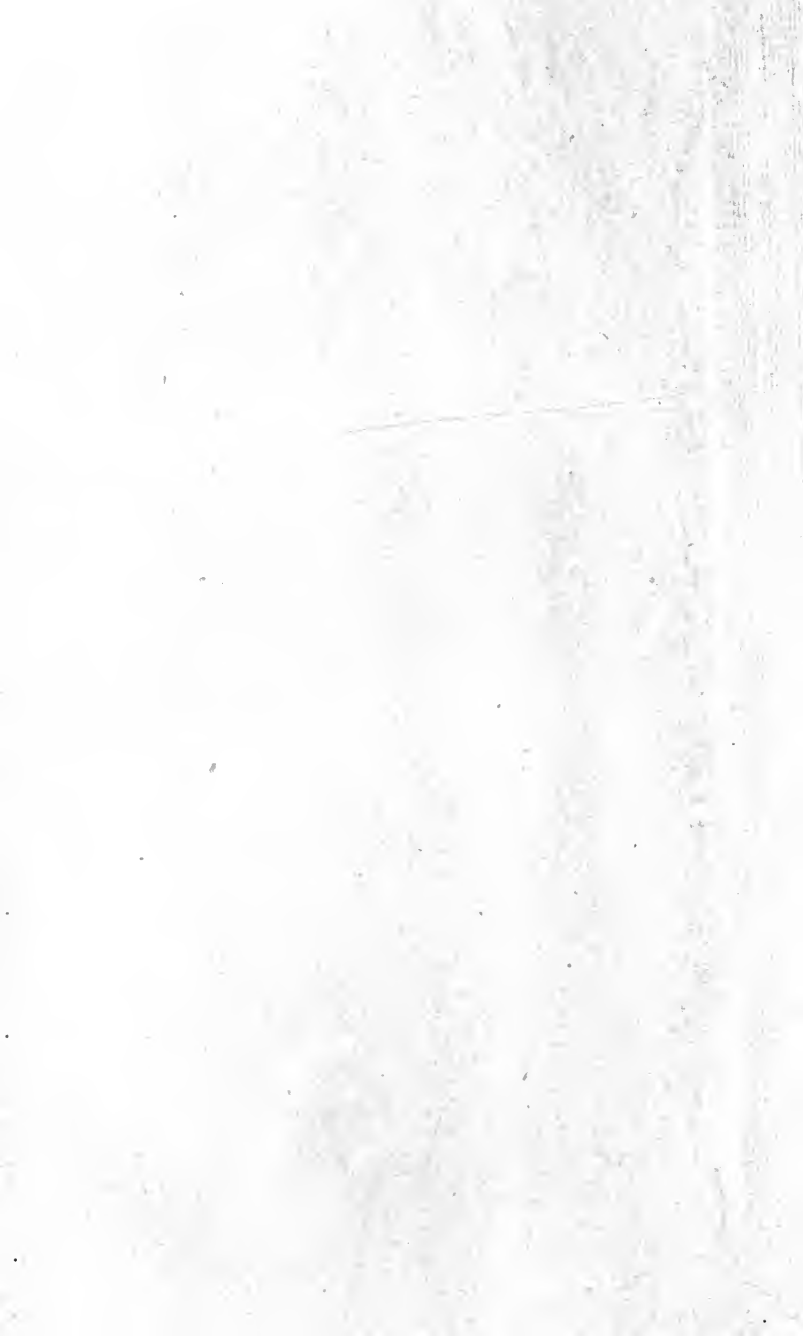


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SELECT WORKS

OF

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

EDITED BY HIS SON-IN-LAW,

THE REV. WILLIAM HANNA, LL.D.

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NATURAL THEOLOGY

LECTURES ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY

INTRODUCTORY LECTURES, ETC.

BY

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

EDINBURGH: THOMAS CONSTABLE AND CO.

HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.

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NATURAL THEOLOGY.

P R E F A C E.

THE Science of Theology in its most general meaning, as comprehensive both of the natural and the revealed, might, in respect to the order of its topics and propositions, be presented to the disciple in two different ways—so as, if not to affect the substance of its various arguments, at least to affect the succession of them. According to the first way, a commencement is made, as if at the fountainhead of the whole theme, with the being, and the constitution, and the character of God; and then from this point of departure, a demonstration is carried forward in the footsteps of the history of the Divine administration, from the first purposes of the uncreated mind to the final issues of His government in eternity. This most frequently is the course of those Christian writers who attempt the construction of an entire system of theology. They descend from the heights of the eternity that is past; and often it is not till they have bestowed their treatment on such antemundane topics as the mysteries of the Divine essence and the high pre-ordinations of God, that they enter on the development of these in the creation of a universe and its moral history onward to the consummation of all things. One cannot peruse the successive titles of the chapters in the systematic works of our best and greatest authors, without observing how much the arrangement proceeds in the chronological order of the history of the Divine government—so that, after the establishment of the initial lessons which we have

now specified, we are very generally conducted along some such series of doctrines as the following :—the formation of man ; his original state of innocence ; the introduction of moral evil at the fall, and the consequent guilt and depravation of our species ; the remedy for this universal disease in the appointment of a Mediator ; the atonement made by Him, so as to release His followers from the penalty of sin ; the doctrine of a regenerating Spirit to deliver them from its power ; the free overtures of this reconciliation and recovery to the world ; the great moral change experienced by all who accept them ; their duties in the present life, and their blissful prospects of another : on the other hand, the fearful doom of all who reject the Christian message ; the judgment to which both the obedient and the rebellious will be summoned at the end of the world ; and the destinies which respectively await them in that everlasting economy which is to succeed after the present economy of things shall have passed away.

Now such an arrangement, proceeding as it does in the chronological order of the Divine administration, and which quadrates too with the great successions that take place in the collective history of the species, has peculiar advantages of its own. But there is another arrangement, having a distinct principle, attended too with its own distinct benefits, but of another sort. Instead of treating theology in the order of the procedure of the Divine government, and with general respect therefore to the whole universe of created intelligences, or at least to the whole of the human family, it may be treated in the order of those inquiries which are natural to the exercised spirit of an individual man, from the outset of his religious earnestness when the felt supremacy of conscience within tells him of a Law and tells him of a Lawgiver—when his own sense of innumerable deficiencies from a higher and a holier standard of rectitude than he has ever reached, first visits him with the conviction of guilt and the dread anticipation of a coming vengeance. This would give rise to an arrangement differing from the former, having a different starting-post or point of departure, and, though coincid-

ing in some places, yet reversing the order of certain of the topics; and, more especially, transferring to a far ulterior part of its course, some of those initial matters in the first arrangement, which, when discussed at so early a stage, give an obscure and transcendental character to the very commencement of the science. By the first arrangement we are made to descend synthetically, from principles which have their residence in the constitution and character of the Godhead, and which transport us back to past eternity—as in those systems of Christian theology, where the doctrines of the Trinity and Predestination take the priority of all those themes which are within the reach of human conception, or bear with immediate application on the desires and the doings of man. By the second arrangement, we are made to ascend in the order of man's fears and of his efforts to be relieved from them—beginning, therefore, with that sense of God which is so promptly and powerfully suggested to every man by his own moral nature; and proceeding, under the impulse of apprehensive and conscious guilt, to the consideration of what must be done to escape from its consequences, and what is the remedy, if any, for the sore disease under which humanity labours. It is obvious that with such a commencement as this for our system of theology, the depravity of man, along with the moral character and government of God, and the requisitions and sanctions of His law, would find an early place in it; and, whereas in the atonement made known by a professed Revelation there is a remedy proposed, it were most natural to pass onward to the claims and credentials of this professed embassy from heaven—thence, under the promptings of a desire for relief, from the consideration of our danger to the consideration of the refuge opened up for us in the Gospel—thence to the new life required of all its disciples—thence to the promised aids of a strength and grace from on high, for the fulfilment of our due obedience—thence to the issues of our repentance and faith in a deathless eternity—thence, finally, and after the settlement of all that was practical and pressing, to the solution of difficulties which are grappled with at the outset of the former scheme of

theology: but which in the latter scheme would be postponed for their more scientific treatment to that stage, when, leaving the first principles of their discipleship, the aspirants after larger views and more recondite mysteries go on unto perfection.

