey the largeness of his celestial ideas to a child, than God impart a systematic revelation to man. On the contrary, it is almost as if the vessel of divine philosophy had been wrecked and broken in a distant storm, and as if the fragments only had come drifting upon our world, which, like an islet in the ocean of eternity, has drawn to itself what might be floating near its shores.

“ The abrupt and illogical style of oriental composition, and, in some instances, the characteristic simplicity of untutored minds, are to be regarded as the appropriate means chosen for imparting to mankind such loose particles of religious truth as it was necessary for them to receive. This inartificial vehicle was, of all others, the one best adapted to the conveyance of a revelation necessarily imperfect and partial.

“ Now it is manifest that the mode of exposition must be conformed to the style of the document ; and this conformity demands that the inductive method, invariably, should be used for gleaning the sense of Scripture. While employing all the common and well-known means proper for ascertaining the grammatical sense of ancient writers, each single passage of the inspired volume, like a single phenomenon of nature, is to be interrogated for its evidence, without any solicitude for the fate of a preconceived theory, and without asking, how is this evidence to be reconciled with that derived from other quarters ? for it is remembered that the revelation we are studying is a partial discovery of facts, which could not be more than imperfectly made known. Whoever has not yet fully satisfied himself that the Scriptures throughout were “ given by inspiration of God,” should lose no time in determining that doubt ; but if it be

determined, then it is a flagrant inconsistency not to confide in the principle that the Bible is everywhere truly consistent with itself, whether or not we have the means of tracing its agreements. And while this principle is adhered to, no sentiment or fact plainly contained in the words, need be refused or contorted on account of its apparent incongruity with systematic divinity.

“ In this manner only is it possible that the whole amount of religious knowledge intended to be imparted by the Scriptures can be gathered from them. It must be granted as not only probable, but certain, that whatever relates to infinity, to the Divine nature, to the ultimate purposes of the Divine government, to the unseen worlds, and to the future state, and even to the mechanism of motives, must offer itself to the human understanding in a form beset with difficulties. That this must actually be the case might be demonstrated to a mathematical certainty. If, therefore, we resolve to receive from the inspired writers nothing but what we can reconcile, first with certain abstruse notions, and then with a particular interpretation of other passages, the consequence is inevitable that we obtain a theology needlessly limited, if not erroneous.

“ It may fairly be supposed that there are treasures of divine knowledge yet latent beneath the surface of the Scriptures, which the practice of scholastic exposition, so long adhered to on all sides, has locked up from the use of the Church ; and it may be hoped, that when that method has fallen completely into disuse, and when the simple and humble style of inductive interpretation is better understood, and more constantly resorted to than at present, and when the necessary imperfection and incoherency of all human knowledge of divine things is fully recognised, and when the vain attempt to fashion a miniature model of the spiritual universe is for ever abandoned, and when whatever the inspired writers either explicitly affirm, or obscurely intimate, is embraced in simplicity of heart, that then the boundaries of our prospect of the hidden and the future world may be vastly enlarged. Nor is this all ; for, in the same manner, the occasions of controversy will be almost en-

tirely removed ; and though smaller differences of opinion may remain, it will be seen by all to be flagrantly absurd to assume such inconsiderable diversities as the pretexts of dissension and separation.”\*

We admit of the separate propositions out of which the doctrine of the Trinity has been made to arise—we admit that they instantly present the semblance of an inconsistency, such as instantly to suggest a sense of the difficulty which there is in doing that inconsistency away. We wonder not that it has acted as a provocative to speculation, and that men have been lured by it to the arduous enterprise of finding out a ligament by which to unite those puzzling contrarieties. But let it ever be remembered, that in the four individual statements there is no puzzle, and that while that which human controversy has fastened upon is obscure, what Scripture announces is unambiguous and plain. We have already stated how the doctrine may be protected from the imputation of an arithmetical falsity ; and, meanwhile, it is of the utmost importance to remark, that amid all the perplexity which attaches to the composition of the sayings into a general harmony, there are distinct and decided convictions impressed on every even the commonest understanding, by the sayings themselves. And so in reply to the question, whether this doctrine, dark and unintelligible as it confessedly is, might not in all propriety be dispensed with, we would ask if the plain and peremptory sayings of Scripture are to be expunged, because we have failed in our attempts to make a harmony out of them ? These sayings, as far as they go, do tell the plain Christian what he both sees to be intelligible and feels to be important. They tell him that the Father is God, and that Christ is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. There is no misunderstanding and no mystery when he looks singly to any of these propositions. They also tell him that God is one, and there is as little misunderstanding or mystery in this. It is when he attempts to harmonize the last with the three first, that the mysteriousness begins ; and because he cannot frame a symphony out of so

\* History of Enthusiasm, 8vo. pp. 301-305.

many elementary propositions, all most clearly and unequivocally stated in Scripture, is he therefore to discard the propositions themselves? Is he to cast away from him the clearest Scripture truths conveyed in the most lucid and decisive Scripture testimonies, because he cannot weave them together into a lucid and comprehensive harmony? Is he to shut his eyes against the individual truths of which Scripture has told him, because he cannot find the unseen ligaments of which Scripture has not told him? Be assured this were as unsound in theology as in philosophy to refuse the evidence of the senses for so many facts or phenomena, because you cannot detect the cementing principle which binds together, and so explains their seeming contrariety. The Divinity of Christ does not rest on the adjustment of any Trinitarian speculation, it rests on the many Scriptural attestations that Christ is God. The Divinity of the Spirit does not rest on such adjustment either: it rests on the attestations of Scripture to the Holy Spirit being God. The oneness of the Deity does not come forth as a corollary from the argumentations of the schoolmen, it comes directly, though not more directly than the Godhead of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, from the plain announcements of the Bible that God is one. Remember, ever hold in remembrance, that our not being able to see through the complexities of human speculation, is no reason that we should turn our eyes from the simplicities of Scripture.

When thus made to perceive in what quarter the clearness and in what quarter the obscurity lies, you will the better appreciate the remark of Dr. Lardner, "that obscure doctrines ought not to be made necessary to salvation," and that "therefore the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity," as obscure, "should not be made a necessary article of a Christian's faith." Now, you will observe, that it is not alone the scholastic doctrine of the Trinity which he wants to get quit of, but also of the elementary propositions out of which it has been framed. And what we have to say upon it is this: whatever obscurity may rest on the doctrine in its general and comprehensive form, there is none whatever in the separate Scripture sayings



that enter into the construction of it. What obscurity is there, for example, in the statement, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; or in John's undisputed affirmation that Christ is God; or in Paul's, that Christ is God, blessed for ever; or in the evident implication of the Spirit distinct from the Father, in that He was sent from the Father; or in the property of omniscience ascribed to Him, in that He guides to all truth, and searches all things, even the deep things of God? Under the guise of pleading for the removal of a mere metaphysical dogma from the Church's creed, they would expunge from the charter of our faith many of its most unambiguous testimonies. They would obliterate Bible passages that minister not a shadowy impression, but plain and palpable convictions to the general multitude of Christendom—convictions that require no aid from the explanations or the terms of an artificial theology, but which, in virtue of honesty and simple faith in the reading of their Bibles, are deeply and solidly established in the hearts of our peasantry. The reconciling principle which harmonizes the Trinity with the unity of the Godhead, neither they, nor the profoundest scholars in theology, understand; but the elementary scriptural propositions out of which this article has been framed they do understand. When looking to the simplicities of the doctrine, they make a substantial appropriation of truths in which they rejoice, that Christ is God, that the Holy Spirit is God; when looking at the difficulties of the doctrine, they are visited with a sense of mysteriousness, and they reverently adore.

We could have tolerated that Socinians and Arians had quarrelled with the phraseology of Athanasius, had it but thrown them back on the simplicities of Scripture. But these they have laboured with all their might to sophisticate or to expunge, and along with them all that was most valuable or dear in the faith of our cottage patriarchs. It is an utter misconception, though never sufficiently exposed, that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of those scholastic subtleties which might safely be dispensed with without endangering aught that is substantial or of practical effect in the faith of Christians. Glad as

the tidings are to the heart of the humble Christian, that to him a Saviour is born, to him it is most gladdening and most elevating of all when told that that Saviour is God. Precious as the announcement is that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, it enhances, and to an inconceivable amount, all his feelings of security, when told that it was the blood of a Divine sacrifice. Never does he feel so safe under the canopy of the appointed mediatorship as when he thinks that the offended justice of the Divine Lawgiver has been met and satisfied by the expiation made through the death of a Divine High-Priest ; and never does he so feel the law to be of awful and inviolable sacredness, as when he thinks of the costly atonement that was devised for the reparation of its outraged dignity. This sense of the Divinity of Christ enhances the sacredness of all his religious contemplations. It aggravates to his view the worthlessness of sin, and gives a deeper reverence for the truth and holiness of the Godhead.

We have already endeavoured to make it palpable to you, that the doctrine of the Trinity may be regarded as a complex or rather comprehensive proposition, made out of certain elementary propositions contained in Scripture, and that all the obscurity charged upon the complex is not chargeable on the elementary propositions. Scripture on the strength of its credentials, which we suppose to have been previously examined and accredited, is entitled to demand our belief for one and all of its statements, after which men may choose to exercise themselves in finding out, if they can, the vinculum between the statements, or the principle upon which they might vindicate the consistency which there is between them. Now, in this latter enterprise there may be the utmost difficulty, while there is no difficulty in a simple apprehension of each of the simple propositions which Scripture has offered upon this subject. This distinction has not been adverted to, and what is the consequence? They who would expunge from the system of our fundamental articles, the doctrine, the complex and comprehensive doctrine of the Trinity, would expunge along with it the most distinct and authoritative testimonies that are anywhere

to be found within the four corners of the Bible. At the most, their dissatisfaction with the article as framed by Athanasius should have thrown them back on the simple affirmations of Scripture, respecting, on the one hand, the unity of God, and on the other, the Divinity of the Father, the Divinity of the Son, and the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. But instead of this, they would not only cancel from the formulas of our Established Churches the article of Athanasius, they would cancel, or at least explain away from the great original charter of the faith of all Churches, its most distinct and unequivocal averments. They would not only discard the scholastic and artificial compend of the orthodox, but they would discard the Scriptural propositions that enter into the compend, and on the evidence for which propositions we now proceed to lay before you a few general observations.

We have first, then, to remark on the testimonies given to the Godhead of Jesus Christ, in the form of a simple, distinct, categorical statement. Nothing can be more absolute than the naked unqualified assertion of the Apostle John, that Christ is God; and if this is not to be sustained as perfectly decisive of the question, then there is not power in the English language for the conveyance of any truth whatever, even of simplest affirmation. I have often thought it would be a good challenge to the sophisticators of Scripture, to ask in what other terms they would have required the Divinity of Christ announced to them, and so as to be satisfied of its truth;—what is the form or mode of annunciation that would really have satisfied them? We believe that even they would be at a loss to devise a mode of putting the doctrine, and a way that would more clearly or intelligibly have impressed it on the convictions of men. We know not how a thing could be more explicitly stated than it has been by the one proposition, or it matters not if it should be resolved into two propositions—Jesus Christ is the Word, and the Word is God. And the same statement is just as roundly and peremptorily made by Paul, when he says of Christ that He is God, blessed for ever; and again by John, though there is a diversity in the interpretation, when

he says of Christ, this is the true God and eternal life ; and again, though subject here to a qualification, grounded on a diversity in the readings, when Paul says to Timothy of Jesus Christ, that He was God manifest in the flesh ; and lastly, though we are far from having closed the list of testimonies, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Apostle expressly applies to the Saviour these words of the Psalmist, " Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom. And thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands."

Let it ever be recollected amid the debates of Scripture criticism, that whatever may be pronounced either of the interpretation or the reading of the controverted texts, this may not lessen the credibility of the doctrine, though it should lessen the number of its proof passages. One decisive testimony may stamp absolute certainty on an article of faith, though it should never be repeated a second time in the Bible, even as you believe the affirmation of a man of veracity though uttered by him only once, with just as firm reliance upon its truth as if he had uttered it fifty times over. It is thus that there is a vast deal of philological controversy on the sense of Scripture, in which the fate of not one important dogma is involved ; and we often give way to a delusive feeling altogether, when we enter on the discussion of some particular clause with the same sort of trepidation as if some of the essentials of Christianity were at stake. It may be affirmed with all safety, that our faith in any principle of religion at all entitled to the name of fundamental, does not rest on aught so precarious as any single verse, where the meaning is doubtful or the readings are uncertain and various. It were something marvellous if our belief in the Trinity hinged on the verification of a central line belonging to the Greek *theta* in an Alexandrian manuscript, just as if, by peering through a microscope of sufficient magnifying power to make us discern the impression of it, we were left to espy and find out this secret in the constitution of the Godhead. However the clause of " God manifest in the

flesh" shall be disposed of, we have other unambiguous testimonies, and that too of an express or absolutely affirmative sort, to the Divinity of Christ. We have the announcement of John, that Christ is the Word, and that the Word is God. We have the announcement of Paul, that He is God, blessed for ever. But on further reflection, it will be found that we have still a broader basis to rest upon than either or both of these distinct and categorical statements. There is in fact an evidence interwoven with the whole of Scripture, and which cannot be discarded without the whole texture and the staple of the book of revelation being changed—a multiple probability to displace which we have not only to establish the adulteration of one or two or three texts, but have to pile as many hundreds of unlikelihoods on each other, and to imagine the concurrence of at least this number of perverse accidents on the multitude of texts scattered over the whole surface of the record, and so transforming every one of them, as to make each speak a language different from what it did originally, when it told us, whether expressly or by implication, that Christ is God. There is in this way a cumulative proof all powerful in point of general effect, the strength of which is accurately felt by an ordinary if an honest reader, however difficult it may be to make a strict or scientific exhibition of its value.

It would require a very protracted lecture of itself simply to read all the passages in Scripture which make for the Divinity of Christ, each of which may not come up to a round and absolute assertion of the doctrine, but all of which compose a cumulative evidence in its favour that is quite irresistible, and which cannot be destroyed without the supposition of such a number of concurrent changes in the sacred text, all too in one direction, the overwhelming improbability of which by the doctrine of chances is quite beyond computation. I will not pretend to give an arithmetical statement of the amount of the unlikelihood that such numerous transformations should have been effected on the innumerable copies of Scripture which have come down to us from distant ages, and which mainly agree with all or at least the vast majority of passages upon this

subject in our authorized version. Let me first present a few of these from the New Testament, as to come forward with them all is out of the question:—"They shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us."—"No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son."—"The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath."—"Jesus went to the temple of God, and he said, my house shall be called a house of prayer."—"What think ye of Christ, how doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, the Lord said to my Lord?"—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—"Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—"Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how, in the bush, God spake to him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?"—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—"The Jews sought to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal to God."—" whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."—"As the Father, so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."—"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."—"Before Abraham was, I am."—"I and my Father are one."—"The Jews answered him, saying, for a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."—"The Father is in me, and I in him."—"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."—"If I depart, I will send the Comforter to you."—"All mine are thine, and thine are mine."—"He breathed on them, and said to them, receive ye the Holy Ghost."—"Thomas answered and said to him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed."—"Lord, thou knowest all things."—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—"Ye are in the spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you.

Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—"Christ is over all, God blessed for ever."—"We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God; so, then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—"Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."—"Base things of the world hath God chosen, that no flesh should glory in his presence."—"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—"Christ is the image of God."—"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me, and he said, my strength is made perfect in weakness; I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—"God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts."—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."—"God created all things by Jesus Christ."—"Christ Jesus being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—"By him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—"In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—"Which is the head of all principality and power."—"In singleness of heart, fearing God, for ye serve the Lord Christ."—"Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you."—"Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."—"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."—"God was manifest in the flesh."—"Looking for the glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—"By whom also God made the worlds, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power."—"Let all the angels of God worship him."—"To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are

the works of thy hands ; they shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment ; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.”—“ For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house ; for every house is builded by some one, but he that built all things is God.”—“ Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.”—“ We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ.”—“ This is the true God and eternal life.”—“ I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.”—“ I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last.”—“ I am the first and the last ; I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen.”—“ Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever.”—“ These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings.”—“ His name is called the Word of God ; and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.”

We speak not of those quotations in which express assertion is made of the Divinity of Christ ; but we ask, if it be not the general effect of them all put together to throw the halo of a divine sacredness around Him ? Do they not altogether compose a celestial radiance, and enthrone Him who is the subject of them in celestial supremacy ? Do they at all comport with the state or character of a being placed at that infinite distance of inferiority at which the most exalted of creatures stands in relation to the Creator ? Is He not represented as sitting in high imperial state over angels as well as men ; the head not of certain orders only, but the head of all principality and power ? Are not the Father and the Son represented as alike the hearers, and represented as alike the answerers of prayer ? Is there not an interchange, is there not a participation betwixt them, of the like superlative titles, of the like high and glorious sovereignty ? Will any man say that as the effect of



these scriptural exhibitions we have just given, he feels a limitation imposed on the spiritual homage he should render to the Saviour; or is it really his honest impression, on the whole, that there is danger of yielding too high a reverence to Christ, or of casting himself into too lowly obeisance before Him? Are they not rather fitted to call up the aspirations of the heart towards an object of infinite and illimitable majesty? Would the name of Christ, if a creature, have been so enshrined as it is in the New Testament among the epithets and the honours of Deity; or rather—framed as the whole economy is by a Being jealous of His name, and who will not share the glories of it with another—is it not the distinctly announced lesson of all these passages, that Christ is one with the Father, that Christ is God?

We think that a still more forcible impression to the same effect is produced by the appropriate passages of the Old Testament. We know not how it is, but we think that in the records of the elder dispensation there is often to be met a richness of evangelical sentiment not surpassed in any of the more explicit statements or more distinct reasonings of the New Testament. We appeal to the force and fulness of Isaiah on the doctrine of the atonement; and in the book of Psalms to its spiritual religion, etherealized, as it were, above all the grossness of Judaism. The spirit of prophecy, we are told, is the testimony of Jesus; and in the ancient descriptions of this personage in whom the law and the prophets had alike their termination, we meet with as emphatic testimonies to the dignity and divinity of the Saviour as any that the Apostles ever penned. We have often said that we felt a peculiar interest when recognising the truths and the substance of Christianity under the drapery of the Mosaic ritual, and there is something analogous to this when we behold the doctrines of our faith set as it were in the oriental beauties of Hebrew diction and Hebrew poesy. Whatever obscurity may be charged on the figurative language of the seers of the Old Testament, there is nothing to obscure but everything to enhance our conception of the high dignity of the Saviour in the

representations which they have given of it ; and distinctly as we read of the Godhead of Christ in the New Testament, we shall meet with much not to weaken but to confirm our belief in the things that are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him.

Let us therefore present you with a few testimonies taken from the more ancient Scriptures :—“ For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given ; and the government shall be upon his shoulder ; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”—“ The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God ; even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel.”—“ The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through the kings in the day of his wrath.”—“ Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory ? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.”—“ Look to me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth ; for I am God, and there is none else.”—“ For thy Maker is thine husband ; the Lord of hosts is his name : and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel ; the God of the whole earth shall he be called.”—“ O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain ; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength ; lift it up, be not afraid ; say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God.”—“ When he prepared the heavens, I was there ; when he set a compass upon the face of the depth, when he established the clouds above, when he strengthened the fountains of the deep, when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment, when he appointed the foundations of the earth, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth ; and my delights were with the sons of men.”—“ Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts.” Lastly—though I might have offered a tenfold amount of such quotations—“ In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

Without stopping to appreciate the force of each testimony, the accumulated weight of them all can scarcely be withstood by any honest inquirer. And apart from these, we have just been investigating another evidence\* to the same effect, so peculiarly implicated with the narratives of sacred writ that it cannot be detached without laceration, as it were, to the texture of whole passages. There is something very impressive in this sort of evidence, forcing itself upon our observation in quarters where we at first did not expect it, or at least where the theological doctrine was not the main object of the argument, but only presented to us in the incidental notices of the history. The comparison and the scrutiny which are necessary to make out a conclusive argument are all the more satisfactory, that they repel the imagination of any wilful adulteration being practised upon texts with the view of fabricating an evidence so removed as this is from the observation of common or cursory readers. There is the force of an analogous consideration here to that on which Dr. Paley has constructed his masterly and convincing argument for the historical reality of Paul, and of the transactions which are ascribed to him. And apart from the value which attaches to it for the establishment of the doctrine, it has a most affecting interest besides when viewed merely in the light of an information. It is a most pleasing discovery—if not in regard to the conduct of that natural providence whose object is the general history of the world, at least in regard to the conduct of what may be called that celestial providence, whose object is the special history and the well-being of the Church; we say it rises upon us in the light of a pleasing and picturesque discovery, when made to know that in those forthgoings of the Divinity it was invariably the Son who descended in visible representation upon our world, even He whose delights from of old were with the children of men—that it was our own identical Saviour who held converse with the ancient patriarchs, and appeared to Moses in the bush, and called the people with an outstretched arm out of Egypt,

\* The evidence relative to the Angel of the Covenant discussed in reading the Text-book, and to be presented in the next volume of the Posthumous Works.

and tended their footsteps through the wilderness, and spake from Sinai's flaming top to the thousands of Israel, and bore with all the perversities of a rebellious and stiff-necked generation, and accompanied, by the presence of His glory in the tabernacle, with this nation of wayfarers, and afterwards irradiated that temple which was reared for His peculiar habitation in the midst of their priestly and consecrated land. We look at it as a beautiful gleam of light among the dim and distant ages of that elder dispensation—as a halo peering forth from the obscurities of that far and high antiquity—as a kind of twilight revelation from the Sun of righteousness, which, though not brightened into the full sunshine of the gospel, yet was effected by His own presence, and gave promise of the brightness that was to follow. It affords, too, a glimpse, a sort of mysterious glimpse, into heaven's economy—only, however, revealing a mystery which it cannot dissipate. But far its most interesting aspect, and that, we imagine, which will most engage the heart of every devout and reflecting Christian, is the view which it gives of the Saviour, of His personal dealings with that wondrous people with whose history and whose fortunes God's moral administration of our species is so closely interwoven—the unwearied continuity of His regard for that nation whom He cherished as His own, and that in the face of resistance to His law and contumely to His messengers—the unquenched kindness and forbearance of many ages, during which He sent prophets to warn and providences to correct them, till at length, in the fulness of time, He Himself descended among them in human form; and after years of painful endurance at their hand, as the last and largest manifestation of His love, poured out His soul to the death for them.

There is one consideration on the Divinity of Christ which we hold to be of great argumentative force, and which even scripture criticism, though all-triumphant on the side of orthodoxy, does not supersede; for even a victorious criticism, however it may succeed in defending the truth, yet, by the very multitude of its explanations, may enfeeble the impression of it. The very agitation of the controversy may leave a misti-

ness even on a question which itself is decided, and decided with a power of reasoning that can no longer be gainsaid, and yet the student may arise from the discussion with a sense of the truth not half so fresh and vigorous as is felt by a simple peasant on his first perusal of the passages which hold it. It may with all safety be affirmed to be the general understanding, whether right or wrong, that by the Arian or the Socinian hypothesis a violence is done to the obvious meaning of Scripture, and that any natural or unsophisticated reader cannot in a plain way hold converse with his Bible without an impression on his spirit, that according to its testimonies Christ is God. Now we ask whether, under a system so abhorrent to idolatry as both the Jewish and the Christian, the phraseology would have been so constructed, or the doctrine of the Saviour's person been couched in such terms as might have misled the bulk of Christians to the deification of the creature, if Christ have indeed been created? Seeing that there is such a harmony in hundreds of passages on the side of the Divine nature of Christ, would there not, to neutralize their mischief, have been somewhere in the record an explicit and earnest disavowal of the blasphemy, if blasphemy indeed it is? Would our Saviour have tolerated the "My Lord and my God" that fell from the lips of Thomas? or lent, in the presence of all the apostles, the sanction of His silence to a sacrilegious delusion? There was no want of promptitude on His part in rebuking the errors of His disciples; and the "Get thee behind me, Satan," which He addressed to Peter, would have been launched with still greater emphasis and force on the head of Thomas had he then been offering to a creature the homage that is due to the Creator. He quarrelled with the one apostle who refused to hear of His approaching death, that universal fatality of man, because He knew it was a humiliation that awaited Him. He quarrelled not with the other apostle who attributed to Him the name and the titles of a God, because He knew that it was an exaltation which belonged to Him. Would the Scriptures have so teemed with the evidences of His divinity; or rather, would the semblance of such evidence have been permitted so to overspread the sacred

record, had He stood at that immeasurable descent of inferiority at which even the highest of creatures stands in relation to his God? Remember that He is a God jealous of His honour—that He will not give to another the glory of His name—that in the history of His dealings with the people of Israel, vengeance ever followed in the train of idolatry—that it was a crime which fastened the brand of extermination on the guilty nations who were before them. The great object in the separation of the Church from the world, which commenced with Abraham, was to keep alive on the earth the faith and the worship of one God, the infinite Jehovah, who stands aloof from all participation in the frailties or imperfections of any created thing. It is an infinite misplacing when the creature usurps the place of the Creator. The interval, the mighty interval, between them is guarded throughout with implacable jealousy; and would there have been, we repeat, such a mingling of works and attributes, such a merging and mutual transference of Divine names and Divine honours between the Father and the Son, such a free interchange of titles and high ascriptions—would Christ have been called the man who was His fellow, or the incommunicable name of Jehovah been given to Him had not Christ been God?

## LECTURE II.

ON THE MORAL USES OF THE DOCTRINE THAT  
CHRIST IS GOD.

THE first of these uses we may propound with all confidence as not being suggested by any imagination of ours, it having the authority of clear scriptural information to rest upon. What I now advert to is intimated with sufficient distinctness in the parable of the vineyard, to which the husbandman sent one set of servants after another that they might receive the fruits of it, and upon their having been successively withstood and maltreated, last of all sent his son, saying, They will reverence my son. But we have the same lesson far more directly and literally presented to us in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where solemn and serious entertainment of the Christian message is made to hang upon the dignity of the messenger. "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord?"—a passage, by the way, that might have been offered as one among the many other indications of the uncreated nature of the Son of God, seeing that we understand by the term angel every creature, however exalted, between the Deity and man. But our object at present is not to exhibit the proofs of the doctrine, but its practical uses; and it does seem an argument which, even apart from Scripture, should come strongly home to the sense and feelings of our reasonable nature, that the honour due to any communication from a distance rises with the high and honourable character of him who bears it—that the rank and the personal glory of the ambassador add to the weight of his embassy, and call for our more reverent attention to the overtures

wherewith he is charged—so that in very proportion to the nobility and high consideration of the messenger, will our despite or our heedless indifference to the message be resented as all the deeper affront, all the deadlier provocation.

This view of the matter is greatly enhanced when we think of this exalted personage having descended upon our world not merely as the bearer of a message, but as the captain and the finisher of a mighty enterprise—that something more than a revelation had to be made—that a work had to be done, to execute which a movement so mysterious took place in heaven as the departure thence of Him who in the beginning was with God, and was God ; that in the fulfilment of His great commission He must die, and clothing Himself with the infirmities of our nature, had to incur substantial humiliation, and to undergo the agonies of a substantial and real endurance ; that however inexplicable to us the principles or the causes, still the fact is palpably announced, that, with all the strength of the Divinity to uphold Him, He shrank from the burden of the sore and heavy visitation, and prayed that if possible it might pass ; that what has been mysteriously called the passion of the Saviour, was not the semblance or the mockery of pain, but a deep and bitter anguish, which well-nigh overwhelmed Him ; that in the decease which He accomplished at Jerusalem the penalties of the outraged law were all absorbed, and the weight of the world's atonement fully borne ; that there was in deed and in truth a sacrifice, an actual transference of the suffering to His person commensurate to the vengeance of the guilty millions for whom He died. Let our ignorance of the hidden springs and counsels of heaven's government be what it may, we cannot but discern in the informations of Scripture the symptoms of an arduous contest with the powers of darkness—of a work, for the achievement of which the Captain of our salvation had to travel in the greatness of His strength—of a difficulty insuperable by angelic might, as the salvation of it was incomprehensible by angelic wisdom—the sufferings of Christ and the glory that followed being things which angels desired to look into. We are not told what the force of His



uplifted arm when He destroyed the works of the devil, or what the depth of His endurance when He bore the chastisement of our peace ; but to Him are distinctly ascribed the toil and the struggle and the hard won victory ; and now, having levelled the barrier of separation that stood in the way of our acceptance, He invites by His gospel sinful men to enter on the way of reconciliation which He had opened up for them—He calls on one and all of the world's generations to turn unto God.

