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Rationalism and revelation





# HULSEAN LECTURES

FOR

MDCCCXXXVII.



RATIONALISM AND REVELATION.



*V. C. Hulse*

RATIONALISM AND REVELATION :

OR THE

TESTIMONY OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY,

THE SYSTEM OF NATURE,

AND THE CONSTITUTION OF MAN,

TO THE TRUTH OF

THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE ;

IN EIGHT DISCOURSES,

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

IN THE YEAR 1837 ;

WITH A MEMOIR OF THE FOUNDER OF THE LECTURE,  
THE REV. JOHN HULSE.

BY THE

REV. RICHARD PARKINSON, B. D.

OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,  
AND FELLOW OF CHRIST'S COLLEGE IN MANCHESTER.

LONDON :

J. G. AND F. RIVINGTON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD.

MDCCCXXXVIII.





TO

GILBERT AINSLIE, D. D.

MASTER OF PEMBROKE COLLEGE, AND LATE VICE-CHANCELLOR:

CHRISTOPHER WORDSWORTH, D. D.

MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE:

AND THE VERY REV. JAMES WOOD, D. D.

DEAN OF ELY,

AND MASTER OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE:

TRUSTEES OF THE LECTURE

FOUNDED BY

THE REV. JOHN HULSE,

THE FOLLOWING DISCOURSES,

PREACHED BY THEIR APPOINTMENT,

ARE VERY RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR.



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## MEMOIR OF MR. HULSE.

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THERE are few men who have taken more effectual means of securing to their *names* an earthly immortality, than those who have, by donation or bequest, endowed some Fellowship, Exhibition, or Prize, in one of our Universities. There is at least a remembrance of their bounty made once every year. Each triumphant competitor for their crown “adds a stone to their cairn;” and their name becomes a very household word with thousands, who have no recollections or sympathies for heroes and potentates, the *effects* of whose brilliant exploits have now become mere matters of history. It is, however, much to be regretted that the names *alone* of too many of these best patrons of religion and science are now remembered. HULSE, one of the greatest benefactors to the University of Cambridge in modern times, (the value of the estates which he devoted to the encouragement of literature and religion may be stated, in round numbers, as approaching to the

sum of £1000 per annum), is fast following the fate of his predecessors ; the only record of his life being the brief but very interesting particulars noticed by Mr. BENSON, the first Lecturer on his Foundation, in the first and second of his eloquent and valuable discourses on the Evidences of Christianity. For these particulars he acknowledges himself indebted to Dr. WOOD, the present venerable Master of St. JOHN'S, and DEAN of ELY. Dr. WOOD is the oldest surviving Trustee under Mr. Hulse's will, and is now the sole depository of many of the facts which tradition has treasured up respecting his habits and character. It was long his intention to arrange them into the form of a brief memoir ; and it is much to be regretted that he never carried this design into execution, as it cannot be doubted that the clearness of style and vigour of thought which have given permanence to his works even on the progressive subjects of mathematical science, would have imparted peculiar interest to his notices, however necessarily scanty, of one, whose unchanging attachment to his own beloved College, must have caused him to be regarded by its Master almost in the light of a friend. Pleading, however, the apology of advancing age, for declining the task which he had long proposed to himself, Dr. WOOD has kindly placed the particulars with regard to Mr. Hulse, which he had many years ago collected from his servants and surviving friends, in the

hands of the present Lecturer; with a request that they should be embodied into a brief memoir, and such extracts from his voluminous Will appended, as might put the public in full possession of the benevolence of his designs, and of his judgment in carrying them into execution. From no one is the discharge of this almost filial duty more due, than one who has had the honour, (however unworthily), of holding a conspicuous post on his Foundation; and scanty as are necessarily the materials for biography, which are furnished by the life of a retired student, yet there are traits in the history of Mr. Hulse, which, independent of his pious testamentary bequests, may make some notice of him a matter of interest to the reader.

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JOHN HULSE, the subject of this memoir, was the descendant of a respectable, though not what is technically called a county family, in Cheshire.\*

\* In Debrett's Baronetage there is a strange mistake. It is there stated that "the Rev. John (who left his estates for the purpose of promoting religious knowledge in the University of Cambridge,)" was the son of Sir Edward Hulse, the first Baronet of that name. It is difficult to consider an error so circumstantial as this, as being entirely the result of accident. The blunder is, nevertheless, wholly gratuitous; there never having been the slightest relationship or connexion between the two families.

His grandfather, Thomas Hulse, whose conduct towards him had a very considerable influence on his character and fortunes, was the son of Thomas Hulse of Clive, and Catharine, daughter of Thomas Malbon, a native of Nantwich. He married Mary Raven, daughter, and, on her brother's death, heiress of William Raven, of Elworth Hall, in Cheshire, which descended to his son Thomas, the father of the subject of the present memoir. Elworth Hall, according to Ormerod, who mentions it in his History of Cheshire, "is a very respectable mansion, of the second class, situated within the township of Sandbach, but close to Bradwall, surrounded with fine trees, and kept in neat order, according to his (Mr. Hulse's) will. The front is of brick, finished with gables, the rest more ancient, and composed of timber and plaster."

Thomas Hulse, the father of the Rev. John Hulse, married Anne Webb, a daughter of Mr. Webb, of Middlewich, and a lady of considerable fortune—probably, says the informant, from £10,000 to £20,000. Her father had a share in what, in the language of the salt-mining district, is called a brine-pit; and on her giving up her fortune at her marriage, the whole of the Hulse's estates of Elworth, and in Clive and Bradwall, was settled upon her and her eldest son. That eldest son was JOHN, the subject of the present

memoir. He was born at Middlewich, on the 15th of March, in the year 1708, and was the eldest of nineteen children!—of whom, though a considerable number survived to at least middle age, five brothers and two sisters being alive—as appears from his will—in the year 1777—yet none of them left any offspring behind them. The conduct of his parents towards their eldest son was of a kind difficult to account for. Whatever might have been the cause, John was early removed from under the paternal roof, and was put out to nurse with a cottager on the estate. The account given of this part of his history, by the late Mr. Plant to the Master of St. John's, was as follows: “The grandfather, being desirous of seeing his grandson, proceeded up a dirty green lane, where he observed a girl with a child under one arm, and a pitcher of water in the other hand. He soon heard the old cottager's wife rebuking the girl for not making haste with the water; and adding, that if she could not bring *both* the child and the water, she must drop the child in the lane,—*which was accordingly done.*” From that hour the grandfather took the child unto his own home. It is probable that the treatment which he experienced at this early period of his life made an impression both on his physical and mental constitution, which determined the whole of his future character. He was of a delicate frame of body, of a contemplative turn of mind,

of diminutive stature, and of an irritable temperament. He is said to have contracted the bodily ailments, which he could never afterwards shake off, by an early habit of lying on the cold ground observing the heavens. He received his education at the grammar school of Congleton, near which town Elworth Hall is situated. At the age (which now appears an early one) of sixteen, he was admitted of St. John's College, Cambridge; and it is stated that his grandfather, who was indeed a father to him, took him thither behind him on horseback, which was at that time the only mode of conveyance for the middle classes, (a railroad not *then* running, as it does now, through his estate!), he himself being seventy-eight years of age. Soon after his entrance upon his college career his venerable benefactor died, and the family estate of course lapsed to his father, as heir under the entail. His father's family, however, was, as has been already stated, exceedingly numerous; and he sent for John from college for the purpose of obtaining his assent to the sale of part of the entailed property. To this he agreed. But on being sent for the second time for a similar purpose, he refused to comply with what he probably thought an unreasonable request. His refusal, it is stated, led to *personal* ill-treatment of him on the part of his father; and from that time he never returned to the paternal roof; taking up his residence, when not domesticated in



his college, with his grandmother, who was now old, and very much limited in her means of subsistence. But here was exemplified the value of those benevolent provisions which have been made in our universities for the necessities of indigent students, and which, I may add, have seldom been more judiciously or liberally dispensed, than in the college to which Mr. Hulse belonged. It appears that his career had not been undistinguished; for it is entered on the college records that he obtained a prize for a Latin Ode. He was carried through the remaining expenses of his University course by exhibitions granted to him by his college; and this liberality, on its part, accounts for the gratitude towards the place of his education which he always expressed during life, and which he so strikingly exemplified at its close. He never advanced farther in his degrees than that of Bachelor of Arts. He was ordained in the beginning of the year 1732, and had a small curacy at Yoxall. He married, in the year 1733, Miss Mary Hall, of Hermitage, near Holmes Chapel, in the neighbourhood of his paternal estate; a lady of a highly respectable family, and a very near relation to Miss Frances Hall, of Manchester, who, on her death in 1828, bequeathed the sum of £40,000 to the various public charities of that town. They had one son, Edward, who was

born at Hermitage, and died at the age of 22.\* He afterwards took the small curacy of Goostry, a chapel under Sandbach, and near Hermitage, which he served till the death of his father, which took place in the year 1753. He then took possession of his paternal estate of Elworth, where he resided for the remainder of his life; resigning, on account of the delicate state of his health, all clerical duties, and devoting himself to such studies as became his situation and profession. He died on the 14th of December, 1790, at the age of 82, of what I find styled in the memoranda before me, nervous atrophy; that is, doubtless, of old age attended with a total failure of the nervous system, rather than the ordinary and simple decay of the main physical powers. He was, indeed, a valetudinarian through life, and all his habits, as well as the tone of his mind, were influenced by his necessary attention to the precarious state of his health. He was, it is reported, and we may well believe it to have been the case, well versed in the science of medicine; for his own condition, as well as the taste of his time, would naturally direct his studies into that channel. He played well on the violin and flute, and other instru-

\* Mr. Benson states that Mr. Hulse died unmarried. I have not thought it necessary to point out some other mistakes of a similar kind. They do not much affect the object which *he* had in view.

ments; these were the natural and proper solace of many of his lonely hours. In one of the many codicils to his will, we find that he leaves his "fine organ to Elizabeth Plant, (one of his favourite servants), and disposes of his "violins and flutes, and all Corelli's works, and Purcell's Book of Songs, with his Sonatas, and all his Solos and Sonatas, and single songs for those instruments." And in a subsequent codicil he leaves "his smaller organ, and diagonal mirror, or optical machine, with the large collection of fine coloured prints to be viewed therein," to Thomas Plant. These were afterwards presented by Mr. Plant to the Master of St. John's, and are now in his possession. His habits of living were strictly abstemious; but his tastes are recorded to have been somewhat fastidious in these, as they were in matters more important. He drank nothing but water. He was (like most men of recluse habits) somewhat jealous of his rights, and suspicious of imposition; and, though of a most liberal disposition, never forgave or forgot any thing in the shape of meanness or falsehood. The early separation from his family, which has been already detailed, caused a breach in the domestic affections which was never healed, and all communication with his brothers and sisters seems to have been from that time cut off. But though doubtless this melancholy circumstance threw a permanent shade over his natural feelings

towards his relatives, it is much to his credit to have to record, that he finally did them no injustice in the provisions of his will. His charitable bequests only took effect "after a provision being made by his will for his several relations, he having left no children, nor his relations having any."

He left his estates in Middlewich and Newton to his brothers and sisters, of whom seven were then living, "for the term of ninety-nine years, if they should so long live, (none of them having any children), with a proviso that his brothers, who were then abroad, should, if they did not return within seven years, be considered as dead. Then to the University of Cambridge, on condition that the clear yearly rents should be divided into six equal parts, of which four should be paid to the author of the Dissertation hereafter to be mentioned, one to the Lecturer, and one for a Scholarship," which he afterwards revoked. His property in Sandbach and Bradwall he devised, "in the first place, for the purpose of paying the annual sum of £30 to such brother as was his heir-at-law, provided he was also resident in England; and after the death of his brothers, the sum of £30 each to two scholarships at St. John's College."

Thus secluded from society, and with the natural outlets of domestic affection closed in

early life, it is not surprising that he should have transferred his regards to those who were near to him in position, and who became finally dear to him by their conduct. These were his two favourite servants, Thomas and Elizabeth Plant, who watched over and cared for him during his long and tedious hours of sickness and pain, and to whom he bequeathed an interest for life in the estate of Elworth, and a considerable portion of his other property. These favoured servants shewed themselves (what is not always the case in similar circumstances) worthy of the trust reposed in, and bounty extended to them; and have been excellent stewards of the property thus temporally placed in their power. It is mentioned to the credit of Mr. Plant, that though a provision was made in the will, by which he might have extended the exclusive interest of his family in the estate to another generation, yet he generously forbore to avail himself of it; and it is but justice to add, that his son, who has succeeded him in the occupation of the property, is the inheritor also of his father's integrity and virtues.

Mr. Hulse was as judicious in the administration of his property during life, as he was bountiful in the disposal of it at his death. He fell neither into the habits of unjustifiable expense,

nor of avaricious accumulation. “The only addition he made to his property,” says our informant, “was the purchase of Mostyn, containing about 50 acres, and he sold about 35 acres at Clive.”

Of Mr. Hulse’s habits of constant and sincere piety, we have the most undeniable testimony. Prayer, according to the statement of his faithful domestics, formed a large portion of his daily and nightly occupation. His will commences, as Mr. Benson has observed, “in a strain of fervent and undissembled piety, and refers in a mingled tone of gratitude and resignation to the mercies and miseries of a lengthened life.” It opens in the following language:—

“In the name of God. Amen. I JOHN HULSE, of Elworth, in the county and diocese of Chester, Clerk, and once a member of the college of Saint John the Evangelist, in Cambridge, though at this time in a very infirm state of health, and for many years past afflicted with the stone, and the most acute and extreme pain, yet of sound mind, memory, and understanding, (praised be the great and gracious Author of my being for this and for all his other undeserved mercies,) on a due consideration of the certainty of death, and the uncertain time thereof, do make and publish this my last Will and Testament, in

manner and form following : and first, I desire, with the deepest reverence and submission, to resign my soul into the hands of Almighty God, the greatest and best of beings, whenever his All-wise Providence shall call for it, humbly relying, (through the gracious influence of his Holy Spirit,) on the merits, mediation, and satisfaction of his blessed Son Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Redeemer, for the forgiveness of my sins, and a glorious immortality : and my body I commend to the grave, to be interred in such manner as I shall by a note under my hand in writing direct, and for want thereof, in a decent and private manner, at the discretion of my executors. And as to such worldly estate as it has pleased the Divine Goodness so graciously of late years to bless me with, I do order and dispose of the same in the following manner :”

Mr. Hulse left behind him, in manuscript, a small volume of prayers, which were afterwards presented to the master of St. John's, by Mr. Plant, the son of the servants to whom he bequeathed so much of his property. They all breathe a pious spirit, and many of them have a reference to the painful complaints with which he was so long afflicted : a few are here selected from among the shorter, as a specimen of the rest. He left them to his servants with the following memorandum, signed by his own hand :

“ Dated the eleventh day of October, one thousand seven hundred and eighty six. The above prayers were taken some years ago by Mr. Joseph Beckett, schoolmaster, of Middlewich, from the mouth of the Reverend John Hulse, of Elworth, who himself composed them, and who now leaves them to his faithful servants Mr. Thomas Plant and Elizabeth his wife, as a memorial of one that meant well.

JOHN HULSE.

*Witness, Richard Darlington, Jun.”*

EXTRACTS FROM HIS PRAYERS.

O Lord, grant me, I beseech thee, a truly Christian and well-grounded Faith ; a Faith that works by Love, and by an unfeigned obedience to all thy laws ; that I may always do my duty as I ought to thee, my good and gracious God, and to my fellow creatures, and to myself—assisted by thy grace, and protected by thy Providence, O sovereign Lord, through Jesus Christ our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. Amen.

O Lord, grant that I may always have a true notion of my duty, with a sincere resolution to advance thy glory and the real interest and salvation of mankind ; and, Lord, vouchsafe to bless my studies and endeavours, through thy sacred wisdom, so that they may always prove effectual



to promote the interest of piety and virtue. And may thy glorious name be praised, and thy most holy will performed, and all thy laws obeyed, by every creature both in heaven and earth, (and by myself especially,) O Lord my God, to everlasting ages! Amen.

Many of his prayers are for himself and others in the midst of extreme pain, he having, as he states towards the conclusion of them, “had the severest fits of the stone for more than twenty years.” The following seems to have been composed towards the close of his life :

O ever-merciful and glorious Lord, I entreat thee to accept, and favourably to receive, these my prayers, and to sanctify me by thy grace; and in thy pity grant that, through the merits of thy blessed Son and his most precious death, unworthy as I am, I may be freed from the guilt of sin; and released from the power and slavery of satan; and preserved, in the midst of dangers and temptations, from all evil; and, above all, from the assaults of evil spirits in this my weak and declining state. And at the awful time of death, and when the hour of death approaches, Lord grant that, through thy grace, I may triumphantly depart and leave this sinful world, and may joyfully enter upon the glories and the employments of the blessed. Grant this, I beseech

thee, O sovereign Lord, through thy unspeakable and undeserved goodness, and the salvation purchased for all those that sincerely repent and humbly return to thee and to their duty; and grant that I may do the same myself, O sovereign Lord, through Jesus Christ, our only mediator and Redeemer. Amen.

Mr. Hulse lies buried in the parish church of Middlewich, with his grandfather and grandmother; to whom he was affectionately attached through life, and has not been separated from them in death. The arms of his family, and those of his grandmother Raven, have been presented by Mr. Plant to the library of St. John's College, where they are now preserved. But his memory rests not, there, upon these frail memorials of the past respectability of his house; he has erected to himself a monument more durable than brass, in the devotion of his life to God's service, and his substance to His glory, and the spiritual good of mankind.\*

\* It is curious, but not surprising, to learn, that the notions regarding him at present entertained by the surrounding peasantry, are those of strong suspicion as to the origin of what they naturally considered his eccentricities, and of dissatisfaction with regard to the final disposition of his property. These are the usual penalties which the secluded and somewhat hypochondriac student must pay for his exemption from what he considers the pains of social intercourse; to which has been, in this case, added

## THE WILL.

This extraordinary document, as it must evidently have occupied the thoughts of Mr. Hulse for nearly the whole of his long life, so must the composition of it have formed the (probably most agreeable) employment of a considerable portion of it. It is dated July the 21st, 1777. He was then in his 70th year; and appears to write in full expectation of the immediate approach of that final event which did not befall him for

the suspicion as to motives, with which the lower orders always regard the bequest of property to public uses, so long as there exists the remotest (however unworthy) relation in the world. A striking proof that this feeling still exists towards Mr. Hulse, has been related to me. His death, as has been stated, was finally brought on, rather by defective nervous action, than by common bodily decay. His mental faculties were perfect to the last; and he could therefore *watch* the approach of death, although, as we know he did, with the composure of a Christian, yet doubtless with anxious speculation as to the form which its actual arrival might assume. There being no external symptoms of bodily ailment, animation might be suspended in such a frame as his, who had always lived a dying life, before it was finally extinct; and he therefore directed, it is said, that his grave should be kept open for some days after his interment, and his body watched (which, of course, was a necessary part of his design) day and night. This (if such directions were really given) might be eccentric on his part, but it was nothing more. His simple countrymen, however, assigned a reason of their own for it, which no doubt

twelve long years afterwards. It is his dying confession, as well as his last will and testament. The document is of very great length. The copy in the possession of the vice-chancellor consists of a folio volume of nearly 400 pages of closely written manuscript. To this are appended nine codicils ; almost one for each year during the remainder of his life. The last is dated Nov. 23rd, 1789, a little more than a year before his death. These consist principally of additional legacies to his favourite servants, Thomas and Elizabeth Plant, to whom he successively transferred the sums which he had previously bequeathed to others, on

his retired habits,—his reported skill in music, medicine, and divinity,—and above all, perhaps, the wonders displayed by his “diagonal mirror, or optical machine,” with the magical revelations of which he had doubtless sometimes astonished the eyes of his rustic neighbours on an occasional holiday,—all tended to convince them must be the right one ; viz., that the day of his dealings with the Enemy of souls being over, he wished to be constantly watched lest the Owner should come and carry away the *body*,—the right to which is always understood to form part of the infernal compact ! They seem to have forgotten that his temerity in directing the grave to be left *open*, was somewhat inconsistent with their own charitable theory as to the motive ; to say nothing of the insufficiency of the *guard* (they, it seems, being certainly no *conjurers*) to whom he had thought proper to entrust the care of his remains. This anecdote, absurd as it is, seems worth recording, as a proof of the disadvantage which always arises to character from seclusion from society, and the slightest symptoms of mystery in conduct.

the bequests becoming void by the death of such legatees, or, as he mentions in one or two cases, by the unworthy conduct of those for whom he had designed them. The main purport of his will, however, was to found the three or rather four offices, in the University of Cambridge, on which his future fame will rest, viz.,—The two Divinity Scholarships in St John's College, the Hulsean Prize, the office of Christian Advocate, and that of Hulsean Lecturer, or Christian Preacher. It is evident that he was led to establish these most seasonable endowments from two distinct causes; the aspect of the times in which he lived, and his own personal condition. He lived in an age when infidel notions were especially rife throughout the land, and when unbelief seemed to have before it a clearer prospect of final triumph than has either before or since attended its malignant efforts. He felt, moreover, how inefficiently he had (from causes which he could not control) discharged his own spiritual functions; and sought by these means to effect, through the agency of others, the good ends which he could so well design, though physical rather than spiritual and mental weakness had deprived him of the power to execute them. The peculiar objects and offices of each of his foundations have been well and eloquently described by Mr. Benson, in his first course of Hulsean Lectures; and though these lectures are

justly in the hands of almost every reader of divinity, I do not hesitate to transcribe the passage referred to, my object being simply to gather together into one point all that it may seem necessary to know with regard to the history and bequests of Mr. Hulse.

“ The estates which Mr. Hulse has bequeathed to the University of Cambridge are of considerable value, and the whole of the revenue is directed to one and the same object, the advancement and reward of religious learning. This general stream of benevolence is divided, however, into three principal channels, one of which is intended to recompense the exertions of the Hulsean Prizeman; another, those of the Christian Advocate; and the third, those of the Christian Preacher, or Hulsean Lecturer, by whichever title it may be thought proper to distinguish the character in which I now appear before you.

“ With regard to the first of these institutions, which awards an annual prize of forty pounds” (since advanced to one hundred) “ to the writer of the best Dissertation upon some subject connected with the direct or collateral evidences of the Christian revelation; we may observe, that it ought principally to be considered as a means of exciting the zeal, and directing the studies of

intelligent and younger men into a course of theological and religious inquiries. It is, in fact, strictly confined to those who are neither of the degree nor of the standing of Masters of Arts, and can be conferred but once upon the same individual; thus plainly proving, that it was intended by the Founder to stimulate the industry of the slumbering, and draw forth latent talent in defence of the Gospel. In this point of view it is scarce possible to imagine an appointment more useful in itself, or better calculated to raise up a succession of able and godly men to fill the other and more laborious situations for which Mr. Hulse has provided, and to discharge their duties with such fidelity and power, as may reflect honour upon themselves, bring credit to their University, and communicate to the world the inestimable blessing of a sound instruction in righteousness.

“The office of Christian Advocate is the second institution of Mr. Hulse, and though it cannot be more beneficial in its remoter consequences, it certainly may be regarded as more immediately useful and positively important in checking the progress and prevalence of Infidelity and Scepticism. The duty of the Christian Advocate is, in the first place, to obviate by annual or more frequent answers, such popular objections as may be raised either against natural or revealed religion, whether those objections be new or old,

original or revived.—It is, in the second place, to be ready to satisfy, in a private way, those real scruples and doubts which may be felt by any fair and candid inquirer, who is sorrowfully and perhaps hopelessly struggling, unaided and alone, against the darkness of ignorance and the burthen of difficulties. In one word, the Christian Advocate is to go forth and meet the spirit of infidelity in all the varied forms which it may assume, to unmask the hideousness of its seeming beauty to the eye of the unwary, and to calm the bewildered mind, by shewing it the unsubstantial nature of the phantom of doubt by which it is disturbed. I can scarce conceive of any possible mode of exerting the talents of a man or of a minister, which could be more actually useful and satisfactory than this; and if the office itself have not hitherto produced so many publications, as the number of years during which it has been established would seem to promise, the deficiency must be referred rather to the circumstances of the times, than to any other cause. Since the year 1803, when the first appointment took place, until the present time, but few novelties have appeared in the unbelieving world. The awful issue of irreligion and insubordination in the crimes and horrors of the French Revolution, gave a practical demonstration of the beneficial influence of Christianity which, for a moment at least, hushed every murmur against its utility,



and silenced every sophism against its truth. But as the remembrance of those calamities and iniquities has gradually died away, and the return of peace has restored men to leisure for other thoughts than those of securing their own immediate safety, the voice of daring disbelief has again been heard in our cities and our streets, and it is greatly to be feared that few of the years that are about to come, will come unaccompanied with some sneer against what we believe, or some blasphemy against what we adore. Happy is he who has been called to the task, and may possibly become the providential instrument, of enlightening the unlearned and confirming the unstable in the principles and practice of a saving faith !

“The third and last appointment of Mr. Hulse, is that of Christian Preacher, and it forms indeed an admirable completion of the whole scheme of this excellent man for the benefit and promotion of religious truth. The task of the Christian Preacher is, as far as relates to the subject matter of his labours, the same with that of the Christian Advocate, and the only difference lies in the method he is to pursue in his religious lucubrations. As the Advocate is to guard the frivolous and unwary against the fallacy of prevalent and *particular* objections to the truth or holiness of religion ; so the Preacher is to employ himself in

a more *general* statement of the evidences of revelation, and a more copious and systematic elucidation of its difficulties.—The Advocate is to prop the falling or recal the wandering Christian ; the Preacher is to build up the unestablished babe in Christ, in the solidity of a reasonable faith : and both together are to bend their unremitting energies to the same holy end, the glory of God and the salvation of souls, by the propagation of the pure and undefiled religion of the Gospel.

“Such are the wise foundations of Mr. Hulse. The first is intended to rouse the mind to religious pursuits, the two latter to employ it, when trained, in the actual labours of religious usefulness.”

*The following is an abstract of the principal clauses of the Will, as relating to the several endowments :—*

### THE SCHOLARSHIPS.

“ The scholars shall be undergraduates in St. John’s College, and shall be born in the county of Chester. Such scholar to be elected by the Master and a majority of the senior Fellows of the said college on Christmas-day, or within the first seven days after, and may be distinguished as usual by the name of “ Hulse’s scholars,” and shall wear a cloth gown with long open sleeves hanging down like those of Bachelors. And in case it should happen that a son of any clergyman who should at any time officiate as curate to the vicar of Sandbach, or next to him the son of any vicar or curate who should then live and officiate in the parish of Middlewich as the proper minister or curate of Middlewich, or, lastly, any minister or curate of the chapel of Witton, or who should reside and live in the town of Northwich or Witton, or the adjacent townships of Castle Northwich and Winnington, and should do the duty of the said chapel as the proper minister of Witton (all of them in the said county of Chester) shall be admitted as a scholar into the said college: such person being an undergraduate shall have the preference, and be elected before all others. And those born as above, are to be elected in the order above mentioned. And in default of such persons, then the son of any other clergyman who (that is, which son) shall be born in either of the said parishes

of Sandbach and Middlewich, or in the said chapelry of Witton, shall have the preference. And if none shall be admitted, then the son of any other clergyman shall be preferred who shall be born in the said county of Chester, and next in any of the four following counties of Stafford, Salop, Derby, and Lancaster; or, lastly, elsewhere in any other part of England. Provided that it shall appear that the clergyman who is father of such scholar is not, if living, or if dead, was not at his death possessed of any spiritual preferment of more than £140 a year clear income, or whose income in every respect should not exceed the clear yearly value of £200 in the whole. But if no son of any clergyman entitled as aforesaid should be elected into such scholarship, the same shall be given to the son of some lay person whose clear yearly income does not if living, and if dead, did not at the time of his death amount to more than £200, such son being born in the counties of Chester, Stafford, Salop, Derby, or Lancaster, the counties in that order having a preference, or, lastly, elsewhere in England. And such scholar, whether the son of clergyman or layman, to be elected in manner aforesaid, shall continue to enjoy that my benefaction until he shall take or shall be of standing to take his first degree of Bachelor of Arts, unless some other person being the son of some of the officiating ministers at some of the churches or chapels before mentioned, and otherwise qualified as aforesaid, and which qualification, had he been a member of the said college at the time the party in possession of it was elected, would have been entitled to a preference, shall be admitted a member of the said college; in which case the scholar who shall be then in possession shall only hold the same for that year, and the other, with a prior right, shall be elected to the same the year following. And I do appoint the Master and senior Fellows of St. John's College, trustees of the said scholarships."

## HULSEAN PRIZE.

“ I direct that one other sixth part” (of a certain portion of his rentals) “ shall be paid to such other learned and ingenious person in the said university, under the degree of Master of Arts, as shall compose for that year the best Dissertation, in the English language, on the evidence in general, or on the Prophecies or Miracles in particular, or any other particular argument, whether the same be direct or collateral proofs of the Christian religion, in order to evince its truth and excellence. The subject of which Dissertation shall be given out by the Vice-Chancellor and said two Masters, my trustees above mentioned, or by some of them, on New Year’s-day annually; and such Dissertation as shall be by them, or any two of them, on Christmas-day annually, the best approved shall be also printed, and the expense defrayed out of the author’s income under my Will, and the remainder given to him on St. John the Evangelist’s day following. And he who shall be so rewarded shall not be admitted at any future time as a candidate again in the same way, though he may be elected to the other offices afterwards.”

## CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

He gives certain proportions of his property (afterwards modified in the course of his Will and the Codicils to it, till he adopted a fixed principle, not necessary to be detailed) “ which shall be given by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, and by the Master or Head of Trinity College, and the Master of St. John’s College, whom I do hereby

appoint as trustees for the disposal of this and all the benefactions to the said university (except herein otherwise ordered) or any two of them, for the maintenance and support of one such learned and ingenious person (for a term not exceeding five or six years) of the degree of Master of Arts, or of Bachelor or Doctor of Divinity, of the age of 30 years, and resident in the university; who is to compose yearly, whilst in office, some proper and judicious answer or answers every year, to all such new and popular, or other cavils and objections, against the Christian or revealed religion, or against the religion of nature, as may, in the opinion of the trustees, or any two of them, seem best or most proper to deserve or require an answer, whether the same be ancient or modern objections, but chiefly such as are most modern, and especially such as have appeared in the English language of late years against Christianity, and which may not seem to have received a full and sufficient answer, if any such there shall be, unto the year preceding his election; as likewise to be ready to satisfy any real scruples or objections in a private way, that may be brought from time to time by any fair and candid enquirer against the same: such writer to be called the Christian Advocate, and such his written answers to be in English, and only against notorious infidels, whether atheists or deists, not descending to any particular controversies or sects among Christians themselves, except some new or dangerous error, either of superstition or enthusiasm, as of Popery or Methodism, either in opinion or practice, shall prevail: in which case only it may be necessary for that time to write or to reason against the same; and such treatise or treatises to be every year printed, the expence whereof shall be deducted out of the temporary stipend or salary; and the remainder of the said stipend or salary, or rents and profits, shall be paid or given every year to the several authors successively as a reward for the same; but if the person chosen into the said office shall

neglect or not discharge his office as he ought to do, he is to forfeit and lose his salary for that year, which is, in such case, to be equally divided between the six senior Fellows of St. John's College.—The Christian Advocate is not afterwards eligible to the office of Hulsean Lecturer."

### LECTURER.

"I direct that four parts out of six (of his property in Clive) shall be paid on St. John the Evangelist's day following the preaching the lectures or sermons after-mentioned annually, to such learned and ingenious clergyman in the said university of the degree of Master of Arts, and under the age of 40 years, as shall be duly chosen or elected on Christmas-day, or within seven days after, by the Vice-Chancellor then for the time being, and by the Master or Head of Trinity College, and the Master of St. John's College, or by any two of them, in order to preach twenty sermons in the whole year, (i. e.) ten sermons in the following spring in St. Mary's great church in Cambridge, namely, one sermon on the Friday morning, or else on Sunday afternoon, in every week during the months of April and May, and the two first weeks in June, and likewise ten sermons in the same church in the following autumn, either on the Friday morning or else on the Sunday afternoon in every week during the months of September and October, and during the two first weeks in November. The subject of which discourses shall be as followeth—that is, the subject of five sermons in the spring, and of five sermons in the autumn shall be to shew the evidence for revealed religion, and to demonstrate in the most convincing and persuasive manner the truth and excellence of Christianity, so as to include not only the prophecies and miracles general

and particular, but also any other proper or useful arguments, whether the same be direct or collateral proofs of the Christian religion, which he may think fittest to discourse upon, either in general or particular, especially the collateral arguments, or else any particular argument or branch thereof, and chiefly against notorious Infidels, whether Atheists or Deists, not descending to any particular sects or controversies (so much to be lamented) among Christians themselves, except some new or dangerous error either of superstition or enthusiasm, as of Popery or Methodism, or the like, either in opinion or practice, should prevail, in which cause only it may be necessary for that time to preach against the same. Nevertheless the preacher of the ten sermons last mentioned, to shew the truth and excellence of revealed religion and the evidence of Christianity, may at his own discretion preach either more or fewer than ten sermons on this great argument, only provided he shall in consequence thereof lessen or increase the number of the other ten remaining sermons which are hereinafter directed to be on the more obscure parts of Holy Scripture in a due proportion, so as that he shall every year preach twenty sermons on those subjects on the whole.

And as to the ten sermons that remain, of which five were to be preached in the spring and five in the autumn, as before mentioned, the Lecturer or Preacher shall take for his subject some of the more difficult texts or obscure parts of the Holy Scriptures, such as might appear to be more generally useful and necessary to be explained, and which might best admit of such a comment and explanation without presuming to pry too far into the profound secrets or awful mysteries of the Almighty; and in all the said twenty sermons such practical observations shall be made, and such useful conclusions added, as may instruct and edify mankind. The said twenty sermons shall be every year printed, and a new preacher every year elected,



(except in the case of the extraordinary merit of the preacher), when it may be sometimes thought proper to continue the same person for five, or at the most six years together; but for no longer period, nor shall he ever afterwards be elected to the same duty."

Substance of the order of the Court of Chancery in the matter of the Hulsean Lectureship, in the university of Cambridge, dated 21st December, 1830:—

On the Petition of the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the university of Cambridge.

After reciting the property left by Mr. Hulse for the endowment of a Lectureship in Cambridge, and the conditions attached to the office, the petition states that owing to the number of lectures required to be delivered and printed by the Lecturer within the year, no sufficiently qualified person could be induced to hold the office, and suggests that the number might be conveniently reduced to eight, which was the number appointed by Mr. Boyle,\* or to any other which the Chancellor might think fit. "Whereupon," to use the words of the order, "all parties concerned were ordered to attend his lordship on the matter of the said petition; and counsel for the petitioners this day attending accordingly, upon hearing of the said petition, and of the said Will of the said John Hulse, dated the 21st day of July, 1777, read, and what was alleged by the counsel of the petitioners, this Court doth order that the number of the lectures in the petition mentioned be reduced to eight; and it

\* "It was always," says Mr. Hulse in his Will, "my humble and earnest desire and intention, that the following donation and devise should be founded, *as much as possible*, upon the plan of that profoundly learned, and successful inquirer into Nature, and most religious adorer of Nature's God, I mean the truly great and good (as well as honourable, Robert Boyle, esquire, who has added so much lustre, and done equal service, both by his learning and his life, to his native country and human nature, and to the cause of Christianity and truth."

is ordered that the time limited for printing the said lectures be enlarged for the the term of one year from the delivery of the last of such lectures."

"*Mem.*—And it is my will that all the clauses relating to the aforesaid endowments, whether in regard to the annual Sermons by the Lecturer, or the Dissertation, or to the Defence of Christianity by the Christian Advocate, expressing also the particular sums or stipends annexed to each office, with the further provision by donation of shares of rents, &c., or otherwise, should every year be printed at large in the beginning of each particular work or treatise respectively, by way of preface or introduction to such respective publications, with an abstract as far as regards the four scholarships; and that the clause so to be printed shall be introduced and concluded as herein mentioned."

This injunction he, in a subsequent part of his Will, modified as follows:—

"It is now my will to have only such particular clauses as most expressly and at large describe the duty or office of the Lecturer, or Christian Advocate, or Dissertator, to be printed whole and entire, and in the very words of the Will, as to the duty and office to be performed, without alteration or abridgment."

And he directed that such clause or clauses should always be headed as follows:—

"Clauses from the Will of the Rev. John Hulse, late of Elworth, in the county of Chester, Clerk, deceased, dated the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord, 1777, expressed in the words of the testator, as he, in order to prevent mistakes, thought proper to draw and write the same himself, and directed that such clauses should be every year printed, to the intent that the several persons whom it might concern and be of service to might know that there were such special donations and endowments left for the encouragement of piety and learning, in an age

unfortunately addicted to infidelity and luxury, and that others might be invited to the like charitable, and as he humbly hoped, seasonable and useful benefactions."

And he directed that such clause or clauses should always be concluded with the following prayer:—

"May the Divine blessing for ever go along with all my benefactions; and may the greatest and best of Beings, by his all-wise Providence and gracious influence, make the same effectual to his own glory and the good of my fellow-creatures! —*Amen.*"



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HULSEAN LECTURES.

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THE great subject of the Evidences of Revelation might well seem to be almost exhausted. The truth of Scripture has been established by historical testimony; by its contents; by its prophecies; by its miracles; by its analogy with the constitution and course of nature; and by its perfect adaptation to the character of God and the necessities of man. One line of argument seemed yet open, which has been pursued in the following Lectures; namely, to call into court the antagonists and rivals of Revelation, and cross-examine them as to the nature and extent of their *own* pretensions; and thence to arrive at the conclusion, that the truths involved in the great *Doctrines* of Scripture, while they are the very results at which these rivals would severally *seek to arrive*, are, nevertheless, those to which, by their own confession, they are utterly unable to attain. Could this undertaking be *accomplished*, we should strike entirely at the root of one great

cause of scepticism,—that which arises from relying upon the sufficiency of *something else* beside scripture. But the subject is, from its very nature, almost boundless, and is capable of as great a variety of treatment as there are varieties of the human mind. It is daily growing in importance, and, there can be no doubt, will ultimately have to be pursued to an indefinite extent beyond the present *suggestions*. But to suggest, when truth is on your side, is to succeed.

The Author will be pardoned for just hinting,—in the shape of an apology for an anticipated objection,—at one difficulty connected with his undertaking, which he had necessarily to encounter—that of *preaching a book*; that is, of uniting the rapid and somewhat figurative language belonging to a popular address, with the logical reasoning required in a treatise intended for the closet. Such works are in danger of being at once too heavy for the hearer and too light for the reader. The reasonable among both will make allowances for the unavoidable peculiarity.



## LECTURE I.

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### THE SUBJECT PROPOSED AND UNFOLDED.

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### THE ARGUMENT.

*Permanence of error, and its unchangeable character—the institution of this Lecture intended by its Founder to form one of its antagonist powers—subject stated, and contempt for the leading and peculiar DOCTRINES of the gospel asserted to be a prevalent feeling among a portion of the educated classes—causes assigned—remedies proposed, such as the works of Paley and Butler—in what respects they do not remove the difficulties of the modern Rationalist—these difficulties stated, and mode of removing them sketched—shewn that they themselves, properly considered, tend to establish, instead of shaking the truth of the doctrines of the gospel—re-statement of the results at which it is hoped we may arrive by granting the premises of our opponents, and apology for arguing upwards from the principles of the Rationalist, instead of downwards from the contents of the book of Revelation.*



## LECTURE I.

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### THE SUBJECT PROPOSED AND UNFOLDED.

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*Job* iv. 17.

SHALL MORTAL MAN BE MORE JUST THAN GOD? SHALL A MAN BE  
MORE PURE THAN HIS MAKER?

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ERROR is immortal. The angels which kept not their first estate, lost not their immortality with their happiness. There is in sin no principle of decay; for though the "soul that sinneth it shall die," yet the death which awaits it is *eternal*. Hence error, checked on one side, continually shoots out its ramifications in some less obstructed direction, and bears testimony to the root from whence it springs by the unceasing exercise of its malignant energies. The history of the church militant, viewed on what may be called its negative side, namely, that of restraining evil, in contradistinction to its higher as well as more grateful province of advancing good, is but a melancholy though instructive and most interesting picture of the various shapes which error has assumed, and of the various methods

by which, with different degrees of success, the champions of the gospel have sought to curb its advances, and frustrate its designs. It is a struggle constantly renewing, without peace or truce. It has been the complaint of all times that errors, once apparently subdued, are still springing up as vigorous and fresh as ever. The following is the remark of the philosophical and judicious Powell, made almost an hundred years ago :—“ Errors, which we thought buried in oblivion, are again called forth ; and though relating only to some nice and difficult subjects, which require the utmost attention of the learned and contemplative, are industriously spread in small treatises among the common people: whilst we, the clergy, are urged to examine anew, matters which we had long considered as certain ; and are told that our system of Christianity, transmitted to us, it seems, from ages of ignorance and bigotry, may and ought to receive improvements, corresponding to those which the present enlightened age has made in every other science. The reputation of modern philosophers is turned to the disgrace of modern divines ; as neither emulating the example, nor accepting the assistance which the discoveries of those strict reasoners might afford them.”\*

\* See note A, at the end.

Who, that looks abroad on the present condition of the religious world, would believe that the above passage was not rather a composition of yesterday than of an age gone by? And yet, doubtless it is but the expression of an universal truth; and, with a few periodical modifications, might be made to represent the feelings of the church, through every stage of its history, from the days of the apostles to our own. It was a deep conviction of this melancholy truth which seems to have led the pious founder of the Lecture which has this day brought me before you, to establish those various benevolent institutions in our University, for which he will be held in everlasting remembrance. He had been impressed with this pertinacious vitality of evil, and wished it be encountered, in some of the most important of its strongholds, by as enduring an antagonist. Not requiring, as we would hope, that some new weapon of defence should be introduced into the Christian warfare by each succeeding soldier, but with the intention that those which had been tried of old should be kept bur-nished for the field, and such selected for the occasion as seemed best calculated to meet the exigency of the time, and the mode of conducting the contest last adopted by the assailant. He has thus erected, within this religious fortress, a spi-

ritual watch-tower, from whence the signs of the times, and of "those things which are coming," or have come "on the earth," may be most advantageously discerned. You, the guardians and the garrison of this fortress, can take from your high station a wider view, and form, from your erudition, a more accurate estimate of the *general* position of the enemy, than we who are engaged in the turmoil of personal conflict, and whose views are limited and attention distracted by the pressure and anxiety of active warfare; yet, coming from the confines, if not from the very midst of the enemy's camp, we may render to this our "fenced city" no trivial service, by indicating the nature of his forces and immediate direction of his march, even though we may have but little strength for the war, or council and advice for securing the victory. It is only in this hope, and for this limited object, that the present Lecturer has ventured to appear before you.

Taking, then, a broad and general view of the aspect which is now worn by no inconsiderable portion of the educated classes in this country, with regard to religious feelings and opinions, and looking especially to that department of them, towards which, by this foundation, I am directed, there can be little doubt that, along

with much sound scriptural erudition among the higher, and much right scriptural feeling among the lower of these classes (for which blessings we can never be sufficiently thankful to the source from whence they flow!)—yet that there is still to be discovered, within and *between* them both, a wide and most alarming prevalence of error—error not only as to the nature, but still more as to the necessity of the leading and peculiar doctrines of the gospel. I say not this, nor should I be justified in saying it, as a sweeping denunciation of the age; nor with the unnecessary object of magnifying the extent of the danger, in order to enhance the merit of endeavouring to avert it; but I state it as a fact, to which no one who is conversant with the actual condition of the world without, will hesitate to accede,—that there is much laxity of thought and of language with regard to the doctrinal part of our faith, among men of considerable mental acuteness, great worldly experience, and strict probity of life. The evil is thus increased by the very quarter from whence it springs; for, as a man's life is always the best comment on his creed;—he who appears to show, in his own person, that the doctrines of religion may be dispensed with, is the more likely to be listened to

when he declares them to be unnecessary.\* It may not be difficult to account for this condition of things—this tendency rather towards intellectual than physical and carnal error, which seems to characterize the class to which we are now referring, by considering their social and economical condition, and the effects which that condition will naturally produce on their habitual modes of thought. The boundless extension of trade, which is at once exciting in its uncertainty, and engrossing in its interests; the necessity of incessant and all-absorbing occupation; the constant and promiscuous intermingling of all classes of men with each other; the new lights of natural and moral philosophy, which, hitherto confined to real philosophers, are now “disseminated” (I say it not in condemnation) “in small treatises among the common people,” and which dazzle and gratify the mind as yet too weak-eyed to view them in their just proportions—all these, and many more similar circumstances, give multiplicity and prominence to the interests of the passing moment, close up the avenues of contemplative thought, and, while they necessarily place a restraint upon gross and sensual vices, sharpen the edge of the intellectual faculty, and

\* See note B, at the end.



give a most undue weight and importance to the subjects with which it is thus incessantly occupied. When the mind is at once habitually and agreeably employed, it seeks not for, but rather willingly excludes other matter of meditation. Engrossed with the delightful exercise of encountering and overcoming difficulties of immediate and ever-varying worldly interest, it either scorns to grapple with, or at once contemptuously decides, questions which, though they present themselves as fraught with the greatest consequences, and claiming the deepest investigation, are yet too spiritual in their character, and apparently abstract in their nature, to *demand* an immediate and attentive consideration. It is only when the mind is sufficiently opened to perceive its own wants, that it seeks for and duly appreciates a supply; and hence these men, contented with that condition of things with which they are surrounded, rather pass by and despise, than absolutely reject and disbelieve those doctrines of the gospel which profess to afford assistance that they have never sought, and to explain difficulties and unfold truths, of the existence and importance of which, in their self-satisfied ignorance, they are totally unconscious. Now it is evident, that melancholy and unchristian as such a condition of mind may be,

(and that it is wide-spread, and is spreading wider, no one will deny,) it is still a condition which is hardly accessible to the usual processes of reasoning, whereby, in former days, the champions of our faith have vanquished their opponents, and brought into subjection to the truth every assailant band as they successively arose to disturb the peace, and obstruct the quiet and unobtrusive progress of the gospel. You cannot attack them, with much show of reason, on the ground of defective morality, nor hope to convince them of the supreme excellence of the doctrines of Christianity, by comparing the refined principles of action which necessarily flow from them, with the infinitely lower standard of virtue exemplified in their own lives; for, in point of external morality, their general conduct is, as I have already remarked, for the most part clear of obvious reproach; nor do they hesitate to allow to the moral code of the gospel its full degree of praise, whether assenting, as some do, to its divine original, or arrogating for human reason the merit of discovering and perfecting it. Nor are they, as a body, disbelievers of Revelation in the abstract; or we might send them to the unanswerable pages of Paley for such proofs of its general truth as ought to lead every philosophical mind to adopt it in all its particulars; but ex-

perience has long shown, that assent to a general proposition is quite compatible with an utter disregard of the necessary consequences to which it leads; and that men will resist the clearest demonstrations of the truth so long as they can find a plausible reason for adhering to falsehood. If you do not vanquish them on the ground selected by themselves, they will never want an excuse for disputing the reality of the victory. There is, indeed, one mighty mind, from whose fountain, could we persuade them to draw, or were they, alas! supplied with vessels to draw with,—the pure and living stream of the gospel might yet be theirs, for the strengthening and refreshing of their souls. Butler has trodden, with cautious but unerring step, through the mazes in which many among them are wandering, and would they but follow his path, soon would they discover the light of day. Yet hardly does *he* meet the case of the great majority of those to whom we are now referring: much of his strength is employed, and with unanswerable force, to remove presumptions *against* Revelation. The class of philosophers with whom he had to contend, were not satisfied with opposing a passive resistance to the truth; they were ready to attack it; and its champion had to ward off their assaults, as well as to pull down

their strong-holds. Those who, in these days, feel themselves equally armed for the battle, I leave to break their spears against the well-polished shield of Butler; they will find that he is as ready to attack as to repel, and that time has not blunted the edge of his weapons, nor has the advancement of modern skill given efficacy to that instrument, in their own hands, which was powerless in the grasp of their predecessors. To those who are anxious, or at least not unwilling, to believe the truth of Revelation, and wish to see it freed from the strongest objections that philosophy can devise against it, the "Analogy" of Bishop Butler is indeed a treasure, second only in value to that Book of which it is the ablest vindicator. But the free-thinker of our day neither brings objections to Deism, nor, always, to Revelation, from the constitution and course of nature; he rather makes the constitution and course of nature his paramount creed—the very God of his idolatry; not hesitating, at the same time, to take into alliance with it Deism, and even Revelation itself, so far as they can be made subservient to the establishment of his favourite theory—the independent advancement, and ultimate perfectibility, of man. It is in the maintenance of this theory, that all men of latitudinarian notions

with regard to the doctrinal part of Revelation, (under whatever denomination of Christians they may think it prudent to arrange themselves,) will be found eventually to unite. Whatsoever source the fatal aberration may spring from—whether it be an originally misdirected education, or that all-engrossing devotion of the faculties to the concerns of this world, which blinds the eyes and cools the heart towards the mysteries of the next—or that pride of intellect, which scorns to accept at the hand of Revelation all such facts and doctrines as it cannot thoroughly understand—or that hardness of heart, which will not stoop to the self-denying acknowledgments, which are necessarily required for an unqualified reception of the fundamental articles of our faith;—whatever may be the immediate stumbling-block in each individual case, the result is, under all circumstances, substantially the same; and man sets up himself—his own powers and faculties, and the natural and moral conditions with which he is intimately connected—as a guide, a rule, and an end, independent of that higher guide, that safer rule, and that nobler end, which are to be found solely in the great doctrines of the book of Revelation. In what way, then, are the errors of such a condition of mind, from whatever source they may have their

origin, most effectually to be assailed?—(I speak as unto wise men, who know that when we have recourse to means and instruments, it is because they are the only channels of grace in some measure within our own power; leaving to Him from whom they flow all higher sources of instruction, and deeply feeling, that even in such as seem to fall more directly within our own province, our sole sufficiency is of God!)—How, then, are we, whose duty it is in all things to vindicate the gospel of God in the eyes of mistaken man, so to encounter this present modification of error, as at least to neutralize its evil, if not to convert it from a curse into a blessing? Clearly, by turning the supposed grounds of hesitation into evidences of the truth: by shewing that the reasons which lead these men to stop short of the doctrines of Christianity, are among some of the very arguments which make most strongly for their adoption;—that the idolatrous gods which they set up as substitutes for doctrinal religion, are gods which, like the devils of old, proclaim with their own tongues—if their infatuated followers would but hearken to them when they are brought reluctantly to tell the truth—that they themselves are but vain idols; while those who preach the doctrines of revelation —“these men are the servants of the most high

God, that shew unto you the way of salvation.” Well has it been demonstrated, as of old, so especially in later days,\* and with all the force and eloquence that the advancement of scientific knowledge and the high cultivation of the strongest reasoning powers can supply,—that all the works of creation, investigate and sift them as you will, bear testimony which no truly philosophical mind can resist, to the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God. On this ground, thus ably vindicated, the preacher may safely take his stand; nor will probably many of those hesitate to take up the same position, who will nevertheless maintain, that it is the highest point to which it is either possible, or indeed necessary, to ascend. What, then, if it should appear, that these very works of creation not only prove that on which all are agreed, but that also, which is the present point of difference—the irresistible consequence, and absolute necessity, of the *doctrinal part of Revelation*? What if it should be shewn, that no reasonable man can acknowledge the truth of the former proposition, without being constrained also to confess the validity of the latter; and that the moral and intellectual constitution of man, *coupled* with the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, so far from being sufficient

\* See the Bridgewater Treatises.

of themselves to constitute the religion of a reasonable being, and to disprove the necessity of a still further revelation, are themselves, even in their best estate and highest developement, the strongest proofs of the want of such revelation: and not only so, but *that their specific defects are exactly such as meet with their specific remedies in the very revelation which we possess ; that they stop short just where revelation begins ; and that it hence appears, by the deficiency on the one side being exactly met by the supply on the other, that they each form part of one harmonious plan, and were originally designed by the artificer of that plan to be united together for the great end of furthering the moral advancement of man.*

This, then, is our position. We find prevalent in the world—not only in the shape of distinct sects and parties, but among many who, by outward profession at least, are not much distinguished from ourselves, or even sometimes closely associated with us—a worshipping of the intellect, an attachment to outward and surrounding circumstances, and a reliance upon the independent powers and native qualities of man, which are utterly destructive in their tendencies to that spiritual character which the gospel portrays and inculcates. Sometimes, indeed, this



dangerous delusion rises so high upwards towards the truth, as not easily to be distinguished from it. It has been well remarked by a powerful and pious writer, that "Rationalism is taking a subtle turn, or rather its author, the author of evil, has been subtly applying it. In the days of our Deists, it openly attacked Christianity, and was defeated; now it appears as the ally and supporter of the faith which it would undermine; it supports our evidences; reconciles our difficulties; smooths down the 'hard sayings' of the word of God, and steals away our treasure."\* It claims also to itself the refined morality of the gospel; either as being the discovery of human reason, or as being a revelation in harmony with, and not at all beyond the limits, of enlarged principles of Deism. Safely might we dispute this extravagant assumption. Clearly might we demonstrate that the sublime morality of the gospel can only flow from its still sublimer doctrines: the divergence of its days necessarily denoting their real focus, even though the eye of the gazer may be too weak to trace them to their source. But this point it is not our present purpose to debate;—the pure morality of the gospel is now wide abroad in the world; it now enlightens souls which know not,

\* Pusey—Preface to his work on Regeneration.

and acknowledge not, its origin ; and God forbid that we should deny the benefit of it, any more than that of the sun in heaven, even to those who will not worship Him who has caused both of them to shine. It has become, as it were, public property, and we will not now stop to assign the origin of the blessing to the real benefactor : but allowing, on the one hand, the strongest concessions that the Rationalist can fairly claim—the improving and improvable condition of man’s physical, moral, and intellectual constitution, with Deism as a rule of faith, and a correct system of morality as a rule of practice ; and assuming, on the other, the *fact* of the existence of the scheme of Revelation contained in the Bible ; we would attempt to shew that the principles of the former lead directly and inevitably to the latter ; and that the Rationalist, when he has arrived at the utmost degree of perfection to which his own theory will permit him to advance, will discover that he has been approaching by a direct path towards the threshold of Revelation, the leading doctrines of which, he will find, will then come to his aid, just at the moment when his former guides have left him bewildered in the dark. It is manifest, that, could this point be, though by but probable arguments, established—could it be made to appear that the undeniable and specific

defects of Rationalism are met and remedied by the specific doctrines of Revelation, it would at least cease to be philosophical to reject these doctrines in the abstract; they could no longer be passed by with indifference; they would demand to be heard on their pretension to form at least a supplementary portion of natural religion; and the objector must either attack them in detail, or resort to the old system of assailing the whole scheme of Revelation of which they form a part—in which undertaking, from past experience, we know his fate! He would then be in the condition of him, who holds in his hand one irregular half of a page, torn from a document which professes to convey to the reader truths of the highest personal importance; and who yet obstinately persists in trying to decypher its meaning from the unconnected commencements of each mutilated line, even after he is told that the corresponding portion is not only in existence, but within his reach; and after he is assured, that the dissevered parts would at once prove their genuineness by fitting accurately together, and would, when in conjunction, enable him to read, with ease and edification, a message of the utmost moment to his eternal salvation! Such a torn page as this, we hold to be the religion of

nature and the religion of grace. The perverseness of man may keep them apart from each other; but, even when separated, they shew the penmanship of the same eternal finger; and, united, they form the Book of God.—“Those which God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

It might not, perhaps, be difficult, were it necessary for our argument, to trace a principle in our nature which will in some degree account for, however little it may justify, this obstinate severance of natural from revealed truth. There are many passions in the human heart, which are flattered in the pursuit of the first, while, in the second, they discover little but what is humiliating. The feeling of *merit*, natural to man, is closely connected with every discovery in natural truth; every advance is a triumph, and every discovery a victory. Whereas the tendency of revelation is all the other way. The very necessity for it is grounded upon man's ignorance; and every fact and doctrine contained in it is, as it were, a testimony to the weakness, and a reproof to the presumption, of the human intellect; for, probably, nothing is revealed, that could have been discovered. This is, indeed, the substance of our argument for the identity of origin, and

unity of purpose, which we assign to the systems of nature and grace, that the one begins *just where* the other fails.

It would be more in accordance with the office of a "Christian Preacher,"\* and possibly tend more to the edification of his immediate audience, with whom (thank God!) he can on this question have no controversy—were he at once to address those whom he would convince, in his high character as a messenger of the Gospel; and, armed with the authority and language of scripture, boldly to rebuke that spirit of pride and worldly-mindedness which seems to form the origin of this dangerous laxity with regard to religious Doctrines. There is a weight and an influence in the plain word of God which have never yet accompanied the loftiest reasonings of man. But a necessity seems laid upon us, in this particular instance, to adapt our mode of argument to the exigency of the time; and if we are required, in the words of our Founder, "to shew the evidence for revealed religion, and to demonstrate *in the most convincing and persuasive manner*, the truth and excellence of Christianity;" "and chiefly against notorious infidels, whether Atheists, or Deists;"—it

\* The title by which the Hulsean Lecturer is designated in Mr. Hulse's will.

appears incumbent, for such a purpose, to view the question for the moment, as far as we are able, through their own medium; with the hope of shewing that were not their moral and intellectual vision weak or perverted, they would see, with us, that the things with which they are satisfied, are but introductory to higher objects, and form but a vista through which they may discern the heavenly "Temple of the Lamb" glittering in the distance. Our Lord reasoned with the Pharisee on his own traditions, and confuted the Saducee out of his own scripture; and should we, in imitation of so high an example, be enabled to show to the Doubter, though but in a faint degree, that the honest conclusion of all his inquiries should be a faith in the Doctrines of the Gospel, all praise, glory, and honour be to him through whom all good things do come—the Holy Spirit of God; who, with the Father and the Son, liveth and reigneth ever, one God, world without end!

## LECTURE II.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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#### THE ARGUMENT.

*Subject defined to be the testimony of moral philosophy, the system of nature, and the constitution of man to the truth of the DOCTRINES of Revelation—Ethics first treated upon—their antiquity and importance—their various leading principles—Conscience, its power and defects—both shewn to lead directly to an investigation of the doctrines of the gospel—the doctrine of future rewards and punishments shewn to be necessary to secure the supremacy of Conscience—that doctrine shewn to carry the truth of all the others in its train—general remarks on the conclusions arising from the preceding argument.*





## LECTURE II.

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THE  
TESTIMONY OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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*Romans* iv. 14, 15.

FOR WHEN THE GENTILES, WHICH HAVE NOT THE LAW, DO BY NATURE THE THINGS CONTAINED IN THE LAW, THESE, HAVING NOT THE LAW, ARE A LAW UNTO THEMSELVES: WHICH SHEW THE WORK OF THE LAW WRITTEN IN THEIR HEARTS, THEIR CONSCIENCE ALSO BEARING WITNESS, AND THEIR THOUGHTS MEAN WHILE ACCUSING OR ELSE EXCUSING ONE ANOTHER.