By the former method theology is capable of being presented more in the form or aspect of a regular science, with the orderly descent and derivation of its propositions from the highest principles to which we can ascend; but when the departure is made from the primeval designs of the Godhead, or the profound mysteries of His nature—this gives more of a transcendental, but more at the same time of a presumptuous and *a priori* character to the whole contemplation. The second method, by which departure is made from the suggestions and the fears of human conscience, has the recommendation of being more practical, and if not in the order of exposition, is more at least in the order of discovery. Even natural theology, taken by itself, is susceptible of both these treatments; and may be either studied as the theology of academic demonstration, or traced to its outgoings as the theology of conscience—from the first stirrings of human feelings or human fancy on the question of a God, to the fullest discoveries that can be made by the light of nature whether of His existence or His character or His ways. In the following treatise we do not rigorously adhere to any of these methods—though we hold it incumbent upon us to clear away the injurious metaphysics, in which certain disciples of the first school have, even in their earliest, their initial lessons on the subject, shrouded the science of theology; and we have also endeavoured to show what those incipient, those rudimental tendencies of the human spirit are, under the guidance of which the disciples of the second school are carried onward in the path of inquiry. In the execution of these tasks we have occupied the first Book, having the title of Preliminary Views; and would now bespeak the indulgence of our readers for what some might deem the superfluous illustration of its two first, and others might feel to be the hopeless and impracticable obscurity of its two succeeding chapters. The latter complaint should be laid, we think, not on

the Author, but on the necessities of his subject. To the former, however, he must plead guilty ; for, even though at the expense of nauseating those of quick and powerful understanding ; and whose taste is more for the profound than the palpable, however important the truth inculcated may be, and however desirable to have the luminous conception and intense feeling of it—he should rejoice to be the instrument, and more particularly at the outset of their religious earnestness, of giving the most plain and intelligible notices of their way even unto babes.

We shall not be so liable to either of these extremes in the subsequent Books of which this treatise is composed—and the perusal of which, indeed, might be immediately entered on, although the first or preliminary Book were to receive the treatment that is often given to a long and wearisome preface, that is, passed over altogether. We must confess, however, our desire for the judgment of the more profound class of readers on the fourth chapter in this department of the work, and which treats of a peculiar argument by Hume on the side of Atheism. The truth is, that we do not conceive the infidelity of this philosopher to have been adequately met by any of his opponents ; whether as it respects the question of a God or the question of the truth of Christianity. In the management of both controversies, it has been thought necessary to conjure up a new principle for the purpose of refuting his especial sophistries ; and thus to make two gratuitous, and we think very questionable additions, to the mental philosophy, in the shape of two distinct and original laws of the human understanding, which, anterior to the date of his speculations, never had been heard of ; and probably never would, but for the service which they were imagined to render in the battles of the faith. We hold ourselves independent of both these auxiliaries ; and it is our attempt to show, on the premises of the author himself, or at least with the help of no other principles than the universal and uniform faith of men in the lessons of experience, now of his atheistical, and afterwards of his deistical argument—the one grounded on the alleged singularity of the world as an effect, the other

grounded on the alleged incompetency of human testimony to accredit the truth of a miracle—we hope to show that there is a distinct fallacy in each, and at the same time a contradiction between the fallacies in itself destructive of both; and which must either have escaped the penetration, or been concealed by the art of this most subtle metaphysician and reasoner.

After having disposed in the first Book of all that is of a prefatory or general character, we in the second Book enter on the consideration of proofs for the being of a God in the dispositions of matter. The third Book is occupied with proofs, not for the being only, but for the being and character of God as displayed in the constitution of the mind—from which department it has been strangely affirmed of late, that little or no evidence has yet been collected for the defence or illustration of Natural Theology. The object of the fourth Book is to exhibit additional evidence for a God in the adaptation of external nature to the mental constitution of man. And in the fifth, which is the last Book, we endeavour to estimate the amount as well as the dimness and deficiency of the light of nature in respect to its power of discovering either the character or still less the counsels and the ways of God. In this concluding part of the treatise, besides recording the efforts which Philosophy has made, and to what degree she has failed in resolving that most tremendous and appalling of all mysteries—the origin of evil, we attempt to reconcile both the doctrine of a special providence and the efficacy of prayer with the constancy of visible nature. It is well to evince, not the success only, but the shortcomings of Natural Theology; and thus to make palpable at the same time both her helplessness and her usefulness—helpless if trusted to as a guide or an informer on the way to heaven; but most useful if, under a sense of her felt deficiency, we seek for a place of enlargement, and are led onward to the higher manifestations of Christianity.

EDINBURGH, *15th Dec.* 1835.

NATURAL THEOLOGY.

BOOK I.—PRELIMINARY VIEWS.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE ETHICS OF THEOLOGY AND THE OBJECTS OF THEOLOGY.

1. OUR first remark on the science of Theology is, that the objects of it, by their remoteness, and by their elevation, seem to be inaccessible. The objects of the other sciences are either placed, as those of matter, within the ken of our senses; or, as in the science of mind, they come under a nearer and more direct recognition still, by the faculty of consciousness. But no man hath seen God at any time. We “have neither heard his voice nor seen his shape.” And neither do the felt operations of our own busy and ever-thinking spirits immediately announce themselves to be the stirrings of the Divinity within us. So that the knowledge of that Being, whose existence, and whose character, and whose ways, it is the business of Theology to investigate, and the high purpose of Theology to ascertain, stands distinguished from all other knowledge, by the peculiar avenues through which it is conveyed to us. We feel Him not. We behold Him not. And however palpably He may stand forth to our convictions, in the strength of those appropriate evidences which it is the province of this science to unfold—certain it is, that we can take no direct cognizance of Him by our faculties whether of external or internal observation.

2. And while the spirituality of His nature places Him beyond the reach of our direct cognizance, there are certain other essential properties of His nature which place Him beyond the reach

of our possible comprehension. Let me instance the past eternity of the Godhead. One might figure a futurity that never ceases to flow, and which has no termination; but who can climb his ascending way among the obscurities of that infinite which is behind him? Who can travel in thought along the track of generations gone by, till he has overtaken the eternity which lies in that direction? Who can look across the millions of ages which have elapsed, and from an ulterior post of observation look again to another and another succession of centuries; and at each further extremity in this series of retrospects, stretch backward his regards on an antiquity as remote and indefinite as ever? Could we by any number of successive strides over these mighty intervals, at length reach the fountain-head of duration, our spirits might be at rest. But to think of duration as having no fountain-head; to think of time with no beginning; to uplift the imagination along the heights of an antiquity which hath positively no summit; to soar these upward steeps till, dizzied by the altitude, we can keep no longer on the wing; for the mind to make these repeated flights from one pinnacle to another, and instead of scaling the mysterious elevation, to lie baffled at its foot, or lose itself among the far, the long-withdrawing recesses of that primeval distance, which at length merges away into a fathomless unknown; this is an exercise utterly discomfiting to the puny faculties of man. We are called on to stir ourselves up that we may take hold of God, but the "clouds and darkness which are round about Him" seem to repel the enterprise as hopeless; and man, as if overborne by a sense of littleness, feels as if nothing can be done but to make prostrate obeisance of all his faculties before Him.