Now had this been but the doing of an angel, or the word of an angel, still it would have formed an impressive call upon the world. "The word thus spoken would have been steadfast, and our disobedience thereto received a just recompense of reward." But there is the "How much more?"—the evident stress laid in the Bible on the circumstance that the author and the messenger of our salvation is He whom all the angels of God worshipped. It is on this that the apostle argues both for the greatness of the salvation and for the danger of neglecting it. That God himself should have moved from heaven on this enterprise of the world's recovery—that He should have veiled His glory in a tabernacle of flesh, and exchanged the bliss and the greatness of heaven for a life of persecution and penury among earth's lowly habitations—that after deeds and sufferings of unknown magnitude, which required the strength of an infinite and everlasting God to atone for the infinite evil of sin and make satisfaction for the penalties of an outraged law, He should turn Him to the world He had saved, and invite the return of one and all to the blessedness from which they had wandered, it is the world's defiance to such a call that sets the conclusive seal upon its impenitency, leaving uncancelled the guilt of a broken law, and superadding thereto the provocation of a rejected gospel. It is the Godhead of Christ which gives such emphasis to the question of the apostle—"How can they escape?" It is the described glory of the Saviour's person in the first chapter of the Hebrews on which he argues the greatness of the salvation at the commencement of the second chapter, and pronounces the inevitable doom of those who put it

away from them. The greatness of the message is linked in his argument with the greatness of the messenger, as if to slight the condescension of so great a Saviour was the worst affront that could be rendered to heaven's high majesty. In other words, it is the Divinity of Christ which arms the overtures of the gospel with the challenging power that belongs to them on the respect and entertainment of the world. It is this which gives the rejection of them a character of such fearful impiety; and represented though it has been as but a scholastic and speculative dogma, of no account save in the eyes of angry theologians, there is none which, wielded aright in the pulpit, so efficiently tells on the consciences of the plainest of the people. They would be all alive to a communication of grace and benignity sent them from the king; but tenfold alive to it should the king bring it to their doors. They may do honour to the message when told that God in heaven is the sender of it; they will listen more reverently still, and with feelings of deeper reverence, when told that God manifest in the flesh is the bearer of it.

Amid the heaviness and the haze of this nether world, we have no adequate sense and no adequate sensibility of the guilt of that moral hardihood implied in our adverse or even our indifferent reception of the message thus brought to us. It is unfelt on earth, but deeply felt, we doubt not, and fully appreciated in heaven. In the pure breast of the immortals there, there will be clear perception of the wrong, and a profound and powerful sense of its enormity. They, on the one hand, witness of the King of glory, before whom they cast their crowns in lowly obeisance, that in pity to a fallen world He, by a mystery in jurisprudence, took their sins upon Himself, and bore the desert, the disgrace, and the burden of all their iniquities; and, on the other hand, they witness the thankless unconcern and apathy of the world back again. An offence like this, even against one of their own number, they might have resented as foul ingratitude; but offence as it is against the grace and the condescension of heaven's Sovereign, it speaks such prostrate lethargy of feeling, or such resolute defi-

ance to heaven's calls, as in either way makes salvation hopeless, and would seem to lay an impossibility in the way of that world's restoration on which the personal importunities, nay a personal visit from God Himself, have been utterly thrown away. Well may the question in these circumstances be put—"How can they escape?" but you will perceive that it is just the article we have so long been labouring to expound which arms the question with all its point and all its energy. It is the Godhead of Christ which here forms the emphatic argument; or, in other words, instead of a barren dogma, it is either the mightiest engine of persuasion, to force the compliance of human spirits with the gospel, or, if resisted, to furnish the ground of their most overwhelming condemnation.

The Divinity of Christ, when theorized upon beyond the limits of Scripture and of just speculation, becomes, under this treatment, one of the impracticable subtleties of the schoolmen. Yet when received with docility and in faith as the Bible announces it, it forms one of those impressive simplicities of the gospel which bear with greatest effect on the hearts and consciences of the people. We cannot imagine a more powerful consideration to be urged from the pulpit in behalf of the overtures of reconciliation than that God Himself not only framed them, but brought them down in person to the world; and, after all, should the overtures be rejected, we have no adequate expression for the fulness and the force of that resistless justice which will issue forth in the blast of the judgment-seat on the heads of those who spurned this proffered grace away from them. He who is to preside over the solemnities of that awful day will wipe His hands of the blood of those who have brought upon themselves all the wretchedness and the horrors of their undone eternity. He who now goes forth from heaven to judge them, Himself went forth on the errand to seek and to save them. In pity to their lost condition, He bowed down His head to the sacrifice, and with a voice full of humanity, implored them to flee from that coming wrath now to be relentlessly discharged on those who, in the day of their peace, despised the calls and the opportunities of mercy. Here they are

beseched by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—there He will look upon them with an altered countenance. In proportion to the height of that majesty from which He stooped to save them, will be the reaction of His vengeance on those who have put that majesty to scorn. Their first blow was struck at the sceptre of heaven's authority when they broke the commandment of God their Lawgiver. Their second was struck at the sceptre of heaven's clemency when they refused the invitation of God their Saviour. Their provocation of God in the law was tenfold aggravated by their provocation of God in the gospel; and when He who Himself did bleed in expiation for their sins, now takes cognizance of the unrepentant sinners, they will be left without a speech and without an argument.

You will now, I trust, understand how this great topic of the Divinity of Christ is not merely a thing of polemic but a thing of pulpit theology, enhancing as it does the efficacy of all the plainest lessons in the gospel. When the terminating object is to prove a doctrine, there is necessarily much of controversy and of recondite argument. But when the object is to ply a doctrine for a practical effect, we know of none that can be wielded with greater power, or that has in it more the force of a touching demonstration. And here, while I am on the use of hortatory weapons or hortatory arguments, let me, though not wholly related to the subject, advert to the use you might make in your sermons of the gospel being an alternative dispensation. Hold out a free and a full declaration of forgiveness to all; but make them understand that if the declaration is not listened to, or is not cared for, there is a consequent accumulated wrath that will be left on the heads of those who rejected it. Urge in all its welcome and all its universality the message of reconciliation; but give them to know that in very proportion to the grace which prompted it, will be the weight and severity of their condemnation who have put it away from them. There is acceptance, the amplest and the kindest acceptance to all who will, but on that special account a more peremptory and hopeless exclusion to all who will not. The strength and urgency of these considerations, plain as they are,

are inconceivably heightened by the dignity of the Saviour, and fearfully will it be found to aggravate the penalties of their coming vengeance, that in rejecting the proffers of Jesus Christ they have rejected the proffers of a God. There is not one of those arguments by which we urge the compliance of men with the overtures of Christianity to which the Divinity of Christ does not add indefinite momentum and force. It makes the condescension of His visit infinite. It makes the dignity of the expiation infinite. It exalts into the high rank of infinite the homage done by it to the authority of the law. It enhances, and that to an infinite degree, all the obligations of the sinner to gratitude and trust and obedience. In virtue of this article, the whole staple as it were of Christian doctrine and sentiment becomes of Divine quality—a quality that would be throughout attenuated by the denial of the Godhead of Christ. The whole transaction of man's recovery gathers thence a more august sacredness, at once enshrining in more awful reverence the holiness of the Lawgiver, and affixing a deeper stigma on the infinite turpitude of moral evil. The Godhead that appears in the majesty of the law is met by the Godhead that appears in the mercy of the gospel; and the honours of the Divine authority, outraged as it has been by the defiance of a rebellious world, have been fully upheld by the honour of a Divine atonement.

We often make use of the term infinite as a mere vocable, and there is a sort of argumentative jangle on the articles of Christ's Divinity and Atonement that we have no taste for. We allude to those who found upon the one a kind of arithmetical demonstration for the certainty or necessity of the other, talking, for example, of the sin of a finite creature as being nevertheless infinite, because committed against an infinite God, and that an infinite sin called for an infinite sacrifice, such a sacrifice in short as angels could not render, and so called for the interposition of a Divine Saviour. It is thus that proceeding from the one truth they would, as if by algebraic evolution, bring out the other, when they might have satisfaction on both at first hand, by an immediate derivation of both from the statements

of the Bible. There may, for aught we can tell, be deep-laid necessities unknown to us, and in virtue of which there could have been no atonement without the sacrifice by death of the incarnate God. But this is a subject on which we would repress every anterior imagination of our own. We should rather abstain from pronouncing beforehand on the connexion between those articles of our faith, yet now that both are revealed, we cannot be insensible to the lustre and effect which the one sheds upon the other, and how it deepens on the heart of a believer the whole moral impress of the doctrine of the atonement, when he knows of that atonement having been rendered by a Divine personage.

To understand how this should be, let me ask you to imagine the effect, if told of any limitation on the power or wisdom or goodness or other perfections of the Deity. We believe that it would shake, and shake fundamentally, the whole system of your religious sentiments and feelings. It is our impression that if the thought of any confinement or deficiency in the Divine attributes were admitted, it would destroy that which enters essentially into our idea of a God;—not that we can comprehend infinity, or thus to speak, can go round and round it, so as to inclose it within the capacity of our imagination. This we may not, this we cannot overtake, yet still infinity be an indispensable constituent in our notion of the Supreme Being. We cannot reach the conception of infinity, yet we attach that conception to God by the very sense on our spirits that He is unsearchable. We must have room as it were in our meditations of God for endless and indefinite outgoings. Were we arrested by the information of a boundary beyond which the power or presence of God did not extend, we should feel revolted by the sense of a painful incompatibility. Our very notions of the eternal and infinite and uncreated mind would seem to be subverted by it. To lay a check on the immensity of the Divine Being, for example, or set bounds to His knowledge, or be able to conceive either a wisdom more profound or a holiness more spotless, or a goodness more sincere and exuberant than His, were painfully oppressive to every no-

tion we have formed of the all-perfect and illimitable God. We cannot imagine otherwise of God than that He is co-extensive with space and co-eternal with duration; and as little can we imagine otherwise of Him than as a being of immeasurable greatness in all the attributes, whether of natural power or of moral excellence, that belong to Him. In short, we should feel it to be as unnatural violence, the setting of bounds to any of His attributes as the setting of bounds to the immensity that is filled by Him. He is absolutely without limits. To Him the question of degrees is inapplicable. He is circumscribed by no boundaries—all powerful, all wise, all holy; having in His nature the fulness of every perfection, an infinite goodness, an infinite glory.

Now the doctrine of a Divine atonement harmonizes with this the natural infinity of His character and of His ways, with the infinite dignity of His law, the infinite recoil of His righteous and holy nature from moral evil. I should feel as if a breach had been made on my conceptions of God's perfect sanctity and truth, did I believe that a sin against the Creator could be expiated by the sufferings of a creature. I should be visited by a certain sense of descent and of degradation in the system of the Divine government, could I think that an outrage upon His authority by any being whom He had made, were commensurately atoned for by any possible reparation on the part of any other being whom He had made. By the Divinity of Christ I feel as if an unbroken sacredness were upheld throughout the whole extent both of the natural and the Christian theology. When I look at the outrage of the violated law, and think of its precepts consecrated by the Divine authority, I can see no adequate reparation anywhere, save when I look at the gospel of Jesus Christ, and think of its pardon consecrated by a Divine atonement. It seems the only expedient within the compass of natural or revealed truth by which the transgressors of the law can be taken into acceptance, while the law itself is magnified and made honourable; or by which sinners can be admitted into the presence of God's unspotted sanctuary, and yet sin be stigmatized as exceeding sinful.

On the whole, you may rest assured that without a sense of the Divinity of Christ on the part of the people, every lesson you can deliver, whether of confidence in the efficacy of His atonement, or of gratitude for His services, will be immeasurably extenuated. By detaching the sentiment of Christ's Divinity, you would take all the force and the spirit out of them. This doctrine strengthens and impregnates the whole of practical Christianity; and whether it be the trust or the gratitude or the obedience of the gospel that you are urging, they can only be urged with effect along with the belief that Jesus Christ, the author and the finisher of the gospel, is God.



## LECTURE III.

ON THE UNION OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURE  
IN CHRIST.

WITHOUT attempting any impracticable subtleties upon this question, there is much of patent and most impressive instruction to be gathered from the fact as it simply stands recorded of the incarnation of our Saviour. It is a question on which, in the hands of our scholastics, there is to be met with much of the recondite, and, I may add also, much of the revolting. Under their management the subject has fallen into discredit, being regarded as a barren article, of a dry and barren formulary. It has not been presented as a topic of vivid and affecting interest, or as one that might be made to stand forth in a beauteous and engaging aspect to the notice of the contemplative. When announced as part of the creed of the orthodox, it awakens no sensibility, and the statement of it as a proposition is felt to be in every way as hard and repulsive as the statement of an equation in algebra. It is viewed but as a cold and withering abstraction, which calls forth no response from the sentimental part of our nature; and in point of character and effect, we can imagine no two things to stand so widely asunder as do this position when set forth as the dictum of an intolerant theology, and this same position when seen in certain other lights and revelations which such a theology would disdain to look upon.

The first palpable effect then of Christ's incarnation is, that it has afforded to the world a vivid representation of the Godhead. It has thrown, if I may so express it, an archway of communication over that dark, that mysterious interval, which separates the realms of sense and of spirit from each other.

It has brought the character of the Divinity within the observation and ken of the human senses, and it forms indeed a mighty revelation when God, before essentially invisible, thus effloresces upon our view in the form, and the features, and the aspect, and very lineaments of a man. The doctrine of the Saviour's incarnation has been termed by Mr. Hall that mystic ladder which conducts man to the abode of the Eternal. Placed as we are in the midst of a carnal system, and holding converse with all that is external and apart from ourselves, by no other organs than the eye and the ear, the abstract, the immaterial God, though not far from any one of us, stood at the distance of infinity from mortal vision. What a marvellous approximation to the infirmities of our state that this distance has been overcome! The characteristics of the unseen God, before shrouded in concealment unfathomable, now stand forth in picture to the world, seen in visible expression on the human countenance, heard in the accents of the human voice, exemplified in the doings of the human history. In the person of God manifest in the flesh—of Him who we are taught to believe is the Deity embodied, we obtain, not by verbal statement but by sensible exhibition, the discovery of God; for He, we are told, is the very brightness of His Father's glory, the express image of His person. It is this sight of the Deity, when thus shrined as it were in the framework of materialism, that gives to the doctrine of Christ's incarnation its surpassing interest, and enables me, when trying to form or to consolidate my apprehensions of God, to substitute in place of the shadowy metaphysical abstractions of schoolmen, the light and the lustre of an ocular demonstration.