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IT will have appeared, from the preceding Lecture, that our proposed object is to shew, that all those circumstances and qualities connected with the present condition of man, with which men are severally disposed to rest satisfied as substitutes for the doctrines of Revelation, are themselves but links in a chain of inductive argument, which proves the necessity of those very doctrines; and that, instead of professing to exercise, of themselves, an independent power and authority, they openly confess themselves to be but ministers of a higher master, and fragments of a more perfect system. In brief, we would suggest, and attempt in some degree to trace out, an argument for the truth of the leading doctrines of the Gospel, drawn from man's moral and intellec-

tual constitution, and his relation towards external nature. The subject is almost boundless in its extent; and little more can be attempted in a course of addresses like the present, than to indicate the nature of the argument, and shew, by selected examples of its application, the important consequences which would seem to follow from its full development; but it holds out this encouragement to a popular and cursory examination, that the reasoning, if valid at all, is so from its general outlines, rather than from the minuteness of detail, and depends upon deductions drawn from broad and obvious results rather than nice and intricate processes of thought. Here, in fact, lies the force of our proposed argument: we allow all that the Rationalist can fairly ask in favour of his own system; we call upon him to bring forward into full view the fair side of his own principle—whether that principle be the moral sense, as a guide of life—the intellectual faculties—the relation of man to his kind and to external nature—his physical structure and condition—or all combined; we would receive the best account of each or all which the advocates of each or all can supply;—only requiring, in return, that they will acknowledge—what they cannot deny—the *fact* of the *existence* of the Bible Revelation: and we would attempt

to shew, from the mere apposition of these two given terms, (the principle which they advocate, on the one hand, and the existence of Revelation on the other,) that a conclusion in favour of the necessity of the doctrinal part of Scripture follows, with all the force that a wise man can require, or the case will admit; and that (to repeat a former simile) the Rationalist is but in possession of a part, and that a small one, of the torn page of God's will, which of itself shews nothing so much as its want of the remainder, in order to become an intelligible document.

Let us then commence with an examination of the pretensions of that system, which, perhaps, may arrogate to itself the fairest claim of being to man a sufficient rule of faith and practice—the system of Ethics,\* including under that name all that is comprised in the terms Metaphysics, Ethics, and Moral Philosophy.

If antiquity of existence, if wide extent of influence, if to have exercised the thoughts of the wisest of men through every age of intellectual history, are any grounds for demanding general veneration and respect, these grounds may surely be alleged in favour of Ethical Phi-

\* See note C, at the end.

losophy when it claims to be a rule of life. Century after century did it guide the destiny of the most polished ages of Greece and Rome. It formed the character of their heroes, it dictated the policy of their statesmen ; it was the Inspiration to which we are indebted for those models of heroic enterprise and patriotic self-devotion, of manly eloquence in the orator, and of philosophical narrative in the historian, which have been, in their several departments, the unrivalled models of all after times, and which, in our own day, continue to form not the least instructive portion of a comprehensive and generous education. When this system fell before the irresistible assaults of Christianity, it was taken up in a modified form by those who had been the instruments of its downfall ; and Christians themselves, partly from the mental delight which they experienced in grappling with the difficulties that had exercised the ingenuity of the strongest intellects of old ; partly to repose their thoughts on some topic over which party, and passion, and other distracting influences, had no power ; and partly, perhaps, from an irresistible inclination to systematize what nature seemed to have left in so tempting a state of disorder ;—Christians themselves took up what the heathen had laid down ; and then,

and all along, have brought the matured powers of their intellect to bear upon the subtle questions of Ethical Philosophy. Hence this science, the storehouse of refined reasoning, forms one of the best schools for training the young mind in habits of precision of language and accuracy of thought. Yet what, after all, has been the result?—With all the judicious care and nurture which have been bestowed upon it, is it even yet advanced to the maturity of an independent science, and able to go alone? Were not its heathen advocates, all along, irreconcilably at variance even as to its first and most elementary principles,—admirable, and almost Christian, as was its dissection of human feelings, and its detail of moral duties; and are not its Christian expounders in our own day, often driven, in their expositions, to take much tacitly for granted, which they have in reality learnt in a higher school than that in which they profess themselves to be students? I say not this to disparage a study of which the importance cannot easily be overrated, and which, at the present time, by no means receives the attention that its intrinsic merits, as well as incidental advantages deserve; but I state it as a fact, which those who have entered most deeply into the science will be the readiest to confess, that while from its very structure, and its total want

of fixed and well-defined elementary principles, it can never form a *popular* rule of faith and practice, the advances which it may have made in modern times have arisen rather from light let in upon it from without, than from any expansion of its inward brightness. During the contests of the Stoic and the Epicurean schools, and down through the more subtle, but not more settled, disputes of the Schoolmen, it was wanting in two most essential ingredients in the composition of a science—a commencement and a conclusion. Its professors had not determined from what fixed point they were to start in their common inquiries, and they were equally divided as to the point at which it was desirable to arrive. The second question seems still undetermined; and whether it is the highest excellence of the human character to be moved in all matters of duty by the law of utility, or of self-love, or of disinterestedness, is still a subject which admits of much doubt and debate. The former question, the starting-point in the science, if we may so term it—that element which is to the laws of Ethics what gravitation is to the laws of matter—has been finally established and defined, to the satisfaction at least of the most judicious professors of this science, and by one, moreover, to whom the cause of Revelation

as well as that of Ethics is, above all others, indebted—by Bishop Butler. It was he who, by the confession of all succeeding philosophers, first erected in the mind a court of appeal by which all aberrations from the strict laws of morals are to be heard and judged; and, by establishing the Supremacy of Conscience, placed in every man's bosom a tribunal, from which there was no escape even for his private delinquencies and most secret vices. He first demonstrated, and succeeding writers have expanded the notion, that had Conscience “strength, as as it has right, it would govern the world.” It is found to have fixed its seat in every human bosom. However a neglected or a false education may have perverted or even closed up the other faculties of man—to whatever extent a debasing superstition, a degrading tyranny, or an erroneous system of philosophy may have turned away the feelings, and habits, and appetites from their natural channel—still Conscience is found sitting arbitress over these unruly elements; and, even when the tumult of their confusion rages too loudly for her feeble voice to be heard, still persevering in the utterance of her unbiassed dictates, and asserting the native supremacy of Truth.\* It is true that

\* See note D, at the end.

instances may be found of conduct so equivocal in point of morals, as to leave rational room for doubt whether Conscience may not have vacated her throne, or have become herself so thoroughly corrupted, as to have confounded, in her decisions, the immutable principles of right and wrong. But, in such cases, it is satisfactorily answered, that the passions have for a moment usurped her seat—that it is the conduct, not the Conscience, which is in fault; and that the transgressor himself, if questioned on the grounds of his delinquency, will be found to justify himself not on principles necessarily hostile to the dictates of Conscience, but for reasons which seem, to himself, to take the case out of her jurisdiction. He does not deny her authority. He does not maintain that the difference between virtue and vice is a consideration of no account. But having either stifled by discouragement, or perverted by some over-ruling passion, the voice of Conscience, he appeals fearlessly to his inward judge, and finds there no sentence of condemnation.

Here, then, we have arrived at a most satisfactory point. We have established the existence of an universal principle in the mind, which, whenever it is permitted to operate at all, is always on the side of virtue. But it



cannot be disguised that another principle is still required, before such beneficial results as a perfect system of ethics should produce, can fairly be expected. We have, indeed, got a controlling, but we still want an impelling power, before this moral machine can produce such consequences as the philosopher may build upon as a system, and on which he can safely calculate, as the necessary fruits of sound and well-defined principles. The best that can be said of the impelling powers, such as the will, the passions, propensities, and affections, is that they pursue their several objects with an indifference as to the moral consequences of the issue; and though Conscience, in her capacity of arbitress, may restrain their tendencies towards evil, yet where is the innate power that is to impel them directly towards good? It seems to have been the impression of Butler, that this power also should be attributed to Conscience; and he has been accused of attempting to establish this point by arguing in a vicious circle; it is a circle, however, out of which none of his successors seem to have been able to escape; they may have, in some degree, enlarged the range of their speculations, but they have not approached one whit the nearer to the establishment of a definite boundary. They have attempted to shew, not only that Conscience is

a faculty which directly impels the conduct towards virtue (an office, apparently, in some degree inconsistent with its legitimate province of arbitress); but that it continually adds to its own scope and authority by associating with itself each successive acquisition of moral virtue, and causing it to form a part, as it were, of its own original constitution. "Acts of kindness," they say, "of generosity, of pity, of placability, of humanity, when they are long continued, can hardly fail mainly to flow from the pure fountain of an excellent nature. They are not reducible to rules; and the attempt to enforce them by punishment would destroy them. They are *virtues* of which the essence consists in a good disposition of mind. As we gradually transfer our desire from praise to praiseworthiness, this principle also is adopted into Conscience."\* This is true; and thus it is that conscience is cultivated and improved; but where is the impelling and improving power? Such graces do indeed "flow from the pure fountain of an excellent nature;" they are truly "*virtues* of which the essence consists in a good disposition of mind"—but where these excellent qualities are to be found, and how they are to be generated, is the great problem to be solved, and which still

\* See note E, at the end.

seems, as far as Ethical Philosophy is concerned, to be involved in much of its original obscurity.

Now, should the above be allowed to be even a tolerably accurate account of the actual state of Ethical science, as far as this elementary question is concerned, the advocate for Revealed Religion could not well devise a position of things more favourable to his views, whether he looks at the advantages or the deficiencies of that system which he has thus been induced to consider, for the moment, as the rival, or even substitute, of his own. The establishment of the supremacy of Conscience, is indeed a point of the most vital importance to both systems; certainly not less so to the cause of Revelation than that of Ethics; and it is of infinite advantage to the former, that it can refer to arguments drawn from a source altogether independent of its own principles, to prove a fact in which it is essentially concerned. For it is through the Conscience that Revelation takes hold upon humanity. It requires some corresponding fixed point in man's nature, in addition to and independent of the pure reason, to which it may fasten itself, before any communion between the one and the other can be systematically established. There must be in the human bosom some acknowledged

authority before which it can spread its credentials, unfold its pretensions, and explain the various blessings and benefits which it proposes to introduce into the old constitution of man. Such an acknowledged authority is Conscience, —a power, as it has appeared, to which, and to which alone, in all moral questions, the other faculties of man are disposed to bow; and which, it will not be denied, has never yet protested against, but rather, has almost universally acquiesced in, and heartily embraced, the moral code of the gospel. Indeed, we have already stated, that the Rationalist is generally disposed to adopt this code, as property which he does not hesitate to call his own. Nor is it our wish, as has been also hinted, to deprive him of so inestimable a benefit. But it is clear that he can make no use of it, as a power auxiliary to the efforts of Conscience, unless he takes its *sanctions* also along with its rules. A law is nothing without power to enforce it; and Conscience will produce no impression on the unruly elements over which it is called to preside, by merely displaying before them the moral law of the gospel, unless it has power also to compel obedience to its dictates by motives much stronger than have yet been found in the natural constitution of man. The law of the gospel is evidently the very element which Con-

science requires—the impelling power which it needs, in order to establish that authority over the moral character of man, without which there can be no systematic progress towards improvement. But the Conscience cannot enforce this law without adequate motives ; and these it must seek by examining those sanctions on which the Revelation itself proposes to place them. Thus it is that we are led to the doctrines of the gospel ; we are bound by Conscience itself to enquire into the grounds of this promulgation of a moral code ; and unless these grounds be satisfactory, the code itself becomes merely a dead letter—not binding upon the passions, and, therefore, not compulsory in practice. How directly, then, does the system of Ethics lead to, at least, a necessary investigation of the doctrines of the gospel ! It cannot, in truth, on any sound philosophical principles, go on without them. It possesses, indeed, already, in the faculty of Conscience, a controlling power over the mind ; it has, at least, a negative voice in every determination of the will, every impulse of the passions, and every *tendency* of the sentiments and affections. It summons before it the deepest contrivances of the head, the subtlest emotions of the heart ; it unravels and exposes not only their broad and obvious intentions, but their

secret and most latent consequences; but though it seldom fails to enter a solemn protest against the evil of them, it possesses no controlling power to divert them authoritatively towards good. In milder and better natures, indeed, its influence may have been so long tacitly acknowledged, that it may exercise, as it were, a prescriptive control over the whole line of conduct, and be consulted under every moral circumstance of life; but this obedience is too accidental and too voluntary to be considered a general rule, and to be safely calculated upon when the mind is assailed by strong inducements, and the passions agitated by pressing temptations. It calls, *then*, for external assistance; and the moral law of the gospel now comes to its aid; but only on condition that the gospel shall be permitted to enforce the observance of its own rules, by the irresistible *sanctions* under which they are revealed. These sanctions are the doctrines of the gospel; and why should Conscience refuse aid under such conditions, unless reason can shew that these doctrines are indefensible, and that the evidences of Christianity are not made to rest upon solid ground? Into *that* question we need not enter—it has been discussed by those who still call aloud, but call in vain, for refutation! It is enough for our purpose to shew, that the doc-

trines of the gospel stand prominently forward in any enquiry as to the sufficiency of Ethical Philosophy as a rule of life, and demand not to be passed by for their insignificance, in a question where they are found standing on the threshold! The conscience requires the aid of Christian principles; it must seek them through Christian motives. It would—to give one or two instances of its operation—it would check the impulses of pride and ambition—it must do so by shewing, on scriptural grounds, the vanity of this life, and the reality and importance of another. It must lay before the aspiring spirit which would build its tower of strength on this side the grave, the certainty of an eternal existence that awaits it when all these things shall be dissolved; a fact which, though Conscience itself might darkly conjecture, yet which it could not prove till there came a voice from heaven to confirm its own natural surmises. It must press this fact home on the heart of ambition; and shew, on its own self-centered principles, that as time is to eternity so is the folly of building for itself a tabernacle on earth, compared with the wisdom of having a “name written in heaven.” But Conscience has to reign over subjects of a less flexible mould than even pride and ambition; they will sometimes bend to the strength of reason—at least in

their own natural direction. But the Passions are as unreasonable as they are unruly, and rush madly and blindly upon that ruin which pride and ambition seek upon a false principle of calculation. Here then Conscience must, in its distress, have recourse to the same Christian motives, but with added reasons, and more powerful denunciations. It must exhibit that eternity, no longer as a space filled with mere existent beings, and faintly shadowed spiritualities, but with the dead of old, following out the last consequences of the evil passions which had their commencement in this state of being. What it has often said in whispers, that vice is immortal, it must now speak in thunder, as authorized by the book of Revelation. To feel that the attribute of *immortality* is associated with our evil passions, gives to the mind, of itself, a notion of *punishment*, which requires no additional illustrations to fill up its horrors to the brim. "The worm that never dieth, and the fire that is never quenched," are but faint and material emblems of that spiritual and enduring agony which Conscience never fails to intimate as the natural and inherent fruit of sin; and which intimation the express language of scripture so solemnly ratifies and confirms. The fears of man and the word of God agree, that "our sin will find us out."



It is thus that Conscience is reinforced by Revelation in the discharge of its appropriate office—that of an arbitress among unruly passions and headlong desires. Its higher and more complex operations (according to some authorities) shall be discussed in a succeeding Lecture. We have here viewed it in its primary and undeniable occupation—that of passing a moral sentence on every determination of the will, and every inclination of the heart; and we have shewn that Revelation comes directly to its aid through no new and unexpected channel, by running counter to no acknowledged principle of our moral nature, but simply by giving force and efficacy to those motives which conscience had all along been *suggesting* to the human heart, but which it wanted power to *enforce*, whenever strong temptation came into direct collision with probable argument. The ancient philosophers well knew the influence of this appeal to futurity. They deterred from vice by the vindictive lash of the Furies, and allured to virtue by the prospective felicities of Elysium; and it speaks strongly for the harmony of such sentiments with the common feelings of mankind, that, however irregularly promulgated, they have operated as so powerful a barrier against the inroads of so many opposing elements. We see,

in this, that Ethical science was continually aiming at, though it could not reach, the truth. When, therefore, philosophy finds its own dreams and conjectures unexpectedly sanctioned and verified—when the outwork, which it had thrown up in its terror, is found to be a tower of defence erected upon an impregnable foundation, is it then for the first time to hesitate in its credence; and to begin to doubt the truth of its own principles just when they have been tested by the corroborative weight of independent evidence? It is right that philosophy should be cautious in admitting facts or inferences, when the mind has either a suspicious facility in entertaining them, or there are strong probabilities on the other side of the question; but after philosophy itself has made great and independent advances towards certain results; it deserves another name than wisdom contemptuously to reject the aid of Revelation, when it comes forward to follow out these results to their consequences, and to dispel the clouds and mists with which the footsteps of Ethical science have been constantly encircled.

We have now dwelt solely upon those doctrines of the gospel that hinge directly upon the acknowledged position of Conscience in the hu-

man mind, and have shewn that the promulgation of a future state of reward and punishment is but a continuation and completion of the moral law, written originally, in characters more or less legible, on every human heart. But it need hardly be remarked, that the admission of the truth of but one doctrine of Revelation leads necessarily to at least a favourable consideration of the rest ; and especially of those on which the doctrine so admitted is found to be itself dependent. The golden chain that binds together all the great truths of the gospel, and suspends them all from heaven, becomes thus the object of contemplation ; and though there are to be found men who will violently tear asunder doctrines which are invaluable when united, and useless when alone, yet the process is too tortuous, and too abhorrent from all sound principles of philosophy and criticism, to be deserving of any other than an honest man's reprobation. Let but a single mind be brought to the question, and we doubt not, but that, the grace of God preventing it, the process of its conviction will be this: From the acknowledged relation of Conscience to a future state of reward and punishment as revealed in the gospel, the inquirer will proceed to investigate, in the document thus approved to his own heart, the means by which he may se-

cure the one and shun the other : his own weakness will thus rise up to view : and the great doctrine of the Atonement will then stand before him in all its true dimensions, while the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit will appear a truth as *reasonable* as it is momentous : thus will he be finally led to confess, with Christ's holy catholic church, that the Son, and the Holy Ghost are, with the Father Almighty, ever one God, world without end !

## LECTURE III.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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#### THE ARGUMENT.

*Preliminary observation—the subject of Ethics resumed—the auxiliaries of Conscience discussed—It requires some impelling power to give it authority over the Will—some have proposed utility as the power required—Paley’s doctrine on the subject of utility sometimes mis-stated—its defects, arising from man’s ignorance, and its want of authority over the feelings—other auxiliaries to Conscience, such as self-love, disinterestedness, association of ideas—a more powerful and universal auxiliary than all these suggested, the relation of Parent and Child—its beneficial operation enlarged upon—the defects of all these auxiliaries specified, and the doctrines of the Gospel shewn to remedy these defects—the relation of Parent and Child, universal in nature, adopted into the system of grace, by the representation of God as our Father, and Christians as the brethren of his Son—important consequences of this view developed.*



## LECTURE III.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY.

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*Psalm cxix. 96.*

I HAVE SEEN AN END OF ALL PERFECTION : BUT THY COMMAND-  
MENT IS EXCEEDING BROAD.

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It may be necessary, for the sake of clearness of view, without which no profitable results can accrue from any discussion whatever, to revert to the peculiar position in which we seem to stand with regard to those with whom an argument is now instituted ; and, by briefly pointing out the difficulties as well as advantages of such position, to shew the precise nature of the conclusions at which we can reasonably expect to arrive.

We have, then, properly speaking, no tangible antagonist to contend with ; the rationalist being, at least in our own day, for the most part satisfied with a laudatory and general statement of his own theories, and a tacit and contemptuous rejection of scripture doctrines, without entering either into a formal refutation of our principles, or a systematic vindication of his own. Hence we

labour under the disadvantage of having often to *assign* the reasons which we would refute, and to *imagine* arguments, which can be disowned as soon as they are exposed. Whilst, on the other hand, we certainly enjoy this privilege—a privilege of unspeakable value to a minister of the gospel of peace, that against those who present no hostile front, no hostile weapons need be employed; but a hope is held out, that, since a full and honest statement of the truth is always the most general and the most convincing refutation of error—such a statement may, in this case, leave a blessing behind it, and those who are “wise in their own conceits” may be induced, even by the simple developement of their own principles, to become “wise unto salvation.”

Under the encouragement, then, of this hope, we proceed with the discussion which was commenced in the last Lecture; and propose to examine into the nature and extent of those auxiliaries, which it is universally allowed that Conscience requires, in order that it may become,—what, in the perfection of our nature, it would become,—the guide and governor of man.

The Ethical Philosopher,—partly that his science may be complete within itself, and not



dependant upon some extraneous principle for any of its constituent elements ; and partly, it is to be feared, because some of those who have prosecuted the study of it most zealously, have been but little favourable to the doctrinal part of Revelation,—the Ethical Philosopher has sought, and not unnaturally, to discover within the boundaries of his own system all the materials which are necessary for its full developement. We have already shewn the acknowledged limits of Conscience, and hinted at the failure of all the attempts to make it, as it were, both cause and effect in prosecuting the improvement of the human character. The additional impelling powers which have been brought to its aid, are various ; and have received different denominations, according to the different views which philosophers have entertained of the predominant faculties of man's mental and moral constitution. It is clear that the power *required* is, primarily, an influence over the Will ; and the problem to be solved is, to discover some general principle, which, applied in all cases of moral trial to the guidance of the Will, may so direct it universally towards good, that every step which a man takes in the path of life may be an advance towards moral perfection. The principle which has been the most widely adopted for this purpose,—which

can boast among its advocates of some of the most imposing names,—and which, when fairly stated and honestly applied, is, in truth, productive of no small degree of beneficial influence on human practice—is that of Utility; or, as it is sometimes denominated, with a shade of distinction as to meaning—Expediency.\* Now there does seem something almost, may we not say, altogether Providential, in the circumstance, that the cause of utility has been taken up and advocated by a mind like Paley's. No one will suspect that justice has not been done to its merits, or that there exist any latent qualities in the system which his searching mind had not penetration to fathom, or his absolute transparency of style was unable to convey. Indeed, we may appeal to the advocates of this theory themselves, as to whether it has not gradually retrograded in public estimation under the advocacy of each succeeding champion, and whether the soundness of its principles do not become the more suspected, in proportion as they are more diligently traced to their inevitable conclusions. Under Paley's treatment of the subject, these conclusions were less obviously seen, on account of that tacit reference in his own mind to the truths of Revelation, which runs like

\* See note F, at the end.

an invisible thread through even the most secular of his speculations ; and it would seem to have been only from a vain hope of constructing a system of moral philosophy complete *within itself*, that he was led to neglect the arguments drawn from the sanctions of Revelation. The grand basis of his system is this : “ that the method of coming at the will of God, concerning any action, *by the light of nature*, is to inquire into the tendency of that action to promote or diminish general happiness.”\* He is thus bound to the light of nature by definition ; nor have we any right to condemn him for not executing what he never undertook to achieve ; but that his theory is miserably defective in the extent of its application, and almost impracticable even where it may be applied, is now universally acknowledged. The sterling worth of the book, indeed, is thus but little injured ; for though the image which he would have impressed upon it may be defaced, yet the material is of gold.

We have said, that his criterion of virtue is almost impracticable even in those cases where it may be applied ; for it is attended with this necessary consequence, that, in each actual event of life, a man’s judgment as to the morality of it

\* See note G, at the end.

will depend upon the extent of his knowledge; and thus, in all doubtful cases, which, in reality, form the sum of the trials of life,—we shall have as many standards of morality as there are degrees of moral and intellectual proficiency. The system implies, in truth, that the beginner in practical morals should possess all the knowledge which is the last result of experience; or that every possible case which can arise has been ruled and recorded by the Ethical Philosopher, and engrafted, moreover, on the mind of his pupil, ready for immediate reference in every emergency of life. We may safely assert, therefore, of the doctrines of Utility, what Butler has asserted of that of Necessity, “that were this opinion of Utility ever so true; yet such is, in fact, our condition, and the natural course of things, that whenever we apply it to life and practice, this application of it always misleads us, and cannot but mislead us, in a most dreadful manner, with regard to our present interest.”\*

But, miserably defective as the rule of utility is found to be, even in cases where it may, at least partially, be applied; the fatal objection to it is, that to more than one half of the human mind and character it has no application what-

\* Analogy, Part I., Chap. 6.

ever. Its government, if it govern at all, is simply through the instrumentality of the reason; over the feelings, except indirectly through the same channel, it can exercise no influence or control; and yet no one will deny that on the regulation of the feelings (using that term in its widest sense) depends, more than upon any other circumstance whatever, the moral character of man. Now the object and ultimate aim of the feelings, when roused into active operation, is not utility but enjoyment;—they are not guided by the benefits, but by the sensations which will arise from any proposed course of action; and, therefore, any appeal to them through the reason, which they overwhelm, and on the grounds of utility, which they do not recognise, can produce little more impression on their headlong career, than the fears of the rustic for his crops can check the course of an overflowing torrent, or the intreaties of the shipwrecked mariner calm the inexorable ocean.

The futility of all attempts, indeed, to regulate the passions and feelings by a principle so incongruous, and so utterly inadequate to the office, as that of utility, has led philosophers to look among the passions themselves, for some motive or motives of cognate origin, and homo-

geneous operation, which may be relied upon as a faithful auxiliary of Conscience, when it would divert the course of these passions towards a beneficial and moral end. Thus it is that some have recognised self-love,—a kind of generous and liberal modification of selfishness,\* as an impelling principle which may be considered to stand towards the passions in the same relation as utility towards the pure reason; others again, justly concluding that this principle of self-love, being analogous to, is liable, likewise, to the same objections and beset with the same defects, as that of utility, have sought out among the feelings for affections of a wider scope and more catholic operation, to which they propose to give the name of Disinterested,—than which we should almost be tempted to say, that a more negative, or, (had it not the sanction of most venerable names,) a more unphilosophical description of an active faculty, could not easily be devised. Willingly, however, and thankfully do we acknowledge, that those benevolent feelings which are intended to be expressed under this title, are indeed to be found in the human mind, and are continually operating as a counterbalance to many of the baser tendencies of the affections, and throwing the light of a kind and charitable

\* See note II, at the end.

spirit over many of the dark surfaces of human life. By the process, too, of what has been denominated the association of ideas, new feelings of a like beneficial and moral tendency are constantly eliminated from those which are more simple and elementary; and come successively, and most potently, to the aid of Conscience in the discharge of its high office of controlling and forming the moral character of man. It must be evident, however, that we are at present employed in simply *giving names* to faculties which are found to exist in the mind, rather than in discovering some elementary impelling principle to which all these faculties should be made subservient. It is well that disinterestedness should be traced by the philosopher, as forming a component part of the natural constitution of man; it is well, likewise, to have it ascertained, that ideas, by association, often result in sentiments conducive to the cause of virtue and good morals; but to appeal to principles, which have as yet scarcely received even a settled name in science, as simple and fundamental Laws in a popular system of Ethics, would be as unphilosophical in theory, as it would be useless in practice. In a practical sense, a moral rule which is not obvious, is not true.

A reflection must here occur to the mind of every one who has followed us through this investigation into the present condition of Ethical science, which will be properly stated in this place, as leading us a step nearer to the conclusions at which we hope ultimately to arrive. It will naturally be asked—if this be neither an unfaithful nor even unfavourable view of the component parts of moral philosophy—if the power of the great arbiter Conscience be thus thwarted, and controlled by opposing influences;—if one of its main instruments, utility, be thus defective in its application to the reason, while its power over the passions is still more equivocal and obscure,—how can we account for the consoling, but undeniable fact, that the laws of morality have, after all, been held in honour, and even in no small measure obeyed, in every age, and almost every country of the world? There are, no doubt, not only individuals, but whole nations to be found, so sunk in barbarity and vice, as to have well-nigh obliterated from their minds every vestige of a moral nature; but these are but melancholy exceptions to the rule which is found universally to prevail—that in all countries, and under every form of religion, wherever a moderate degree of civilization exists, the moral feelings are not only viewed with ap-



probation, but are diligently cultivated and improved; an impelling power is thus *practically* applied, though Philosophy may be unable to trace its laws; and even where the Conscience is too much darkened to issue or to understand the precept, the heart is often found anticipating the injunction by its practice. What, then, is this school, in which all seem to be taught, in a greater or less degree, the lessons after which Philosophy halts? It is a school which nature has provided for all—in which all have studied, and in which all must study to the end of time. There is only one universal and immutable relation between man and man—and with it this great school of moral discipline is inseparably joined—the relation of Parent and Child. It is from this root that the best feelings of our nature shoot most vigorously upwards. We may lay down learned and scientific theories as to the best mode of conducting the great work of education—we may talk wisely and philosophically about the powers of the intellect, the value of arts and sciences, and the dignity which is conferred on human nature by expanding its powers of mental vision, and bringing, as it were, the whole range of physical and intellectual creation within its grasp;—but the moral lessons—the expansion of the feelings—the discipline of

the heart, which the child learns, during the first feeble years of its existence, in the school where all must study, are of more value to it even as far as this world is concerned, and make even deeper inroads into the dark science of moral philosophy itself, than all the after-lessons of life, with whatever skill conveyed, or eloquence recommended! It is not a mere rhetorical expression to say, that the best wisdom is learned at a mother's knee. And not only many a philosopher, poet, and divine, can trace the first rudiments of his future proficiency to the natural lessons, inculcated without severity, and imbibed without difficulty, from the lips to which he has looked upwards as oracles as infallible as sacred writ; but many a youth, in the trials and temptations of manhood, has owed his deliverance to the timely and perhaps casual recollection of some early parental admonition; and has abstained from the seducing indulgence, less from natural or even religious hesitation, than from the habitual influence of long-continued filial obedience, and from anticipating the painful sensations, which the degradation of their child would not fail to awaken in the breasts of his affectionate parents. It is a wise ordination of Providence, that, at our outset in life, we should come in contact with human nature under its

best aspect,—that, under the relation of parent and child, we should form our first acquaintance with humanity! As it is impossible for the parent to entertain towards his child any of those feelings of jealousy, rivalry, or hostility of disposition, which, in our intercourse with the world at large, are the origin of so many of the malevolent passions, his interest and his self-love combine with the dictates of our common nature to awaken within his bosom the purest sentiments in regard to his offspring; which,—exhibited as affection will exhibit them,—under the most attractive forms, will light up within *their* breasts a corresponding emotion, till the development of the benevolent feelings in their minds becomes almost as early, and as untraceable in its first disclosure, as their attention to external objects; and, having been thus exercised in infancy towards those who can most judiciously cherish it, is gradually expanded so as to embrace more distant objects, as experience, and a wider acquaintance with the world, successively bring them within the sphere of its operation. It is from hence that Conscience draws its most active adherents out of the ranks of the Passions; which enable it, in after life, to put a restraint even upon the most dangerous emotions that the

commerce of an evil world but seldom fails to awaken.