3. Or, if instead of viewing the Deity in relation to time we view Him in relation to space, we shall feel the mystery of His being to be alike impracticable and impervious. But we shall not again venture on aught so inconceivable, yet the reality of which so irresistibly obtrudes itself upon the mind, as immensity without limits; nor shall we presume one conjecture upon a question which we have no means of resolving, whether the Universe have its terminating outskirts; and so, however stupendous to our eye, shrink by its very finitude, to an atom, in the midst of that unoccupied and unpeopled vastness by which it is surrounded. Let us satisfy ourselves with a humbler flight. Let us carry the speculation no further than our senses have carried it. Let us but take account of the suns and systems

which the telescope has unfolded ; though for aught we know there might, beyond the farthest range of this instrument, be myriads of remoter suns and remoter systems. Let us, however, keep within the circle of our actual discoveries, within the limits of that scene which we know to be peopled with realities ; and instead of trying to dilate our imagination to the infinity beyond it, let us but think of God as sitting in state and in high sovereignty over millions of other worlds beside our own. If this Earth, which we know, and know so imperfectly, form so small a part of His works—what an emphasis it gives to the lesson that we indeed know a very small part of His ways. “These are part of his ways,” said a holy man of old, “but how little a portion is heard of him !” Here the revelations of Astronomy, in our modern day, accord with the direct spiritual revelations of a former age. In this sentiment at least the Patriarch and the Philosopher are at one ; and highest science meets and is in harmony with deepest sacredness. So that we construct the same lesson, whether we employ the element of space or the element of time. With the one the basis of the argument is the ephemeral experience of our little day. With the other the basis of the argument is the contracted observation of our little sphere. They both alike serve to distance man from the infinite, the everlasting God.

4. But it will somewhat dissipate this felt obscurity of the science, and give more of distinctness and definiteness to the whole of this transcendental contemplation—if we distinguish aright between the Ethics of Theology and the Objects of Theology.

5. To understand this distinction let us conceive some certain relation between two individual men—as that for example of a benefactor to a dependant, or of one who has conferred a kindness to another who has received it. There is a moral or ethical propriety that springs out of this relation. It is that of gratitude from the latter of these individuals to the former of them. Gratitude is the incumbent virtue in such a case, and a benefactor is the object of that virtue.

6. Now to make one feel the truth of the ethical principle, it matters not whether he has seen many or few benefactors in the course of his experience. Nay, it matters not whether there are many or few benefactors in the world. The moral propriety of gratitude is that which attaches to the relation between a benefactor and a dependant ; and it equally remains so whether the

relation be seldom or often exemplified. Nay, gratitude would be the appropriate virtue of this relation, although actually it were never exemplified at all. The ethical principle of the virtuousness of gratitude does not depend on the existent reality of an object for this virtue. Let a benefactor really exist; and then gratitude is due to him. Or let a benefactor only be supposed to exist; and then we affirm with as great readiness that gratitude would be due to him. The incumbent morality is alike recognised—whether we behold a real object, or only figure to ourselves a hypothetical one. The morality, in fact, does not depend for its rightness on any such contingency as the actual and substantive existence of a proper object to which it may be rendered. The virtuousness of gratitude would remain a stable category in ethical science; although, never once exemplified in the living world of realities, we derived our only notion of it from the possibilities which were contemplated in an ideal world of relations.

7. It is thus that whether much or little conversant with the objects of a virtue, there may of the virtue itself be a clear and vivid apprehension. A peasant, all whose experience is limited to the homestead of his own little walk, can recognise the virtuousness of gratitude, and justice, and truth, with as great correctness, and feel them too with as great intensesness, as the man of various and ample intercourse, who has traversed a thousand times wider sphere in human society. By enlarging the field of observation we may extend our acquaintance with the objects of moral science; but this does not appear at all indispensable to our acquaintance with the Ethics of the science. To appreciate aright the moral propriety which belongs to any given relation, we do not need to multiply the exemplifications or the cases of it. The one is not a thing of observation as the other is, and therefore not a thing to which the Baconian or inductive method of investigation is in the same manner applicable. Our knowledge of the Objects belongs to the Philosophy of Facts. Our knowledge of the Ethics belongs to another and a distinct Philosophy.

8. There has been too much arrogated for the philosophy of Lord Bacon in our day. "Quid est?" is the only question to the solution of which it is applicable. It is by observation that we ascertain what are the objects in Nature; and what are, or have been, the events in the history of Nature. But there is another question wholly distinct from this: "Quid oportet?" to

the solution of which we are guided by another light than that of experience. This question lies without the domain of the Inductive Philosophy, and the science to whose cognizance it belongs shines upon us by the light of its own immediate evidence. There may have been a just and a luminous Ethics; even when the lessons of the experimental philosophy were most disregarded; and, on the other hand, it is the office of this philosophy to rectify and extend physical, but not to rectify and extend moral science.*

9. On this subject there is an instructive analogy taken from another science, and which illustrates still more the distinction now stated between the objects and the ethics of Moral Philosophy; † that is, the distinction between the mathematics and the objects of Natural Philosophy.

10. The objects of Natural Philosophy are the facts or data of the science. The knowledge of these is only to be obtained by observation. Jupiter, placed at a certain distance from the sun, and moving in a certain direction, and with a certain velocity, is an object. His satellites, with their positions and their motions, are also so many objects. Any piece of matter, including those attributes which it is the part of Natural Philosophy to take cognizance of, such as weight, and magnitude, and movement, and situation, is an object of this science. Altogether they form what may be called the individual and existent realities of the science. And Lord Bacon has done well in having demonstrated that for the knowledge of these we must

* We mean not to deny the legitimate application of the Baconian Philosophy to mental science—a distinct thing from moral science. The philosophy which directs and presides over the investigation of facts has to do with the facts and phenomena of mind, as well as those of matter; and though the sanguine anticipations of Reid and Stewart, of a vast coming enlargement in the science of mind, from the call which they had sounded for the treatment of it by the inductive method, have not been realized—it is not the less true that the philosophy which has for its object the determination of the *Quid est* throughout all the departments of observational truth, has to do with the facts of the mental world, as well as with those of the material world, and with the classification of both. But the feelings and purposes of the mind, viewed as phenomena, present a different object of investigation altogether from those feelings and purposes viewed in relation to their rightness or wrongness. The latter is the object of moral science. And when we say that the office of Lord Bacon's philosophy is to rectify and extend physical, but not to rectify moral science, let it be understood that the physical includes phenomena and facts wherever they are to be found—more especially the phenomena of man's spiritual and intellectual nature, the physics of the mind, the mental physiology of Dr. Thomas Brown, the pneumatology of an older generation.