But this appearance of the Godhead in human form has done more than dissipated a metaphysical obscuration, it has given manifestation and distinctness to the moral characteristics of the Deity. When we think of a Being so transcendently above us, and of whom we read that His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts, we might have feared that in virtue of this infinite distance, there was also an infinite dissimilarity, and so that all the analogies between God and

man were interrupted. We might have felt as if justice in God was something different from justice in man, or kindness in God something different from kindness in man, or as if such was the total disparity of the Divine and the human nature that the moral perfection of the Deity was something as unlike in kind as it is in degree to the moral perfection of one of our own species. There is certainly much countenance given to this imagination in the representations and the statements of our academic theism, where the Deity is set forth as a sort of cold and desolate abstraction, with a nature wholly impassive, His love being without sensibility, His hatred of moral evil being without emotion, and so reduced, as it were, to an immense physical energy, He is left with nought that we can distinctly apprehend but the naked attributes of intelligence and power. Not so when the character of the Godhead burst upon the observation of the world in the face of Jesus Christ, when it thus came forth into living and distinct personality; and it is now made palpable to all that the virtues of the Divinity are specifically and in kind the virtues of the perfect man. By having assumed the brotherhood of our nature, He hath made us to feel our affinity, our kindredness with God. The incarnation of the Saviour hath done more for this than all the descriptions or demonstrations of academic theism. We can now make a study of the Godhead. He who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father; and we now behold in graphic outline and detail, the graces and the glories by which that perfect Exemplar of all morality and all sacredness was irradiated. There is no mistaking the predominant, the perpetual aim of that personage who went about doing good continually—who, in the spirit of untired and exuberant kindness, expiated over the face of the land on which, from the first moment of His alighting, He had met with nothing but hardship and ingratitude. We read the compassion of the Godhead in the tears which fell at the tomb of Lazarus. We see a still more picturesque exhibition of it in the Saviour's weeping over the city of Jerusalem, when saddened and overwhelmed at the thought of its approaching desolation; and in

the tremendous certainty and greatness of that desolation we have further insight into the character of the Deity. We there see that even the strength of His infinite compassion did not do away with the dispensation of His vindictive justice on those who had persisted in rejecting its calls till the day of their peace was over. And we know not a more impressive manifestation of the Godhead, than is blended in this one exhibition of the Saviour, when, like a tender parent, He wept over the approaching fatality, which yet, as a righteous and inflexible Governor, He could not or would not recall. It tells us the dread certainty of coming wrath ; but it also tells us, in this our accepted time, the kindness and honesty of the present invitations. We can no longer misunderstand the character of the unseen God, when thus visibly pourtrayed in one of our own species. What we read of the meekness and gentleness of the Son, we transfer to the Father ; and all the passages of tenderness and beauty in the history of His life, strengthen our felt affinity and felt confidence towards God. Altogether, the effect of the representation is to soften or do away the terror and the mystery of Heaven's throne. The fellow-feelings of the humanity, but represent or picture forth the tender regards of the Godhead towards us. We look at the aspect of Christ the Mediator, and we thence take the assurance that God is still bending in compassion over us—that God is still waiting to be gracious.

We fear that this great use of the incarnation of Christ is not sufficiently attended to. By this great approximation to the perceptions and faculties of our nature, we are brought, as it were, within sight of the Deity. On the tablet of humanity we may read the lineaments of the Godhead, and certainly in no way have we been so impressively told that the greatest of all beings is also the kindest and the gentlest and the best.

But there is another, I had almost said a greater, use of the incarnation. It not only affords the nearest and most impressive demonstration of what God's character is, it also gives the nearest and most effectual demonstration of what our character ought to be. In the teaching of Jesus Christ we see morality in precept ; but in the person and history of Jesus Christ we

see it in picture. If the use we have already spoken to of the incarnation make it profitable for doctrine, the use we are now speaking to makes it eminently profitable for instruction in righteousness. The discovery made of what virtue is in God is an inestimable benefit, and only equalled by the display which it hath made of what virtue should be in ourselves. The example of morality is in some respects as much better than a commandment or a code, as a model is better than a description; —at all events, it gives a clear representation, and makes far more palpable to us than language possibly can the finer graces and delicacies of human conduct. The one stands in somewhat the same relation to the other that the concrete does to the abstract. The one presents us with virtue described, the other with virtue embodied; or, the former with the sayings that we have to keep, the latter with the doings that we have to copy. Our imitation of the Saviour, our conformity to the image of Christ, our walking as He walked, it is in looking to the incarnation that we practise these; and this doctrine, so far from a jejune and merely scholastic article, frowning intolerantly upon us from the pages of a Confession, is rich in all the details of practice, and expands into an infinity of most beautiful applications to the whole life and character of man. And then, this descent of the Godhead amongst the familiarities of human converse, how it dignifies the whole state of humanity, how it impregnates with sacredness even the minutest proprieties of behaviour, how it stamps a character of religiousness on all the duties and all the occasions of our history. Jesus Christ, by the assumption of our nature, hath brought down heaven to earth, and did so that He might bring up earth to heaven. He hath animated the terrestrial moralities of our terrestrial condition with the breath and spirit of the upper sanctuary, and hath thereby shown that our condition, humble as it is, admits an impress upon it of a celestial character, and so of being elevated to celestial glory. When I see in the person of Jesus Christ how the everyday virtues and commonest occasions of life were throughout impregnated with the very spirit of the Divinity, I think I can better understand, when

told to resemble Him, what it is to be filled with the whole fullness of God. And here let me instance with what admirable effect this doctrine may be brought to bear on the great and mischievous popular delusion, of which you will have more experience when you come to be personally engaged with the work of the pulpit and the work of parishes. You will then find an obstinate and deep-rooted prejudice against the full exposition of certain virtues by the minister, and the equally full exposure of certain vices. There is toleration for a sermon on the duties of the Sabbath, but there is no such toleration for a sermon on any of the week-day duties. The truth is, that with these latter there stands associated the feeling or the imagination of a certain taint of earthliness. The business of the pulpit is held to be secularized by any allusions to the business of common life, though introduced for no other purpose than the Christian regulation of it. A minister has more or less to notice this prejudice in expounding the duties of the second table, which, though delivered by the same Law-giver and enforced by the same sanctions, are held as of inferior sacredness to the duties of the first table. Although the lessons he delivered should be substantially the same with those which Scripture has given, yet if they relate, for example, to the gains of unlawful merchandise, to the neglect and idleness of unfaithful workmen, to the low duplicities or frauds currently practised, it may be, in violation of common honesty, he comes in collision with a certain sense of dissociation on the part of his hearers, or perhaps of the ridiculous, grounded on the felt incongruity of such topics with the character of a place and of a day consecrated to themes not of week-day but of heavenly contemplation. This dissociation in the minds of the people, of common life from Christianity, is a sore evil, nor can a more effectual argument be brought into the rebuke and the resistance of it than our Saviour's incarnation. He seasoned with the heavenly all the footsteps of His life on earth, and in these steps we are required to walk. There is not an occasion in the history of man which does not admit of highest sacredness, as there is none in which the question may not be put—

In what way would the incarnate Saviour have met the exigencies by which now I am surrounded? This consideration ennobles all and sanctifies all. The minister surely may well descend to preach that which the Saviour descended to exemplify; nor should man disdain to be told, in all fidelity and minuteness, of that which sat as a grace or a propriety on the character of the incarnate God.

But this doctrine may not only be employed as a corrective to this popular delusion, there is also a certain philosophical delusion which it is alike fitted to rectify. A prevalent imagination among academic, and, I suspect too, among Christian theologians, is that in matter there is something radically and essentially evil; that the spirit is confined and crippled in all its energies in virtue of the material presence which incloses it; that by being implicated with the carnal system there is a weight and incumbrance laid upon its faculties, and that when it escapes thence by death, then, and only then, it will expatiate in the freedom and the buoyancy of its emancipated powers. There is much, we hold, in the doctrine of our Saviour's incarnation that is fitted to qualify those imaginations. There was, in the first instance, a sublime homage done to materialism by the Godhead consenting to hold occupancy in a tabernacle of flesh; and then, when we think of the identical body that suffered on the cross being borne up by the Saviour to heaven, it suggests the probability that this arraigned and vilified matter may somehow consist with the economy and constitution of the immortal state of existence. The probability, in our estimation, rises into certainty when we advert to the resurrection of the body, and to the description given of that future economy which is to supersede the present one—even the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is sin, and sin alone, which has tainted and vitiated matter; and we hold that if this deadly virus were abstracted, this would restore to it all its worth and all its loveliness, as in its first and beautiful evolution, when, expanded into a goodly creation, the morning stars sang together for joy, and God Himself rejoiced over it, because He saw it to be all very good.

We are not, I trust, giving way to a spirit of adventurous speculation, but only confronting, by the palpable revelations of the gospel, the withering representations of our academic theism, in whose heaven of disembodied spirits, where cold and meagre and evanescent spectres dwell in some unknown and incomprehensible mode of existence, there is not one object on which the human hopes or the human sympathies can fasten. They have stripped heaven of all its sensible attractions, and by a device of figurative interpretation, wherewith to nullify the obvious meanings of the New Testament, they have contended that there is no music there, no sights and sounds of beauty there, no human face divine, or joys of human companionship maintained by the interchange of looks and audible voices, and held in material dwelling-places. We argue not for the bowers of a Mahometan paradise, for the heaven of Christians is an abode of unspotted holiness ; but we do argue for the kindly sympathies, and the personal recognitions, and all those charities of home and of friendship, by the prospect of which the Apostle thought it not unworthy to comfort the heart of his disciples. In the languor of man's faith, we cannot afford a less vivid or impressive representation of a future immortality than is actually given of it in the New Testament ; and metaphysicians or theists of any sort have no right to desolate our heaven of its attractions, or to set it forth in terms less warm and endearing than is actually done in the book of God's revelation.

The subject which now engages us is not really so useless, so inapplicable a speculation, as many may apprehend it. It is a very great matter to understand that the change from earth to heaven is not so transcendental, so mysterious a change, as, I am sure, the generality of Christians conceive, who imagine the difference to be as wide and distant as the difference between matter and spirit, between one mode of existence familiarly known to us and another mode utterly beyond our experience, and therefore wholly incomprehensible. I hold it of practical importance that it should be understood how the dissimilarity between earth and heaven is just as great and as



small as the dissimilarity between sin and righteousness ; or, in other words, if moral evil were wholly discharged from the present constitution of things, and perfect virtue substituted in its place, on this single difference, without discarding materialism at all, there turns the difference between earth and heaven. Conceive all the men who are now on the face of our world to be renovated into a state of absolute purity and piety and kindness, and then let the elixir of immortality be poured into their condition, this alone, without any upward movement from the ground we tread upon to the eternal regions above us, this alone were a mighty approximation to the actual heaven of the New Testament. And so the obvious conclusion is, that to prepare for such a heaven, the great change to be aspired after is a change upon the character. It tells us that we commence our heaven here by entering on the cultivation of heaven's virtues ; and that instead of being only admitted into its blessedness after death, we may admit it now into our hearts and into our homes.

There is one connexion or application of the doctrine of the very highest character in point of importance and effect, which we have not adverted to. It is affirmed in Scripture of the incarnation, that it was an essential step to the atonement. This we have on purpose omitted, partly because we wish to confine ourselves to those views which, however legitimate, have been seldom entertained or thought of, and partly because this subserviency of the human nature of Christ to the expiation upon the cross, is a frequent topic of the scholastic or controversial theology ; and so, as if by a look from the head of Medusa, has been stiffened thereby into the hardness and frigidity of stone. We wanted to keep ourselves through the whole of our exposition on ground that had not been entered upon by this withering influence ; and we trust that from the specimens given, however feebly or imperfectly exhibited, you may at least be led to imagine how possible it is that there may be tracts in divinity over which the questions of polemic intolerance has spread an arid and a repulsive aspect, but which, nevertheless, are capable of being enlivened into richness and sentiment and

beauty. You will here be reminded of an affirmation in your text-book, that the many fierce and frivolous questions which have been agitated on this subject have overshadowed the real worth and interest of the doctrine—have spread, if I may so express myself, a thick umbrageous covering over it; not such a covering as to have embowered it in myrtle, but as to have beset it with loathsome weeds and lacerating thorns. We hope that theology may at length emerge in native dignity and grace out of the accumulated rubbish of many generations, and invested in all the honours which properly and originally belong to her, be again throned in her rightful supremacy as queen of the sciences.

## LECTURE IV.

## ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT.

THERE are two aspects wholly distinct from each other in which this doctrine may be regarded. The first respects the place which it holds in the physical constitution of the Deity ; the second respects the offices and the relation of the Spirit to ourselves. We mean at present to make no express announcement of the personality or even the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and far less to affirm His mode of derivation from the Father and the Son, or to assign His order in the Trinity. These latter topics belong all to the *physique* of the question. I would at present restrict myself exclusively to the *morale* of the question—the moral relation in which the Holy Spirit stands to us, and the moral obligations or regards that we owe to Him back again. It is not that I hold the proposition to be of no moment that the Spirit is God, for when taken up instantaneously, as it generally is by every plain and honest reader of the Bible, it will be found to enhance, and that to an indefinite degree, every moral lesson which stands at all associated with the subject. It is during the critical and laborious establishment of the truth that its moral influence is so utterly unfelt ; or in other words, however expedient or even indispensable for the silencing of gainsayers the argumentation may be, it, under this treatment, is of no proper efficacy in the pulpit ; and I want to exhibit what the other treatment is which it should receive at your hands, that your people may be religiously the better of it.

But let me here premise that the Spirit acts upon the mind mediately, and not immediately. He acts by the Word, and

in His whole operation on the heart and understanding of men there may be no contravention to the laws of our known philosophy. You will perhaps recollect our doctrine on the consistency between the efficacy of prayer and the stability of visible nature.\* Now this may be exemplified in the fulfilment of prayer for the Spirit of God, as well as of prayer for the recovery of health, or protection from danger, or any other blessing which the Almighty ever bestows in answer to the requests of His children. The responsive touch may be given far behind the curtain of our farthest possible observation—far behind all that ever could or ever can be discovered of the metaphysical processes of the human spirit; so that, without violation to a single law or sequence of the mental philosophy, might the Spirit be blowing where He listeth, and making His distinct conquests of regeneration by the ascendancy which belongs to Him over the consciences and the understandings of men. We believe that this can be done not in opposition to secondary causes, but by means of them; and could it be shown how effectually it may be done without derangement to any of the ordinary processes in the mechanism of man's moral and intellectual constitution, it might soften, perhaps subdue, the antipathy felt by men of science towards the doctrine of this Divine and supernatural agency. And if there be repugnance felt to the agency of the great and the good Spirit on the mind of man, there is a still more implacable repugnance to the agency of evil spirits, and to the whole doctrine of temptations on the part of a subtle and malignant adversary. Now we have sometimes thought it might appease this repugnance to have it understood, that as the Spirit of God does not act but by the intervention of the word, so the spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience does not act but by the intervention of the world; that whether under the one or the other influence, we never come into direct or personal converse with either of these unseen agents, but that each acts behind an intermedium as it were, whose operation upon us is in perfect accordancy with all that is known respecting the processes of the human spirit,

\* See Works, 12mo. edit., vol. ii. p. 314; vol. vii. p. 234.

or the pathology of man's sentient nature. It is thus that we may be even as Scripture represents us, the real subjects of a contest between the powers of light and of darkness, and yet with the powers themselves we may never once come into sensible or immediate contact—but only in the first case with the Word, which the one plies, but without contravening the established processes of human thought; and only in the second case with the world, which the other plies, but without contravening the established processes of human appetite or human affection. The one wields His element, the Bible, it being termed in Scripture the sword of the Spirit; the other wields his element, the world, it being termed in Scripture the kingdom of Satan, or which is the same thing, he being there termed the god of this world. With neither the one nor the other of these invisible agents may we come into sensible contact, we being sensible of nothing but the elements which they employ—with the general suasions of the Bible, or the corrupt seductions of the world. Nevertheless the destiny of our species may indeed be suspended on an actual conflict, a strenuous competition between the Spirit that worketh in the children of light, and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; and we, though insensible to the power or the presence of either, and conscious of nothing but the natural influence of the word, or the natural influence of the world, may yet be the subjects of an unseen warfare betwixt unseen potentates, each striving, thus to speak, in a war of ambition for the moral ascendancy over us.