We seem, then, to have arrived, by a chain of reasoning in which no link appears to be wanting, at two important conclusions. In the first place, that utility, difficult as it may be to find a general principle, which shall altogether supersede it in moral philosophy, is yet but of limited applicability, and, even within its proper sphere, of most uncertain operation; and, in the second place, that the natural relation of parent and child—a relation liable to all the disturbing forces which absolute ignorance, corruption of manners, and perverted and disordered passions have a perpetual tendency to introduce—is the only recognised ally on which Conscience can safely calculate, in its office of subduing the evil, and training and cherishing the good sentiments, of the human heart. To what quarter, then, shall the philosopher fly in his perplexity, (and especially if assistance can no where else be found) but to the Doctrines of Revelation? And surely no philosopher that deserves the name will hesitate to receive assistance from such a source, provided it be administered in accordance with his own principles, and may remedy those

defects in his own system which he never ceases to acknowledge and deplore. By his own confession, the doctrine of utility labours under two principal defects in its application as a rule of life; the difficulty of preventing the will from seizing upon a present and less solid good, in preference to one of greater value, but of less immediate acquisition; and the difficulty, moreover, which common minds must always experience, of correctly ascertaining, amidst perplexing and often contradictory motives, what is the line of conduct which *real* utility would prescribe, in the various and complicated occurrences of life. Of both these difficulties the doctrines of Revelation supply us with a ready solution. By impressing upon our minds the deepest possible convictions of the essential distinction between right and wrong, through the sanctions of eternal reward for the one, and eternal punishment for the other, utility receives a bolder outline, and presents more distinctive features to the mind, than when seen through the mists and shadows of present and petty interests; the passing considerations which have regard only to time, are lost in the tremendous consequences, which require eternity for their developement. Selfishness itself, when a future state is taken into the account, instead of re-

volving round its own narrow circle, and coming perpetually into hostile contact with the interests of others, who are similarly employed in pursuing their own confined estimate of good, becomes infinitely enlarged in its views when its central attraction is transferred into the immeasurable distance of an unseen world ; and can then pursue its object in a straight and even course, neither crossing the orbit of its neighbour, nor withholding from him the light of mutual assistance and mutual love. Selfishness, upon an infinite scale, becomes the most expanded benevolence.

Again, the difficulty of applying the rules of Utility, as gathered from the subtle reasonings of Ethical Philosophy, is at once removed by having recourse to the comprehensive and recorded moral instructions of the Gospel, as founded upon, and enforced by its doctrines. Cases of conscience, and points of reasonable doubt, may and will occasionally arise even out of the lucid rules of Scripture, from the impossibility of comprehending under general terms all the complex moral relations of mankind ; but “an honest and good heart” will seldom decide these questions amiss ; and it is an important fact, that while the moral philosopher has often recourse to the

Ethics of the Gospel, to sanction at least, if not to develope, his own principles; the Christian, who is well instructed in his own system of morality, and deeply impressed with the doctrines on which scripture has made them to rest,\* is never driven to seek assistance, either as to principle or details, from the deductions of moral philosophy. He cherishes and adopts them as allies, but never acknowledges them as his masters.

But we hasten to resume the consideration of that branch of moral science in which the rule of Utility is most defective, and wherein its deficiencies are most strikingly supplied by the doctrines of revelation—the discipline and control of the feelings. It appears, that upon this department of the mind, utility has no direct bearing; and that the indissoluble and universal relation of Parent and Child seems to be the only natural, and innate, and unchangeable principle through which Conscience can impress a beneficial tendency upon the sentiments and passions of mankind. Now see the use which Revelation has made of this unfailing instrument; and mark therein a proof, at once beyond invention and denial, that the Maker of man's heart was the designer also of that wonderful scheme by which

\* See note I, at the end.

the errors of it are to be corrected and reformed. On this immutable and always-operating relation of parent and child, is erected the whole structure of the Gospel; and to that relation does it appeal to effect what philosophy has shrunk from in despair—a turning of the whole heart and soul of man from the pleasures, and pursuits, and interests of earth, to a heartfelt love and systematic prosecution of things in heaven. Though it might be impossible for the philosopher to predicate, *a priori*, through what channel the Almighty, having determined to vouchsafe a revelation of his will to his creatures, would think it best to convey such revelation to their reason and affections, yet he might safely anticipate that both would be appealed to, as the natural connecting links between things human and divine. But an intangible, infinite, and incomprehensible essence is altogether beyond the range of our intellect and of our sympathies: God can only communicate with man through an intervening medium. The Almighty, therefore,—so we read in the Gospel,—has lessened, as it were, this infinite distance between man and his Maker, by sending into the world his only-begotten Son in the likeness of human flesh; he has prepared for us a Mediator,—God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds, and man, of the



substance of his mother, born in the world ; who by taking of this manhood into God, might make us, who are his brethren by redemption, the sons of God by adoption ; and so joint-heirs with him in the privileges and glories of his Father's kingdom. This, we must bear in mind, is not a mere figurative representation, but, according to Scripture, a literal and actual transaction ; so much so, that the faithful disciple of Christ is as truly, though in a spiritual sense, the son and brother of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, as he stands in these several relations towards his father and brethren according to the flesh. I need not occupy the time of an audience like the present with quoting passages from the New Testament (for no detached passages can adequately represent a spirit which pervades the whole)\* to shew, that to make us Christ's brethren, and God the joint Father of all, is the main object and aim of the Christian dispensation. It seeks to impress on our minds, that by the atonement of Christ, " we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God ; and if children, then, heirs ; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

\* See note J, at the end.

Thus it is that the Gospel scheme lays its foundations deep in our natural affections, by appealing to the indelible relation of parent and child. It pours its sweet waters into a fountain of which the well-spring is found in every human heart ; and requires us but to cherish, and refine, and elevate the benevolent feelings which we have been taught to entertain towards our earthly parents, in order that we may in some degree comprehend and respond to the affection displayed towards us by our heavenly Father, when he redeemed us to himself for a peculiar people by the precious blood of his only-begotten Son. It supplies, in short, an *infinite motive* for the cultivation of those amiable feelings of which nature has implanted the elements in every man's bosom, by transferring them from an earthly to a heavenly object ; and, universal in its design, connects itself with an universal principle, which it moulds to its own holy purposes !

Such is the aspect under which the Gospel represents the duty of directing the affections of the heart towards God ; and it uses the same arguments, likewise, for extending the same affections towards all around us. The burthen of it is comprehended in this saying—" Beloved, *if* God *so* loved us, we ought also to love one an-

other." The reason of the duty, in both cases, is made to rest upon the doctrines of the Gospel: the heart of man responds to the *duties*; why should his pride revolt at the *doctrines* by which alone they can be enforced?

I know not what effect these conclusions may produce on the minds of others; but I confess that on my own, the reflection that the Almighty has laid the foundations of the Christian faith on the solid basis of principles which are acknowledged, even by its opponents, to form constituent elements of the human mind—that he has appealed to the fixed principle of Conscience in the revelation of future rewards and punishments,—and to the only universal, moral as well as natural, relation between man and man, that of parent and child, by revealing himself to us in the light of a Father, and accounting us his children as the brethren of his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ;—I confess, that so striking, in this case, is the correspondence of the excellency of Revelation with the acknowledged deficiency of Philosophy,—so exactly is the supply accommodated to the necessity,—that a natural miracle would not be more convincing to my judgment, that the worker of it was a messenger from heaven, than this, as it were, moral miracle, is

satisfactory to my feelings, that he who divulged such a scheme of spiritual philosophy was guided in its promulgation by a Power, which fathomed all the mysteries, understood all the defects, and could remedy all the evils, that are confessedly inherent in the moral constitution of man. And when we reflect, finally, that this Divine Messenger has brought with him into the world a co-ordinate Power, whose especial office it is to purify and pervade every faculty of man which is in any degree susceptible of moral discipline—who strengthens the reason, directs the will, curbs the passions, and sanctifies the affections, by an influence which, though it may not be distinguishable by man from the operations of his natural powers, is yet felt and seen in every step which he takes in his progress towards moral perfection,—it is surely no rash conclusion to say, that the difficulties of philosophy form but a part of the evidences of Christianity; and we may turn from the consideration of them with the reflection of Holy David: “I have seen an *end* of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding BROAD.”

## LECTURE IV.

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THE

TESTIMONY OF THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS.

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### THE ARGUMENT.

*The Intellectual Powers considered as a Rule of life—in what way the cultivation of the Intellect leads to the principles of Rationalism—the perishable nature of Intellectual results—the injustice of considering the Intellectual Powers as a standard of excellence—this not true of a Moral standard—the great doctrine of the Atonement applicable to one and not to the other—this doctrine unfolded, and shewn to be the precise remedy which Philosophy would require for intellectual and moral defects—conclusions drawn from the preceding statement.*



## LECTURE IV.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF THE INTELLECTUAL POWERS.

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*Hebrews* ii. 9.

THAT HE BY THE GRACE OF GOD SHOULD TASTE DEATH FOR  
EVERY MAN.

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IT is a common remark, (with whatever limitations it is to be taken,) that men of highly cultivated minds are to be found, in more than an average proportion, among the ranks of those who, to speak in the gentlest terms, think lightly on the subjects of doctrinal revelation. Though it does not appear that this assertion is founded on any satisfactory evidence—for the aberrations of one man of intellect are more conspicuous than those of a whole legion of obscure unbelievers—yet so it has commonly been maintained; and a conclusion has been drawn from the supposed fact, that this *indisposition* towards the doctrines of religion arises from the exclusive cultivation of the mental powers. Doubtless, this is too often the case; but I believe it will frequently be found, that the converse of the proposition is equally true, and that men devote their whole

time and attention to intellectual and secular pursuits not seldom from some original deficiency, or early neglect, of the moral and religious feelings; and from not having on the mind a full impression of the transcendent importance of Scripture doctrines. It is not always, therefore, that mental cultivation leads to scepticism, but often scepticism to mental cultivation.

And the reasons for this are too obvious to require much illustration. The mind of man demands a pursuit which shall occupy, whether worthily or not, the whole range of its powers. Now if we suppose that sound principles and right feelings with regard to religion have, in early life, been either inaccessible or withheld, we cannot be surprised that other principles and feelings, of less dignity and value, should have usurped their legitimate station and authority. Withhold from a man the knowledge of another life, and you compel him, by a necessary consequence, to make the most of this. You give a particular and exclusive direction to his whole system of action; and he views life, and every portion of life, under a totally different aspect, from the man who considers it but as a probation for eternity. That which is as nothing to the one, is every thing to the other; and it is his



interest and his wisdom, on the soundest principles of calculation, to gather as much of good as he is able, out of his little day of life. He does not walk by faith, but by sight. The hopes with which the Christian is cheered in his passage through the dark and dreary ways that intersect the course of even the most prosperous life, afford no light to him ; he must smooth the path for himself, by energetic exertion, or patient endurance. The strength which the Christian seeks from above, he must find within. Mental and physical self-denial (except so far as worldly prudence dictates) absence of ambition, humility of spirit, the sacrifice of the interests of self to those of other men, the esteeming of the social, and domestic, and private virtues above mental acquirements, worldly distinctions, and personal enjoyments, are but doubtful graces with him whose horizon is limited by time, and who cannot look to the future for recompense of a present sacrifice. He finds himself in possession of various powers and faculties, from the judicious exercise of which certain beneficial or gratifying temporal results may be derived ; and philosophy and self-love combine to urge on him the wisdom of seeking such benefits or gratifications, with a devotedness of purpose, which the Christian, whose views are wider, and principles of a loftier

character, would justly consider to be unworthy of the high vocation to which he knows himself to be called.

Thus it is that the principles of philosophical Rationalism lead necessarily to the cultivation of the mental powers; and what is true of the extreme case here stated, is doubtless true also, of all the varieties of them that exist, from absolute unbelief upwards towards a sound and lively faith; and the estimation of the intellectual faculties, as an end and for their own sake, will be found to bear a strong relation to the value which is placed on faith and hope, the cultivation of the virtues of morality, and the acquisition of Christian graces. To the Christian these intellectual faculties are valuable, as means; to the Rationalist they are everything, as results. To him they are a treasure laid up on earth; and where his treasure is, there his heart is also.

While, therefore, the remark is not new, but is, on the contrary, too general, not to have its foundation in truth, that men who take up with low views on the subject of religious doctrines, are mostly found to be men of competent information, and devoted, in a greater or less degree, to the pursuits of literature and science—a natural

result, as it has appeared, of the absolute value which minds so constituted must necessarily attach to them,—it does not appear that science can be justly chargeable with effects, which spring from causes that have a much earlier and deeper root in the character; and which lead these men to mingle in the ranks of philosophers from lower and meaner motives than true philosophy will ever acknowledge. They have thus been permitted to bring a stigma upon pursuits whose generous and modest spirit they never imbibe; by misleading hasty observers into the notion, that the low and degrading sentiments with regard to religion which they entertain in *connexion* with their philosophical pursuits, are the *consequence* instead of the *cause* of this particular direction of their minds. True philosophy may have *found* a man an infidel, but it never yet *made* him one. There is nothing in its nature, there is nothing in its tendency, there is nothing in its results, which can teach the student, of a truly expanded mind, any other lesson, than those which he learns in the revealed will of God:—the incomprehensible greatness and goodness of the Divinity, the weakness of his own mental powers, and the scanty portion of knowledge which these powers can gather in, during the brief section of human life. The wider his sphere

of vision grows, the more clearly does he see the interminable distance before him ; and the doctrine, which teaches him to rely on another's strength, acquires additional force with every successive exertion of his own !

But the case is quite otherwise with the unbeliever, who, from very different or even opposite motives, is often found side by side with the Christian philosopher in the path of science. He considers, and with perfect consistency of principle, that to apply his mental powers to all the ends for which they are applicable, and to deduce from them all the benefits and gratifications which they are capable of producing, is one great object of his being : should he be a simple materialist, almost a sole object ; should he symbolize with some of the various shades of Deism, as a mode of answering the purposes of his present existence, or of qualifying himself for such future aspects of being as his creed may suggest to his hopes hereafter. Now he has doubtless a right to expect that his own estimate of the value of these mental acquisitions should be fairly weighed ; nor have we any reason to fear but that, after such an examination, on his part as well as his opponents', he will honestly confess, that, *should the Christian Religion be true*, it exhibits at once

the deficiencies of his own theory, and the remedy for those deficiencies, in a point of view, which ought not to be hastily dismissed, or lightly regarded.

The first defect which strikes us as attaching to the Intellectual Faculties, when considered in themselves and independent of their effects; and which belongs also to their effects, when viewed as ends rather than instruments—is their perishable nature. They are almost as changeable as the faculties of the body. The results of intellectual processes never seem to us, like those of our moral faculties, to form a permanent and necessary part of ourselves. Knowledge is, indeed, interesting to our curiosity, flattering to our pride, and gratifying to our feelings, as well as a most valuable instrument of moral action; but it always appears to be an *acquisition*. When present with us, it resides in the mind as an extraneous object; in our possession indeed, but forming no integral portion of our constitution. It vanishes away; and we feel that we have lost an accomplishment, towards which our relation may have ceased for ever. But it is not so with any thought or action in which a moral principle has been involved. We feel that we have *never done with it*. The thought may, for the present,

be blotted out from our minds,—the action may be erased from our memory; but the heart of every man acknowledges the momentous truth, that were that thought or action brought back before the recollection, the responsibility for its good or evil tendency would still be engraven on our consciences; and the cheek would glow with satisfaction, or burn with shame at the remembrance, as freshly as when the high or the unholy conception of it was first engendered in the recesses of the heart. On the ground, then, of their perishable nature, intellectual powers and acquisitions are not the basis on which a truly philosophical mind would build its hopes of happiness, whether it confines its views to this life, or takes into the account the consequences which may arise out of them in another state of existence.

Again, an intellectual standard is so manifestly inequitable a scale, by which to determine the relative merit of individuals, that the Deist, who takes this element not unfrequently into the account, involves the First Cause in an obscurity as to the equity of his dealings with mankind, of a more serious character than any which he can trace in the scheme of Revelation.\* There are so many natural reasons why men should differ

\* See Note K, at the end.

from each other in intellect and intellectual acquisitions,—reasons over which it is impossible for individuals to exercise any influence or control ; that to make such powers and results in any essential respect a criterion, by which to determine the degree in which a man has answered the highest object of his existence, in this world, or has qualified himself for the inheritance and enjoyment of another, would be to introduce into the system of nature a principle against which all the objections might justly be alleged, that have so often been assumed to lie against the system of grace—fatalism, partiality, and inaptitude to man's present state. Measured by such a standard, men would differ from each other, not only as individuals but in masses ; and their relative merit might be approximated, by ascertaining the age in which they lived, or the region they inhabited.

The developement of the powers of the human mind, and the progress of the arts and sciences, have undergone various changes of advance or retrogression in different ages of the world. At one period, light has been widely diffused among extensive portions of the community, which has been succeeded, from causes altogether independent of the control of that community itself, by a

period of equally extended mental darkness ; and generation after generation have been suffered to drop into the grave, deprived, on this supposition, of the highest object of their existence, and depressed, for no demerits of their own, beneath their predecessors and their followers in the long chain of mortality,—and as to those essential elements of good, for the possession of which life is alone worth the enjoyment.

The same remark holds good of contemporary sections, which is true of successive generations of mankind ; and the state of science or education, liberty or slavery, peace or war ; an ennobling or enervating system of manners and morals, a true or false theory of philosophy or religion, is daily producing, on each division and family of man, a difference in condition as to mental and physical progression, which is as striking as that which appears from comparing distant ages of mankind with each other. Thus does it appear that the boundless and inevitable inequality with which intellectual distinctions are found to be distributed among the human race, renders such distinctions totally inadmissible as a standard of relative excellence, on any principles which involve the notion of a moral government of the universe ; and are much more con-



sistent with a state of *recompense* than of probation.

Now these obvious objections to an intellectual, have by no means the same force against a moral scale of merit; though difficulties are doubtless, in *that* point of view, to be encountered, of which we can only approximate towards the solution. Men may differ as to the opportunities of moral exertion, almost as far as in those of mental culture, but the same inequality and apparent injustice does not therefore arise from making one or the other a standard of relative desert. A man's moral trial depends upon the degree in which he conforms to his own standard of duty. It would indeed, be in him a moral delinquency not to elevate that standard by every means within his reach; but when he has so elevated it, his degree of moral merit, (we do not speak here in the language of theology, but of Ethical Philosophy) will depend, not upon the altitude of that elevation, but upon the strictness with which he models his heart and life according to this ascertained criterion. "They who have not *the* Law, are a law unto themselves." In this sense, all men may be said to be upon a level with regard to moral trial, however widely they may differ in every other cir-

cumstance or condition. A man's intellectual powers may be almost in abeyance—his outward lot in life may be most unfavourable to happiness or to virtue; still, his responsibility is proportioned to his opportunities; and nothing more can equitably be expected from him than that he should in all respects conform to the moral law of his own mind.

Nor is there, perhaps, such a wide difference among men as to their degrees of moral probation, as we may hastily conclude from a casual glance over the unequal surfaces of human life. Not only are these inequalities corrected by the measure of responsibility being proportioned to the trial, but the trials themselves differ much less, in kind, or in intensity, than we are at first sight aware of. The relations between man and man, out of which these trials for the most part arise, vary but little in their nature through every stage of society, from the highest to the lowest.

The domestic, and parental, and filial ties, which pervade alike the whole chain of human existence, call forth the same moral emotions from every bosom—elicit the same virtuous affections, or are obstructed by the same vicious pro-

pensities. The poor man's cottage is, in these respects, the same school as the rich man's mansion; and peace is found, in both cases, to shed her radiance round the domestic circle, not from the penetrating properties of the head, but the warm recesses of the heart.

Another universal school of moral trial, is found in the various gradations of rank and station, which run through the whole frame of society, and link together, by the bonds of mutual dependence, and mutual interest, "all sorts and conditions of men." Their conduct under this universal relation, is, likewise, a form of probation to which men are subjected, with scarcely a shade of distinction as to the amount, or even as to the nature, of their discipline. Strict honesty of dealing—a faithful discharge of our appropriated offices—kind and judicious treatment of those beneath us—and faithful and hearty obedience towards those above—are duties which arise evidently out of each man's condition as a social being—are equally binding upon, and may be discharged with equal ease, by men of every reach of understanding, and in every position of life.

Thus defective is an intellectual, as compared with a moral standard of excellence. whether

considered as applicable solely to this life, or, also, to the life to come. The intellect marches on by slow and irregular steps towards the goal of its final triumph; and should it be destined ultimately, as we may fondly hope it may, to place the family of man on a triumphant eminence, as to power and proficiency, which it has never yet attained; yet it must achieve that object by conferring an undue and unmerited distinction on those races who shall thus be so highly favoured; and its march must be over the prostrate fortunes of past generations of men, who have been but stepping-stones to the advance of their successors, and who can look for no compensation, either in time or in eternity, for the unjust deprivation of mental blessings which has been so capriciously assigned to them for an inheritance.

Neither in time nor eternity. For their time here is past, never to be recalled; nor in eternity can they look for any thing in the nature of a *reward* for their mental acquisitions, for they were expressly pursued as *their own reward*. And the inequality and injustice of which we complain would be infinitely multiplied, by taking futurity into the account; these unfair temporal distinctions being thus carried on into another

sphere, and the unequal fiat of time thereby magnified, as it were, into an eternal injustice.

Nor—what is the most important consideration of all—can we understand how these inequalities can be rectified, on any natural principles, without some proceeding of an arbitrary nature, which would add to the evil complained of, by withdrawing all such preference on the ground of merit as may appear to be due to a higher cultivation of the mental faculties; and thus rendering the whole of this life at once totally nugatory with regard to another, by placing men once more on a perfect level as to claims and qualifications. The idea of atonement has no consistency with merely mental defects: it cannot even in imagination be brought to bear upon any thing not of a *moral* nature.

We have now arrived at the point to which the awful solemnities of this day would necessarily have directed our attention,\* were we not led thus naturally to the consideration of it by the course of our preceding argument. That point is, the death of Jesus Christ, and the momentous consequences which flow from it to the

\* This Lecture was delivered before the University on Good Friday.

whole race of mankind. We are not concerned, on this occasion, to prove these consequences; we have only to state fully their nature and extent. We take them as we find them to be set forth in Holy Scripture—leaving Scripture to defend its own positions, and its enemies to overturn them—tasks which have, hitherto, proved as easy for the one, as impracticable for the other.

According, then, to the account given us in the book of God's revealed will, Christ Jesus came into the world for the express purpose of offering himself a sacrifice for sin. A sacrifice, in the Jewish language, means an atonement, or substitute and compensation; and the whole impression which the constant tenour of scripture, when speaking on this awful transaction, seems calculated to make on the mind, is this: that by the death of Christ, original or birth-sin is universally atoned for; and that every moral transgression which has followed upon the Fall of man has been wiped out of the remembrance of infinite Justice, on condition that the transgressor is willing to accept, and ready to plead this substituted perfection as the propitiation for his own acknowledged errors and infirmities. (We are compelled to use figurative language in speaking of matters so far beyond our experi-

ence; but figures, on subjects of a spiritual nature, are often the nearest approach that we can make to the literal truth.) Now, supposing the philosopher to have ascertained,—as the wisest of them, (by a process, like that which we have detailed,) have seldom failed to do,—that an intellectual standard of comparative excellence, is, of all others, the most fallacious and unequal, and that a *moral* criterion is the only one in which even the shadow of natural justice can be traced, how cheering to his spirits must be the announcement, that such moral criterion is the very standard which the Governor of the Universe has set up; and that, since fallen creatures can hold no correspondence with a perfect rule, He has provided, in his own infinite wisdom, a substitute for the manifold moral imperfections of man! I verily believe, that there neither is, nor ever was in the world, a single human being, who had lived long enough on the earth to experience the weakness of his own nature, and who had not been corrupted by some false system of faith or philosophy, who would not rejoice beyond measure at the intelligence that a remedy had been provided for the multiplied transgressions of his life; and who would not be filled with joy unspeakable at the prospect that *any one* rather than himself should be ready, and able, to

become responsible for the sins of which the most obdurate bosom cannot but confess itself to be guilty! He may be proud of his intellectual acquisitions—he may look on their deficiencies with unconcern; but conscience tells him that his *moral condition* is by no means so indifferent a question: as regards this life, it is much—as regards the next, it is every thing. Ignorance he can remove by future knowledge, but sin leaves an indelible stain. It hangs on his conscience, it clouds his understanding, it rankles in his heart. He feels it to be a weight which no strength of his own can shake off, a stigma which no after efforts can efface.

This is but the natural effect of Conscience when left at liberty to speak its own language—it is the almost necessary result of a false, as well as a right system of religion. If, then, the Philosopher, by his own reasoning processes, have discovered the defective character of an intellectual standard of excellence, let him turn to the Bible to have his own surmises confirmed, and to find the powers of the intellect placed in their just position—as means and instruments of good. Does he feel that strict moral purity is at once unattainable, and yet absolutely necessary for the perfection of his nature? The Bible *con-*



*firms* him in this view, and directs him to look with the eye of faith to a perfect Being, who has made himself the representative, both in punishment and in perfection, of the whole race of man; who took upon himself our nature, that he might obtain power to confer upon us a portion of his own inheritance. Is he still at a loss in what way he can become individually benefited by this act of general amnesty thus proclaimed to the whole race of mankind? The scripture tells him, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,—throw thyself unreservedly into the ranks of those who, having discovered their own weakness, and their Redeemer's power, are willing, on his own conditions, to be saved from the wrath to come.

Still does the Philosopher feel, that his heart and his habits cannot, even by such an act of oblivion, become at once adapted for a region of perfect purity and holiness; let him turn once more to the Bible, for light upon this doubt also. He will learn that this wonderful scheme embraces not only forgiveness of the past, but sanctification for the future; and that the Holy Spirit of God, infused into his moral system by grace, and nourished there by co-operation and by prayer, is ready to cleanse him from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit—to guide his intellectual powers,

and purify his moral principles: so that the seeds of a better nature having been sown in his heart in this world, he may be fitted, on their full expansion in another, for the enjoyment of a life of perfect holiness, and happiness, and immortality.

The adaptation of the main doctrines of the Gospel to man's intellectual and moral condition, as developed in the preceding outline, is too evident to be denied; and no good man can fail to entertain, at least the *wish*, that a system so consonant with the wants of man and the wisdom of God, may be found to be based on the rock of truth. Let, then, this very consonance be, of itself, an evidence with the Philosopher, that the systems of nature and of grace are the workmanship of the same Almighty hand; and let him not, in defiance of such evidence, and of every sound principle of his own school, rest satisfied with the one *without* the other, or even array the one *against* the other, when every law of just reasoning, commence in your course of argument from which system you may, tends to prove that *both* are necessary to form a consistent and harmonious whole. The intellect, is not the sole, nor even the soundest guide of life; it is rather a powerful instrument, to minister to the wants and supply food for the healthy developement of

the moral faculties and religious principles; providing for them, as the body does for the soul, means for their continual expansion, and their training for the enjoyment, hereafter, of a far holier and happier state of existence. The intellectual Philosopher may thus be encouraged to pursue his researches into every region of science which nature has spread open to his view—he may admire, in his successive discoveries, the utility, and beauty, and wisdom manifested in every department of created things: they were displayed, among other purposes, to excite this feeling of admiration in his mind; but let him not mistake them for *ends* to be satisfied with, and the knowledge of them for a substantial good. Let them teach him rather God's power and his own weakness; and lead him, through the works, to that clearer revelation of his will—the word of God, in which is displayed, in all its fulness, his goodness in the redemption of mankind through Jesus Christ, in the means of grace afforded us here, and the hope of glory hereafter. Thus will he be led to acknowledge that the system of nature is but the hand-maid to that of Revelation; and that while the enthusiast would sometimes deprecate human knowledge as if it were in itself a sin, and the rationalist would despise the system of grace, as

being but foolishness in his eyes—the scribe instructed to the kingdom of heaven, can trace, in both, the same divine spirit of unbounded benevolence, and, uniting both together, can in ALL THINGS give God the glory, for the sake of his blessed Son Jesus Christ, our only Saviour and Redeemer.

## LECTURE V.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF THE ULTIMATE DESTINY OF THE BODY.

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#### THE ARGUMENT.

*The importance of the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body—a peculiar doctrine of the Gospel—shewn to be in accordance with human expectation, though beyond the reach of human sagacity to discover—difficulties as to personal identity discussed—shewn to be those of Philosophy and not of Scripture—solution which the doctrine of the Resurrection affords of the silence of Scripture with respect to the condition of the soul as distinct from the body—the Materialist cannot overthrow this doctrine—general observations on the future resurrection of the whole moral man as well as of the body.*



## LECTURE V.

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THE  
TESTIMONY OF THE ULTIMATE DESTINY  
OF THE BODY.

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1. *Corinthians*, xv. 20.

NOW IS CHRIST RISEN FROM THE DEAD, AND BECOME THE FIRST  
FRUITS OF THEM THAT SLEPT.