† Moral Philosophy is here understood in its most generic meaning, as comprehensive of the duties owing to God in heaven, as well as to our fellow-men upon earth.

give ourselves up exclusively to the informations of experience ; that is, to obtain a knowledge of the visible properties of material things, we must look at them—or of their tangible properties, we must handle them—or of their weights, or motions, or distances, we must measure them.

11. Thus far, then, do the applications of the Baconian Philosophy go, and no farther. After that the facts or objects of the science have in this way been ascertained, we perceive certain mathematical relations between the objects from which we can derive truths and properties innumerable. But it is not experience now which lights us on from one truth or property to another. The objects or data of the science are ascertained by the evidence of observation ; but the mathematics of the science proceed on an evidence of their own, and land us in sound and stable mathematical conclusions, whether the data at the outset of the reasoning be real or hypothetical. The moral proprieties founded on equity between man and man would remain like so many fixtures in ethical science, though the whole species were swept away, and no man could be found to exemplify our conclusions. The mathematical properties founded on an equality between line and line would in like manner abide as eternal truths in geometry, although matter were swept away from the universe, and there remained no bodies whose position or whose distances had to be reasoned on. It has been already said that we do not need to extend the domain of observation in order to have a clear and a right notion of the moral proprieties ; and it may now be said that we do not need to extend the domain of observation in order to have a clear and a right notion of the mathematical properties. If straight lines be drawn between the centres of the earth and the sun and Jupiter, they would constitute a triangle, the investigation of whose properties might elicit much important truth on the relations of these three bodies. But all that is purely mathematical in the truth would remain, although it were not exemplified, or although these three bodies had no existence. Nay, the triangle might serve as the exemplar of an infinity of triangles, which required only a corresponding infinity of objects, in order that the general and abstract truth might become the symbol or representative of an endless host of applicable and actually existent truths. For the objects of both sciences you must have inductive or observational evidence ; but by a moral light in the one science, and a mathematical light in the other, we arrive at the ethics of the first

science, at the mathematics of the second, without the aid of the inductive philosophy.

12. It is interesting to note if aught may have fallen from Lord Bacon himself upon this subject. In his English treatise on the "Advancement of Learning," he says, "that in mathematics I can report no deficiency." So that this great author of the experimental method by which to arrive at a true philosophy of facts, had no improvement to propose on the methods of mathematical investigation. And in his more extended Latin treatise on the same subject, entitled, "De Augmentis Scientiarum," where he takes so comprehensive a view of all the possible objects of human knowledge, he says, speaking of geometry and arithmetic: "Quæ duo artes, magno certe cum acumine, et industria, inquisitæ et tractatæ sunt: veruntamen et Euclidis laboribus in geometricis nihil additum est a sequentibus quod intervallo tot seculorum dignum sit; or, "which two arts have certainly been investigated and handled with much acuteness and industry; notwithstanding which, however, nothing has been added to the labours of Euclid in geometry by those who have followed him, that is worthy of so long a series of ages."

13. The proper discrimination, then, to be made in natural philosophy, is between the facts or data of the science, and the relations that by means of mathematics might be deduced from these data. The former are ascertained by observation—after which no further aid is required from observation, while we prosecute that reasoning which often brings the most weighty and important discoveries in its train. It is well to consider how much can be achieved by mathematics in this process, and how distinct its part is from that of wide and distant observation; insomuch that by the light which it strikes out in the little chamber of one's own thoughts, we are enabled to proceed from one doctrine and discovery to another. From three distant points in the firmament, a triangle may be formed to which the very mathematics are applicable that we employ upon a triangle constructed upon paper by our own fingers. Whether they be the positions and the distances that lie within the compass of a diagram, or the positions and distances that obtain in wide immensity, it is one and the same geometry which, from a few simple and ascertained data, guides the inquirer to the various and important relations of both. After that observation hath done its office, and made over to mathematics the materials which it hath gathered—this latter science can guide the way to

discoveries and applications innumerable; and without one look more upon the heavens, with nought but the student's concentrated regard on the lines and the symbols that lie in little room upon his table, might the whole mystery and mechanism of the heavens be unravelled.

14. Let those things, then, be rightly distinguished which are distinct from one another. They were not the objects of the science which gave the observer his mathematics. These objects were only addressed to his previous and independent mathematics; and he, in virtue of his mathematics, was enabled rightly to estimate many important relations which subsisted between the objects. Nay, it is conceivable that the objects might have remained for ever obscure and unknown to him. He, in this case, would have wanted an application which he now has for his mathematics; but the mathematics themselves would have been still as much within his reach or his power of acquisition as before. His mathematical nature, if we may so speak, would have been entire notwithstanding; and he have had as clear a sense of the mathematical relations, and as prompt and powerful a faculty of prosecuting these to their results. Things might have been so constituted, as that every star in the firmament should have been beyond the discernment of our naked eye; or what is still more conceivable, the lucky invention might never have been made by which the wonders of a remoter heavens have been laid open to our view. But still they were neither the informations of the eye nor of the telescope which furnished man with his geometry; they only furnished him with data for his geometry. And thus, while the objects of astronomy are brought to him by a light from afar—there enters, as a constituent part of the science, the mathematics of astronomy, immediately seen by him in the light of his own spirit, and to master the lessons of which he needs not so much as one excursion of thought beyond the precincts of his own little home.

15. Now, what is true of the mathematical may be also true of the moral relations. We may have the faculty of perceiving these relations whether they be occupied by actually existent objects or not; or although we should be in ignorance of the objects. On the imagination that one of the inhabitants of the planet Jupiter had the mysterious knowledge of all my movements, and a mysterious power of guidance and protection over me; that he eyed me with constant benevolence, and ever acted the part of my friend and my guardian—I could immediately pro-

nounce on the gratitude and the kind regard that were due from me back again: And should the imagination become a reality, and be authentically made known to me as such, I have a moral nature, a law within my heart, which already tells me how I should respond to this communication. The instance is extravagant; but it enables us at once to perceive what that is which must be fetched to us from without, and what that is which we have to meet it from within. The objects are either made known by observation; or, if they exist without the limits of observation, they are made known by the credible report or revelation of others. But when thus made known, they may meet with a prior and a ready-made Ethics in ourselves. The objects may be placed beyond the limits of human experience; but though the knowledge of their existence must therefore be brought to us from afar, a sense of the correspondent moralities which are due to them may arise spontaneously in our bosoms. After the mind has gotten, in whatever way, its information of their reality—then within the little cell of its own feelings and its own thoughts, there may be a light which manifests the appropriate ethics for the most distant beings in the universe.

16. We are thus enabled to bestow a certain amount of elucidation on a question which falls most properly to be discussed at the outset of Natural Theology. On this distinction between the ethics of the science and the objects of the science, we can proceed at least a certain way in assigning their respective provinces to the light of nature and the light of revelation. But for this purpose let us shortly recur again to the illustration that may be taken from the science of astronomy.