Thus far then the revelation of the Spirit is far from being *effete* in respect of practical efficacy. Without one thought of the relation which it bears to the physical constitution of the Deity, here is one obvious use to which all that is plain in the revelation of the Spirit may be turned. He is made known to us as the great agent both of light to the understanding and of moral impression upon the heart, though it be through the lessons and informations of the Bible, and these alone, that His influence is exerted. There is not an unlettered peasant who can misunderstand the application of such a truth, which

is, that to his instant perusal of the Scriptures he should add instant prayer for that Spirit who gives them all their weight and all their efficacy. We believe that on this simple habit has turned the illumination and the consequent blissful eternity of thousands who never once attempted any adjustment in their minds on the complex and comprehensive proposition of the Trinity, and were utter strangers to all the controversies it has raised. The simple proposition, that the Spirit is God, they could scarcely miss, shining as it does in its own obviousness from the pages of Scripture on every honest and direct understanding. It is your part to be acquainted with the polemics of every doctrine in theology; but it is indispensable to your usefulness as ministers that you know how to separate that which is polemical from that which is practical. There is often discovered the utmost want of tact and of judiciousness when the scholastic is introduced into the pulpit instead of the scriptural. The business of a polemic, to which you may never once be called, is wholly different from the business of a pastor, to which you are called weekly, when, without one term or one argument of controversy, you might make textual and forcible exposition of the truth that the Holy Spirit is the effectual teacher and sanctifier of men, and that the Holy Spirit is given to them who ask it.

But there is another revelation concerning the Spirit of very great account in the matters of practical Christianity,—we mean the personal regards that we owe to Him; and when the Scripture tells us of these, it is difficult to avoid the notion of His own distinct personality. We are there bidden to resist not the Spirit, to grieve not the Spirit, to provoke Him not lest He should be led to abandon us, as on that occasion when God said—“My Spirit shall not always strive with the children of men.” There is a process or economy made known to us in Scripture, of which I cannot help thinking that a vast deal more might be made, both in argument from the pulpit and in effect on the consciences of men. It may be termed the ordinary method of procedure by which the Spirit deals with those upon whom He operates. He is represented as

being personally moved or affected by their entertainment of Him, just as a human teacher is, either by the docility on the one hand, or on the other by the intractableness of his pupil. We feel that if this particular view were more realized and more acted on, it would have a mighty operation in spiriting on the business of one's moral and religious cultivation. If even the faintest and feeblest intimations from this heavenly agent were but respectfully attended to and faithfully proceeded on, this would be followed up by the light of larger and clearer intimations, agreeably to the saying, That to him who hath, more shall be given. If the duties which He now impresses on the conscience were all diligently turned into conduct, there would on the back of this be an increasing manifestation agreeably to that other saying, That the Holy Ghost is given to them who obey Him. Remember all the while that you are not sensible of any direct converse with Himself, all the light that He gives being given through the word, wherewith alone you have immediately to do; and all the monitions to which He gives utterance being whispered through the organ of conscience, that ear of the inner man—so that in obeying Him, you are just obeying the voice of conscience, or, as Dr. Smith, in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, calls it, of the Judge within the breast. A growing moral sensibility, a growing moral clearness, a growing strength of principle and purpose—all of which are so many palpable phenomena in the mind of him who hath embarked with all holy determination on the course of virtue, these may seem but the result of laws wherewith the feelings and faculties of our nature alone have to do. But we are taught by revelation to believe in an invisible agent, who, through the medium of these feelings and faculties, follows up our former acts of obedience by that richest of all rewards, the moral reward of a more abundant strength, and a more abundant manifestation for future and larger acts of obedience; and so causes the path of the just to be like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

We may here observe how completely, under this view, the

faith and morality of the gospel are intermingled with each other, so that they grow with each other's growth, and strengthen with each other's strength. The Spirit is both the revealer of truth to the mind, though it be only the doctrine and information of the Bible, and the bestower of the disposition and the power of obedience, though it be obedience only to the lessons of the Bible. But if we resist one influence, He, in withdrawing Himself, may withdraw all His other influences; if we shut our heart against His sanctifying power, He may withhold from us His illuminating power; and conversely, in proportion to the fidelity of our obedience and the duteness of our conformities to what He tells us we ought to do, may He shed the manifestation of a clearer and more convincing evidence on what He tells us we ought to believe. It is thus that there is established, by the intervention of the Spirit, a connexion between obedience and discernment on the one hand, between sin and spiritual darkness on the other. Therefore it is, that when people complain of desertion, or melancholy, or spiritual blindness, I would set them to their duties; and therefore also it is, that at the very outset of a man's inquiries, I would bid him be diligent in doing all which conscience told him to be right, in avoiding all which conscience told him to be wrong. You will here be reminded of those passages where a reciprocal influence is affirmed between the mind and the heart, God judicially giving up to evil affections those who liked not to retain Him in their knowledge, and on the other hand, promising the manifestations of light and truth to those who keep His sayings. If any man is willing to do God's will, he shall know of Christ's doctrine whether it be of God:—"And to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God." "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the



morning ; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rereward." We hold these testimonies to be exceeding precious. They moralize the whole of Christianity. They completely do away the fancied discrepancy between faith and works. Instead of a discrepancy, they establish a firm dependence between them ; and, in this intervention of the Holy Spirit, as we have now explained it, we perceive what the causal principle of this dependence is. We now understand how, if the faith animate to the performance of works, the works cast a reflex brightness, and give a firmer stability to the faith. Instead of faith discharging you from works, you, on this principle, have to work for your faith, or, at least, be assured that the iniquities of your conduct will unsettle the articles of your creed, and darken the whole field of your religious contemplations. We believe that there is a natural reaction between the moral and the intellectual, which may in part explain this. But in harmony therewith is the effect of the Spirit's operation. If you refuse to obey Him, He will refuse to enlighten you ; and this provides another security for the indissoluble alliance between a right faith and a right obedience.

But it is in the process of man's moral and religious degeneracy that the doctrine of the Spirit acquires a mighty, I had almost said, a tremendous, importance. There are not more familiar facts and phenomena in our nature than the hardening of conscience, the decay of its moral light and moral sensibility, the tyranny of evil habits when fostered by indulgence, the growth of irreligion in the soul, and at length, its immovable unconcern, or even resolute defiance, either to the terrors of the law or the invitations of mercy. Now we dispute not that all these results are in strict accordance with the principles and the processes of the mental philosophy ; yet this hinders not my belief in their being also the results of an influence that directs these processes, and gives the touch of an effective and overruling control at a higher place than the highest principles of this philosophy, or the first and farthest at all discoverable by human observation. In other words, I behold the agency of the Spirit, or rather, the withdrawal of

His agency, in every step of this melancholy declension. I can read in this progression to hopeless and irrecoverable apathy an experimental interpretation of such phrases as the Spirit being resisted, being grieved, being quenched, ceasing to strive, and at last abandoning to his own infatuation, and for ever, the man who has turned a deaf ear to his admonitions and his warnings. It is an argument of immense practical efficacy in the pulpit, and more especially when connected with the doctrine that the resistance of conscience is the resistance of Him who sends His impressive whispers to the heart through this organ of our moral economy—that the stifling of every good impression on the side of truth and seriousness is stifling the voice of the living and personal agent who prompted it. We cannot imagine a more impressive consideration wherewith to back the urgency of a sermon, and from the vantage-ground of any good feeling or good purpose that may have been awakened, to bring it upon the consciences of the people, that if they suffer these to go into dissipation, they do personal offence to one who is knocking at the door of their hearts, and may recede to a greater distance from their heedless or their contemptuous rejection of Him. In particular, the whole illusion of some future, perhaps some deathbed repentance, is completely broken up by the representation that we are now giving. They may be told, and with fearful emphasis, that by every week of delay they are speeding onward their moral and spiritual deterioration, and strengthening the barrier in the way of their recovery therefrom, till this recovery may at length become desperate, may actually amount to a moral impossibility. Their resistance of the Spirit may, even long before death, have been carried to the point of His final and everlasting separation. They may have provoked Him to the determination of letting them alone since they will have it so; and whatever the terrors of nature may extort in that dread hour of solemnity and alarm, He may refuse to mingle His alone effective influence with the fears and the agonies of their deathbed.

“ Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. But because I have called, and ye refused; I have

stretched out my hand, and no man regarded ; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh ; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me.”—Prov. i. 23-28.

You may remember the use I made of a principle in natural theology, and by which I hold it to be demonstrable that all men, under every degree of religious or moral light, are the fit subjects for a judicial cognizance and reckoning at the bar of a righteous and almighty Governor. That principle was the obligation laid upon us by the faintest imagination of a God.\* We arrive at the same conclusion from the argument which now engages us. It will be found in the great day of account that God is clear of the blood of all the families upon earth.†

And here we may advert to one of the testimonies which have been quoted in support of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit—that blasphemy against the Son of God may be forgiven, but that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost can never be forgiven. In all our discussions of the different questions in theology, we have ever rejoiced when, instead of a merely intellectual dogma, a topic, perhaps, of learned controversy, we could perceive any opening whatever by which it might be turned to an object of plain and practical application. This we have abundantly evinced in our treatment of the doctrine of predestination and in our treatment of the incarnation of Christ ; and now that the unpardonable sin has been adverted to, (in argument for the Divinity of the Holy Spirit,) we confess that far more important to us than its subserviency to this demonstration, and far more important to us than the gratification of any speculative curiosity in regard to the precise nature of this mysterious offence, do we hold that solution of the parable, which, while, in our estimation, it fully resolves the question, serves, over and above, the great purpose of an urgent and a moral influence on the consciences of men. Now this, we think, is gained by

\* See Works, vol. i. p. 56.

† See Sermon on Genesis vi. 3, Works, vol. ix. p. 213.

the theory that many years ago we ourselves proposed on this much controverted topic—a theory in perfect accordance with all that we have now advanced, even that the sin against the Holy Ghost, instead of some great specific transgression which so many have tried to fix and ascertain, is just that continued resistance to the general calls of the gospel which at length determines Him to a final and everlasting abandonment of the man whom He has so long plied, but in vain, with His admonitions and His warnings.\*

Whether this shall be sustained as a valid explanation of the specific question or not, certain it is that there is much both of true and important principle involved in the explanation, and from which, I hope, it is evident that the scriptural doctrine of the Spirit can be made to subserve a most powerful and practical application to the consciences of men. Yet we have said nothing, you will observe, all the while, of the hypothetical place that He occupies in the system of the Godhead. We have even made no dogmatic or formal assertion of His Divinity, though ready, most abundantly, to admit that this enhances to an indefinite degree the influential weight of every lesson wherewith His name is at all associated. But I should like you to understand the moral richness and power even of those doctrines in Scripture which have given rise to so many tasteless and fatiguing controversies, and how well it is that you avoid these in the pulpit. Even in the Chair we are glad to make our escape from them, and to enjoy a breathing time from that logomachy, which, though it relate to truths that, seen in the light of Scripture, have in them a greatness and an efficacy that their very mysteriousness perhaps serves more to enhance than to diminish, yet coming out as they have done from among the thickest of the Church's controversies, they, on that account, have gathered a certain repulsive obscuration, and that aggravated tenfold by their exposure for a long, dark, dreary millennium to all the crudities and barbarism of the Middle Ages.

\* See Works, vol. ix. p. 176.

## LECTURE V.

ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MODE IN WHICH THEOLOGY SHOULD BE LEARNED AT THE HALL AND THE MODE IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE TAUGHT FROM THE PULPIT

ONE prime object of your studies here is to fix and ascertain what the doctrines of Christianity really are. For this purpose you have to take a comprehensive survey of the words of revelation—you have to compare Scripture with Scripture—you have to penetrate the meaning of obscure or doubtful texts—you have to reconcile apparent contrarieties, and from a crowd of kindred and consistent testimonies on any given topic, you have to elicit some general proposition as one of the articles of our faith. Perhaps ere the conclusion was fully made out a long and laborious proof had to be gone through; and as the final result of the process, you at length came to a thorough and well-grounded belief that the doctrine in question has the sure and authentic seal of heaven's divine authority set upon it.

Now, though this be the way in which you have received your argumentative conviction of some certain truth in theology, it follows not that this is the very way in which you should deal it forth again among the people. The very utterance of your text will generally be enough for gaining their assent to the doctrine which it enunciates, or, at most, the concurrence of a few decisive testimonies from other parts of Scripture, will abundantly suffice in the way of argument. This is not because I look upon the people as less of reasonable beings than ourselves, and that therefore less of reasoning should serve them. But I would curtail the formal proof of a doc-

trine, that room might be left for an object ulterior to that, and in which the mere verifying of the proof terminates. The ultimatum of a proof is conviction, the end of what I have already called the first process. But beyond this there is a second process to stimulate and set forward, which should be the main object of every sermon. Now the danger of lengthening out the first process, is, that it may leave less than enough of room for the second process. And really there is no practical necessity for lengthening out the formal proof of a doctrine in the pulpit, in the same way that it is in the classroom; because, generally speaking, in the obviousness of the many Scripture testimonies, and the manifestation of the truth itself to the conscience, the people are abundantly possessed with what may be called the effective proof of it. It really is not half, it is not a tenth part the business of a sermon to establish any proposition in Christianity as a mere dogma, and leave it thus. Only imagine this done with the doctrine of the universal judgment, and that the preacher gave over, as if acquitted of his task, after that by arguments from Scripture and arguments from reason, he had fully made out and settled it as the article of a creed. It would have been far better, we say, if instead of proving the doctrine at all, he had from the outset of his address proceeded upon the doctrine, or, at most, if he had taken up the length of the introduction on the statement of the truth with a few decisive testimonies in its favour, and then given the great bulk both of his strength and of his space, not to the establishment, but to the enforcement of the truth. It is an appalling doctrine, and fitted in the pulpit to be an effective weapon for the pulling down of strongholds. But what we say is, that instead of first fabricating the weapon before the eyes of his people, or showing the process of its fabrication, he should proceed immediately to use it. Instead of a doctrine to be proved argumentatively, he should regard it as a doctrine to be instantly taken up and wielded executively. Knowing the terrors of the law, he should therewith persuade men. The awfulness of that coming day—the speed and certainty of its arrival—its searching examina-

tions into the recesses of every heart, and the now unknown deeds of every history—its fearful exposures in the presence of an assembled world, calling down the awful sentence and the everlasting contempt which are to follow—these with powerful and urgent and awakening appeals to the consciences of your hearers, accompanied by entreaties to flee from the coming wrath, and the denunciations of a heavier doom on those who reject the offers of the gospel; should form the burden of every sermon on this article of our faith—not a formal demonstration of its truth like that given by a professor in his classroom, but a persuasion founded upon its truth, and by which the minister plies the hearts of his people with the calls and the considerations of practical earnestness. The proof of the doctrine being that which is chiefly exhibited in the one—the practical uses of the doctrine being that which is chiefly expounded and enforced in the other.