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THE fact proclaimed in the text, that the body of Jesus Christ has risen from the grave, and the inference deduced from it, that the body of every human being shall follow in its train, are subjects which, in themselves and their consequences, include the whole circle of natural and revealed religion. On the event which we this day commemorate,\* rests the truth, and the nature also, of that religion which *we* hold to be the great and final revelation of the Will of God. Establish this point, and all the rest follows of course—subvert it, and the whole fabric of Christianity crumbles at once into ruin. Both the friends and the enemies of the Gospel have felt this; and it has accordingly formed the ground on

\* This Lecture was delivered on Easter Sunday.

which the most violent struggles for victory have taken place. *We* enter not into the conflict; for, independent of its being unnecessary to “lay help upon one that is mighty”—the course of our argument permits us to *assume* the fact which has so often been unanswerably established. We cannot, indeed, nor should we on a day like this, wholly pass by without notice the present benefits, and glorious anticipations of future good, which the Christian derives from the great doctrine of the resurrection of his blessed master from the grave. From his opening tomb springs a light, which illuminates the otherwise mysterious dealings of Providence as with the blaze of day. We see, in this wonderful event, the strongest practical proof of the truth of our Saviour’s declaration that he was the Son of God. He who vanquished that arm before which the mightiest of the sons of men had hitherto stooped in prostrate submission, and, after a voluntary subjection of himself to all the power of Death, rose, by an effort of his own volition, out of the chambers of his dark prison, and at once assumed the perfect functions of a living man,—has done all that the eyes of mortal men can gaze upon, to convince us of his possessing powers at once incomprehensible and unlimited: all evidence beyond this, of majesty



and might, must be addressed to the faculty of imagination, and the eye of faith. When the timid and doubting disciples saw their Lord once more alive in the flesh, all their fears and misgivings vanished for ever, and they were ready to believe and to do all things, in the full conviction that he who promised, and who commanded, was indeed over all, God blessed for ever. The sun which rose on this memorable morning never more set for them ; but they walked in the light thereof, through all the trials of life, into prison and to death, looking forward in faith to the second and glorious appearing of their Redeemer, when they, whether dead or alive at that final hour, should be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so be ever with the Lord.

But the course of our argument will not permit us to dwell on these, and innumerable other cheering encouragements which the Christian can derive from the doctrine of his Saviour's Resurrection. We must not forget that our business is with "them that are without;" and to shew, that those doctrines of the gospel which *solve* the difficulties of natural religion cannot, at least, be objected to on the ground of *incompatibility* with that system—that he who

is determined to disbelieve the great truths of Christianity, must look anywhere rather than in philosophy, for plausible pretences for his incredulity.

We take, then, the fact of the future Resurrection of the Dead, as a peculiar and characteristic doctrine of Revelation. This will not be denied. For often as the restless curiosity, and daring conjectures of the human mind may have advanced, either by accident or sound deduction, towards some faint discoveries of the other doctrines of Revelation, this, of the Resurrection of the Body, constantly as men's inquiries were naturally directed towards that region of speculation, seems seldom to have crossed their minds as even a possible issue of things. Even in the Mosaic Revelation it is rather implied than expressly revealed; and though in our Saviour's day it seems to have become, in some sense, a Jewish doctrine, yet it can hardly be said to have been a recognized article of faith, till our Lord himself illustrated its truth, and typified its universality, by rising, in the body, from the grave, and ascending with that body into heaven. Ever since, it has become a corner stone in the Christian creed. Now let us trace, as briefly as

we may, the light which this doctrine throws on various difficulties in natural and moral philosophy, both of ancient and moral date.

No one can have directed his attention to the opinions entertained by the ancients with regard to a future state of existence, without being struck with the changeable sentiments of each individual philosopher, and the confused notions of all. The existence of a spiritual essence in each man's bosom might almost be said to form a part of their universal creed; but how to dispose of this immaterial particle after it had taken its departure from the body with which it had been associated, was a problem which they were unable to solve either by experience or induction: and the difficulty, to them insuperable, lay precisely in their necessary ignorance of the resurrection of the body. They could not conceive, nor is it perhaps possible for the mind of man to conceive, the existence of a spirit totally denuded of material accidents, and yet performing all the functions which are necessary to percipient and intelligent existence. When the mind attempts to embrace the idea of such a spirit, it necessarily clothes it, in imagination at least, with some corporeal substance and definite shape;—we picture the ghost of our departed

friend in his fashion as he lived. The early Christians, as we learn from Tertullian, were wont to assign a body of inconceivable lightness to the spirits of the deceased; and the ancients gave their own well-known forms and features to their heroes and sages, whom they represented, with a pleasing departure from their own principles of philosophy, as enjoying a life of happiness beyond the grave. They felt that the soul without a body would be totally unintelligible as to its modes of action; and therefore they either sent it from one corporeal form to another, with such gradations in dignity as seemed to them to befit its moral conduct in a previous state of existence; or they at once absorbed it in the Divinity, of which the major part of them held it to be but a particle and emanation. There appeared to them no alternative but either to merge the individual existence of the soul in the Divine essence, or to assign to it some bodily form through which it might exercise its spiritual energies. The doctrine of the Transmigration of Souls appears, in truth, to be but a complex substitute for that of the Resurrection, planned by the ingenuity of man in the helplessness of his ignorance, and executed with a degree of "wild justice" as to the relative assignment of a new body to each separate spirit, which

shows how natural is the expectation of a future state of rewards and punishments to the heart of man. How acceptable, then, to men in this state of perplexity, would have been the revelation of the true doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead; and how instantaneously would it have approved itself to their convictions, by answering at once all the conditions which their philosophy had taught them were required for a future state of existence in any degree analogous to the present constitution of humanity.\* They would now no longer feel the necessity of absorbing the immaterial part of man in the Divine substance, as a future and independent sphere of active existence was already provided for it. Nor would they be driven to transfer its scene of moral and intellectual action from body to body as instruments of its trial and retribution, when they were informed that that identical body—identical so far as moral responsibility is concerned—which had been its instrument and accomplice in acting and suffering while on earth, and which they had seen mouldering and withering into dust, should hereafter be raised again from the grave; and, having been fitted once more, by a glorious process of regeneration, to be the receptacle of a spiritual Influence, should become the

\* See note L, at the end.

companion of its former associate, in weal or woe, through an eternal and unchangeable existence.

While, therefore, the inability of the utmost efforts of the human mind to *discover* this doctrine, proves that the ultimate revelation of it must have been from heaven; its close harmony, when revealed, with the very wants and wishes of philosophy, shews that it had its emanation from the benevolence of that Divine Being, whose knowledge of man's deficiencies is as boundless, as his readiness and ability to relieve them. We cannot but often wish,—however vain and perhaps unjustifiable may be the feeling, that this doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body had been at least obscurely intimated to some of the wisest of the sages of old. What a sober hue it would have thrown over their feverish aspirations after this world's wisdom and distinctions! How it would have calmed their troubled spirits, when the unequal fortunes or untimely fates of the good and great led them sometimes almost to doubt the existence of a moral government in the affairs of men; and, in their last hours, how soothing to them would have been the assurance, that it was neither to a state of annihilation, nor of a degraded existence, that they were now passing. but to one where,

united to a glorified body, they would be permitted to continue, as it were, the analogy of their present mode of being, but with added capacities of enjoyment, and clearer perceptions of the wisdom and goodness of their Almighty Creator! But this light was, doubtless for wise purposes, withheld from their eyes—one of them being clearly this: to teach *us*, who enjoy this inestimable privilege, to walk worthy of it, in every good word and work!

As the whole drift of our argument is, to shew that the doctrines of Revelation, independent of their own intrinsic worth, tend at the same time to throw light on the difficulties in which natural and moral philosophy are confessedly involved; it is only the part of an honest advocate to point out where the converse of the proposition may appear to hold good, and to obviate or to acknowledge the force of the objection. It is well known, that this doctrine of the resurrection of the body, has given occasion to discussions, both friendly and hostile, as to its compatibility with the known laws of nature, and the possibility of each dead body being finally restored from the grave in its strict and individual identity. Even supposing this to be a necessary condition, the question still remains to be asked,

in what does strict identity of person consist? Now though it may not be easy to convey accurately the idea of personal identity, we may safely venture to assert, that it does *not* consist in the mere insensate particles of which the body is composed. When we judge of the identity of other men, simply by external appearance, it is by the conformation of parts, and their correspondence in *effect* with the idea of them already impressed upon the mind, that we determine the question,—the particles *themselves* are never once taken, nor can they be taken, into the account; and, in like manner, when we judge of our own identity, the substance of which our bodies may have been composed at different periods, is never once in our contemplation; we determine the point by the question—*are we the person who thought, felt, or acted in a particular manner at a particular period?* and, if so, we hold ourselves to be personally the same at that time and the present. The main difficulty seems to have arisen from confounding personal with actual identity;—concerning the latter, there can be no dispute; but personal identity has been well defined to be “the sameness of a *rational being*”; and to fulfil the terms of such a definition, no continuation of material parts seems in the smallest degree requisite.



Now the perpetuation to every man of this personal identity, this sameness of a rational being, is, as we have shewn, apparently necessary for the future agency of the soul in any condition of things at all analagous to the present. It forms, likewise, a part of an equitable distribution of future rewards and punishments that the *whole man* should be responsible for his past actions; and, when his consciousness of their moral character shall be rendered perfect, should concur in the justice, and participate in the effects, of his final sentence. Man, in this collective sense, as a rational being, consists of various faculties, some peculiar to himself, and others which he has in common with the lower animals; but all of them either agents or instruments in his moral probation, and, so far, all apparently requisite to complete our notion of his personal identity; but beyond this, neither reason nor revelation requires us to go, in maintaining the doctrine of the resurrection of the body.

It is worthy of our special notice, that the phrases "resurrection of the body" and "resurrection of the flesh," are expressions which are not to be found in scripture. They are inserted, and most properly, in our ancient creeds, as expressive of doctrines which are fairly deducible

from the language of scripture ; but they are not to be interpreted as if the Church meant to pledge her faith to the notion that identity of particles will be maintained at the resurrection, but simply that *we*, in our collective sense as men, shall be raised from the dead, and not that the resurrection is a mere figure, as some would say, and “past already,” or that the soul will have an eternal existence apart from the body. *We* (is the scripture phrase, and the word expresses all that we require to know) *we* shall be raised, and *we* shall be *changed*. “This corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.” Viewed in this light, the scripture doctrine of the resurrection of the dead not only involves no consideration at which reason should cavil, but fully harmonizes with her own principles and deductions ; and it is an additional testimony to the divine origin of this most important doctrine, that in the revelation of it, those very difficulties have been escaped, with which even its friends and believers, with the light of scripture before them, have not unfrequently been entangled.

In close connection with this doctrine of the Resurrection, and as another proof of its being a divine revelation, let us dwell for a moment

upon the solution which it affords of the remarkable silence maintained in scripture concerning the history of the soul as distinct from the body.

It has often been observed, that the inspiration and heavenly guidance of the sacred writers may be traced almost as clearly in what they have *not*, as in what they have revealed ; the natural curiosity of man being so strongly directed towards some topics with which the subjects on which they wrote brought them necessarily into connexion, that it required a restraint beyond the bounds of mere human prudence to withhold them from dropping some hint as to matters which might, with so much plausibility, have been elucidated. The nature of the soul, and its modes of existence and of operation, have formed the subjects of anxious speculation throughout all ages of the world. They seem questions of much interest to ourselves, and on which some light might fairly be looked for in the word of Revelation. Yet they are veiled in the closest and most studious darkness. Not a ray of light is thrown upon them from one end of the Bible to the other. It is with *man*, the compound being, that the scriptures have, all along, to do. It is of a creature composed of Reason and Will, of sentiments and feelings, and with external organs

adapted for the developement of these faculties, that they constantly treat. They never separate this being into his component parts, but treat him constantly as an undivided whole. They describe to us his original creation—dust breathed into life by the breath of the Almighty;—they trace his history, a mixture, like himself, of good and evil;—they expose to him his corrupt nature;—they propound to him a complete remedy;—and they prescribe for him rules of conduct, adapted to his condition, from the cradle to the grave;—and there they leave him. Though every page of the Bible seems to imply the existence of the soul as distinct from the body, yet no essential doctrine of the Gospel is made to rest upon that distinction; it deals with us as men of a reasonable soul and human flesh subsisting; and all its rules are applicable to this intimate conjunction of flesh and spirit.

Now nothing can be more wise than such a mode of proceeding as this. Since we have no experience of any other condition of existence than the present, we see at once that any rules or any revelation with regard to the soul as distinct from the body would be altogether useless and misplaced. To what unknown regions the disembodied spirit may wander, or what may

be its condition as to enjoyment or existence, may be questions of speculative interest; but, as they have nothing to do with the state of *humanity*, they are most properly omitted in a system of revelation wherein humanity is alone concerned. All that we know of a truth with regard to the condition of the departed, is this—that “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord. Even so, saith the Spirit; for they rest from their labours.” But though scripture leaves man in the grave, when considered as a probationary being, it does not leave him there for ever. After an undefined interval the man is re-composed once more; and silent as revelation had been with regard to his history during this period of his *dissolution*, it takes up the narrative again with its wonted distinctness of language, when the voice of the archangel’s trumpet shall penetrate the dull ear of death. Then shall the man be once more reunited in all his faculties and powers—but they will be all magnified in intensity, and closely cemented together by the bonds of immortality. The body of earth will be exchanged for a heavenly tabernacle, and time (man’s former confined sphere of action) will be swallowed up in eternity. The history now closes in a general but glorious description of man’s future destiny, when united with his

Lord; who, having taken the manhood into God, is thus fitted to reign over his household the Church,—as at once its Master and Redeemer,—for ever and ever.

Nor let the Materialist himself—if any such in truth there be—the man who, in his philosophical researches, has arrived at the conclusion that mind is but a peculiar modification of matter, and intellect the result of organization—let not such an one suppose that he is drawing from nature an argument against the system of grace. If he be sincere, he need not *dread* lest his convictions should place him beyond the pale of the Gospel; if he be but guided by a perverse and self-satisfied incredulity, let him not *hope* that such a plea will exempt him from the obligations of Christianity! His notions may militate against the tenour of Scripture language, as well as the common sense and general convictions of mankind—men may wonder how the philosopher could bring himself to believe that *any* collocation of material particles whatever could produce (what no experience of our own seems to shew that they have *any tendency* to produce) Reason, and Will, and passions, and feelings, and all the other phenomena of the living man—but there is nothing in his opinions which necessarily inca-

pacitates him from the duty of believing the doctrines of Scripture—unless it be that mental aberration in physical science is but too often a foreboding sign of laxity on religious questions. It is not as being possessed of an immaterial soul that Scripture constantly addresses itself to man, but as being a *rational* creature—as a being capable of distinguishing between right and wrong, and therefore responsible for his conduct. Could therefore the Materialist establish this most *unreasonable* of all doctrines, at least to his own satisfaction, he would by no means thereby escape the responsibility to which his conscience still confesses itself to be liable—for the Scripture tells us that the body shall *rise again*. Be it, then, that the mind is material,—it shall be resuscitated at the last day, and so become capable of eternal punishment or reward. And surely the very last person to deny the possibility of this resurrection must be the man, whose notions of the capabilities of matter are so exalted, as to permit him to believe that all the wonderful effects of thought, and mind, and feeling, which we see exhibited by the living and rational creation, are but the result of various combinations of insensible atoms. The very existence of moral beings so constituted, must be to him a much greater miracle than their future revival from the dead. His faith is much more strongly exercised with

that which is present, than by any revelation in Scripture of that which is to come. According to his own theory, the future resurrection must be the most natural and probable of all consequences. The difficulty, with him, would be to suppose, that rational beings of such curious and ingenious mechanism, should have been constructed for so transient a period as the present life; and the intelligence that he would most reasonably expect to receive, would be that which he finds in Scripture—that this machinery, though for the present disordered, shall hereafter be recomposed upon a more perfect principle, and with additional capabilities and powers. Nor would he *dare* to call himself an unbeliever, simply because he had taken up a false theory in philosophy.

It would appear, then, that the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body has the strongest claims upon the admiration of the Philosopher as well as the reverence of the Divine; and that in approaching the consideration of it, no prostration of the understanding or “voluntary humility” is required, but that it challenges investigation as a fact which unties the knot of many physical and moral difficulties, as well as instructs the mind in an essential religious truth. It is found to explain the contradictions of an-



cient psychological controversy, and to evade the subtle questions of identity, and of materialism,—while it strengthens the faith and elevates the hopes of the sincere believer in Revelation.

It is, indeed, in this latter respect, that the pious Christian will principally regard it; and while he leaves it to the sceptic to weigh its bearings simply as a matter of evidence, he embraces it within his own heart by faith, as a doctrine which fills his bosom at once with encouragement and fear. It is encouraging to him to feel that the apparent inequalities as to good and evil which are allotted to man on this side the grave, will doubtless be rendered equal in another and higher state of existence; and that he can thus answer to his own mind any casual misgivings which may occasionally spring up within it, as to the complete justice and benevolence of the Supreme Governor of the Universe. But this feeling of encouragement will not be unattended with a sentiment of holy fear, when he recollects that the period to which he is thus looking will be a Resurrection of the body—of the whole man—not merely a continuation but a rehearsal of his whole past state of being. He then calls to mind that he is immortal, not only as to the duration, but as to every circumstance

of his existence. Every action of his life in which a moral principle has been developed, shall be raised, as it were from the dead, and form a constituent and inseparable portion of himself, to be enjoyed in its holy results, or to be endured in its evil tendencies, for ever! What watchful care, then, ought we to exercise over every moral act of our lives. These actions are seeds which never die. They may disappear from our sight, and our memory; but they will spring up again hereafter with immortal vigour, and form an integral part of that collective MAN which shall be raised hereafter from the grave! Well, therefore, may we pray fervently, with all supplication in the Spirit, that all evil desires may be rooted out of our hearts by grace, and that the fruits of purity and holiness may flourish there, and abound. It is here that we must be forgiven, it is here that we must be cleansed—hereafter, is the day of recompense. “Knowing,” therefore, brethren, “that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

## LECTURE VI.

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THE

TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MAN TO  
EXTERNAL THINGS.

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### THE ARGUMENT.

*Proofs of our proposition deduced from the relation of man to the external world—uncertainty and change every where prevail in the external world—Rationalist theory that this condition formed part of the original design—objections to this theory—want of progression in natural things, and deductions from them unjust to the character of the Deity—a passage of Scripture expounded as containing a just view of the present condition of the external world, by linking it with the moral condition of man—the relation of external things to the body shewn to be analogous to the relation of Scripture to the soul—each teaches an appropriate lesson, and the second takes us up where the first deserts us.*



## LECTURE VI.

THE  
TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MAN  
TO EXTERNAL THINGS.

*Romans*, viii. 19, 20, 21.

FOR THE EARNEST EXPECTATION OF THE CREATURE WAITETH FOR THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS OF GOD. FOR THE CREATURE WAS MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY, NOT WILLINGLY, BUT BY REASON OF HIM WHO HATH SUBJECTED THE SAME IN HOPE, BECAUSE THE CREATURE ITSELF ALSO SHALL BE DELIVERED FROM THE BONDAGE OF CORRUPTION INTO THE GLORIOUS LIBERTY OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD.

THE testimony to the truth of the great doctrines of Christianity which arises out of their adaptation to the wants of man, and the deficiencies of his natural powers, has already been traced through various departments of an almost boundless subject. The results of moral philosophy have been shown to form but elements to the great moral revelations of the Gospel; the intellectual powers have confessed themselves unequal to the duty of forming and controlling the human character, and becoming a perfect rule of life; the great doctrine of the Resurrection has been found to be in advance of the whole system of Philosophy, while, in a religious point of

view, it reconciles difficulties and awakens spiritual hopes, of the very last importance to mankind. Evidence of this nature has been dwelt upon with the more earnestness, because it appears to be of that kind which is least liable to suspicion—the unwilling testimony of a rival. If the systems which men produce as substitutes for the doctrines of the gospel, appear to prove, at best, little more than the necessity for those very doctrines, all feeling of jealousy or rivalry towards such systems is extinguished, and a supposed enemy is at once converted into a friend. It is as when Balaam himself was heard, however unwillingly, to utter the language of inspiration, or as when “Saul also” was found “among the prophets.”

Let us then proceed with this our view (cursorily as, indeed, it must needs be) through other branches of knowledge; and deduce the same important conclusions, as we do not despair to do, from comparing the doctrines of scripture with the human mind and constitution, as they each relate to the race of man and the external universe. Let us view mankind, in the first place, with reference to the world around them; secondly, with reference to their intercourse and connexion with each other; and lastly, with re-

gard to the construction and condition of their own minds; and see how, in each of these relations, the moral state of man is advanced, and the defects of the relation itself remedied, by the doctrines of the gospel.

First, then, with regard to the external world. We find ourselves placed upon a globe of earth, vast, massy, and durable; yet every thing beyond the mere substratum itself, all its developments of life and organization, seem subject, by some universal law, to constant fluctuation and change. There is no such thing in nature as perpetual progression and advancement. The growth of yesterday leads but to the maturity of to-day, which to-morrow is succeeded by incipient corruption and decline. We have promises of good everywhere, their fulfilment nowhere. Nature exhibits to us on all sides her capacities—she shews us specimens of what she is able to effect—she displays before our eyes models of heavenly beauty and perfection, and yet, with a strange and capricious prodigality of creative power, produces but to destroy, and multiplies only to mar, successive races endowed with an incomprehensible vitality; and which, after being moulded by a Hand of infinite plastic power, are

all alike touched by the blighting fingers of imperfection and decay.

This anomalous condition of things, which none can deny, it has been one occupation of thoughtful men, in all ages of the world, to account for ; and attempts have been made, sometimes to reconcile it with the absolute knowledge, wisdom, and power of a Creator, and sometimes to throw difficulties in the way of that doctrine, according to the previous bias or prejudices of the reasoner. It appears to be at present,—if we may employ a word which perhaps gives the best philosophical account of the prevalence of any particular mode of reasoning or thinking,—it seems to be at present the *fashion* with the rationalist to adopt neither the one nor the other of these courses of argument ; neither to attempt to prove or to disprove the existence of such a Being ; but rather to take the constitution of things as it appears to actual experiment and observation, and, without calling any other element into consideration, from thence to draw deductions, which, in *his* view, ought to meet and satisfy all the ends of philosophy and religion. Hear the language of one, widely read and popular in his generation, who may fairly be



selected from his brethren as a type and representative of their opinions :—“ In our own country,” says he, “ two views of the constitution of the world and of human nature” (it is with the former that we have at present to do) “ have long been prevalent, differing widely from each other, and which, if legitimately followed out, would lead to distinct practical results. The one is, that the world, including both the physical and moral departments, contains within itself the elements of improvement, which time will evolve and bring to maturity ; it having been constituted by the Creator on the principle of a progressive system, like the acorn in reference to the oak. This hypothesis ascribes to the power and wisdom of the Divine Being the *whole* phenomena which nature, animate and inanimate, exhibits.....The other hypothesis is, that the world was perfect at first, but fell into derangement, continues in disorder, and does not contain within itself the elements of its own rectification.”\* We may here remark that as the writer above quoted professes to be a Christian, he the more fitly represents the notions which we are combating, when he so flippantly styles “ an hypothesis” that which we recognise as a plain declaration of Scripture !

\* Combe, on the Constitution of Man.

According, then, to this theory, “the physical departments of the world contain within themselves the elements of improvement;” but where is the proof? Do we learn from history, or do we observe around us, any tokens of advancement in physical things, or signs of their possessing within themselves any such powers as are here ascribed to them? Have we, in truth, one good reason to suppose—nay have we not, rather, the strongest grounds for denying, that the earth has exercised any more vigorous powers of production since the day when she first obliterated the desolation caused by the universal Deluge? And with respect to her productions themselves, whether animate or not, do *they* possess those powers which we do not discover in the source from whence they spring? Do we see the vegetable kingdom gradually advancing in vigour and excellence through successive years? Do the various races of animated beings transmit to their progeny qualities which they themselves do not possess, or give any tokens of an inherent tendency to advance towards the perfection of their nature? Certainly not. The whole creation, in these respects, seems to be at least stationary. It passes through the same cycles, of a mixed character of excellence and imperfection, in which it has, to all

appearance, revolved from the earliest times ; nor does it show any symptoms of a capacity to develop new principles, and fresh modes and powers of action, were its duration to be that of eternity.

Now, according to the above quoted authority, the rationalist “hypothesis ascribes to the power and wisdom of the Divine Being the *whole* phenomena which nature, animate and inanimate, exhibits ; because in conferring on each part the specific qualities and constitution which belong to it, and in placing it in the circumstances in which it is found, he is assumed to have designed, *from the very first*, the *whole* results, which these qualities, constitution, and circumstances, are calculated in time to produce.” If, then, there be in nature no innate powers of advancement and progression, we see before us all that the Creator designed to effect. The revolutions of time cannot, in these respects, throw any additional light on his attributes ; and we should be justified in arguing as to the *extent* of his wisdom, power, and goodness, from the mixed exhibitions of them which we see around us. How perplexing would be such a process to the mind, and, I may add, how unjust to the Divine Artificer would be conclusions drawn from such premises

—no honest reasoner will hesitate to admit. If THIS be the last result of philosophical discovery, we are almost tempted to draw from it another, though a melancholy argument, on the other side of the question; and assert that the human mind, like the animal and vegetable creation, when left to the exercise of its own powers, possesses within itself no principle of advancement in wisdom, or even in experience! For who will deny, that the philosophers of old, heathen, and therefore ignorant though they were, did not hesitate to take higher principles than these into their reasonings, and drew loftier conclusions respecting the attributes of the Divinity from their premises, than can ever be deduced from considering the present condition of the material universe as the highest evidence of the powers and capacities of its Creator? The Utilitarian system is, in truth, but a retrogressive movement from the high station to which unaided Intellectual Philosophy had already advanced. Philosophy, in this shape, has indeed vacated the throne of its power; and is but as the great king Nebuchadnezzar driven from men, and with a beast's heart, eating the grass of the field!

Let us turn, then, to Scripture for the elucidation of a subject on which it does not profess

directly to treat, and in regard to a question on which its rays can fall but obliquely, for they are intended to illustrate truths of an infinitely loftier import. But Scripture can “feed the hungry soul” with spiritual food, and yet “the fragments that remain” may be found to satisfy the appetite of a meagre philosophy. It is seldom indeed that the word of God uplifts the veil with which the operations of nature are shrouded. They are left to man to unfold; that he may learn humility from his failure, and adoration in his success. But *glimpses* are sometimes afforded, of such a character as to shew, that the same Spirit which has laid bare the workings of the soul of man, *could* have revealed the whole construction of the material framework with which it is surrounded, had it been his object to “tell us of earthly things,” and not, rather, to “make us wise unto salvation.”

The portion of Scripture which has in part been quoted in the text, has always been considered to be as obscure as it is important; and different interpretations will probably continue to be assigned to it, according to the general views which may be taken of the main drift of the context. But its most literal and obvious meaning,—which is not seldom found to be that

nearest the truth,—is one which throws a light on the question before us, which for its consistency with actual experience and probable reasoning, is not likely to be eclipsed by the discoveries of philosophy falsely so called. The whole bearing of the Apostle's argument, in this part of his Epistle, is to shew the paramount importance of the spirit over the flesh. The spirit of man purified by the spirit of Christ, is, throughout, contrasted with the carnal man weighed down by the external world. As the Holy Ghost is the instrument of the soul's restoration, so was the corruption of the soul the cause of the deterioration of material things. With the spirit, fell the body, of man; and that still more remote appendage to humanity—the whole visible creation. “Cursed is the ground”—cursed is the whole system of things—“for thy sake.” And the Apostle seems to intimate—darkly, indeed, for perhaps no moral purpose could be answered by a clearer revelation—that this material system is closely linked to the spiritual condition of man in its restoration as well as fall; and that the new heavens and the new earth will accompany the glorified state of the regenerated Church of Christ, by the same analogy as the Paradise of Adam disappeared with his primitive innocence, and as the old world shall perish with

our decayed bodily frames, which we shall put away for ever at the final resurrection of the just. Physical is thus represented as subservient to, and in close connexion with Moral nature; and the anomalies of the one are to be explained by the history of the other. Let us at least, for a moment contemplate the passage under this view; and we shall discover a consistency with itself and with sound philosophy running through the whole, which it is difficult to trace on any other principle of interpretation.

“For I reckon,” says the Apostle, “that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us:” That is: It is my clear conviction, that the whole mass of evil which attaches to the present condition of things, and of which man is the cause, bears no comparison whatever to the glory which shall hereafter, and also through man, be developed. “For the earnest expectation of the creature” (or rather of the creation) “waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God:” that is, the period when evil shall be removed from the material universe depends upon the time when the children of God, as joint-heirs with Christ, shall be finally glorified together with him. And the reason of this de-

pendence follows: "for the creation was made subject to vanity (i. e. corruption and decay,—*ματαιότητι*,)—"not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." That is,—the corruption which exists in the world originated not from its own defect, but in consequence of man's transgression; and as he fell in hope, so shall creation also be a partaker of this hope, so far as to be entitled to a liberation from the power of evil, along with the restoration of him through whom the evil came. For none, even the best, shall be *entirely* freed from it till that happy moment arrive. This corruption doth remain, yea, even in them that are regenerate: and it is with this idea, that the Apostle sums up and concludes his remarkable argument: "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption—to wit, the redemption of our body."

Hence, then, it would seem that the doctrine of the Fall of man—a fundamental and peculiar



doctrine of Scripture—is the best key to the difficulties which spring out of the imperfections pervading physical nature. The undeniable existence of the latter gives probability to the recorded history of the former; while that history, connecting man in a moral point of view, as we know he is naturally connected, with external things, opens out expectations and prospects with regard to the ultimate destiny of creation, and suggests arguments as to the wise and comprehensive, yet most mysterious dealings of the Almighty with his creatures, which enlarge while they oppress the mind. Whether it be true, as some have conjectured, that modern science has traced a gradual progression from the commencement (for progression proves a commencement) in the character and qualities of the animal and vegetable world; and that this progression was continued through an indefinite period of time, till the earth was fitted for the reception of its destined Governor;—or whether this notion be a dream arising from our comparing too closely the operations of God with the operations of man;—still, the main point remains unshaken,—that that condition, to which nature had either gradually arrived, or in which it was originally created, was blighted and deteriorated by the Fall of man. It ceased, then, to advance

towards maturity, or even to maintain its previous acquisitions;—its best productions, its sole improvements, are now the result of that labour of man which formed part of the curse upon his transgression; it thus harmonizes in its character with the imperfect being of which it is the appropriate dwelling-place; it will pass away, like him, at a future period of time; and be replaced by a fairer paradise, when he himself, in the Regeneration, shall be fitted for a nobler habitation.