17. Natural Philosophy has two great departments—one of them celestial, the other terrestrial; and it may be thought a very transcendental movement on the part of an inquirer—a movement altogether *per saltum*, when he passes from the one to the other. Now this is true; but only should it be remarked in as far as it regards the objects of the science. The objects of the celestial lie in a far more elevated region than the objects of the terrestrial; and it may certainly be called a transcendental movement, when, instead of viewing with the telescope some lofty peak that is sustained however on the world's surface, we view therewith the planet that floats in the firmament and at an inconceivably greater distance away from it. There is a movement *per saltum* when we pass from the facts and data of the one department, to the facts and data of the other. But

there is no such movement when we pass from the mathematics of the one department to the mathematics of the other. There is, no doubt, in one respect, a very wide transition; when instead of a triangle, whose base-line is taken by a pair of compasses from the Gunter scale, or even measured by a chain on the surface of the earth, we are called to investigate the relations of a triangle whose base-line is the diameter of the earth, or perhaps the diameter of the earth's orbit. There is doubtless a very wide transition from the objects of the terrestrial to those of the celestial physics; when, instead of three indivisible points on the parchment that lies before us, or three signposts of observation that wave on mountain-tops within sight of each other, we have three planetary bodies that, huge though they be in themselves, shrink into atoms when compared with the mighty spaces that lie between them. The fields of observation are wholly different; but it is by the very same trigonometry that we achieve the computation of the resulting triangles. And we again repeat that, sublime as the ascent may be from the facts or data of the one computation to those of the other, there is no gigantic or impracticable stride in their mathematics—that if able to trace certain curves in the page which lies before us, we are further able to scan the cycles of astronomy—that, widely apart as are the revelations of this wondrous science from the conceptions of our first and ordinary experience, yet grant but the facts, and it is by the dint of a familiar and ordinary mathematics, that the mind can ascend to them. It is thus that though in person we never stepped beyond the humble glen of our nativity, we may have that within the depository of our thoughts, which guides us to the certainties that be on the outskirts of creation. Within the little home of our bosom, there lie such principles and powers, as without one mile of locomotion are of as great avail, as if we could have traversed the infinities of space with the plumbline in our hand, or carried the torch of discovery round the universe. It does look a marvel and a mystery, how man is able to climb the steep and lofty ascent from the terrestrial to the celestial in Natural Philosophy. But it helps to resolve the mystery, when we thus advert to the distinction between the facts or objects of the science, and the mathematics of the science. It at least tells us what that is, wherein the transition from the one department to the other lies; and gives us to understand that, could we in any way ascertain by observation, certain of the motions and magnitudes that be-

long to the upper regions of astronomy, there is an instrument within our reach, by which we may come to the accurate determination of its laws.

18. And as with Natural, so with Moral Philosophy. The former hath its objects, whose properties are found by observation; and these objects have their mathematical relations, most of which are found without observation, by an abstract and solitary exercise of mind on the data which have been previously ascertained. There is a great difference between the terrestrial and the celestial physics, in regard to the way by which we arrive at the data. On the one field they are near at hand; and at all events do not lie beyond the confines of the globe which we inhabit. On the other field they have place and occupancy at an exceeding distance away from us. The eye in quest of them must lift itself above all earthly objects; and often beyond the ken of our natural vision, they would have been for ever unknown—had not the telescope, that powerful instrument of revelation, fetched them to the men of our world, from those far and hidden obscurities in which they had lain for ages. But whatever the difference may be between the terrestrial and the celestial physics, in regard to the way by which we arrive at their data—there is no such difference in regard to the way through which, by a mathematical process of reasoning, truths are educed from these data. It matters not whether they be the elements of some terrestrial survey, or the observed elements of some distant planet that have been committed to a formula, and made over to the investigations of the analyst. It was indeed a far loftier flight, when, in the capacity of an observer, he passed from the stations and the objects of a landscape below to those of the upper firmament. But there was no transition, at all corresponding to this, when passing from the mathematics of the one contemplation to the mathematics of the other. Even at the time when he labours to determine the form or the periods of some heavenly orbit, his mind is only in contact with the symbols of that formula, or with the lines and spaces of that little diagram, which is before his eyes. It is enough that the triangle which comprehends any portion however small of his paper, hath the same relations and properties with the triangle which comprehends any portion however large of immensity. It is enough that what is predicated of the line which extends but a few inches may also be predicated of the same line when prolonged to the outskirts of creation.

And thus it is, that after observation hath done its work and collected what may be styled the facts of Astronomy, there is a capability in the human spirit, and upon no other materials than what may lie within the compass of a table, to unravel the principles of its wondrous mechanism—and in the little chamber of thought, to elaborate a doctrine which shall truly represent the universe, and is realized in its most distant processes.

19. Now whence were the mathematics by which he made an achievement so marvellous—whence were these mathematics derived? For our purpose it is a sufficient answer to this question that he had not to go abroad for them. They may have enabled him to scan the cycles of heaven—but most certainly heaven's lofty concave is not the page from which his geometry was drawn. To obtain the necessary mathematics he has not to travel beyond the limits of his own humble apartment—and though in person he may have never wandered from the secluded valley that bounds his habitation, yet, such is the power of this home instrument, that it can carry him in thought through the remotest provinces of nature, and give him the intellectual mastery over them. He needs not have gone half a mile in quest of those conceptions which lie in little room within the receptacle of his bosom. There may have been some obscurely initial or rudimental business of observation at the outset of his mental history, ere his notions of a line or a number or a quantity were settled; but it is an observation that might have all been carried on within a cell or a hermitage: And the important thing to be remarked is, that these notions, of homeward growth and origin though they be, are available on the field of the celestial as well as on that of the terrestrial Physics—and that when once by observation the respective data of each are ascertained, the same mathematics are applicable to both.

20. And it is just so in Moral Philosophy. This science hath its objects that are ascertained by observation—and, apart from these, it hath its Ethics, in virtue of which it can assign the moral relations that subsist between these objects. The facts of the science are just as distinct from the ethics of the science, as the facts of Natural Philosophy are from the mathematics of Natural Philosophy. By observation we can know of certain particulars in the state, or of certain passages in the history of two human beings—and, not by means of any further observation, but by certain ethical principles and by these alone, we can pronounce on the moral relationship that is between them,

and on the proprieties of that relationship. Let us but know of any two men, that the one is a friendly and disinterested benefactor, and that the other is a dependant on his liberalities—or of the one that he is the generous lender, and of the other that he is the debtor who had promised and is now in circumstances to repay—or of the one that he is an injured party, and of the other that he is now a prostrate offender honestly offering every reparation, and pouring out from the sincerity of a contrite bosom the acknowledgments and the vows of a deep-felt repentance: these are the facts of so many distinct cases presented to view either by our own observation or by the credible testimony of others; and it is not by means of any further observation, it is not by the aid of any additional facts that we learn what be the moralities which belong to each of them. Observation, whether in Natural or in Moral Philosophy, furnishes only the data. It is by a mathematics in the one case, and by an ethics in the other, that we draw our conclusions from these data. The gratitude that we should render to a benefactor, the fidelity that we should observe with a creditor, the forgiveness that we should award to a penitent: these are not the lessons of observation any more than the axioms or the demonstrated truths of geometry. And as in Natural Philosophy we should distinguish between the facts of every question and its mathematics; so is there a similar distinction to be observed between the facts and the ethics of every question in Moral Philosophy.*