We say, that even in reference to the plainest and most unquestioned doctrines of religion, there is to be observed a difference of treatment between the congregation and the classroom; but there is a still wider difference to be observed when, from the generally admitted truths of the simply and purely didactic, you pass to the much agitated truths of the controversial theology. For the mere conviction of a general audience, either a lengthened formal proof or an elaborate vindication may be as little called for in a controverted doctrine as in those that are uncontroverted, there being often the same obviousness of Scripture testimony for the latter as for the former, and often the same or a superiorly vivid manifestation of the truth of them to the conscience. The Atonement is such a doctrine. The Divinity of our Saviour is another. Both of these have passed through the fiercest conflict of the theological warfare, so that if in the pulpit a polemic discussion was superadded to the didactic or the Scriptural derivation of them, that process were still more lengthened out whose terminating result after all were but the conviction of the understanding that the articles in question were doctrinally true. This in itself is to be deprecated as an evil, seeing that it interdicts

the space and liberty which the preacher otherwise might have for the outgoings of the second process, and there are special and distinct reasons besides, why, unless there be an obvious practical necessity, controversy should be refrained from in the pulpit. It may lead you to exchange the Scriptural for the scholastic nomenclature, so that instead of propounding a doctrine in those words which were devised by God for the direct instruction of the teachable, you may propound it in those words which have been devised by men for putting down the heresies of the gainsayer. Now this last, however well adapted for its special object, is not adapted for the object of the pulpit, which is not so much to vindicate truth, as to bring men under its power. That language and that mode of putting which are best fitted for the one end, may not be the best fitted for the other end; and so under this translation from the style of a Scriptural to that of a polemic theology, the proper work of the pulpit may suffer in efficiency. Moreover, the attention of the people is turned the wrong way. Instead of being led to entertain the message as announced directly to them by God, they are led to hold parley with men contending for their own interpretations, and engaged in debate on the terms of the message. The minister may triumph in the debate, and the people in kindred sympathy may triumph along with him. The controversy, to the satisfaction of all, may be settled; but to avail ourselves of a familiar phrase, what is held to be settled is often set by. There is a delusive feeling as if their concern with the matter was now ended, when in fact it ought to be only beginning. They may think it enough to have been made intellectually right, as it seems the great ado to bring about that—whereas, mainly and generally speaking, they were all intellectually right at the outset, and the great ado should be to make this intellectual rightness germinate into the morally right and the spiritually right. If this latter be not accomplished, the kingdom of God may have come to them in word, or come to them in reason, *ἐν τῷ λόγῳ* being significant of both; but it comes not *ἐν τῷ δύνامي*, it comes not in power: and there is great hazard of such a result if the deci-



sion of the controversy be the achievement which they rest in. Just as in mathematics, the feat is perfected if you make out the proposition—so in theology, there is a subtle imagination, too, that you have reached the great and desirable ultimatum by making out the proposition. Now what is the end in mathematics is but a mean in theology. The Christian revelation does not end with the intellect, but begins with it. The intellect is but a medium through which to reach the religious influence to the heart and the character, and its design is utterly frustrated and perverted by those who make orthodoxy the landing-place instead of the outset of their Christianity. Now we think it is the part of a sermon not to conduct the people to orthodoxy as a landing-place, but to start along with them from orthodoxy as the outset; and that therefore it may well keep clear of the controversies—they lying in the way of the first and not in the way of the second process. The truth is, that with very few exceptions indeed, the orthodoxy may with all safety be assumed and proceeded on, from the commencement of your address, or at most a statement, with a few of the best Scriptural corroborations, will suffice to put the whole auditory intellectually right on the doctrine of the text. The great business should be to enforce the doctrine on the susceptibilities of their moral and practical nature; to present the truth in such connexions or with such applications as might best awaken the right and correspondent emotions in their heart; to make it bear on their own personal condition, so as that it shall powerfully tell on their feelings and purposes; to press it not so much upon their conviction by proofs, as to press it upon their consideration by the earnest representations which you make of its importance as well as of its verity; to conquer not the oppositions of heresy by argument for the doctrine, but to conquer by means of the doctrine itself, the indifference, and the irreligion, and the death-like torpor, and the earthly affections of the people who are before you.

It were the strong and universal feeling, we believe, that a preacher had not done enough with the doctrine of the universal judgment, who, instead of taking it up and wielding it as an

engine of moral and practical influence, had merely reasoned it on the understandings of his people, and so put them in possession of it merely as a dogma. Yet we fear that there is no correspondent feeling to this in reference to another doctrine, we mean the Divinity of Christ. In regard to the latter, we doubt it to be the more prevalent impression, that our great concern is with the truth of the dogma, and not with its practical influences. The great ado is all about making out and settling the orthodoxy of the question. In as far as the one doctrine is concerned, that is, of the universal judgment, we do not make the truth of the doctrine our resting-place, but carry it forward to its practical outgoings. In as far as the other doctrine is concerned, we are very apt to take up our resting-place in the truth of it, to stop there and terminate there. The only way in which I can explain this difference of treatment between the two doctrines, is, that the one has been much controverted and the other not. When the great point to be contended for is the truth of the doctrine, then let the point be gained, and the heart is satisfied. The one follows as naturally upon the other, as that repose should come after victory—and more particularly if it be victory at the close of a perilous and prolonged warfare. If *for* the acquisition of any object the mind had to go forth on the work of inquiry, and to fight its way through many obstacles, then *in* the acquisition of that object will it as naturally sink into a state of quiescence, as if it had now reached the ultimatum of its wishes, or gotten all it laboured and all it aspired after. We feel quite sure that the controversies have aggravated this tendency on the part of Christian students and inquirers to regard sound doctrine as the end, instead of being what it in truth is, but the commencement of their labours. And in as far as they have this tendency, they lead to a pernicious deviation from the sense and the design of Scripture. When a doctrine is introduced there, it is for a moral and a practical effect. The ultimate design even of its most peculiar, and hence its most controverted revelations, is not to inform the understanding, but through the understanding to effect a salutary and transforming influence

upon the character. The doctrine is not brought forward for its own sake, but for the sake of a something ulterior. The credenda are not the landing-place, they are only a stepping-stone to the agenda. And this is true of its most peculiar, or what has been styled the very highest of its doctrines. The Divinity of Christ, instead of being regularly chronicled in the Bible as one of the articles in a system of well-arranged orthodoxy, is brought forth not as the principle of a theory, but as a persuasion to moral conduct. It is employed by the Apostle as an argument to enforce the virtue of mutual condescension. With the exception perhaps of the first chapter of John, which, by the way, seems, in accordance with the historical account of its composition, to have been framed for the special object of presenting the Church with an authoritative manifesto against the heresies of the time, the Godhead of Christ is nowhere proposed in the shape of a mere dictatorial article, or as a naked dogma for the understanding alone, and at one place it is introduced as an episode for the enforcement of a moral virtue. In this famous passage, the practical lesson occupies the station of principal, as the main or capital figure of the piece, and the doctrine on which so many would effervesce all their zeal, even to exhaustion, stands to it but in the relation of a subsidiary. The lesson is, "Let nothing be done through strife or wrangling, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" and the doctrine, (here noticed by the Apostle, not to the end that he may rectify the opinion of his disciples, but primarily and obviously to the end that he may rectify their conduct,) the doctrine for the enforcement of the lesson is, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."—(Phil. ii. 3-8.) In these verses there is a collateral lesson for our faith; but the

chief, the direct lesson, is a lesson of charity, which is greater than faith. Scripture is profitable for doctrine; but ulterior to this there is another end, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.

You will understand that it is not our object to banish the didactic, nor yet wholly to banish the controversial theology from our pulpits. In reference to the former, there must be a statement of the truth expressed or implied in your text, and that, too, accompanied by enough of argument for gaining the intellectual assent of the hearers; and in reference to the latter, I can imagine times and occasions when, to ward off some menacing heresy, the polemic arm must be lifted even in the house of God to quell the mischief, and the work of exposing it be the burden of many a Sabbath ministration. Whatever the ulterior services of the truth may be, it is an indispensable preliminary that the people shall believe it. Until you have secured this vantage-ground nothing can be effected. But what we affirm is, that without an extended demonstration, and without the full and finished controversial treatment which are proper here in the business of training students for all the services of the Church, you may, by a far shorter process, enlist the understandings of a congregation on the side of all that is most important and influential in the truths of Christianity. In the vast majority of instances, that is done already before you have begun your sermon, or if not, a few suitable texts will suffice to recall the doctrine of the day to their conscience and memory, or to impress it on their convictions. It is not necessary to expend time in the establishment of a doctrine, if their minds be already established in the truth of it. And the plain reason why we grudge unnecessary time in arguing the truth of the doctrine, is, that really there is too much else to do with it. You have to urge the truth upon their consciences. You have to open a way for its influence upon their hearts. You have to address it to their hopes or their fears, or their purposes of obedience. If the doctrine, for example, be the Divinity of Christ, you may therefrom expatiate on the worth of the sacrifice, and so hush the alarms of a guilty bosom; or on the enor-

mity of sin that called forth so costly an expiation, and so arouse from the slumbers of their conscience both the ungodly and the backslider; or on the weight of gratitude earned by this illustrious sufferer, and so press on all who believe the devotedness of their whole lives to the Saviour who died for them; or on the power which inherently belongs to Him, of completing the redemption which He hath begun, and so animating their confidence in the sustaining and sanctifying influences of that grace by which he upholds His disciples in the work and the warfare of their practical Christianity; or, finally, on the danger of rejecting overtures brought to our world by a Divine messenger, and sealed by His blood, and so ground on the very magnitude of the condescension and the mercy a louder appeal of terror to all who shall despise it.

But on this topic I have dwelt longer than I anticipated. What I principally aimed at and had hoped to overtake, was another distinction between the exposition that is usually given of Christianity in the Hall, and the exposition that should be given of Christianity in the pulpit. Here it is propounded as a theory, with a view to your theoretical understanding of it; there, if I may use the expression, it is more practised as an art, with a view to a certain practical fulfilment. So to instruct men as to make them comprehend the scheme of Christianity is one sort of achievement; so to influence men as to make them personally and actually Christians, is another and a very different sort of achievement. The one is the proper achievement of a theological professor, the other the proper achievement of a Christian minister. Their objects are different, and corresponding to this they should go differently to work. In particular, they should begin differently. The dogmatic is essentially different from the hortatory, but not more so than the commencement and the order of your studies in the Hall should differ from the commencement and the order of your sermons in the pulpit.

Very generally in the framing of a theological system, there is first an ascent made to the fountainhead of being, to the primal source as well as object of all religion. The outset is with mysterious and high speculations, and these not about

the character alone, but the constitution of the Deity, where, in the prosecution of a sound and a scriptural path, it is difficult to clear one's way through the crudities and the ambitious imaginations of the men of all sects and of all ages. To guide the Christian scholar along this hazardous walk, among what may be called the heights and the transcendentals of his subject, there is need not of the light only of Biblical criticism, but of that sober and cautious philosophy which is observant of its own limits, and which knows how to separate between the findings of experience or Scripture, and the fancies of unauthorized speculation. After that the question of the Trinity has been laboriously scrutinized throughout the Bible in its original language, and brought safe through the manifold controversies of the Church in the condition of a leading article in our systematic divinity, the same process has to be repeated successively with the following articles, which are often made to come after each other in the chronological order of the history of the Divine administration. After this recondite speculation on His nature and constitution, there is another equally recondite on the purposes or decrees of a predestinating Deity, whence going forth, as it were, from the darkling recesses of a past eternity, this process of doctrinal exposition goes downward to the creation of the world, if not to the previous creation of angels and higher orders of intelligence, to the original innocence of our nature—to the law of God for the government of the human family—to the fall of man, the introduction of sin, the condemnation and moral ruin of our species—to the undertaking of the great Mediator, who bore in His own person the penalties of heaven's outraged authority, that He might deliver us from the wrath of our offended Lawgiver, and so effect a reconciliation between God and a sinful world—to the repentance and the faith, the calls of which accompanied those overtures of the gospel—to the special provision made for the sanctification of believers, so that they may be delivered from the tyranny of their present evil affections, as well as from the terrors of the wrath that is to come—to their progressive holiness here, and their triumphant preferment hereafter, among the

joys and the exercises of heaven's high sanctuary ; lastly, to the day of judgment, when this wondrous scheme shall have its full and final developement, and all its mysteries shall be opened, to the endless the irrecoverable distance of the good and the evil, the pains of the everlasting hell, the delights and the glories of a blissful immortality.

Now the whole of this progression may be gone through in right synthetic order, beginning with the decrees of the past, and ending with the destinations of the future eternity. Altogether, it may be a perfect theoretical exposition of the science ; and we employ the term theoretical, not that it might imply aught of the doubtful or the imaginative in the account that has thus been rendered. Although designed a theory, it may be a just and solid theory notwithstanding, based throughout on the evidence of Scripture, and defensible in all its parts and positions against every opposing heresy. It may be a true exhibition of Christianity, and yet not the exhibition that should be made of it in the work of Christianisation. But if this be a true exhibition, will not another and a different exhibition be a false one? No ; and for this I have to intreat your consideration. In a complicated scheme of doctrine, you may change the whole aspect of the scheme ; you may change the order and the apparent locality of all its parts simply by changing the point of view from which it is contemplated. Meanwhile the doctrine itself continues the same, and there is no change whatever upon it. The representation of the mundane system from the centre of the sun is not the same with the representation of the mundane system from the surface of a planet, yet it is the same mundane system notwithstanding. And the same is true of the scriptural, or, if you will, of the spiritual system ; of all that part of the moral world which is accessible to us. It may be viewed from the highest and most commanding station of all, from the fountainhead of the Divine mind ; and so beginning with the plans and purposes of the Deity, it may pass onward in historical order through the forthgoings of a Divine administration, having for its principle the will and authority of God, and for its subject the

aggregate mass of our species; or it may be viewed from another station—from the heart or the homestead of a single individual in that species, whether as sunk in the moral lethargy from which the calls of Christianity might arouse him, or as awakened to a sense of danger, and labouring to realize, in the asylum which Christianity has opened, a place of safety and of enlargement. What we affirm is, that the representation of Christianity, taken from the one station, is different from the representation of Christianity taken from the other, and yet the thing viewed from both is one and the same Christianity. They differ not as one object does from another, but only as the scheme or projection of an object seen from one point differs from the scheme or projection of the same object seen from another point. The change is not in the truth, the only change is in the perspective. If the representation of the hortatory differs from the representation of the systematic theologian, it is just as one picture of the same landscape differs from another, because of the different sides from which they have been taken, and so different bearings in which the whole and every part stand to the eye of the spectator. It is thus that we may have two different representations of the same Christianity; and if the one is the proper representation to be given from the chair, the other is certainly the proper representation to be given from the pulpit.