There is another, and a distinct point of view, in which the relation of man to the external world may be considered; and from which conclusions in favour of the doctrines of Scripture, both as being analogous and superior to that relation, may be legitimately deduced. The only way in which the connection between us and material things can be cultivated and improved to any noble and really beneficial purpose, is through the operations of the mind. The physical connection between the two is capable of but little variation; and these variations, where they do occur, depend upon circumstances over which man has little control. It is over the mind of man that external objects exercise their widest influence. It is to the mind that they appeal in

all their multifarious manifestations of utility and beauty. Whilst their effects on the bodily powers are governed by some almost unchangeable law, those upon the mind are infinite, according to the degree or the powers of observation which it may employ upon their wonderful processes. It may be gradually expanded and strengthened by following the operations of nature in all their intricate combinations and almost inexplicable results, till it is enabled to catch some faint notion of their general principles, and to adore if not to comprehend the plans of the first great Artificer. But all this results from the operations of the mind alone. It is *with* the mind, that man extracts the beneficial uses of nature; it is *through* the mind, that nature speaks to man: and is not this in complete analogy with the way in which Scripture proposes to benefit the human race? Scripture may be styled, the soul's external world. It is as necessary, and as completely adapted to the spiritual life and well-being of the Christian, as material things to the present condition of humanity. All that we see around us in nature, is clearly devised to be in harmonious union with the present state and structure of man, and would be inconsistent with any other conceivable modification of our being; and all that we read in the word of God, is, in like

manner, equally adapted to the present condition of the soul of man. That word betrays such a knowledge of the secret springs of human action, and appeals so invariably to the higher and nobler motives, as to shew at once the wisdom and goodness of its author; and to prove undeniably, that the same intelligence which constructed the material universe to be an appropriate habitation for humanity, designed also and revealed the scheme of revelation, to be, as it were, a spiritual dwelling-place and home of rest for the soul.

Both nature and revelation then, are indeed adapted to the state of man; and both appeal to the mind: but how different is the extent of the information which they respectively convey, on those subjects which are confessedly of the highest interest to mankind! We may, indeed, by the study of nature, arrive at some faint notion of the existence and attributes of the great First Cause; we can detect some of the laws which he has impressed upon physical, vital, and moral existences; but since all these, as at present developed, are confessedly imperfect, any deductions drawn from them, especially when our own imperfect knowledge of them is taken into the account, can be safely relied upon only to a very limited distance beyond the sphere of actual

experience ; and still less can conclusions drawn from the present condition of things be legitimately applied to another and altogether different mode of existence. The laws which govern the material universe, and the present relations between spirit and matter, may have but little analogy to those which shall govern that future state, to which the innate aspirations of man, and the transient character of all terrestrial things, seem alike to prove that we are tending. Here philosophy deserts us. It may conduct us safely to the threshold, but it cannot open to us the portals, of another world.

It is in this state of uncertainty that Scripture takes us by the hand. It transfers us, in idea, to another state of being, and treats of every thing around us as having a reference to it. The things with which we are conversant, assume, in the Scripture, a new aspect, and become tendencies rather than results. They are shewn to have a double bearing upon our destiny, and to be shadows of a coming substance. With reference to this world they may be ends, but with regard to the next they are only means—roots and fibres of a tree which is to bear immortal fruit hereafter. The Scripture proceeds to develope, fully and without disguise, the mode in which the life

that now is may be trained into an infancy of a higher state of existence. It shews us,—what the conscience of every man will not hesitate to confess,—our present imperfect condition with regard to spiritual things. It describes the process by which man is to be born again into a new life. It declares Faith to be the Will, and Grace the Power, in this new life—the impulsive and the efficient principles by which the functions of our spiritual vitality are to be carried on. The region in which this existence is to be passed, the external world of the soul, as we have defined it, is the word of God. From thence is that aliment continually to be drawn which shall strengthen its vital powers, refresh its failing energies, correct its errors and backslidings, and direct its steps into the right path, when involved, as it often must be, in perplexing ways and bewildering mazes. It is the guide of the soul from its spritual infancy to its maturity. It feeds it with milk in childhood, with strong meats in its riper years. It “provideth medicine to heal its sickness,” and armour against enemies from without. As the external world is to the body, so is the Gospel to the soul—a home, a guardian, and a passport to better things. If, in the former, we find ourselves surrounded with imperfection and decay, with fragments of what

once was perfect, and ruins which no time or art can restore ; we call to mind that equally ruined and imperfect is that being for whose occupation it is designed, and thus find it especially adapted to be at least his temporary dwelling-place : and when we look to the latter,—that Scripture region in which his soul is to live the life of faith—we find the same adaptation continued, and evidently constructed by the hand of the same Artificer. We see, indeed, no longer that imperfection which pervades the world without ; for the training of Scripture expires not with time, but looks onward to eternity. But we see the same wise disposal of means for ends ; the same accommodation of the knowledge conveyed to the information required ; the same consideration for the wants of man, and skill in administering to his necessities. It is thus that the soul's evidence for the truth of Scripture is precisely of the same nature with that of the body for the objects and utility of the external world.

What, then, is there in outward things, or their relation to the moral condition of mankind, which should lead a wise man to esteem them “*above that which is written ;*” nay, what is there, in such relations, which does not proclaim, in language not to be misunderstood, the paramount

authority and importance of the doctrines of Christianity? We thus not only “pass through nature up to nature’s God,” but, through both, to his revealed Word. All the things which we see around us, bear testimony to the existence of one all-directing Mind: the existence of such Mind makes it probable that he would communicate with his moral creatures: and the Word which addresses us in his name,—by explaining his visible works, and by unfolding his will in full accordance with (what reason tells us must be) *his* character, and *our own* necessities,—is thus established to be our safest guide through this world, as well as our only passport to immortality.



## LECTURE VII.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MEN TO EACH OTHER.

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#### THE ARGUMENT.

*The subject pursued with regard to the relation of men to each other—the advances of practical philosophy spring indirectly from the doctrines of the gospel—the international relations of mankind considered—their social relations, with general remarks on the fallacy of the rationalist system—the relation of husband and wife—Scripture doctrine respecting the Law of marriage—the relation of parent and child—parental education necessarily religious—the relation of the higher to the lower classes of society—all these shewn to derive their highest efficacy from being based upon the Doctrines of the Gospel.*



## LECTURE VII.

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### THE TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MEN TO EACH OTHER.

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1 *Corinthians*, i. 20.

HATH NOT GOD MADE FOOLISH THE WISDOM OF THIS WORLD ?

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IF this were true in the Apostle's days, there is nothing to render it less so in our own. Neither the direction which the wisdom of this world has since taken, nor the results at which it has arrived, have been of such a nature as to give to earthly wisdom a character more self-dependent, or to render it more worthy to be brought into comparison with that wisdom which is from above. It has, indeed, made wide advances in many subjects which are eminently conducive to the temporal benefit and well-being of mankind. The arts and sciences have been placed on a sounder basis, and therefore followed out into more beneficial conclusions. They have ceased to be subjects of mere abstract and barren speculation, and have become applicable to the practical purposes, and daily conveniences of life. Now, beyond the immediately useful conse-

quences arising out of this direction of the powers of the human mind, there are charitable uses and humanizing effects on the mind itself, which render these pursuits, judiciously prosecuted, of the utmost value in a moral light. The practical philosopher feels that he combines utility with his wisdom. He is not a being abstracted from the world and its daily concerns, and, with an avarice of intellectual wealth, exercising mental powers, and accumulating speculative knowledge, which exist but in his own breast, and perish with their owner; but he is linking himself and his feelings more closely with his kind, by the very process of conferring benefits upon them; his benevolence expands with his bounty. "It is more blessed to give than to receive,"—the impression on the giver's heart and feelings is more deep and lasting; and hence it is, that those who have already done the most good to others are always the most ready to repeat the kindness.

It is from this cause that a practical philosophy, and one that diffuses temporal and tangible benefits among large masses of the people, has the property, and has already produced, in some degree, the effect, of softening individual and national asperities,—of uniting by mutual benefits

hearts which rival interests would continually separate,—and of establishing, by actual experience, the important truth, that no man can, in any enlarged sense, promote his own good, without at the same time furthering that of the whole community with which he is connected.

We concede so far with regard to the beneficial effects, in a moral light, which spring from an extensive and judicious diffusion of useful knowledge, and the mutual reciprocation of temporal and civil benefits. Nay, we do no justice to our views by placing them on the basis of a concession ; we rather insist upon these facts ; and urge them as grounds for insisting on and enhancing the value of that from which we hold that they mainly arise—the great doctrines of the Gospel. For it is from these doctrines, we maintain, that an impulse has been given to science and knowledge in this beneficial direction—it is towards their unspeakable importance that they have a direct tendency to turn the unbiassed mind—it is by these doctrines that their truly useful ends are developed, and their obvious and innate deficiencies supplied : True social philosophy is at once the offspring and the handmaid of the doctrines of revealed religion. We propose to shew this by

considering the race of man first in its national, and secondly in its social relations.

If we look, for a moment, at the great families of mankind, as separated, by soil, language, or blood, into distinct communities, with interests apart from, and sometimes in opposition to, the interests of those with which they are surrounded, it will not be denied, that the spirit evinced towards each other, in regard to such relations, is of a more liberal and generous nature among those states which profess Christianity, than among those in which Christianity is unknown. It does not militate against this general truth, should we prove that the heathen or the infidel state has not seldom exhibited a degree of noble-minded forbearance in success, or of chivalrous adherence to the letter of an unfavourable treaty, which might shame its wiser enemy; or even should we be driven, as we often are, to lament, that the bitterest animosities have frequently sprung from religion itself: for it is not out of religion, as being *Christian*, that this bitterness arises, but as being the foundation of a *strong emotion*; and all strong emotions, misdirected, lead to evil,—the corruption of the best being still the worst. Exceptions like these do not

overturn the broad proposition, that the influence of the Gospel has had a softening effect on all international and social relations. And how has this effect been produced? Not merely, as the rationalist would wish men to believe, by the clearer light which the Gospel has thrown upon the mutual interests of man—by the sounder system of morals which it infuses into the heart—by the love of literature and science which has generally been associated with its *true* development, and which awakens a sympathy with all, of whatever country or creed, who are engaged in the same ennobling pursuits. These are, indeed, all effects of the influence of the Gospel on the heart of man; but then they all emanate from its Doctrines. They may be mistaken, as they too often are, for its substance; men may rest satisfied with them as the grand results of the Gospel, and may be led to admire and to adopt it solely on their account; and yet they are all the while but collateral though most cheering effects issuing from the great, and it may be, unseen centre of light—the doctrines of Christianity.

The means through which the Gospel has mainly, and in the first instance, produced these humanizing results, is *by enhancing the value of*

*human life.* Whether we look at nations wholly uncivilized, or nations highly civilized but wholly depraved, we find man to be of the lowest account; his blood is but esteemed as water. It is the doctrines of the Gospel, and they alone, that give him his proper dignity in his brother's eye. When it was once known that the only Son of the eternal Deity had descended upon earth to take man's nature upon him—to atone, by suffering, for his innate corruption—to purify him, by his own in-dwelling, from actual sins—to raise him, finally, from the dead, and clothe him with a glorious and incorruptible body, fitted for the company of his Divine Redeemer, and the habitation of his celestial dwelling-place—when all this was fully understood to be man's present condition, and ultimate destiny, every thing connected with him, and more especially that which was of all his earthly possessions the most precious, his life, began to be regarded by his brethren with a solemn reverence. The savage may esteem him but as the highest grade in the animal creation; the depraved may hold his life as nothing when compared with the gratification of his own selfish passions; but in the Christian's eye he is a sanctified being, as one among the many brethren of the Redeemer of the world. Who would not cherish and in every way befriend



him whom God hath condescended to honour? Who would look down with scorn upon even the humblest heir of immortality? Who would wantonly abstract a single moment from that span of life on which hang the issues of an awful eternity!

It is from these fundamental facts in the history of our race, and facts which the Gospel alone reveals, that all that kindlier spirit which we see around us has been infused into the civil and social relations of mankind. The rationalist may despise or may not perceive its origin, but even his own vague principles of philanthropy, would he trace them to their source, are but fragments broken from this eternal rock, however ingeniously they may have been framed into a system by "the cunning of art, and man's device." The doctrines of the Gospel are thus a blessing even to them that are without. Such men are like the Jews of old, who knew not all the good which they enjoyed; who, when carnally-minded in the desert, were unwittingly fed with heavenly food; "they did all eat (then, as now,) the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ."

If we now turn from man in his national and civil relations, to man in his social capacity, and endowed with passions and feelings which form his guide through the domestic, and other the more intimate concerns of life, we are at once supplied with boundless materials for illustrating and confirming our present argument, that the doctrines of the Gospel are still in advance of human wisdom. They are so when they expand, and still more when they oppose and check, the natural passions and propensities of man ; and thus they vindicate their right to rule by the equity and wisdom of their administration.

Before we descend to particular instances in which this wisdom and equity are more especially exemplified, let us dwell for a moment upon the broad principle which distinguishes the proposed system of moral discipline recommended by the rationalist, from that which is propounded in the Gospel. The rationalist looks upon man as a progressive being, each individual of the race being considered less as an independent existence than as a mere link in the chain which connects him, either for good or evil, with his ancestors and his posterity. His bodily powers and local advantages are subjects of essential moral im-

portance and of primary care. His physical development is the key to his mental capabilities; and the judicious cultivation of the former is the proper mode of improving the latter. The soul thus becomes a mere emanation of the body—as much dependent upon it in kind and in perfection of excellence, as the individual flower is of the parent tree. The Gospel views all this as seen from the opposite extremity; and represents the body as being simply the appendage and instrument of the soul. It states that the present undeniable imperfection of man began with the soul; and that, therefore, his restoration must commence there likewise. The transgression which produced the fall was a mental act. It was not the derangement of the flesh that led to the deterioration of the spirit; but it was the corruption of the soul that brought on the degradation of the body. The Gospel, therefore, proposes to remedy the cause and not the effect. It addresses its arguments to the mind—it would direct the perverted will—it would reform the depraved passions—it would heal the wounds of the spirit of man by infusing into it some portion of the spirit of God. It represents man not as naturally a progressive being, but as, in the first instance, a fallen being, to be restored; and considers each individual of our race as capable

of being brought back to the perfection of his nature, whatever may be his local and physical condition, provided the spiritual remedies which it proposes are heartily accepted, and faithfully applied. I need not further contrast these systems. They are diametrically opposed, from their very root upwards; and, it is to be feared, are as different in their consequences as their origin. Nor need I suggest which,—considering them merely as rival systems of philosophy, evinces a deeper knowledge of human character, or is more likely to effect its end.\*

From this general evidence in favour of the doctrines of the Gospel, when viewed as a guide and corrective of the passions and feelings of man, let us turn our attention to one or two individual instances in which their influence has been conspicuous in improving the social condition, and regulating the natural affections of our race. When the cases are so numerous, our only task is to select the best; and there are two, which seem especially to present themselves to our notice, because they exert the most powerful influence on the general well-being of society, and because they are those to which philosophical reasoning has often, and particularly in later times,

\* See Note M, at the end.

been especially directed. These are, the relation of husband and wife, and that of parent and child.

These relations form the very corner-stone of every social system. Morality and human happiness depend upon the principles on which these relations are regulated, beyond any other elements that policy or religion has introduced into the social economy. How do the doctrines of the Gospel, with regard to these questions, bear comparison with the wisdom and experience of modern times?

First, with regard to the law of Marriage.

It is well known that the Gospel has placed this law upon a different basis from that of any other earlier human legislation, or general custom. Attempts may have been instituted to discourage the practice of polygamy; and approaches were sometimes made towards the right system by civilized nations; and these approaches often near in proportion to the degree of their civilization. But it was left to our Saviour to legislate upon this subject on principles which can never be shaken. He makes the union of one husband with one wife a divine command—impressed upon the whole human race by the very act of

their original creation ; God having made one woman for one man. “Have ye not read,” says he, “that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female,” (that is, one male and one female,) “and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife ; and they *twain* shall be one flesh ? Wherefore, they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore GOD hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”\* Here, then, marriage is placed on its right foundation. It is an union of two persons by God himself ; and it is an ordination of nature ;—and one, we may add, from which nature has never swerved, the equality of numbers between the sexes being still preserved, to an extent as wonderful as it is clearly indicative of the object contemplated in that equality. And who can estimate the beneficial consequences which have flowed from this simple, and (if it be not an indignity thus to designate it) most philosophical exposition of the doctrine of Marriage, by our blessed Lord ? Thenceforth it has been the recognised law of the Christian world. Marriage has, almost universally, ever since, been considered a religious obligation, and been restricted to the union of one husband with one wife. And hence have sprung benefits which it is

\* Matthew xix. 1, 5, 6.

impossible to estimate, or even briefly to recount ; the elevation of one sex and the refinement of the other ; the regulation of the passions ; the cherishing of the best feelings of our nature ; the very existence of the domestic charities ; the observance of the decencies and moralities of life, even when the principle of them is wanting ; and a courtesy of demeanour towards those around us, which is a shadowing forth and a preparation for the adoption of many graces, which the spirit of the Gospel constantly infuses into the heart of man. It is not too much to assert, that the main cause of the inferiority in manners and morals, and, by consequence, in the arts and usages of life, which is found to exist among infidel when compared with Christian states, arises from their neglect of this important precept, or rather, as we may justly style it, doctrine of the Gospel. And one symptom of retrogression among Christian states themselves, has always been a laxity of opinion and practice with respect to the religious obligation of marriage. If any such symptom should appear among ourselves—if the rationalist notion of its being merely a civil contract, should ever gain any considerable footing in this hitherto Christian nation, let us look upon such a departure from the express ordinance of our Lord as a sign that the days “in which they will not bear

sound doctrine” are fast approaching, and prepare ourselves for all those “mysteries of iniquity” which have constantly attended the desecration of the married state.\*

When the Gospel had thus given to marriage (an original law of nature) a religious sanction,—thereby establishing, in this respect, the kingdom of heaven upon earth, by taking, as it were, to itself the reins of government out of the hands of the ordinary constitution and course of things, —when marriage had thus become an adopted rite of Christianity, the consequences of it received a religious complexion also. When the first fruits are holy, the lump is also holy. The relation of Parent and Child, became, now, not only a tie of nature, but a law of Christ; and mutual obligations of the most important character, have sprung out of this altered aspect of that relation. The great tie of nature, indeed, still remains in all its original strength. The duties on the one part, and the dependence on the other, still link together Parent and Child by a law as ancient, as universal, and as binding, as that which gives motion and stability to the globe on which we dwell. And we have already enlarged, in a previous Lecture, upon the wise ordination of

\* See Note N, at the end.



Providence in instituting the indissoluble connection of Parent and Child, and the affections which attach to that relation, as a gracious provision for securing to all men some degree of training in propriety of feeling and morality of life. Upon this natural tie between man and man the gospel fixes, and makes it its own. Having adopted marriage as a religious union, it adds a religious sanction to man's natural affection for its fruits. As members of the kingdom of nature, each parent is bound to provide for the bodily well-being of his child, while his child is bound, by the same law, to render all due obedience to his parent. As members of the kingdom of heaven, each parent has the additional obligation of providing for the *soul* of his child, and the child is equally bound to serve his parent with a *religious* service. They have thus a new relation to each other from the very commencement of their connection, which neither party, as Christians, can ever safely forget. Wherever this relation is alluded to in the New Testament, it is always in a religious light. "Children," says St. Paul, "obey your Parents *in the Lord*: for *this* is right." And, "ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of *the Lord*.\*

\* Ephesians, vi. 1. 4.

Here, then, the law of the Gospel does not, indeed, supersede, but absorbs and makes additions to the law of nature. There is no opposition, or even broad distinction between the two, any more than there was between the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ. The lesser light is merged in, but not extinguished by the greater—and the feeble stream still flows on, though its waters may not be distinguishable in the mighty river with which it has mingled its waves. The Christian parent, as a member of the kingdom of heaven, is bound to teach his child even secular knowledge on Christian principles—all is to be “as to the *Lord*, and not to men.” And as the Jew was not permitted to retain the legal observances of his law, and add to them the new doctrines of the Gospel, as mere appendages to his ancient creed, but was to commence, conduct, and conclude his *whole* career under the guidance of the Faith which he had embraced: so should the Christian parent educate his child, even in those departments of knowledge which have a primary reference to the concerns of this life, on principles which have their root, and will therefore bring forth their fruit, in the kingdom of heaven. If, then, we see a tendency, in the present age, to go back to the dark times before the gospel was promulgat-

ed; to recede from “the kingdom of heaven,” into which the Christian is even here exalted, for the very purpose of secularizing the mind in secular things,—to shut out gospel light in order that the light of common day may be the brighter,—we may rest assured that, so far as this principle prevails, there is a falling back into the ignorance of earlier times, there is a voluntary departure out of the spiritual Garden of Eden into the desolate waste that surrounds it—and a dividing of the kingdom of heaven between its rightful Sovereign, and the ruler of the darkness of this world—“the Spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Whenever education is cultivated, even as regards secular things, apart from religious considerations, and without reference, however remotely, to the spiritual state of man, the true position of the Christian, as a member of Christ’s kingdom, is lost sight of, and there is a voluntary renunciation of those mental as well as spiritual privileges to which we have been advanced by being made “children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.”

And if this necessary connexion between education and religion, as resulting from the religious union of parent and child, be the Christian

view of the subject, the rationalist himself cannot deny that benefits arise to society, from acting upon this view, which it is difficult to secure on any of the more lax principles of expediency, utility, or even moral duty. The authority of the parent over the child, as well as the submission of the child towards the parent, can be maintained by no instrument so effectual, as the bond of religious obligation. The severe laws of antiquity, with regard to filial obedience, are at once superseded, not only in their severity, but their efficacy, by the gently restraining but all-powerful influence of the love of God.\*

The time would fail us were we to attempt to follow out our argument through all the passions and affections which are called into action by the social state of man, and shew, as might easily be made to appear, that the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel exercise upon each and all an influence, not only beneficial in its result, but *beyond* that which philosophy, even in its best shape, has ever proposed. Look, for instance, at the relation between owner and slave; between master and servant; between superior and inferior as to worldly station; and see what a change has been gradually, but most beneficially effected, among

\* See Note O, at the end.

Christian states, in the sentiments entertained, and the line of conduct pursued, with regard to each other. The rationalist may maintain that these changes have sprung out of the rapid march of intelligence, and the sounder notions which are now entertained as to the mutual interests of men: but this is merely gliding over the surface of the question. The root of the matter lies much deeper, even in the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. There is nothing which gives so real an equality to the whole race of man as the doctrine of the Redemption of the world by the sacrifice of the Son of God. If men are equal in that which is greatest, they may well *afford* to be unequal in that which is least; if they stand on the same footing with regard to eternity, the slight differences of time (especially when they are differences that affect not the soul) become but as dust in the balance. It is from this view that master and servant, high and low, rich and poor, learn to regard each other's outward state with equal charity—(for *charity* is required alike from both.) They look upon one another as men with the same privileges but different duties—travelling through the world by distinct paths, some less flowery than others, but all short and dangerous; and all alike leading to the same final scene, where the mi-

nute inequalities of time will be lost in the infinite distance and unspeakable glories of eternity.

In producing the testimony to the truth of the doctrines of the Gospel which arises out of the relation of men to each other, we have necessarily confined ourselves to such relations as are most prominent, and spring directly out of the natural constitution of things. There are others to which we might have alluded, of a more complex character, and from which evidence to the same effect might be deduced, less obvious, indeed, but perhaps, on that very account, the more convincing. We have, however, adhered in our instances to the broad and universal relations of life,—those of nation and nation, husband and wife, parent and child, and high and low estate—as being bold and prominent features, in their application to which the advantages or defects of the doctrines of the gospel might be most distinctly seen; and as giving also to the rationalist every reasonable advantage in the comparison thus instituted; since, though these are but inferior questions, and the right solution of them but secondary benefits, with regard to the gospel scheme, they are with the rationalist the leading subjects of his philo-

sophy, and the most momentous considerations of life. To all, nevertheless, they are questions, whether in respect to this life or the next, of the most serious import; and when we find that the doctrines of the gospel are our safest guide in subjects of this nature, which are within the comprehension at least, though not the control, of human wisdom and experience, we can with the less hesitation entrust ourselves to their direction when they carry us beyond the confines of this material world, and undertake to lead us through a path, otherwise dark and slippery, to the regions of eternal light.





## LECTURE VIII.

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THE

TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MAN  
TO HIMSELF.

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### THE ARGUMENT.

*The dissection of man's moral character, as an individual being, shewn to be peculiar to the Gospel—its superiority in this respect, to philosophy, to other religions, and to human laws—its mode of proceeding in the restoration of man shewn to be in accordance with his present acknowledged defects—the assistances of the Spirit—the power of Faith—Christ our example.—CONCLUSION—duty of adapting our preaching to the exigencies of the times—different effects of addressing the head and the heart—duty of the preacher to do both.—Value of learning in the preacher of the Gospel shewn from Scripture instances. Concluding exhortation to the Students to cultivate human learning with a view to religious usefulness.*



## LECTURE VIII.

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THE  
TESTIMONY OF THE RELATION OF MAN  
TO HIMSELF.

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*1 Corinthians, ii. 14, 15.*

BUT THE NATURAL MAN RECEIVETH NOT THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD : FOR THEY ARE FOOLISHNESS UNTO HIM : NEITHER CAN HE KNOW THEM, BECAUSE THEY ARE SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED. BUT HE THAT IS SPIRITUAL JUDGETH ALL THINGS.

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IT now only remains, in pursuing our proposed line of argument through the course marked out for it, that we consider the bearing of the Doctrines of the Gospel on the relation of man to himself; their special adaptation to the construction of his mind, to the nature of his motives, and the character of his passions and affections. Here we stand upon familiar ground: the great and well-trodden field of popular theology lies spread out before us,—and we have every cultivator of it as an associate and ally. It may almost be said to be the main duty of every preacher of the Gospel, to demonstrate to the moral and *practical* conviction of his hearers the doctrine here propounded, and shew the infinite superiority of the Gospel over every other civil

or religious system, when considered as a scheme of individual application, as a guide to the mind, and a corrector of the heart ; as an instrument of self-discipline ; and as bearing directly upon the condition of man apart from all external considerations, and in reference to *himself* alone. This is, in fact, the distinguishing feature of the Gospel. It does not, like other creeds, satisfy itself with proposing improvements, and dictating sounder principles of thinking and acting, grounded upon probable reasons, and enforced by arguments of interest, expedience, or necessity ; nor does it treat men, as human laws must necessarily do, with reference solely to their external conduct ; but it comes more closely to the question, and grapples with the heart. It takes each individual out from his kind and his associations ; it strips him bare of all accidental and extrinsic circumstances ; and dissects the whole anatomy of his mental and moral constitution with an unsparing but most skilful hand. Each man, therefore, may look upon the word of God as the written report of his Creator as to his own individual condition—as addressed especially to himself—and, since it comes directly from his original Framer, as worthy to be fully relied upon in all its directions and details. It contains, in truth, the Creator's proposed method of repairing the

derangement which sin has caused in the moral state of man—the means by which he can alone be restored to his original position in the universe.

It opens with a description of man's constitution and character, as at first created, and an account of the causes and consequences of his corruption ; it gives us, in the subsequent history of our race, melancholy instances of the results which universally followed, when the will lost its control over the conduct, and the passions their harmony with each other, and with the dictates of conscience. Having thus fully laid before us the exact position of man as regards his relation to himself and his Creator, as it has existed ever since the Fall, the word of God then proceeds to develop the means devised by Divine benevolence, for restoring man ultimately to that state of personal purity, and of capacity for happiness, of which the Fall had deprived him ; and in prosecuting this task, it is remarkable that the primary and fundamental character of Creator is still strictly maintained by the Almighty towards his people, and that all the remedies of man's disorganized constitution are still represented to flow from him, and to be dispensed by him to man, with a close analogy to the process by

which he was at first created, and to the means by which he was to have been sustained in his original purity and happiness. No one will deny that there is at once a probability and a philosophy in this, to which false religions have not attained, and from which modern wisdom can at least draw no *objections*. The effects of the Fall were universal; the mental and bodily corruptions of our first parents are represented in scripture to have descended to all their posterity. There is little in reason, and still less in experience, to contradict this. The *cause* may be doubted, but nothing can be more evident than that hereditary succession of infirmity is the undeviating characteristic of man. Now scripture tells us, that the original Framer of our nature has provided a remedy for this evil, as universal as the evil itself; “for as in Adam all die, *even so*, in Christ, shall all be made alive.” But the enjoyment of this remedy is, like Adam’s retention of his perfection, made dependent upon conditions. There is, as it were, a spiritual Eden, in which man is to be placed—and to be placed in it by a regeneration or new birth; there he is to receive a new series of commands, as tests of his obedience. Adam had but one; but having in his thirst for knowledge acquired a wide comprehension and a fatal love of evil, the number of the prohibitions enjoined on

his race is now increased to the number of his evil propensities; and the thorns and thistles which his condition brings forth are now as abundant and as spontaneously produced in the mind, as they are declared, and found by experience to be, in the natural world. All these he is bound to check; and the way in which scripture detects and exposes them all, is not one of the weakest evidences that it has the source of all wisdom and knowledge for its author.

But by what aid, and with what power is man to discharge the duty here imposed upon him?—By the same which would have kept Adam safe in his integrity—assistance from above. Man hears, once more, the voice of God walking in the garden, wilderness though it be. The Holy Spirit, a monitor from heaven, a restorer of that divine image in which man was originally created, is imparted to each man, according to the zeal and fidelity with which He is sought, for the purpose of aiding him in the purification of his heart from every evil passion, and the cultivation of every better and holier affection. HE is the new principle of life communicated to the moral creation for the purpose of counteracting the fatal poison of sin which was, gradually perhaps,

but most inevitably, hurrying the whole of that creation to a state of spiritual death.