* While impressing the distinction between the ethics and the objects of Theology, it may be asked, Whence did our knowledge of the ethics originate—and how is it that they differ in respect of origination from our knowledge of the objects? We have already remarked that some rudimental, some obscurely initial process of observation, may, for aught we know, have been concerned in the first evolution whether of our ethical or our mathematical conceptions; but that after these conceptions had been formed, there was no further observation necessary on our part for the completion of the respective systems of these two sciences. It is very likely that had we never been in converse either by touch or sight with external substances, we might never have attained our present notions of position or direction or quantity; and so the principles of our mathematical nature might have lain in dormancy, and never been evolved. And it is just as likely that, had we never been in converse with other sentient creatures like ourselves, we might never have attained our present notions of equity or of other moral relations; and so the principles of our moral nature might have lain in dormancy too, and never been evolved. These principles are ultimate facts in the human constitution, not communicated to us from external objects, but called forth into actual and sensible exercise by the contact as it were and excitement of these objects. It was not the observation of things without us which deposited them in our minds; though apart from the observation of things without us, the principles, whether ethical or mathematical, might never have been awakened into action and have never been recognised. But whether observation gave these principles at the first, or only evolved them, it truly

21. This helps us to understand what the precise nature of the transition is, when we pass from the terrestrial to the celestial of moral science. We pass to other data ; but we have the same ethics—just as when in physical science we elevate our regards from the earth we tread upon to the sublime movements of astronomy, we pass to other data but have the same mathematics. He who can resolve a triangle whose angles are indivisible points on the parchment that lies before him, can resolve a triangle whose angles are planets in the firmament—and all that he requires to know are the facts or the objects of the celestial physics, to make his mathematics as available in that Natural Philosophy whose field is the heavens, as he may have already made them in that Natural Philosophy whose field is this lower world. In like manner he who can assign the proprieties of that relation which subsists between a dependent family and their earthly benefactor, can assign the proprieties of that relation which subsists between our whole species and their heavenly Benefactor. For this purpose he has no new ethics to

affects not either the reality or the importance of the distinction on which we have been insisting. Enough, that, some how or other, there be a mathematics in Natural Philosophy, which, without the aid of further observation, can, by a peculiar light of its own, guide the investigating spirit from one truth and discovery to another, and elicit doctrines that admit of application to thousands of the known objects in nature, and to an infinity of objects that are yet unknown ; and it is in like manner enough, that, some how or other, there be an ethics in Moral Philosophy, which, without the aid of further observation, can, by a peculiar light of its own, guide us from one moral doctrine to another, applicable alike to the existent beings that lie within the sphere of our knowledge, and to those, who, though at present without this sphere, may, on coming forth by revelation to our notice, call out the very regards and moral recognitions that already had long been familiar to us. The difference established by Dr. Whately between the truths which we receive by information and those which we receive by instruction, so far from being placed in opposition to these views, just serves to illustrate and confirm them. The truths of mere information have no logical dependence, the one upon the other ; and each is made known to us on a distinct and separate evidence of its own. It follows not, because there is a Jupiter, that there must be a Georgium Sidus ; and it requires an additional and independent act of observation to ascertain the existence of the latter. These informational truths, as they may be termed, form the proper objects of the Inductive Philosophy ; whereas the truths of instruction are come at, not by separate observations, but by development and deduction from certain primary and comprehensive propositions which virtually contain them ; but in which they lie wrapped and uneduced, till, by the processes whether of moral or mathematical reasoning, they are brought out in their own distinct individuality to view. And thus it is, that though it needs a new observation to tell us of that before unknown and existent object the Georgium Sidus—it needs not a new mathematics, to tell either the period of its revolution or the form of its orbit. Thus too though it be by an altogether new information that we come to know of the existent Being Jesus Christ ; it is not by a new ethics that we came to acknowledge the services which we owe, or the reverence and gratitude which of right belong to Him.

learn ; and all that he requires to know are the facts or the objects of this higher relationship—to make the ethics which he already has as available in that Moral Philosophy whose field is the heaven above, as he has already made them in that Moral Philosophy whose field is the earth below.

22. The celestial physics form a more transcendental theme than the terrestrial. But this character of the more transcendental lies only in the facts, and not at all in the mathematics. And so the celestial in Moral Philosophy is a more transcendental theme than the terrestrial—but this too lies only in the facts, and not at all in the ethics. To obtain the facts and data of the former science, a new and peculiar mode of discovery was struck out. The telescope was invented. Many of the objects were beyond the reach of our natural vision ; and nature was provided with an assistance—else there had been much of the celestial physics that would have remained for ever unknown. The same may, perhaps, hold of the celestial ethics also. Perhaps, there are many of its data that never could have been ascertained but by a peculiar mode of discovery. Perhaps the unaided faculties of man were incompetent to the task—and what the telescope hath done for us in respect of the material heavens, a living messenger may have done for us in respect of their moral and spiritual economy. It is a very wide transition when we pass from those distances in a terrestrial survey which can be measured by the chain, or at the farther extremities of which we can descry some floating signal that has been erected by human hands—when we pass from these through the mighty voids of immensity ; and across that interval which separates the rolling worlds from each other, can now by the aid of the telescope look on moons and planets that eye had not seen, nor ear heard of, neither had it entered into the heart of man to conceive. And it is also a wide transition when we pass from the terrestrial to the celestial objects of Moral Philosophy—from the living society around us, to the Great Unseen who is above us ; and of whom perhaps we could not have known save by the voice of a messenger from the pavilion of His special residence, who, in reference to the celestial ethics, hath done what the telescope hath done in reference to the celestial mechanics, hath brought out from the obscurity in which for ages they had lain, objects of which the world was before unconscious ; but to which when made known she is already furnished with a morality by which she can respond to them—even as when the new facts of

astronomy were presented to her view, she already had the mathematics by which she could draw from them the just and important applications. The telescope gave her no geometry, though it gave her the data of many a geometrical exercise. And thus it is that a teacher from heaven, even though he should confine himself to the revelation of such facts and objects as had been before wrapt from human eye in the depths of their own mysteriousness—though he should simply lift the veil from that which was before unseen; or by the notices that he brought with him from the Upper Sanctuary, should bring forward into view a spiritual landscape, which by its remoteness, was dim at least, if not altogether invisible—though he should not be the expounder of any new morality at all, might be the expounder of facts that would meet and call forth a doctrine, or a previous discernment of morality, which had been already in the world.

23. And thus as the movement from the terrestrial to the celestial, is in Natural, so is it also in Moral Philosophy. By this movement we look at other things, and perhaps do so by other instruments of vision. In the latter, more particularly, instead of our fellow-men, with whom we can hold immediate converse by the organs of sense, the great object is a Being whom no man hath seen at any time; but whom we either see by reflection from the mirror of His own workmanship, or see by revelation brought down to our earthly dwelling-places through a direct embassy from heaven.

24. And if on earth gratitude to a human benefactor is not unknown, and it be the universal sense of the species that there is virtue in the emotion—if truth, and goodness, and purity, when seen in a fellow-mortal, draw a homage from the heart of every observer—if within the bounds of our world, the obligations of honour, and humanity, and justice, are felt among those who live upon it; then let a new object be set forth to us from heaven, or perhaps an object seen but darkly before and now set forth in brighter manifestation—let Him be made known as the God whose hands did frame and fashion us, and whose right hand upholds us continually—let some new light be thrown upon His character and ways; some new and before unheard demonstration given of a holiness that can descend to no compromise with sin, and yet of a love that by all the sin of His creatures is unquenchable—let Him now stand out in the lustre of His high attributes, with each shedding a glory upon the other, yet mercy rejoicing over them all—let this Being, at once

so lovely and so venerable, be expounded to our view, as the Father of the human family, and as sending abroad upon that world which He hath so plenteously adorned, a voice of general invitation, that His wandering children might again return to his forgiveness, and He again be securely seated in the confidence and affection of them all—it needs not that there be super-added to our existing Ethics, some new principle, in order that we may be qualified to meet this new revelation which is addressed to us. From the nature of man as he is already constituted, there might go back a moral echo to Him who thus speaketh to them from heaven; and they might only need to look upon the now manifested Deity, that their hearts may feel the love, or their consciences may attest the obedience which are due to Him.