The nearest approximation in Scripture to the first of these occurs in the eighth chapter of the Romans: "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate; whom he did predestinate, them he also called; whom he called, them he also justified; whom he justified, them he also glorified." Paul appears at this place in the character of a systematic theologian; but none was practically more successful than he in the work of the hortatory theologian, in acquitting himself of which he would begin not at the first step of the progression which I have now laid before you—not with God's foreknowledge or God's predestination, but at an intermediate step, with God's calling on all men everywhere to repent, and to do works meet for repentance. It was not so that Peter began: not most as-



surely with a dissertation on the Trinity—not with the decrees of a predestinating God, but with other truths that came more nearly home to the personal interest of his hearers, and by which he might arouse them to an immediate practical movement, with the doctrine of a ready-offered forgiveness, and a promised regeneration to all who would, and, grounded upon these, with a call to repent, and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. In whatever way you may receive the truths of Christianity here, this is the way for conducting the business of pulpits. You should first impress the consciences of men with the demonstration of sinfulness, even as Peter did : you should then exhibit the open door of an accepted Mediatorship, which all are invited to enter, and where they may be admitted to behold their offended Lawgiver in this most winning yet impressive attitude, God waiting to be gracious : and then the promised aids of grace and strength from on high might be made known to them, and intermingled with statements of doctrine as in the voice of a teacher, there should be an urgency, an imperative urgency, in the voice of a commander—“ Turn to me, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you ;” and there should be a constant enforcement of the new obedience of the gospel with as constant an appliance of the truths and the motives which constrain it ; and one doctrine after another should be propounded as they are able to bear it, or as it admits of pertinent and practical application to the actual progress they have made in the moral history and moral experience of a believer ; and while all Scripture should be expounded because all Scripture is profitable, it should never be forgotten that in Scripture doctrinal truth is continually brought forward as a stepping-stone to practical efficiency, and that the ultimate object of all its revelations is, that the man of God might be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works.

There is just one distinction more between the systematic and the hortatory that I have time at present to notice, and

which has been suggested by an expression made use of a little while ago. We said that in the systematic theology the administration of God is exhibited as it bears upon the mass of the species, or perhaps rather on two distinct masses, the children of light and the children of this world. It is thus made to assume in a great degree the character of a distant and general speculation. The sense of one's own personal interest is lost among those universalities of statement and doctrine, and theology altogether is in this way more regarded as a thing of intellectual entertainment than as a matter of individual concern. Now for a practical effect it is a mighty object so to shape the representation as to isolate each of your hearers and make him feel that the matters wherewith you are charged are addressed distinctly and specifically to him. Now there are certain terms associated everywhere in the New Testament with God's overtures to the world, and which fully warrant this pointed, this personal direction of them to each individual; and the most important transition is made from the systematic to the hortatory, from the style of a professor in his chair to the style of a minister in his pulpit, when availing yourselves of these terms you pass from a mere general and didactic exhibition of the subject to such an application of it as might lead each individual to take it home to his own case and his own conscience. There is a fine example of this isolation of each hearer given by the Apostle Peter, when he says—Repent every one of you; and by our Saviour when he says, Come to me all; or when He says, Behold I stand at the door and knock, if any man open, I shall enter; or when He says, Whosoever cometh to me shall in no wise be cast out. Ministers still may, after these high examples, charge, or entreat, or hold out the encouragements of the gospel to each and every man within the reach of their voice; and thus the difference between the gospel in its generality and the gospel in its specific bearing on each individual of the great family of man, forms one capital distinction between the didactic and the hortatory management of the subject, between, in short, your present studies as collegians, and your future preparations as ministers of parishes.

## LECTURE VI.

## ON DIDACTIC AND CONTROVERSIAL THEOLOGY.

It would prepare, we think, for a most important practical conclusion, did we distinguish aright between two mental processes, in one of which the truth in theology is the final term of the process, and in the other of which, the same truth in theology is the initial term of the process. To exemplify our meaning, let us instance the doctrine of the Atonement. A process of criticism and comparison and reasoning may be instituted for the ultimate object of establishing the truth of that doctrine—such a process as was described by the author, and may yet be described by every reader, of Magee's work upon this article of our faith. The process may have been altogether a successful one. Belief, and that, too, a right belief, may be the result of it. The object is gained—the *terminus ad quem* is reached—and the mind rests at the place where it terminates. The proposition is mastered and made over as another addition to the stock of our intellectual acquirements. We may settle into the repose of a conscious acquisition or achievement, when we arrive at the *quod erat demonstrandum* of a theological, just as we do after having arrived at the *quod erat demonstrandum* of a mathematical proposition. And the same process repeated with every other article of the creed might, in like manner, bring into your possession the whole of didactic theology. A general, unspotted orthodoxy, may be the result of it; and you may have been schooled not merely into a zealous and attached disciple, but into one of the ablest and most accomplished of its champions.

Now while there is one process which ends with the belief in some truth of theology, there is another and a distinct pro-

cess which begins with it, and it is truly a possible thing for one to have described the first and not so much as to have entered upon the second. Let us recur for illustration to the same doctrine of the atonement, the belief in which, we have already found, may have been the consummation of one mental process, but which we shall now find may also be the commencement of another mental process. That doctrine which the erudite theologian clears his way to by critical research, and, if necessary, by a lengthened polemic operation, when the errors and the sophistry of heretics have laid obstructions in his path—that same doctrine may shine in the immediate light of Scripture on the understanding of a peasant, and find instant entrance there so soon as he opens his eyes on the pages of inspiration. There may have been no process, at least of scholarship, anterior to his reception of the truth, and yet a most busy and important process after it. Instead of being the goal, it is to him the starting-post—not the landing-place at which he stops, but the point of departure which he moves from. His faith in this doctrine, in fact, may not only have ushered in a new train of emotions, but may have set him forth with impellent power on a course of activity that is quite interminable, having both brought a new sensation into his heart and thrown a guiding and governing light over the whole of his history. Instead of having occupancy in his mind as in a reservoir, where lie, in a sort of quiescent deposition, all the truths and doctrines of Christianity, it has occupancy there as in a fountainhead or well of water, struck out in the heart of regenerated man, whose stream is holiness, and which springs up to life everlasting. A man whose only business is to prove the truth, ends with believing it; a man whose business it is to proceed upon the truth, begins with believing it. It lies in the breast of the one in the shape of an inert and unproductive dogma; in the breast of the other it acts as the living and efficient principle, both of the new heart and the new history. There may be the same orthodoxy with both, but in very different positions, and so with a wholly different effect. The doctrine of the atonement, triumphantly argued out by the one, may

have become his by intellectual seizure, and command the homage of this one faculty ; the same doctrine, admitted from the outset by an act of simple but sure credence into the moral system of the other may have obtained mastery there over all the feelings and faculties of his nature, working gratitude within, and strewing the whole of his outward path with the acts and the services of new obedience. The processes are distinct, and they have different and distinct terminations. The one ends where the other begins. In the first it ends with the right state of his creed ; in the second with the right state of his character. The landing-place of the former, valorous and accomplished for the battles of the faith, may be a station of eminence in the Church upon earth ; that of the latter is a place of eminence in heaven.

We mean not to say that both of these processes may not be realized by the same individual. But it is enough that they are separable and often separate, to justify our having adverted to the distinction between them, and to found thereupon our earnest advice that you endeavour to blend both and harmonize both. There is a delusion upon this subject, in virtue of which men sit down in full satisfaction with themselves, because now in the conscious and complacent possession of an orthodoxy to which they have won their way, whereas their having mastered the propositions of Christianity, may be truly of as little religious importance as their having mastered the propositions in conic sections. In both the theological and the mathematical exercises, the intellectual faculties may have been alike soundly and vigorously exercised—the taste and the talent for reasoning may have been alike gratified—the delights of prosperous study and the triumphs of successful achievement may have alike rewarded the toils of this investigation, and you may thus have been conducted by a right pathway to the right dogmata of both the sciences ; yet in both they may be merely scientific or secular acquisitions after all, and as little accompanied in the one as in the other by either the power or the feeling of sacredness. Of this there are examples innumerable in the history of the Church—sound and erudite theologians,

champions, redoubted champions, of the leading articles in the evangelical system, yet without one particle in their hearts of the spirit or unction of evangelical piety. Be assured that one may combine in his own person the classic lore of Walton, and the argumentative power of Clarke, and the philosophic dignity of Butler, and the manly sense of Barrow, and the laborious erudition of Lardner, and the polemic strength of Warburton and Horsley, and the fine discrimination and subtlety of Campbell, and all these, too, enlisted on the side of rigid orthodoxy—and yet, with all his science and all his services in the cause, may have reached no further in Christianity than just to the end of the first process. In other words, his personal Christianity may not yet have been entered on; and while the Christian *savant* has reached only to the truth, the Christian peasant may have passed far beyond it, to the experience of its effects in transforming the character and hastening forward the preparations of eternity.

In contrasting the Christianity of an unlettered rustic with that of a profound scholar, you must not understand of the former, that, though he has not described the first process, there was therefore no anterior process, anterior we mean to his reception of the truth, described by him at all. It was not the scholar's process certainly, but there may have been a busy and a sustained exercise notwithstanding, made up of the workings of conscience, the prayers, and the Bible readings, of great moral earnestness, and at length the illuminations of that Spirit who opened his understanding to the word, and made him perceive its truth and the felt preciousness of its adaptations to the wants and the longings of his diseased nature. Neither must we imagine that, because his belief is not the result of a continuous reasoning, it is therefore a result without reason. It was both the semblance of evidence which drew his first attention to the gospel, and the increasing semblance of it which prolonged his attention, and at last the substance and the power of the most legitimate evidence that carried his convictions and made him a believer. And after this great transition, the evidence multiplies and brightens

every day with the growth of his experience ; and all ignorant though he be of the antique lore connected with revelation, or with the import of any term in its original languages, yet in personal and spiritual contact as he is with the subject-matter of revelation, to him belongs a more intimate, I think a more solid, conviction of its truth, than that which follows in the train of the scholar's lengthened demonstration. It is not by immediate vision, but by a repeated inferential process of one or two steps, that he is made to perceive the truth, and, in fact, to obtain a more close and satisfactory view of it than is ever reached by many a party theologian. It is the more transcendental wisdom of the two, and it is of him that our Saviour speaks in the fervent ejaculation of—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes."

We say not this to discourage your literary treatment of the Bible, or to forbid your drawing forth the sense of the book in the most scholar-like manner, so as by criticism and argument, and all the methods of research applicable to other authors, to come at the subject-matter of Christianity ; but we would have you combine with this the plain daily exercise of reading Scripture in the way and with the spirit and purpose of any ordinary Christian. We would have you, along with your more scientific and strictly professional converse with the sacred volume, hold frequent and familiar converse with it in the English translation. In justice to the various advices which I have offered from time to time upon this subject, I must here refer to the one reigning principle which connects and harmonizes them. I have stated at length to you the reasons why all that is most important in revelation should be most accurately rendered in any of our popular versions ; and that therefore, in reading the Bible which is in everybody's hands, you will not miss aught that is momentous either in the doctrine or the precepts of the gospel. When reading then for a practical object, you not only can read more of English in the same time than of Greek or Hebrew, but you read it with a mind disencumbered from every other object. There is no such partition-

ing of the attention between two things when engaged with the Bible in your own familiar, rather than in a foreign or a dead language. You are accustomed to think in English, and through the medium of English, therefore, you have a shorter transition both to the thoughts of the Bible and to the feelings awakened by the thoughts. For the perfect description of the first process, I would have you to study, and with all profoundness, the original Scriptures. For your advancement in the second, I would have you to read, and with utmost moral earnestness, the translated Scriptures. I would have you, for the upholding and nurturing of your personal Christianity, partake in the same exercises with the humblest of your people. There will thus be the sympathy of a common work between you, and the sympathy of a common result from it. It may be of little avail to their Christianity, and I may add of little avail to your own, that you have travelled your way to orthodoxy through the medium of polyglots. I should augur better both for your personal character, and your public ministrations, did I know of your frequent and affectionate converse with your pocket Bibles.

But while I hold the precautionary lesson which I have now given to be of the utmost importance when commencing the systematic study of the subject-matter of revelation, I must not forget the peculiar modification or change of aspect that the science assumes when it passes from a didactic theology to a controversial theology. I am aware of its being practically a most difficult thing, if not altogether impossible, to complete the didactic exposition of the subject without a reference to the oppositions of heresy, yet I would have you at least to conceive for a moment that the matter were managed in this way. Let us imagine a scholar in every way accomplished for the task, and in the act of drawing forth of it its system of doctrine, holding converse with the Bible alone. Let us imagine him to be even not aware of the existence of any controversies on the subject, and with all the requisite faculties of criticism and comparison and generalisation, to bestow on the Bible his own original and independent treatment. We say, that were the articles of theology brought immediately forth by such a process of extrac-



tion from the original record, they would then be presented to us in pure didactic order fresh from Scripture, and offering to us so many generalities of statement, based, however, on the very statements and sayings of Scripture. This were didactic theology brought out by a didactic process in its simplest and purest style. But imagine the very same articles exposed to an indiscriminate host of theologians, and there meeting with the prejudice of one, the misconception of another, the rash ignorance of a third, the resolute hostility of a fourth. Let the Christian Church be agitated with divisions of sentiment, with the arguings and redarguings of manifold controversy, then, although the orthodox should prevail, and the very same articles originally brought in pacific derivation from the Bible should survive the ordeal of debate, and be presented anew for the submission of the Christian world as the truths that had stood their ground amid the shock of adverse opinions, and triumphed in the conflict, we say of this *theologica polemica*, that though substantially the same with the *theologica didactica* that went before it, it will not be complexionally the same—that it will stand forth differently tinged to the eye of observers, and that they who have studied her lessons will be exposed to certain influences to which the simple derivation of the system from the Bible, though essentially the same system, would not have exposed them. We affirm of a theology directly educes from the words of God, that though not transmuted in doctrine, it will be transmuted in aspect and expression, and so in effect, when, though the same theology, it is reasserted and vindicated in opposition to the words of men. We affirm of the truth, that though unaltered in respect of its matter, it will have another face, and so may have another influence than at first, when, to the confirmatory argument by which to show what Scripture is for it, there is superadded this combative argument by which to silence what heretics and opponents say against it. We did not say in the precautionary lesson which we have just given, that the didactic theology was not true theology, although we warned you of a certain hurtful influence to which it might expose you, and bid you, for protection there-

from, habituate yourselves to the simple and earnest perusal of your Bibles. And neither now do we say that the polemic theology is not true theology, though, for the sake of your protection from certain other hurtful influences to which you are exposed by the study of it, we should bid you often recur to that simpler and earlier didactic theology which springs direct from the Bible, having Scripture theology for its phraseology and Scripture texts for its arguments.