And how is each individual,—for this is indeed a personal question between every man and his God,—how is each individual to partake of this spiritual life, and be “delivered from the body of this death?”—Still the same analogy holds good; and that in which our first parents were found, on trial, to be wanting, must now be our only strength—even Faith itself. This is the new principle, the substitute of a corrupted Will, which is to be the prime mover of man, both as a thinking and an acting being, through every stage of his new existence as “a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.” The Will of man, originally given for his guide, fell under the first assault of temptation; and its power over the passions, once lost, could never be restored; it, on the other hand, grew weaker with each ineffectual struggle against an adversary continually advancing in power; or rather, with an exertion of suicidal strength, it sided in the fatal contest with its own most inveterate enemy! Hence, under the Gospel, was placed over it as a watchful guardian and guide, the power of Faith; a



power which, unlike the will, can be restored when at the feeblest, and revived into a blaze of light even when it appear just flickering into darkness; a power which can draw its aliment alike from every faculty of the human mind, from the will itself, from the feelings and passions, from the judgment and the conscience, from the memory and the imagination. A power whose strength lies in man's very weakness, for its essence consists in the acknowledgment of *another's* power; and the might of man thus becomes measured by the degree of his reliance upon the might of God! It is to this faculty in man that the doctrines of Scripture make their most direct appeal, and on which they especially rely for bringing him under their authority, and leading him onward in that new path of life, through which it is their object to conduct him back to the heavenly Eden of his rest. By faith he apprehends the bearing of these doctrines on the condition of a fallen world; by faith he applies them to his own individual case; by faith he comprehends and *appropriates* the great mystery of the Redemption,—brings down into his own heart the strengthening and refreshing influence of the Holy Spirit,—subdues the will and the passions into obedience to the law of Christ, and walks through the trials and troubles of this

life with feelings of pious resignation, with a resolution to turn miseries into mercies, and with hopes full of immortality.

Looking, then, at the scheme of the Gospel in this light,—as a system rather parallel than in opposition to the system of nature, and proposing remedies not only according to the wants, but according to the analogy of our natural condition, it cannot be denied that they both *seem* at least to have the same author, the original Framers of All. And if we finally suggest, what our limits will not permit us to enlarge upon, the *singular* advantage which the Christian possesses, in having the precepts of his religion illustrated by a perfect Example, we need not further pursue a branch of the subject which is as inexhaustible as it is decisive of our argument. The rationalist can appeal to no exemplar of his system in its full developement; not one of its disciples “has left us an EXAMPLE that we should follow HIS steps!”

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## CONCLUSION.

WE have now arrived, though by a hasty and unequal progress, at the conclusion of our proposed discussion ; and have shewn, by reasonings which it appears easier to pass by than to gainsay, that all human knowledge and all legitimate philosophy lead directly to this inevitable conclusion, that the doctrines of the Gospel are the ends at which they aim, and the aids which they require, as systems of faith and rules of life. Instead of rehearsing the steps through which we have gradually arrived at these invaluable results, let us rather, in conformity with our founder's benevolent direction, attempt to draw from the whole such useful conclusions, as may (in his own words) tend to "instruct and edify mankind."\*

It will, doubtless, have appeared, that the preacher has all along been impressed with the conviction, that one tendency of our times is towards the notion, that human wisdom can *dispense* with scripture doctrine ; that both *may* be true, but that one is sufficient ; that the weak

\* From Mr. Hulse's will.

and the ignorant may require faith, and miracles, and mysteries, but that the wise have another system, more gratifying to the human intellect, more tangible and philosophical, and sufficient for all the practical purposes of life. That these notions, under various modifications, are widely diffusing themselves, it would be useless to deny. The causes appear too obvious, in the circumstances of the times : it is with the remedies that we, as ministers of the gospel, are most intimately concerned. Now if it be the duty of the ambassadors of Christ to become all things to all men that they may gain some, it is not less certain that they should so modify—not the doctrines of the Gospel themselves, for they are immutable—but the aspect under which they are presented, as to meet the prevailing errors of the period.

It is much to be feared that deviations from those pure and apostolical views of the Gospel which are taken by the formularies of the Church of England, whether towards enthusiasm on the one hand, or towards rationalism on the other, have not seldom been increased by the preacher, perhaps unwittingly, pressing too strongly upon that side of his hearer's disposition which had already too great a preponderance in the composition of his character ; or by neglecting

altogether to present the Gospel to that faculty of his mind through which alone he had any inclination or even capacity to receive it. There are two distinct ruling powers by which the conduct of man is governed ; and which, either separately, or blended in an infinite variety of proportions, guide and control the moral actions of the whole human race—the Reason and the Affections. In some men the reason is almost every thing ; they refer the whole of their conduct to its dictates ; and nothing weighs with them except so far as it is based upon sound argument and logical deduction. In others again, the feelings are the predominant faculties ; the heart governs the practice ; they have an almost innate perception of what is right, and holy, and beautiful, and stop not for reasons for that which, strongly presented, at once fastens itself upon their deepest and best affections. Of course, as I have observed, these two distinct powers are found blended in the human character in an infinite variety of proportions : and in some men are so well balanced, that either or both together may be appealed to, and will be obeyed, with equal facility. No preacher of the Gospel should forget this, for the Gospel itself *never* forgets it. It is one of the strongest evidences of its divine origin that it

so nicely adapts itself to the whole character of man by addressing him constantly, and often simultaneously, through *all* his faculties; convincing his reason, exciting his imagination, and stirring up his affections, by blending Faith with Love, and both with Duty. If the head be impenetrable to reason, it wins the heart by the mercies of Redemption, and the graces of the Redeemer's character; or wrings it by pictures of the essential deformity of sin, and the horrors of an impending judgment. It touches the whole man in every point of his character. It cannot, then, be denied, that "the whole counsel of God" is not declared, and the comprehensive nature, and boundless resources of the Gospel not developed, when the individual teacher, and still more, when the church at large, has a tendency to appeal, almost exclusively, to the one or the other of the ruling faculties of man; to the reason independent of the affections, or to the affections independent of the reason.

Let us call to our recollection the consequences of this attempt to divide what is inseparable, in an age which is but just gone by. While the clergy were labouring, and doubtless with the best intentions, (having been justly

alarmed by the sad effects of religious fanaticism on a preceding generation,) to impress the truths of the Gospel almost exclusively on the reason and judgment of their hearers, it was found that numbers were daily departing from the fold of the church, and seeking out for themselves other pastures. The hungry flock had looked up and were not fed—not from *want* of food, but because the food supplied was not their natural aliment. It was as if “the lion should eat straw like the ox,” to expect that those whose hearts were open to religious impressions—who wished to *feel fully* the wretchedness of their natural state—the unutterable danger of sin—the love of God in Christ reconciling the world to himself—the cheering influences of the grace of God on the heart of man—and the glories of a world to come shining through the dark clouds of this mortal life;—it was altogether hopeless to expect that such spirits would, or indeed ought, to rest satisfied with the abstract truths of the Gospel proposed coldly to the reason, and impressed solely on the intellect. They wished to love, as well as to believe; and they sought out for themselves teachers who could lead them captive at will, by appealing to the strongest passions of our nature.

The clergy have taken warning by the event. The fault was in the system rather than in their hearts. Of intellectual habits themselves, they naturally attached great, perhaps too great, importance to truths addressed to that faculty of the mind. Accustomed, in their own practice, to subject their feelings to the dominion of the reason, they had not been sufficiently mindful, that with the majority of mankind the very reverse is not seldom the case, and the heart governs the head. To the heart, then, they once more directed their appeals; and the result has been such as to stir up within the popular breast a deeper interest in the cause of the Gospel, and to awaken fresh hopes of success among the anxious champions of the Church. Still, when the passions alone are fed, excess of appetite always grows with the supply. The reason, the great counterbalancing power in man, soon loses its legitimate influence, when, untrained for the struggle, it has to contend against passions the more uncontrollable because they are conscious of moving in a right direction; and thus the religious position of each individual comes at last to be measured by the intensity of his feelings and affections, and is therefore as uncertain and changeable as the basis on which it



rests. Passion is a dangerous criterion of principle.

While, then, it is our duty,—for the character of the Gospel requires, and the practice of our blessed Master himself authorizes it,—to enlist on our side, and to call into beneficial action, the best feelings of our common nature, as the most effectual agents in practically exemplifying the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel; let us still keep them in their proper position, as the instruments and allies of the Judgment, and not its lord and master. Evil may arise, and indeed has arisen, from treating religion as a simple appeal to the feelings and passions of mankind, evil as essential in its nature, and even still more pernicious in its effects, than that which has too often sprung from addressing it exclusively to the Judgment. Carried along by our own best feelings, and sympathizing with those of the flock over whose religious interests we are appointed to watch, we are still not to forget that there is another door through which the Gospel can make its way into the heart, and one which may alone stand open to receive it. The human intellect is making rapid advances, on the right hand and on the left. There are more occupations for it, and a more urgent demand upon its

powers, in the business of common life. The number of individuals who are compelled, from absolute necessity, to think for themselves, is daily increasing; and a habit is thus gradually spreading, (which it is impossible either to restrain or resist), of weighing, each man for himself, and by an intellectual rather than a moral standard, the force and value of every proposition addressed to them. With men like these, mere appeals to the feelings will produce little effect. The passions are not the channel through which they are most easily to be approached. They are accustomed to bring earthly things to the test of their own judgments, and they are unwilling to accept even of heavenly things on any other conditions. We may lament this want of the spirit of humility, but we cannot command it—it will be the *result*, as we may hope, of true religion, but it is not the natural growth of the human heart. What then remains for us, but that we assail them on the side where they are most open to attack? The Gospel has made provision for this, and has authorized us to “speak wisdom to them that are perfect;” yea, and to them that are wise in their own conceits. It does not, indeed, permit us to rely upon “the wisdom of this world,” for that is “foolishness with God;” but it supplies us with heavenly weapons to take the wise in their

own craftiness, and out of their own mouths to condemn them. They can discern the evidence of natural things, “the signs in the heavens and in the earth,” the “putting forth of the fig-tree and all the trees,” but cannot from thence deduce the signs of the kingdom of God. Here we are called upon to meet them on their own ground, and with such learning as that on which they themselves are content to put the issue of the argument. “Foolish and *unlearned* questions,” indeed, we are justly warned to shun; “the oppositions of sciences *falsely* so called,” we are to avoid; but learning and science, which are truly such, should neither be neglected by the Christian teacher himself, nor condemned by him in others. They are modes of developing the character of God’s works, and should be converted by his minister into evidence of his word. If, as has been well said, God has no need of human knowledge, still less need has he of human ignorance; and no faculty has he given to man which he does not wish him to cultivate to the utmost reach of its powers.

Look at the instruments which God employed of old in the propagation of his word, and you will see no signs of a contempt for learning, or tokens of his wish to fetter the powers of the intellect

any more than the expansion of the affections. Moses, his first legislator, was deeply versed in all the learning of the Egyptians as well as the mysteries of the Divine Will—he knew all the arts of the craftiest magicians, and surpassed them by wonders in *kind* as well as in degree. Solomon was no novice in science, nor David in song. The lips of Isaiah had, indeed, been touched with fire from the altar, but that fire gave but brilliance to the natural flame which had long glowed within his bosom. The Apostles of our Lord were doubtless, at first, but ignorant and unlearned men ; but it was as scholars, not as teachers. When they went forth to convert the world, it was with power to proclaim to every man in his own tongue the wonderful works of God, and with a wisdom and a knowledge such as none of their adversaries could either gainsay or resist. And what shall we say of St. Paul, either as to his learning, or his method of using it ? He never attempted to bear down his adversary by weapons which he rejected, or knew not how to wield. To the Jews he became as a Jew, and to the Gentile almost as a Gentile, that he might gain the more. When he stood forward to be tried by his own law, see how he brings confusion on his enemies by shewing them that they are sitting in judgment on

their own doctrines !—“ I am a pharisee, the son of a pharisee ; of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.” Mark how he encounters the advocate Tertullus before the Roman, with a courtesy as subtle as his own ; and when he stood on Mars’ Hill, in the very heart of the two great antagonist powers of the Gospel—powers that still assail it in close but unnatural union, Superstition and Infidelity—observe how he converts the very extent of the Athenian idolatry into an argument for their turning to the worship of the Unknown God ; and how Stoics and Epicureans alike are at once supplied with a key to unlock the mysteries of their own systems, by being led on to look for a Resurrection, and a day of final Judgment ! And all this in a strain of eloquence and fervour, which the most scoffing Athenian could not but admire amid his scorn !

Resting, then, our justification on these high examples, and perceiving how much intellectual error is the danger of our times, we seem not merely authorized but bound, trusting indeed only “ in the Lord, and in the power of his might,” to shrink from no encounter to which the honour of God and the success of his Gospel may seem even indirectly to invite us. The ambassador of heaven should not forego his high

privilege of guiding the whole sphere of thought :  
“ He that is spiritual judgeth all things.”

If, then, I may be permitted, as one who has at least had experience enough to discover his own deficiency, to leave a parting word of exhortation with those who are to follow me into the field where the Truth must be contended for amidst fightings without and fears within—it is this : that they omit no opportunity of storing up all the knowledge, human and divine, which is provided for them in this place, and at this auspicious moment of their lives. They will require it all in the word without ! And let them not separate too much the one from the other ; for all knowledge is divine, which is devoted to a divine object. Translated into the kingdom of heaven by Baptism, from henceforth every thing within and around them is of that kingdom,—when viewed through the eye of faith, and considered as part of a new life. The discoveries of science, the cultivation of the intellectual powers, the arts and usages and even elegancies, as well as the duties of life, become sanctified, by being attached to beings who have an immortal destiny, and enforced as tests of obedience, and means of moral trial and purification. Let them look upon human knowledge habitually in this light, as an

instrument of God for their salvation. Let all their efforts, whether directed toward the works or the word of God, be accompanied by Prayer, which will teach them that humility is the best proof of knowledge. Then let them go forth, in the name of the Lord, and in full reliance on his grace, to disseminate his saving truths among mankind ; and let them “not doubt, but earnestly believe,” that the word of God, thus recommended to the feelings and the judgment of man, will prosper in their hands, and that the Church, of which they are the ministers, will become at once the stability and glory of their own land, and a light “even unto the ends of the earth.”

THE END.





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NOTES.

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## NOTE A. PAGE 8.

POWELL, CHARGE III. "ON THE USE AND ABUSE OF PHILOSOPHY  
IN THE STUDY OF RELIGION."

To shew that the system of opposition to the church, here so clearly stated by Dr. Powell, is still pursued with a servile and almost literal adherence to the ancient, and it might have been hoped, now exploded model, (but nothing is so utterly devoid of originality as error,) we need only quote the following passage from a modern work by Mr. George Combe, a lecturer on the science (so called) of Phrenology, and which is entitled "The Constitution of Man in relation to External Objects." This book has had a wide circulation. There are various reasons for this. The topic on which it treats is in itself one of much interest. The author possesses considerable knowledge of his subject, and still more of the world. He is, moreover, an itinerant lecturer on the "science" on which the theories of his work are made to rest, and therefore possesses advantages in assisting its circulation which are denied to ordinary authors. But what has doubtless operated most strongly in its favour, and which renders this work a singularity in literary history is, that it is not dependent upon the "voluntary principle," for its success, but possesses, and is sustained in its cheapness by, a fixed "Endowment!" The following is an extract from the preface:—"On 27th May, 1829, the late W. R. Henderson, Esq., younger, of Warriston and Eildon Hall, executed a deed of settlement, by which he conveyed to certain trustees such funds

as he should die possessed of ; and, in the event of his dying without leaving children, he appointed them to pay certain legacies and annuities to individual friends, and gave the following instructions regarding the application of the residue of his funds.

“ ‘ And, lastly, the whole residue of my means and estate shall, after answering the purposes above written, be applied by my said trustees in whatever manner they may judge best for the advancement and diffusion of the science of Phrenology, and the practical application thereof in particular ; giving hereby and committing to my said trustees the most full and unlimited power to manage and dispose of the said residue, in whatever manner shall appear to them best suited to promote the ends in view : Declaring, that if I had less confidence in my trustees, I would make it imperative on them to print and publish one or more editions of an ‘ Essay on the Constitution of Man considered in Relation to External Objects, by George Combe, ’— in a cheap form, so as to be easily purchased by the more intelligent individuals of the poorer classes, and Mechanics’ Institutions, &c. ; but that I consider it better only to request their particular attention to this suggestion, and to leave them quite at liberty to act as circumstances may seem to them to render expedient ; seeing that the state of the country, and things impossible to foresee, may make what would be of unquestionable advantage now, not advisable at some future period of time. But if my decease shall happen before any material change affecting this subject, I request them to act agreeably to my suggestion. And I think it proper here to declare, that I dispose of the residue of my property in the above manner, not from my being carried away by a transient fit of enthusiasm, but from a deliberate, calm, and deep-rooted conviction, that nothing whatever hitherto known can operate so powerfully to the improvement and happiness of mankind, as the knowledge and practical adoption of the principles disclosed by Phrenology,

and particularly of those which are developed in the *Essay on the Constitution of Man*, above mentioned.”

Here, then, is a work, which, from all the circumstances connected with it, may fairly be selected as representing, or at least as seeking to represent, the popular mind. It professes to “avoid religious controversy”—and therefore when the writer touches upon that subject it is not from necessity, but inclination and design. Let, then, the reader pay particular attention to the following extract, which will shew that the author is fully justified in applying Dr. Powell’s language to the circumstances of the present day.

“The theologians who condemned the natural world, lived in an age when there was no sound philosophy, and almost no knowledge of physical science; they were unavoidably ignorant of the elementary qualities of human nature, and of the influence of organisation on the mental powers—the great link which connects the moral and physical worlds. They were unacquainted with the relations subsisting between the mind and external nature; and could not by possibility divine to what extent individuals and society were capable of being improved by natural means. In the history of man, they had read chiefly of misery and crime, and had in their own age beheld much of both. They were, therefore, naturally led to form a low estimate of human nature, and to expect little good from the development of its inherent capabilities. These views appear to me to have influenced the interpretations of Scripture which they adopted: and these, having once been entwined with religious sentiments, have descended from generation to generation: in consequence, persons of sincere piety have for several centuries been induced to look down on this world as a wilderness, abounding with briars, weeds, and noxious things—and to direct their chief attention, not to the study of its elements and their relations, in the hope of reducing them to order, but to en-

during the disorder with patience and resignation, and to securing, by faith and penitence, salvation in a future life. It has never been with them a practical principle, that human nature itself may be vastly improved in its moral and intellectual capacities, by those means which Physiology and Phrenology have recently opened to us; or that human nature and the external world are adjusted on the principle of favouring the developement of the higher powers of our minds; or that the study of the constitution of nature is indispensable to human improvement; or that this world and its professions and pursuits might be rendered favourable to virtue, by searching out the natural qualities of its elements, their relationship, and the moral plan on which God has constituted and governs it. Some philosophers and divines having failed to discover a consistent order or plan in the moral world, have rashly concluded that none such exists, or that it is inscrutable. It appears never to have occurred to them that it is impossible to comprehend a whole system without becoming acquainted with its parts:—though ignorant of the physiology of man, of mental philosophy, of the philosophy of external nature, and of their relations, these authors have not perceived that this extensive ignorance of the details rendered it impossible for them to comprehend the plan of the whole. Hence they have involved themselves in contradictions; for while it has been a leading principle with them, that enjoyment in a future state is to be the consequence of the believer attaining to a holy and pious frame of mind in this life, they have represented the constitution of the world to be so unfavourable to piety and virtue, that men in general, who continue attached to it, cannot attain to this right frame of spirit, or act habitually in consistency with it. They have not had philosophy sufficient to enable them to perceive that man must live in society to be either virtuous, useful, or happy; that the social atmosphere is to the mind what air is to the lungs; and

that, while an individual cannot exist to virtuous ends out of society, he cannot exist in a right frame of mind in it, if the moral atmosphere with which he is surrounded be deeply contaminated with vice and error. Individual merchants, for example, cannot act habitually on Christian principles, if the maxims of their trade be not Christian; and if the world be so unfavourably constituted that it does not admit of the rules of trade becoming Christian, then active life and practical religion are naturally opposed to each other. Divines have laboriously recommended spiritual exercises as means of improvement in this life, and of salvation in the next; but have rarely dealt with the philosophy of this world, or attempted its rectification, so as to render these exercises truly efficacious. Their minds have been infected with the first great error, that this world is irremediably defective in its constitution, and that human hope must be concentrated chiefly on the next. This may be attributed to the premature formation of a system of theology in the dawn of civilisation, before the qualities of the physical world, and the elements of the moral world, and their relationship, were known; and to erroneous interpretations of Scripture, in consequence, partly, of that ignorance.

“ Now, if the discovery of the philosophy of mind, founded on the physiology of the brain, is to operate at all in favour of human improvement, one of the most striking effects which it will produce will be the lifting up of the veil which has so long concealed the natural world, and its capabilities and importance, from the eyes of divines. To all practical ends connected with theology, the philosophy of nature might as well not exist: with few exceptions, the sermons preached a century ago are equal, if not superior, in sense and suitableness to human nature, to those delivered yesterday; and yet, in the interval, the human mind has made vast advances in knowledge of the works of creation. Divines have frequently applied scientific discoveries in proving

the existence and developing the character of the Deity ; but they have failed in applying either the discoveries themselves, or the knowledge of the Divine character obtained by means of them, to the construction of any system of mental philosophy, capable of combining harmoniously with religion, and promoting the improvement of the human race. This, however, Phrenology will enable them one day to do.”—*Combe, pp. 4, 5.*

The above passage is here quoted simply for the purpose of justifying the author’s assertion in the text, that Dr. Powell’s language “might seem rather a composition of yesterday than of an age gone by.” But the concluding paragraph is so completely *answered* by Dr. P.’s anticipatory reply in this part of the same Charge, that I cannot refrain from presenting the passage to the reader.

“The English Divines cannot be justly reproached with the extravagant zeal of those, who, disclaiming the use of reason in religious inquiries, would substitute in its room faith uninformed. They own indeed the sovereignty of Religion ; but are sensible that her throne can no where be fixed securely, except in the understanding. They have never spared any pains to establish it on this firm basis. And, when new discoveries in philosophy have offered it any new supports, they have not failed to apply them. This could hardly be otherwise : since the same men, who have gained our admiration by a fertile invention or clear judgment, in the various kinds of human learning, have been many of them, equally eminent for their proficiency in sacred science. But, when in the study of Religion they used the assistance of philosophy, they used it with great caution : well knowing, that though its guidance may be safely trusted while it has full light, and keeps within its own territories ; yet when it ventures to conduct us in the dark, or wanders beyond its proper limits, it will often mislead us more fatally than ignorance itself. For there is a chain, which connects the various



branches of error as well as of truth. Yet this just and necessary caution seems to have given occasion to the complaint before mentioned. No other grounds for it have ever been pretended. It has never been objected to us, that the evidences for religion are not fully stated, or that any kind of fair reasoning is neglected which might serve to enforce them. On the contrary, it is universally acknowledged, that more rational, more truly philosophical defences of Christianity have appeared, within a century, in our language, than were ever in any other age or country. In these defences, whatever aids could be borrowed from morals, or physic, or natural theology, have been employed, and sometimes even with profusion. Philosophy has furnished us with abundance of incontestable evidence; and has rendered that evidence the more convincing, by rejecting all such proofs as were either false or frivolous. Thus far it has acted within its own province; and has been a good witness in behalf of Christianity. But here its office ends. If a witness should be allowed to take the seat of the judge, we could expect nothing but a hasty and partial decision; and such has been the event, when philosophy has presumed to interpret revealed doctrines, or to examine the reasonableness of revealed dispensations. These are the uses which we have forborne to make of it; and which we shall still forbear, if we form our judgment either from the nature of the attempt, or from the bad success of those who have engaged in it."

The simple and cautious language in which these sentiments are expressed, will not, the author sincerely hopes, prevent the judicious reader from appreciating the depth and solidity of thought with which the above passage (as indeed are all Dr. Powell's writings) is pregnant. Every word, as well as every thought, is in its right place; and both are of the utmost value.

With regard to the "science" of Phrenology, and the alleged necessity for the study of it, as bearing upon theological questions,

Dr. Powell's answer is equally applicable ; and we may pledge ourselves that any really useful and practical discoveries that may arise out of it will soon be applied to their proper and legitimate purposes. As to the supposed tendency of the "science" itself—except so far as ignorant or designing pretenders to a knowledge of it may produce some temporary delusion by drawing false deductions from assumed premises—we entertain no fears whatsoever. We firmly believe, that the more nearly it approaches to the *truth*, the more closely will it ultimately be found to coincide with Scripture. But we see not how, even according to its own account of what it proposes to effect, it can readily be brought in aid of the teacher of theology or morals. It professes to point out a physical developement in each part of the brain, which is the depositary and measure of a corresponding mental power ; now if it undertakes by mechanical or physical means to expand or contract such developement, and thereby the coincident mental power, it will, should it succeed, indeed cause a revolution in the mode of treating the moral condition of man, which will take it altogether out of the province of the present practical system of theology. But if such changes are still primarily to be effected in the mental and not in the bodily department ; if we must still appeal to motives ; and, by first regulating the moral and intellectual faculties, expand or contract the physical department in which a valuable or an injurious modification of them may be supposed to reside,—we seem to be admitted to the knowledge of no secret, of any practical value, which has not been familiar to theologians from the earliest times. Even the change of names as to moral and mental powers, which it would doubtless introduce, seems, as far as simplicity and intelligibility are concerned, scarcely to be for the better. To "keep one's hands from picking and stealing," is quite as plain a precept, as to restrain the organ of "acquisitiveness ;" and so on, through the ancient and modern decalogues.

The system may be said, indeed, to come in aid of the preceptor of youth, by enabling him, from the external organization, to detect the as yet undeveloped tendencies of his pupil's mind, which may form a guide to him as to the proper course to be pursued in training it : but I fear the *practical* preceptor soon discovers, that the mental signs of character are all but contemporaneous with the physical, and that little is wanted, on his part, beyond a close observation, and a judicious treatment, of the moral and intellectual condition of his pupil, as it shews itself in his earliest years. We grant, indeed, (and this is the simple fact which gives plausibility at least to the elements of the "science,") that the brain, being, like every other bodily organ, an *instrument* of the mind, must necessarily be in a healthy and full-formed state in order adequately to discharge its functions ; and that its physical structure may so far indicate its general efficiency ; just as the muscles of the arm betoken the vigour of the limb ; but we require more, and less suspicious evidence, than has yet been produced, before we can give our assent to the doctrine that, corresponding with those symmetrical lines delineated by phrenologists on the outward skull, there is an exactly similar compartment of brain within ; and, what is still more open to scepticism, an exactly similar compartment of an abstract intellectual principle in the soul. It certainly is a new experiment in philosophy, to undertake to assign visible and tangible *localities* to an arbitrary series of *metaphysical abstractions* ! But, be the result as it may, it would be desirable in the professors of this "science," in its present elementary state, to confine their attention to facts rather than deductions : for nothing is more likely to bring suspicion both on their wisdom and their motives, than rushing to startling conclusions before they have unanswerably established their premises. If they will thus act, theologians will stand by with calmness ; ready to turn

their *sound results*, (as they do not fear to be able to do,) to the benefit of religious truth.

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NOTE B. PAGE 12.

While nothing is more common, nothing can be more unphilosophical, than to make the *truth* of men's opinions depend upon their personal character. That which is right cannot be thus contingent; Christianity would be equally true even though no one fully believed, as no one fully obeys it. It has been well remarked by Bishop Sanderson, that "it is not honesty, nor sincerity, that can privilege men from either erring or sinning. Neither ought the unproved conversation of men countenance out their opinions, or their practices, against light of divine Scripture, and right reason: as we read Cyprian's error in old time; and we see in our days, not only the suspected tenets of Arminius, but even the bold heresies of Faustus Socinus have spread much the more for the reverend opinion men had of their personal endowments and sanctity."

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NOTE C. PAGE 31.

The limits prescribed to the author, and the plan of his Lectures, which leads him to deal with general results, rather than minute details, would not permit him to dwell at length on *Ancient Ethics*, important as they are from the powers of mind possessed by those who have cultivated and recorded them, and from the influence which they still continue to exercise on the philosophy of our own time. He would otherwise have at-

tempted to effect what he has since discovered to be much better executed by the Rev. Frederic Oakley, in a pamphlet published since this Lecture was delivered. The author, in that excellent tract, has performed a task, with regard to Ancient Ethics, which it is the object of these Lectures at least to aim at, with regard to the leading branches of human knowledge; and has detailed the conclusions at which he proposes to arrive in language which might well serve as a text to the whole of the present volume: "The main object here proposed is to shew, that Divine Revelation has fallen in with every soundest view, solved every real difficulty, and met every noblest aspiration, of the wisest heathens; and thus, while it throws lustre upon their speculations, approves, as natural, their perplexities; sanctions, as just, the results of their experience; it attests, at once, and remedies, the deficiency of their systems; furnishing Aids, and suggesting Motives, which are eminently and alone adequate to the regulation of conduct. Human Nature, its phenomena and tendencies and capabilities; Human Nature, the work, notwithstanding all its accidental deformities, all its superinduced irregularities, of God himself, was the object present to the mind, whether of the Inspired or the uninspired Moralist. It was not that they saw it with eyes of different structure, so that its images, erect in the view of one, were, in that of the other, inverted; but only that the view of Inspiration was infinite, and its powers of vision perfect."\*

\* Remarks upon Aristotelean and Platonic Ethics, &c. by the Rev. Frederic Oakley, M.A., Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford.