25. And there is nought to baffle our ethics in the infinity of God, or in the distance at which He stands from us. Only grant Him to be our benefactor and our owner; and on this relation alone do we confidently found our obligations, both of gratitude and of service;—just as there is nothing, either in the mighty distance or overbearing magnitude of the sun, that baffles our mathematics. The magnitude of quantity does not affect the relations of quantity. It only gives a larger result to the calculation. And the same is true of the moral relations. Though the Being who is the object of them, be exalted to the uttermost—though the beneficence which He has rendered outweigh indefinitely all that ever was conferred upon us by our fellow-men, there is nothing in this to disturb the conclusion that we owe Him a return. It only enhances the conclusion. It only swells proportionally the amount of the return—and, instead of some partial offering, it points to the dedication of all our powers, and the consecration of all our habits, as the alone adequate expressions of our loyalty. In ascending from the terrestrial to the celestial ethics, we come in view of more elevated gifts, and a more elevated giver—but the relation between the two elements, of good-will on the one hand, and of gratitude on the other, subsists as before—and the only effect of this ascent upon the morality of the question, is, that we are led thereby to infer the obligation of a still more sacred regard, of a still more dutiful and devoted obedience.

26. Observation may have been the original source of all our mathematics. My acquiescence in the axioms of Euclid may have been the fruit of that intercourse which I have had with

the external world by means of my senses; and but for the exercise of the eye or of the feelings on visible or tangible objects, I might never have obtained the conception of lines, or of figures bounded by lines. This may be true; and yet it is not less true that every essential or elementary idea of the mathematics may be acquired in early life, and with a very limited range of observation; and that we do not need to widen or extend this range—nay, that without the aid of one additional fact or experience, it is possible for the spirit of man to pass onward from the first principles of the science, and traverse all the fields both of geometry and analysis that have yet been explored. More particularly—with that little of observation which, for aught we know, might have been necessary ere we could conceive aright of one triangle—with that, and no more, might we master the many thousand properties of each individual in that infinity of triangles that could be furnished by the points innumerable of space—and so, while passing from one truth to another in the little diagram that is before me, I may, in fact, and without one particle of more light being borrowed from observation, be storing up in my mind the truths of a high and distant astronomy. And, in like manner, observation, it may be contended, is the original source of all our ethics, though I should rather say that it supplied the occasional cause for the development of our ethical faculties. But in either way, I must perhaps have seen an exemplification of kindness from one being to another, ere I could understand that gratitude was the emotion which ought to be rendered back again. But after having once gotten my conception and my belief of the virtue of this peculiar relationship—this will serve me for all the cases of Beneficence that shall ever afterwards come within my knowledge. The moral will admit of as wide and as confident an application as the mathematical—and only grant me to have ethics enough for perceiving that when between two fellow-men there is good-will on the one side, there ought to be gratitude on the other—and then simply with the information that God exists, and that He is a God of kindness, the very ethics which told me what I owe to a beneficent neighbour also tells me what I owe to a beneficent Deity.

27. We may thus learn what is the precise ascent which we make, in passing from the terrestrial to the celestial in Moral Philosophy. Let us distinguish between the objects of the science and the ethics of the science—and take notice that these two things stand related to each other, as do the objects of

Natural Philosophy to the mathematics of Natural Philosophy. It is well to understand that a revelation of new facts might of itself suffice for this transition from the lower to the higher department of the subject—and that we do not need to go in quest of new principles. We may perhaps feel relieved from the apprehension of some great and impracticable mystery in this progress—and, at all events, it is most desirable that we conceive aright what be the actual stepping-stones by which it is accomplished. In Natural Philosophy the revelations of the telescope have been superadded to the perceptions of the naked eye—and by this instrument what was before seen has been made more distinct, and there has been brought forth to notice what before was wholly invisible. Perhaps, too, in Moral Philosophy, a science which in its most comprehensive sense embraces all the discoverable relations of the moral world, some new and peculiar revelation hath been superadded to the powers and the perceptions of Nature—and by which, we both see brighter what before was seen but dimly, and there may have further been made known to us what to the unaided mind of man is wholly undiscoverable. But still they might mainly be the peculiar facts or peculiar data which constitute the peculiarities of the celestial, and distinguish it from the terrestrial of Moral Philosophy. It is in the facts and not in the ethics that the peculiarity lies.

28. The question then is—"What are the facts, and how are they accredited?" We already have an ethics suited to all the objects that we actually know—and that could be adapted to more objects on the moment of their being proposed to us. By the mathematics now in our possession, we could assign orbits corresponding to every possible law of attraction in astronomy. There is only one such law ascertained by observation; and the mathematical result of it is—the elliptic course of every planet that is within the reach of our instruments. Could we be made to know of the fact, that there is a gravitation of another rate in distant places of the universe, we are already furnished with the mathematics that would assign the path and periodical velocity of all the projectiles which are under it. Should a new satellite of Jupiter be discovered, the mathematics are at hand by which to assign the path that he ought to follow—and, to extend this remark from the physical to the moral world, should I be authentically made sure of the fact that there is a mystic influence between some certain inhabitant of that planet and myself, that in his breast there is a sympathy towards me, and in his hands

a power over me—that he hath an eye upon all my movements, and by the charm of some talisman in his possession, can read all the feelings and fluctuations of my bosom—that, withal, he is my watchful and unwearied friend, and that every opportune suggestion, whether of comfort in distress or of counsel in the midst of my perplexities, is but the secret whisper of his voice—this were a fact utterly beyond the range of all our present experience, yet if only ascertained to be a fact not beyond the range of our present and existing ethics—and the gratitude I should owe to this beneficent though unseen guardian of my walk is as sure a dictate of our known and established morality, as is the gratitude that I owe to the nurse who tended my infancy, or to the patron who led me step by step along the bright prosperity of my manhood.

29. To ascertain, then, whether there be indeed a celestial ethics we have to go in quest of facts, and not of principles. We have no new system of morality to devise. There are present capacities of moral judgment and emotion within our heart; and for the development of which the world that is immediately around us is crowded with the objects to which they respond. The question is, whether there are not such objects also out of our world—and which when so addressed to our understanding that we perceive their reality, do not furthermore so address our sense of duty, as to convince us of a something which we ought to feel, or of a something which we ought to do.