The characteristics of the two theologies multiply upon observation ; but let me not dismiss the matter at present without some specification.

When any doctrine, then, of the scriptural theology or the didactic theology, which is neither more nor less than generalized Scripture, meets with the hostility of a gainsayer, he utters his contradiction to it in his own language ; he substitutes another doctrine in its place, and he couches it in his own phraseology. It is not enough that he be confronted by Scripture texts, or by the doctrine which he resists propounded in the terms of a purely didactic system, and therefore as nearly as possible in scriptural terms. He professes to understand the Scripture differently, and he advances a different statement in a nomenclature of his own. He has translated the Scripture proposition into another proposition, conveyed in terms which he himself has adopted, and he cannot be adequately met by the original proposition, but by a translated proposition too in terms opposite to his own. His translation of the doctrine, if judged to be erroneous, must be met, not by the original statement of Scripture, but by a counter-translation on the part of the orthodox. It is doubtless the rightful prerogative of every Christian to judge which is the better translation of the two ; but it will be obvious to you, on reflection, that the translation of the heretic could not be met by the doctrine of which he treats couched in the language of Scripture ; it could only be met by another translation whose phraseology was adapted to the special object of neutralizing the phraseology of that error which the Church was labouring to extinguish. The language into which the heretic rendered his unscriptural doctrine could only be coun-

tervailed, not by the true doctrine expressed in scriptural language, for this he professes not to disown, but by the true doctrine rendered back into such a language as might nullify and displace the words along with the substance of the heresy. It could be put out in no other way. The mere affirmation of the scriptural doctrine in scriptural phrases would not put it out, for they would profess the utmost reverence for this affirmation, while at the same time they kept by their own. The only way in which their affirmation expressed in their language could be met was by a counter-affirmation, expressed in a different language, of express and unequivocal denial; and thus, while the same proposition was retained both in the didactic and the polemic theology, in passing from one to another, a translation was effected—the translation of the words adopted by God for the direct instruction of the teachable and the humble into words adopted by men for putting down the heresies of the gainsayers.

It was this which at length gave rise to the expression of theological doctrine in other language than that of Scripture. It originated not with the orthodox, but their opponents, laid upon them by others as a matter of practical necessity, and adopted, not for the purpose of saying better what the Bible had said before, but for the purpose of so saying it as to meet the unscriptural propositions which from time to time were advanced to notice in the Church under the guise and the profession of a reverence for Scripture. There occur innumerable instances in ecclesiastical history of orthodoxy fabricating anew its language, not for improving either on its own language or on the language of the Bible, but for the special object of instituting a test and a safeguard against the new sprung articles of sectaries and innovators. One of the most striking proofs that can be given of this may be found in the origin and history of the term *ὁμοεσιον*, a word not scriptural, certainly, but the only word that could be devised for protecting the clearly scriptural doctrine of the Divinity of Christ from the subtle attempts of the Arians to dilute or do it away. “When the Catholics,” says Bishop Bull in his work on the Trinity, “when the Catholics accused them of calling the Son of God a crea-

ture, they showed indignation ; with this secret intentment that the Son of God was not a creature as other creatures ; they were so mediately by the word, He immediately without the word. The *homoousia* was the only word that they could not reconcile to their heresy. Athanasius again testifies, and it is worthy of observation, that this trickery of the Arians hindered the design of the Nicene bishops of expressing their creed in Scripture terms only. Ambrosius strongly confirms what Athanasius says, namely, that the *homoousia* did so gravel the Arians. ‘ Lastly, they could even now use the word *homoousia* as well as the other terms, if they could find a way to pervert it. But when they saw themselves reduced to difficulty by this word, they utterly rejected it.’ Athanasius produces many creeds or confessions of the Arians themselves to the same purpose, in which, though you may find any other Catholic term, you can never meet with the *homoousia*. They are all over indignation against it, and vainly bite the chain with which they are bound.” This extract is from rather a loose and paraphrastic translation of Bull’s work. The last sentence in his original Latin gives a still more striking representation of the purpose for which this special word was fixed upon :—“ Itaque quod Ariomanitæ tanto furore in homoousii vocem exarserint, in eo idem fecisse mihi videntur, quod rabidi solent canes ; qui ad ferrea vincula, quibus constricti tenentur, hirriunt eademque dentibus confringere frustra adnituntur.”\* You will thus see whence arose that transition from the Scriptural language of a *theologia didactica* to the scholastic language of a *theologia elenctica*—the one formed by God for the direct instruction of the teachable, the other formed by men for the correction of the perverse.

On this ground we cannot sympathize with Mosheim in the lofty and unqualified contempt which he expresses even for the part taken by the orthodox in the controversies of that period. It was a part forced upon them by their antagonists, but for whose unscriptural deviations from the truth, theology might have remained to this hour in pure didactic form, resting on the groundwork and shrined in the phraseology of Scripture.

\* See Bull’s “ Defensio Fidei Nicæne,” Section II. chap. i. § 13.

I may here take occasion to observe, that I agree with the author of the Natural History of Enthusiasm, in looking on a good Church history as a very great desideratum. He says of Mosheim that he gives but the mere husk of history; and of Milner, but some separated particles of pure farina. Nevertheless, he observes, that with all its great defects, Milner's Church History is incomparably the best that has been compiled.

Now, if in the study of a didactic theology there is danger lest the mind should rest in a mere intellectual acquisition of the truth, there is an aggravated danger in the study of controversial theology. The doctrine as put by man for the repression of error may be in substance the same, but in expression and influence, it is not the same as the doctrine put by God for the inculcation of truth. When engaged with the one you may be separated from the other; and so from all those primary and direct influences which a message from God is fitted to have on the spirits of those who are the objects of it. We would therefore advise a constant recurrence to the didactic—a perpetual converse with Scripture, or with Scriptural summaries—a frequent transition by the mind back again from the doctrine as couched in the language of controversy to the doctrine as couched in the *ipsissima verba* of inspiration. We recommend this habit, not alone for the sake of the wholesome effect upon your own personal Christianity, but for the sake of your pulpit ministrations we hold it indispensable. To an ordinary congregation it is the didactic alone that is generally of any interest or value, and seldom is the other of any service at all. There is no good done but the opposite by the pulpit refutation of errors which they never heard of, or the practical ascendancy of which would most effectually be anticipated by the direct enforcement and exposition of the truth. The *theologia elenctica* we hold to be at best but a necessary evil in the Church, which will at length be superseded in times of greater light and of greater honesty—a temporary obstruction that will ultimately be removed in the way of full and immediate converse with the Bible—a din of earthly noises which will at length be overborne by the sound of God's own

voice in the Scripture—a turbid and darkening atmosphere, which, when at length cleared away, will let down upon the agitated Church a direct and penetrating radiance from the lamp of revelation. Calvin, though himself among the sturdiest of polemics, mourned over the necessity that had compelled the Church to an artificial and scholastic nomenclature for the utterance of its doctrines; and we think that by the following single observation he has outrun all his fellows in that prolific age of great theologians and reformers:—“*Utinam,*” he says, “*utinam sepulta essent nomina Trinitatis, ὁμοουσις, constaret modo haec inter omnes fides, Patrem Filium et Spiritum Sanctum esse unum Deum, nec tamen aut Filium esse Patrem, aut Spiritum Filium, sed proprietate quodam esse distinctos,*” &c. “I wish that the names of the Trinity, of the *homoousia*, &c., were buried, should only this faith be established among all, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God, yet that the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinct from each other by some peculiarity.” Turretin, who quotes this sentence, contends for the necessity of retaining the names—a necessity which we cannot refuse, though, with Calvin, we lament it. “But as it is often found,” says Turretin, “that they who litigate more pertinaciously than others against the words, cherish a secret *virus*, and it is sufficiently evident that those new corrupters of religion condemn the words adopted by the ancients for no other reason than that they are unwilling to receive the things designed by them, and, knowing that with the words they might abolish the doctrine also, we therefore did right in retaining them, and not only insist on their use being lawful but also beneficial and necessary for repressing the pertinacity of heretics, (*ad constringendam hereticorum pertinaciam,*) and bringing them forth of their lurking places, (*et ipsos ex latebris suis educendos.*)”

But there is a brilliant perspective before us which we doubt not will in time be realized. There seems both an intellectual and a moral convergency towards it. In as far as controversy originated in the spirit of a rash and unbridled speculation, this is a source which with our now better philosophy and our

better understanding of the limit between the known and the unknown is fast drying up; and there is, partly intellectual and partly moral, a profounder recognition of the authority of Scripture as paramount to all other authority, and perhaps on all sides a greater moral fairness in the interpretation of it. When these habits are consummated, controversy will cease, because the provocations to controversy will be done away. The *theologia elenctica*, after having accomplished a most important temporary service will then be dispensed with. Its technology will fall into desuetude, because formed as it was for the special object of neutralizing the heresies which no longer exist, its employment will be uncalled for. God's own truths expressed in God's own language will form the universal creed of enlarged and harmonized and happy Christendom. Men's faith and their affections, when this intermediate and temporary apparatus is at length taken down, will come into more direct contact with heaven's original revelation, and the spirit of good-will to man which prompted heaven's message will be felt in all its freshness and power, when the uproar of controversy is stilled, and its harsh and jarring discords die away in everlasting silence. There will be system and generalization still, but founded on the generalizations of Scripture, and the doctrines in which many now terminate, as if they were the ultimate truths of the record, will be found themselves to be subordinate to the one and reigning expression of heaven's kindness to the world by which the whole scheme of our redemption is pervaded.

"I'm apt to think the man  
That could surround the sum of things, and spy  
The heart of God and secrets of His empire,  
Would speak but love—with him the bright result  
Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,  
And make one thing of all theology."—GAMBOLD.

END OF VOLUME EIGHTH.





# DR. CHALMERS' POSTHUMOUS WORKS.

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["*To commend these works is superfluous ; they have met with universal approbation from the British press and public. That the periodical press, representing so great a variety of religious and political opinion, should have so generally noticed them, and that too with high commendation, is a circumstance exceedingly rare, if not altogether unparalleled. They have charms for the merely literary man, and they will obtain a hearing for evangelical truth in quarters from which it would otherwise be excluded.*"]—KITTO'S JOURNAL.

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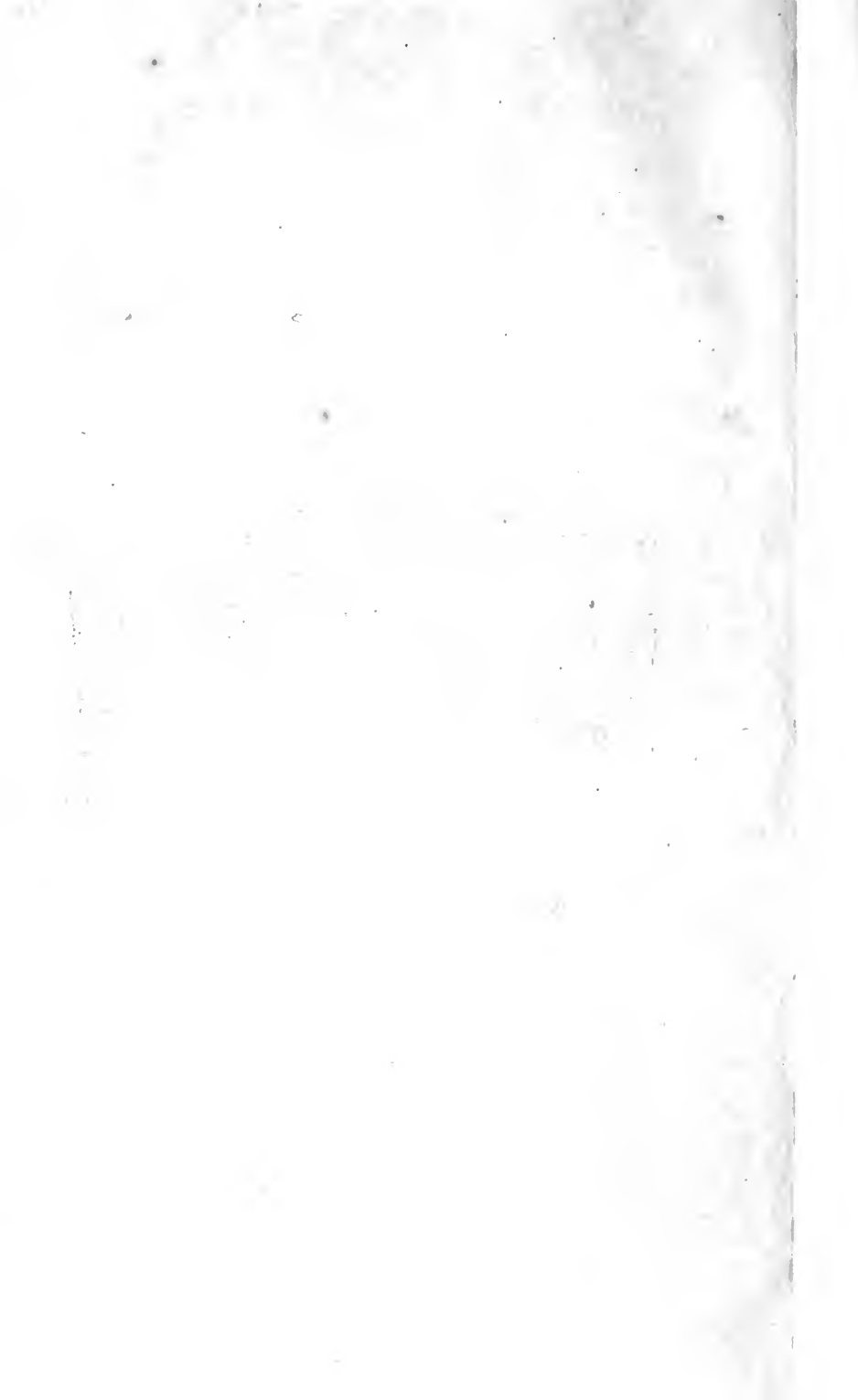
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