## NOTE D. PAGE 35.

“ And neither do we urge the proposition that conscience has, in every instance, the actual direction of human affairs, for this were in the face of all experience. It is not that every man obeys her dictates, but that every man feels he ought to obey them. These dictates are often in life and practice disregarded: so that conscience is not the sovereign *de facto*. Still there is a voice within the hearts of all which asserts that conscience is the sovereign *de jure*; that to her belongs the command rightfully, even though she do not possess it actually. In a season of national anarchy, the actual power and the legitimate authority are often disjointed from each other. The lawful monarch may be dethroned, and so lose the might; while he continues to possess—nay, while he may be acknowledged throughout his kingdom to possess the right of sovereignty. The distinction still is made, even under this reign of violence, between the usurper and the lawful sovereign; and there is a similar distinction among the powers and principles of the human constitution, when an insurrection takes place of the inferior against the superior; and conscience, after being dethroned from her place of mastery and control, is still felt to be the superior, or rather supreme faculty, of our nature notwithstanding. She may have fallen from her dominion, yet still wear the badges of a fallen sovereign, having the acknowledged right of authority, though the power of enforcement has been wrested away from her. She may be outraged in all her prerogatives by the lawless appetites of our nature,—but not without the accompanying sense within of an outrage and a wrong having been inflicted, and a reclaiming voice from thence which causes itself to be heard and which remonstrates against it. The insurgent and inferior principles of our consti-

tution may, in the uproar of their wild mutiny, lift a louder and more effective voice than the small still voice of conscience. They have the might but not the right. Conscience, on the other hand, is felt to have the right though not the might—the legislative office being that which properly belongs to her, though the executive power should be wanting to enforce her enactments. It is not the reigning but the rightful authority of conscience that we, under the name of her supremacy, contend for; or, rather the fact that, by the consent of all our higher principles and feelings, this rightful authority is reputed to be hers; and, by the general concurrence of mankind awarded to her.”—*Chalmers: Bridgewater Treatise, Vol. I. pp. 62, 63, 64.*

The following remarks of Sir James Mackintosh, upon Bishop Butler's principles of Ethics, though deficient in perspicuity from his using the term “moral sentiments,” as synonymous with that of “conscience,” afford a fair specimen of the views now very generally entertained of the bearing and tendency of the Bishop's theory:—

“This result of the peculiar relation of conscience to the will, justifies those metaphorical expressions which ascribe to it *authority* and the right of *universal command*. It is *immutable*; for, by the law which regulates all feelings, it must rest on *action*, which is its object, and beyond which it cannot look; and as it employs no *means*, it never can be transferred to nearer objects, in the way in which he who first desires an object as a means of gratification, may come to seek it as his end. Another remarkable peculiarity is bestowed on the moral feelings by the nature of their object. As the objects of all other desires are outward, the satisfaction of them may be frustrated by outward causes. The moral sentiments may always be gratified, because voluntary actions and moral dispositions spring from within. No external circumstance affects them. Hence their *independence*. As the moral sentiment needs *no means*, and the desire is

instantaneously followed by the volition, it seems to be either that which first suggests the relation between *command* and *obedience*, or at least that which affords the simplest instance of it. It is therefore with the most rigorous precision that authority and universality are ascribed to them. Their only unfortunate property is their too frequent weakness; but it is apparent that it is from that circumstance alone that their failure arises. Thus considered, the language of Butler concerning conscience, that, 'had it strength as it has right it would govern the world,' which may seem to be only an effusion of generous feeling, proves to be a just statement of the nature and action of the highest of human faculties. The union of universality, immutability, and independence, with direct action on the will, which distinguishes the moral sense from every other part of our practical nature, renders it scarcely metaphorical language to ascribe to it unbounded sovereignty and lawful authority over the whole of the world within;—shews that attributes, well denoted by terms significant of command and controul, are, in fact, inseparable from it, or rather constitute its very essence;—justifies those ancient moralists who represent it as alone securing, if not forming, the moral liberty of man; and finally, when religion rises from its roots in virtuous feeling, it clothes conscience with the sublime character of representing the divine purity and majesty in the human soul. Its title is not impaired by any number of defeats; for every defeat necessarily disposes the disinterested and dispassionate by-stander to wish that it were strengthened: and though it may be doubted whether, consistently with the present constitution of human nature, it could be so invigorated as to be the only motive to action, yet every such by-stander rejoices at all accessions to its force; and would own, that man becomes happier, more excellent, more estimable, more venerable, in proportion as conscience acquires a power of banishing malevolent passions, of strongly curbing all the



private appetites, of influencing and guiding the benevolent affections themselves.”—*Ethical Philosophy, Whewell's Edition*, pp. 199, 200, 201.

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NOTE E. PAGE 38.

MACKINTOSH, ETHICAL PHILOSOPHY, PAGE 260.

Much confusion on the subject of Conscience, and the extent of its powers, has necessarily arisen from each writer on the subject not clearly defining the sense in which the word is employed by himself. Bishop Sanderson, in his *Prælectiones de obligatione Conscientiæ*, gives four definitions of the sense in which the word Conscience is sometimes used; and states his own opinion of what is the proper meaning of it as follows: “*Conscientia est facultas vel habitus intellectus practici; quo mens hominis per discursum rationis applicat lumen quod sibi inest ad particulares suos actus morales.*” Neither Sir James Mackintosh nor Dr. Chalmers seem to have used the word in this precise signification. Sir James, in the passage quoted in the text and elsewhere, does not limit it to the *facultas vel habitus intellectus practici*, but views it as an *accumulation* of moral powers, the result of training and experience; while Chalmers, more clearly at least, if not more properly, confines it to the *lumen quod sibi inest*, without taking into much account the mode of its operation, the *per discursum rationis* of Bishop Sanderson’s definition. The following is his account of the sense in which the word is employed by him:

“The proposition, however, which we are now urging, is not that the obligations of virtue are binding, but that man has a conscience which tells him that they are so—not that justice and truth and humanity are the dogmata of the abstract moral system, but that they are the dictates of man’s moral nature—

not that in themselves they are the constituent parts of moral rectitude, but that there is a voice within every heart which thus pronounces on them. It is not with the constitution of morality, viewed objectively, as a system or theory of doctrine, that we have properly to do; but with the constitution of man's spirit, viewed as the subject of certain phenomena and laws—and, more particularly, with a great psychological fact in human nature, namely, the homage rendered by it to the supremacy of conscience. In a word, it is not of a category, but of a certain creation that we are speaking. The one can tell us nothing of the divine character, while the other might afford most distinct and decisive indications of it. We could find no demonstration whatever of the divine purposes, on a mere ethical, any more than we could, on a logical or mathematical category. But it is very different with an actual creation, whether in mind or in matter—a mechanism of obvious contrivance, and whose workings and tendencies, therefore, must be referred to the design, and so to the disposition and character of that Being, whose spirit hath devised and whose fingers have framed it.”—*Bridgewater Treatise, Vol. I. pp. 61, 62.*

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NOTE F. PAGE 54.

Few terms have been more abused than this. It would have been well for the world if the following language by Bishop Sanderson, as to the proper meaning of the word Expediency, had never been forgotten:—

“ And first, *expediency* in St. Paul's method supposes lawfulness. He takes that for granted that the thing is lawful, before he enters into any enquiry whether it be expedient, yea or no; for expediency is here brought in, as a thing that must restrain and limit us in the exercise of that liberty, which God

has otherwise allowed us; but God has not allowed us any liberty unto unlawful things. And this observation is of right good use; for thence it will follow, that when the unlawfulness of any thing is once made sufficiently to appear, all further inquiry into the expediency or in expediency thereof must thenceforth utterly cease and determine. No conjuncture of circumstances whatsoever, can make that expedient to be done at any time, that is of itself and in the kind unlawful. For a man to blaspheme the holy name of God, to sacrifice to idols, to give wrong sentence in judgment, by his power to oppress those that are not able to withstand him, by subtilty to overreach others in bargaining, to take up arms (offensive or defensive) against a lawful sovereign; none of all these, and sundry other things of like nature, being all of them simply and *de toto genere* unlawful, may be done by any man, at any time, in any case, upon any colour or pretension whatsoever; the express command of God Himself only excepted, as in the case of Abraham for sacrificing his son. Not for the avoiding of scandal; not at the instance of any friend, or command of any power upon earth; not for the maintenance of the lives or liberties either of ourselves or others; not for the defence of religion; not for the preservation of a Church or state; no, nor yet, if that could be imagined possible, for the salvation of a soul; no, not for the redemption of the whole world.

“ I remember to have read long since a story of one of the Popes, (but who the man was, and what the particular occasion, I cannot now recall to mind,) that having, in a consultation with some of his Cardinals, proposed unto them the course himself had thought of, for the settling of some present affairs to his most advantage; when one of the Cardinals told him he might not go that way, because it was not according to justice;—he made answer again, that, though it might not be done *per viam justitiæ*, yet it was to be done *per viam expeditiæ*. A dis-

tion which it seems the high-priest of Rome had learned of his predecessor at Jerusalem—the high-priest Caiaphas in a solemn consultation held there. There the chief priests and Pharisees call a council, and the business was, what they should do with Jesus. If they should let Him alone, so, the people would all run after Him because of His miracles; and then would the Romans (who did but wait for such an opportunity) make that a pretence to invade their country, and to destroy both their religion and nation. If they should take away His life, that were, indeed, a sure course; but Nicodemus had stammered them all for that, a good while before, in a former council at Jerusalem, when he told them that they could not do it by law; being they had nothing to lay to His charge that could touch His life. Up stands Caiaphas then, and tells them they were but too scrupulous to stand so much upon the nice point of legality at that time: they should let the matter of justice go for once, and consider what was now expedient to be done for the preserving of their nation, and to prevent the incursions of the Romans: ‘You know nothing at all,’ says he, ‘nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.’

“Whatever infallibility either of those high-priests might challenge to themselves, or their flatterers ascribe to them, it is sure far safer for us to rest our judgments upon that never-failing rule of St. Paul, ‘we may not do evil that good may come thereof,’ than to follow them in their wild resolutions.”—*Sermon 12. Ad Aulam*, preached at Hampton Court, July 26, 1640.

## NOTE G. PAGE 55.

The author cannot help thinking, that Paley has of late had somewhat hard measure dealt out to him. The defects of his system are obvious; and were doubtless as well known to himself as they seem to be to those who possess not a tithe of his admirable perspicacity. But they arose from the character of the undertaking, and not from his mode of treating it. I feel convinced that it will always be found to be impossible to construct a complete system of Ethics on any basis which does not include Revelation. All the attempts that have yet been made to find another groundwork prove this;—and it is indeed a valuable result, though the process of arriving at it has been somewhat circuitous and toilsome. Conscience, according to the definition of it given by Chalmers and others, is simply a judge, and can never be legitimately converted into a lawgiver; while, if we adopt Sanderson's wider view of its office, we need do no more than take his Treatise on the subject likewise, as one of the best outlines of the obligation and power of conscience. But, in this case, conscience is not properly an elementary rule—it is rather the result of all the rules that reason and revelation have supplied to man. The Rev. W. WHEWELL, in four eloquent sermons preached before the University of Cambridge, since these Lectures were delivered, and which are entitled “On the Foundations of Morals,” while he does not spare the acknowledged defects of Paley's theory, suggests that some one should construct another system of morals, having Conscience for its basis. “Butler,” he observes, “has delivered no *System of Morals*; and, (in the part of his work here referred to,) is employed mainly in the discussion of the fundamental principle of the subject.” The reason, I suspect, will ultimately be found to be, that the fundamental principle was *all* that conscience was ever designed to become; and that any complete theory of

morals can only be deduced from the rules of *Revelation*, discussed by *Reason*, and tested by *Conscience*.

Professor SEDGWICK, in his masterly "Discourse on the Studies of the University," has entered fully into the deficiencies of Paley's system; and has pointed them out with a fire and energy, which, were the statement less accurate than it is, it would not be easy for calm reason to withstand. The following extract will put the views expressed by him on the subject, in a distinct point of view.

"Had Paley," says he, "rejecting the authority of the moral sense on grounds like these," (viz. "on the avowed depravity of our nature, and the impotency of moral rule, in putting down the evil that is at war with our better feelings,") "proceeded to build up a system of christian ethics, founded on the word of God, enforced by its heavenly sanction, and recommended through the affections to a practical acceptance as a rule of life, he might have conferred a great benefit on the cause of morality and religion. He might then have gone on to shew, that the code of christian morals contains a set of rules co-ordinate with other rules which the wise and the good of all ages have endeavoured to establish and enforce (with a fainter light indeed, and under a more feeble sanction) as in accordance with the law of our nature, and therefore with the will of God: and afterwards he might have proved, that the rules of action, derived from these two sources, are not only in conformity with each other, but call our highest faculties into activity and return into our bosoms incomparably the greatest sum of earthly happiness. Thus might he have arrived at a perception of an attribute of God, in the only way in which it is permitted us, by the mere force of natural reason, to reach high points of knowledge—by ascending from particular to general truths, from phenomena to laws; and thus might he have concluded, that as in the material world we see in all things the proofs of intelligence and power;

so also, that in the immaterial world we find proofs, not less strong, that man is under the moral government of an all-powerful, benevolent, and holy God. Following this train of thought he might, lastly, have enunciated a proposition (resembling in its words what stands in the front of his moral system, but far different in its meaning and incomparably more true,) that whatever is right is also expedient for man."

Here what is required in order to construct a combined system of philosophical and Christian ethics, is fairly stated. And I think we may add, that the portion of such a system which Paley *intended* to execute, namely that which relates to "moral and political *philosophy*," he has executed *well*. He has shewn that philosophy, or right reason, or the light of nature, or by whatever name the common sense of mankind is to be designated, bears testimony to the same moral truths as those which are developed in the Gospel. He has shewn that the "two methods which exist of coming at the will of God on any point: I. By his express declarations in scripture, and II. By the light of nature," lead ultimately to the same conclusions; and that, in the long run, "whatever is expedient is right." To have done this, and to have done it so effectually, is surely to have conferred an invaluable boon upon Ethical Philosophy—in useful results he has left all his predecessors in the science far behind. And if the public or private tutor, in directing the studies of his pupil to this work, should not fail, as no Christian tutor would fail, to point out the obvious and inherent defects in the theory which Paley, in his capacity as a moral philosopher and not Christian divine, was necessarily driven to adopt, his work may still be read as a proof of *how far* moral ethics go along with, though they naturally fall behind, the footsteps of Revelation; and as a model of sound honest reasoning, applied, in language of unexampled clearness and force, to subjects of the deepest interest to the human mind.

It would indeed be surprising if any theory of morals, that is worth a *Christian's* thought, could be constructed independent of the rules (themselves dependent on the doctrines) of Revelation. Revelation came *after* Reason; and all the efforts of Reason since, have only tended to shew how much the Dispensation was wanted.

With the names of Paley and Butler, let us unite that of another hard thinker—Warburton. The following is his outline of the principles upon which a complete theory of morals should be made to rest:—

“ Each animal hath its *instinct* implanted by nature to direct it to its greatest good. Amongst these, man hath his; to which modern philosophers have given the name of

“ 1. The *Moral Sense*: an *instinctive* approbation of *right* and abhorrence of *wrong*, prior to all reflexion on their nature, or their consequences. This is the first inlet to the *adequate idea of morality*; and, plainly, the most extensive of all; the Atheist, as well as Theist, having it. When instinct had gone thus far,

“ 2. The *Reasoning Faculty* improved upon its dictates: for, reflecting men, naturally led to examine the foundation of this *moral sense*, soon discovered that there were real essential differences in the qualities of human actions, established by nature; and, consequently, that the love and hatred excited by the *moral sense* were not capricious in their operations; for, that the essential properties of their objects had a specific difference. Reason having gone thus far, and thus far too it might conduct the Stratonian Atheist, it stopped, and found something now was wanting whereon to establish the *morality*, properly so called, of actions, that is, an *obligation* or *injunction* on men, to perform some and to avoid others; and that, for this, there was need of calling in other principles to its assistance: because nothing can thus oblige but

“ 3. A *Superior Will*: and such a *will* could not be found



till the being and attributes of God were established, but was discovered with them.

“ Hence arose, and only from hence, a *moral difference*. From this time human actions became the subject of obligation, and not till now : for though *Instinct* discovered a difference in actions ; and *Reason* perceived *that* difference to be founded in the nature of things ; yet it was *Will* only that could make a compliance with that difference a *Duty*.

“ On these principles then, namely, *the Moral Sense,—the Essential Difference in Human Actions,—and the Will of God*, is built the whole edifice of *Practical Morality*: each of which principles hath its distinct motive to enforce it ; compliance with *the moral sense* being attended with a grateful sensation ; compliance with the *essential differences of things* being the promoting the order and harmony of the universe ; and compliance with the *will of God*, the obtaining reward and avoiding punishment.

“ This, when attentively considered, cannot fail of affecting every one with the most lively sense of God’s goodness to mankind, who, graciously respecting the imperfections of man’s nature, the weakness of his reason, and the violence of his passions, hath been pleased to give three different excitements to the practice of virtue, that men of all ranks, constitutions, and educations, might find their account in one or other of them ; something that would hit their *palate*, satisfy their *reason*, or subdue their *will*. The first principle, which is the *moral sense*, would strongly operate on those, who by the exact temperature and balance of the passions, were disengaged enough to feel the delicacy and excellence of the moral sense ; and had an elegance of mind to be charmed with the nobleness of its dictates. The second, which is *the essential difference*, will have its weight with the speculative, the abstracted and profound reasoners, and on all those who excel in the knowledge of mankind. And the

third, which resolves itself into the *will of God*, and takes in all consequences of obedience and disobedience, is principally adapted to the common run of men.

“ It may perhaps be objected, to what is here delivered, *that the true principle of morality should have the worthiest motive to enforce it : whereas the will of God is enforced by the view of rewards and punishments ; on which motive, virtue hath the smallest merit.* This character of the true principle of morality is perfectly right ; and agrees, we say, with the principle which we make to be so : for the legitimate motive to virtue, on that principle, is *compliance with the will of God* ; which hath the highest degree of merit. But this not being found of sufficient force to take in the generality, the consequences of compliance or non-compliance to this will, as far as relates to rewards and punishments, were first drawn out to the people’s view. In which they were dealt with as the teachers of mathematics treat their pupils, when, to engage them in a sublime demonstration, they explain to them the utility of the theorem.

To these great purposes do the three principles serve, while in conjunction : but now, as in the *moral* world and the affairs of men, our pleasure, in contemplating the wisdom and goodness of providence, is often disturbed and checked by the view of some human perversity or folly which runs cross that dispensation ; so it is here, in the *intellectual*. This admirable provision for the support of virtue hath been, in great measure, defeated by its pretended advocates, who, in their eternal squabbles about the true foundation of morality, and the obligation to its practice, have sacrilegiously untwisted this *threefold cord* ; and each running away with the part he esteemed the strongest, hath affixed that to the throne of heaven, as the golden chain that is to unite and draw all to it.”—*Divine Legation, Book I. Sec. 4.*

## NOTE H. PAGE 58.

It is well worthy of observation, that while the *selfish* system of utility appeals to *general* results as motives of action, the Scripture always places these motives on the basis of *self*. "Honour thy father and thy mother,"—not that *they* may be happy, but "that *thy* days," &c. "Blessed are the peace-makers,"—not because the public shall be benefited, but because "*they* shall be called the children of God." The contrast here pointed out in the two systems, as to the knowledge displayed of the secret springs of human nature, is very remarkable. It is only men of the highest mental and moral cultivation that will ever be guided by considerations of general utility; while the consequences to self, in the extended sense in which they are held out in holy Scripture, are influential on all the world.

## NOTE I. PAGE 67.

"It has often been asserted that the department of *moral truth* admits not of *discoveries* properly so called. The assertion is one which, after some explanation and under some restriction, may be granted. In the department of *religious truth*, the case is different: here it has been perceived and is allowed that there exists not only a *possibility*, but a *previous likelihood*, of what may be strictly considered and justly termed *discoveries*.....And as from these discoveries once made, new duties immediately result; as, moreover, by means of the same discoveries the foundations of moral science are more broadly and more firmly laid, the force of moral motives greatly strengthened, and a flood of light thrown over the whole field of moral speculation; it is evident that the assertion, lately

noticed, requires to be restricted and qualified by a reference to both these considerations; for duties, previously recognized, are thus seen to be invested with a character that may entitle them to be called in some sort *new*; and although of duties confessedly new, it may be contended that even they flow from general moral principles, prior to the disclosures, which rather make *manifest* and *develop* than *create* their obligation; it must, after all, be conceded, that these duties, in some sort, partake of that character of *discoveries*, which belongs to the *religious truths*, whereon they depend."—*Ogilvie's Bampton Lectures*, pp. 88, 90.

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NOTE J. PAGE 69.

To shew how this idea of brethren, as between Christ and his disciples, and of a filial relation of Christ and his disciples conjointly towards the Father, pervades the whole gospel, it is only necessary to refer to our Lord's last fervent prayer to his heavenly Father, at once on their behalf and his own. *John xvii.*, vv. 20—24.

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NOTE K. PAGE 82.

“The *Enquiry* is disfigured by another speck of more frivolous paradox. It consists in the attempt to give the name of virtue to qualities of the *understanding*; and it would not have deserved the single remark about to be made on it, had it been the paradox of an inferior man. He has altogether omitted the circumstance on which depends the difference of our sentiments regarding moral and intellectual qualities. We *admire* intel-

lectual excellence, but we bestow no moral *approbation* on it. Such approbation has no tendency directly to increase it, because it is not voluntary. We cultivate our natural disposition to esteem and love benevolence and justice, because these moral sentiments, and the expression of them, directly and materially dispose others, as well as ourselves, to cultivate these two virtues. We cultivate a natural anger against oppression, which guards ourselves against the practice of that vice, and because the manifestation of it deters others from its exercise. The first rude resentment of a child is against every instrument of hurt. We confine it to intentional hurt, when we are taught by experience that it prevents only that species of hurt; and at last it is still further limited to *wrong* done to ourselves or others, and in that case becomes a purely moral sentiment. We morally approve industry, desire of knowledge, love of truth, and all the habits by which the understanding is strengthened and rectified, because their formation is subject to the will. But we do not feel a moral anger against folly or ignorance, because they are involuntary. No one but the religious persecutor, a mischievous and overgrown child, wreaks his vengeance on involuntary, inevitable, compulsory acts or states of the understanding, which are no more affected by blame than the stone which the foolish child beats for hurting him. Reasonable men apply to every thing which they wish to move, the agent which is capable of moving it;—force to outward substances, arguments to the understanding, and blame, together with all other motives, whether moral or personal, to the will alone. It is as absurd to entertain an abhorrence of intellectual inferiority or error, however extensive or mischievous, as it would be to cherish a warm indignation against earthquakes or hurricanes. It is singular that a philosopher who needed the most liberal toleration should, by representing states of the understanding as moral or immoral

have offered the most philosophical apology for persecution."—*Mackintosh, Ethics, pp. 228, 229, 230.*

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NOTE L. PAGE 105.

“No more, indeed, is necessary than to read the complaints of impatient grief which Quintilian has left behind him, to be sensible how vainly such philosophy boasted of triumphing over the terrors of the grave, when, in truth, they had done no more than cover it with blacker darkness, and when even they who themselves disbelieved in a life to come, could not refrain from pronouncing those barbarians ‘happy in their error,’ who regarded death as the passage to another state of existence. Let us see, then, how these more fortunate reasoners of paganism had succeeded in establishing the faith of a life after death, and how far this faith, as held by them, was calculated to rob death of its sting.

“They began by reasoning justly, that, as we are composed of two distinct natures, we have no reason to suspect that the accidents to which the one is liable have any necessary tendency to affect the other. They observed that the soul can do many things (such as reasoning, comparing, compounding, and remembering) without the body’s help; and concluded that the soul might continue to do all this, though the body were returned to its original element. They even went farther, and suggested the possibility that she might, under such circumstances, exercise these powers in still greater perfection than, from the presence and pressure of the body, she is now permitted to do. And as reason told them that whatever now is, must continue to be till destroyed, so till some agent were found competent to destroy the soul, the soul (they were induced to apprehend)

might exist for ever in a separate state of happiness or of misery, or might be united, at the pleasure of their gods, to a successive series of bodies. And this opinion they conceived to be remarkably strengthened and supported both by the usual phenomena of dreams, and by the supposed fact that the manes of the dead had, on certain occasions, been seen and heard by the living; a notion which, whether true or false, has been common in all ages and countries, and which the epicureans themselves were so from regarding as unfounded, that they had recourse to the wildest theories to reconcile it with their own opinions. But when this possibility, or call it if you will, this probability, was admitted by the minds of men, and it is plain that this is, pretty nearly, the utmost length to which the unassisted powers of human reason could proceed, the result obtained was, surely, far from sufficient to support the trembling spirit in its passage through the valley of the shadow of death, or to chase from the gate of the grave the horrors which surround it.

“ The first hypothesis of a separate and spiritual existence of the soul, when deprived of those hopes and aspirations which gild the Christian Paradise, resolves itself into little more than a continued but useless consciousness of existence, a continued, and, it may be, a murmuring recollection of the pains and pleasures of a life which is to return no more, the obscure residence, the stridulous cry, the shadowy limbs, and shivering appetite for warm blood, which, in the estimate of Homer, made up the comfortless elysium of departed heroes. The second, which Lucan considered the more comfortable creed of those warlike Gothic tribes who had derived this faith with many other circumstances of belief and practice from their ancestors in the north of India, held out to the dying man no more than a return to the miseries of life and death in another body. And, as the interruption of consciousness was almost a necessary accompaniment of transmigration, it was, in fact, nothing else

than to say, that while his present being was absolutely drawing to a close, another being, of which he was to have no knowledge, and in which he could feel no interest, was to arise from his essence, like a plant from the seed of its predecessor. Or, though the hope might be indulged that where all was unknown, some better things were in store for the virtuous, such a chance of possible gain would but little avail to comfort us under the present and certain loss of life and friendship and enjoyment!

“ It is true, nevertheless, that the majority of the heathen world, and more especially, perhaps, among those who were least entangled in the meshes of philosophy, both had and have some better expectations than these, derived from those traditions which had descended from the earliest men, from the times when our species conversed with angels and with God, and learned from the highest authority the secrets of that unseen world, to which the visible world is but a passage and a vestibule. And how much more satisfactory these traditions were to the mind than the hardest and most plausible conjectures of natural reason, may be inferred from the eagerness with which Socrates is said to have recurred to them in that hour when the soul of man is most anxious in her search for comfort. How gladly does that wise and good man take refuge from the difficulties of abstract reasoning in those ancient legends of Egyptian and Chaldean mystics, which speak of the soul as expiating her crimes in the waves of Phlegethon, or enjoying the reward of her virtues in the society of departed sages. And surely it may be said that whoever reads the *Phædo* with attention, will not hesitate to admit that faith is an instinct natural to man, or refuse to bless that wisdom and goodness which have supplied this appetite, since the truths of Christianity were made known, with a food so pure, so inexhaustible, so satisfactory!

But though much of truth and much more of striking poetry may be found, beyond a doubt, in the heathen traditions of a



life beyond the grave, the misfortune was that these traditions came down to the civilized nations of antiquity in a state so encumbered with fable, where truth and falsehood were so intimately blended, and where the falsehood was of a kind so repugnant to reason and probability, that it was difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to determine what circumstances, if any circumstances at all, might be selected and adhered to from the mass of general error. The Grecian judges of the dead, the river, the dog, and the ferryman of hell, are notions which the principal heathen writers hardly ever mention without scorn. And, unhappily, though their scorn was in these instances justly excited, yet, when these were taken away very little remained on which the faith of a dying man might fasten, except the general probability that the soul did not perish with the body, and that the separation of the two would be the commencement of a new and distinct existence to the former. But, when thus much was believed, and this, as we have seen, was nearly all of which the best instructed heathen was persuaded, the idea of death must still have been extremely formidable, nor to be contemplated without an anxiety which the wisest and boldest of their number were little able to overcome or dissemble.

“The man who felt the approach of death was departing for a strange and distant country, where his reception might depend on causes over which he had no controul, where all was dark, where all was eternal, and where all was, therefore, terrible. ‘Poor fluttering lively spirit,’ said the philosopher Hadrian, on his death, ‘poor guest and comrade of the body! to what unknown regions wilt thou wing thy way, pale, naked, and trembling?’—‘Whether to live or die be most profitable,’ were the words of a far better and wiser man than the Roman Emperor; ‘whether my lot, oh men of Athens, be in this respect better than yours, there is no one who knoweth, save God.’ But how different were the dismal anxiety of Hadrian, and the

doubtful hope of Socrates, from the sure and certain faith of that great apostle, to whom ‘to die was gain,’ and who exclaimed in triumphant anticipation of his approaching martyrdom, ‘I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day.’”—*Heber: Sermons preached in England, Sermon XVI.*

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NOTE M. PAGE 152.

In the preceding paragraph, the author has attempted to *indicate* the essential distinction between the Rationalist principle and that of the Gospel. The full expansion of the notion would require a volume; but he believes that the *root* of the evil lies in the fundamental error here alluded to.

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NOTE N. PAGE 156.

“I would, if called upon, die a martyr for the Christian religion, so completely is (in my poor opinion) its divine origin proved by its beneficial effects on the state of society. Were we but to name the abolition of *slavery* and *polygamy*, how much has, in these two words, been granted to mankind in the lessons of our Saviour.”—*Sir Walter Scott.*

The opinion of a learned layman on a religious question is always valuable; and these words, from *such* a man, deserve, both on his account and that of their subject, as wide a circulation as theologians can give them. This great man had felt the force of the testimony which philosophy bears to the truth of the doctrines of Christianity.

## NOTE O. PAGE 160.

The author need scarcely point out how strongly this argument bears upon the great, and now much agitated question, of National Education. If a parent, on the ground of his indissoluble religious relationship to his child, is bound to afford that child religious instruction, by a tie as strong as that which compels him to provide for its bodily wants, the State, which stands *in loco parentis* towards its people, is equally held by the same eternal obligation. The hopeless diversity of human opinion on religious matters, may, indeed, prevent the State from carrying this obligation fully into effect ; but, as a Christian community, it is at least bound to do nothing which shall militate *against* this theory, or which shall in any degree afford countenance to the notion, that religion and education ought, for one moment, to be disunited.

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