30. We are aware, that along with the total degeneracy of man, there has been a total darkness ascribed to him; but we feel quite assured that in the vagueness and vehemence wherewith this charge has been preferred, the distinction between the objects and the ethics of Theology has not been enough adverted to. There is no such blindness in respect to moral distinctions that there is in respect to objects placed beyond the domain of observation, and holding substantive existence in a spiritual and unseen world. It is true that there is diversity of moral sentiment among men—and that, along with the general recognition of one and the same morals in the various ages and countries of the world, there have been certain special and important modifications. These have so far been well accounted for by Dr. Thomas Brown in one of his Lectures upon this subject—and what he has said on the effect of passion in so blinding for a time the mind that is under its influence as to obscure its perceptions of moral truth, may apply to whole generations of men

unbridled in revenge or immersed in the depths of sensuality. Even the worst of these, however, will pronounce aright on the great majority of ethical questions—and should the power of profligacy or passion be from any cause suspended, if solemnized or arrested by the revelation of new objects from heaven, or (even without the intervention of aught so striking as this) if but withdrawn for a season from those influences which darken the understanding only because they deprave the affections, it is wonderful with how much truth of sentiment virtue is appreciated and the homage to virtue is felt. A thousand evidences of this could be extracted, not from the light and licentious, but certainly from the grave and didactic authorship both of Greece and Rome. And while beyond the limits of Christendom, all those peculiar revelations of the Gospel which relate either to past events or to existent objects are almost wholly unknown—we are persuaded that bosoms may be found which would do the homage of acknowledgment at least, if not of obedience, to its truth, and its purity, and its kindness, and its generous self-devotion all the world over.*

31. On this distinction between the objects and the ethics of Theology we should not have expatiated so long, had we not been persuaded of the important uses to which it may be turned in estimating the legitimacy and the weight of various sorts of evidence for the truth of religion; and, more especially, in helping us to mark the respective provinces which belong to the light of nature and the light of revelation. We sometimes hear of the application of the Baconian Philosophy to the Christian argument; and it is our belief that this Philosophy, so revered in modern times, and to which the experimental science of our day stands indebted for its present stability and gigantic elevation, does admit of most wholesome and beneficial application to the question between infidels and believers. But then we must so discriminate as to assign those places in the controversy where the Philosophy of Bacon is, and those where it is not applicable. It is of paramount authority on the question of facts or objects. On the question of ethics, again, it is not more admissible than on the question of mathematics. And by thus confining it within

* It is thus, that there is a pervading error in Leland's book on the Necessity of Revelation. There is not one trace, from beginning to end of it, of that discrimination which we have now been urging—nor do we remark in it any difference at all between the ignorance which springs from moral perversity and that which springs from mere intellectual deficiency. It is a book, however, that is worthy of perusal, though more for the exceeding fulness of its learned information, than for its just or enlightened principles.

its appropriate limits, we not only make a sounder application of it—but an application of it that we shall find to be greatly more serviceable to the cause.

32. Our first inference from this argument is, that even though the objects of Theology lay under total obscurity from our species—though a screen utterly impervious were placed between the mental eye of us creatures here below, and those invisible beings by whom heaven is occupied—still we might have an ethics in reserve, which, on the screen being in any way withdrawn, will justly and vividly respond to the objects that are on the other side of it. There might be a mathematics without Astronomy, but of which instant application can be made, on the existent objects of Astronomy being unveiled. And there may be a morals without Theology, that, on the simple presentation of its objects, would at once recognise the duteous regards and proprieties which belong to them. We often hear, in the general, of the darkness of nature. But a darkness in regard to the ethics might not be at all in the same proportion or degree as a darkness in regard to the objects of Theology. We can imagine the latter to be a total darkness, while the former is only a twilight obscurity; or may even but need a revelation of the appropriate facts to be excited into full illumination. There may be moral light along with the ignorance of all supernal objects, in which case there can be no supernal application. But yet, in reference to the near and palpable and besetting objects of a sublunary scene, this same light might be of most useful avail in the business of human society. It is thus that we understand the Apostle when speaking of the work of the law being written in the hearts of the Gentiles, and of their being a law unto themselves. It at least furnished as much light to the conscience as that they could accuse or else excuse each other. In this passage he concedes to nature the knowledge, if not of the objects of Theology, at least of the ethics. There might need perhaps to be a revelation ere any moral aspiration can be felt towards God—but without such a revelation, and without any regard being had to a God, there might be a reciprocal play of the moral feelings among men, a standard of equity and moral judgment, a common principle of reference alike indicated in their expressions of mutual esteem and mutual recrimination.

33. This, we think, should be quite obvious to those who are at all acquainted with the literature and history of ancient

times. It is true that ere all the phenomena even of pagan conscience and sensibility can be explained, we must admit the knowledge, or at least the imagination, of certain objects in Theology. But it is also true that apart from Theology altogether, with no other objects in the view of the mind than those which are supplied within the limits of our visible world and by the fellows of our species, there was a general sense of the right and the wrong—an occasional exemplification of high and heroic virtue with the plaudits of its accompanying admiration on the one hand—or, along with execrable villany, the prompt indignancy of human hearts, and execration of human tongues upon the other. We are not pleading for the practical strength of morality in those days,—though we might quote the self-devotion of Regulus, the continence of Scipio, and other noble sacrifices at the shrine of principle or patriotism. It is enough for our object, which is to prove, not the power of morality, but merely the sense and recognition of it—that the nobility of these instances was felt, that the homage of public acclamation was rendered to them, that historians eulogized and poets sung the honours of illustrious virtue. We are not contending for such a moral nature as could achieve the practice, but for such a moral nature as could discern the principles of righteousness. In short, there was a natural ethics among men, a capacity both of feeling and of perceiving the moral distinction between good and evil. The works of Horace and Juvenal, and above all of Cicero, abundantly attest this—nor are we aware of aught more splendid and even importantly true in the whole authorship of Moral Science than the following passage from the last of these writers:—“*Est quidem vera lex, recta ratio, naturæ congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna; quæ vocet ad officium jubendo, vetando a fraude deterreat; quæ tamen neque probos frustra jubet aut vetat, nec improbos jubendo aut vetando movet. Huic legi, nec abrogari fas est, neque derogari ex hac aliquid licet neque tota abrogari potest. Nec vero per senatum, aut per populum, solvi hac lege possumus, neque est quærendus explanator aut interpres ejus alius. Nec erit alia lex Romæ, alia Athenis—alia nunc, alia posthac; sed et omnes gentes, et omni tempore, una lex et sempiterna, et immortalis continebit; unusque erit communis quasi magister, et Imperator omnium Deus. Ille legis hujus inventor, disceptator, lator; cui qui non parebit, ipse se fugiet, ac naturam hominis asperuabitur; atque hoc ipso luet maximas pœnas, etiam si cætera supplicia quæ effugerit.*” Such is the

testimony of a heathen to the law within the breast—and armed too with such power of enforcement, that, apart from the retributions of a reigning and a living judge, man cannot offer violation to its authority without at the same time suffering the greatest of all penalties in the violence which he thereby offers to his own nature.

34. But though we have thus separated between the Ontology and the Deontology of the question, between man's knowledge of existences and his knowledge of duties, between the light by which he views the being of a God and the light by which he views the services and affections that we owe to Him—let it not be imagined that in conceding to nature the faculty of perceiving virtue, we concede to her such a possession of virtue, as at all to mitigate that charge of total and unexcepted depravity which the Scriptures have preferred against her. And neither let it be imagined that we even accredit her with such an unclouded perception of Ethics, as to leave nothing for revelation to do, but to superadd the knowledge of objects—so that on the simple information of what is truth, we could instantly and decisively follow it up with the conclusion of what is duty. We believe that Christianity not only addresses to the mind of her disciples objects which were before unknown, but quickens and enlightens them in the sense of what is right and wrong—making their moral discernment more clear, and their moral sensibility more tender.* But remember that Christianity herself presupposes this moral sense in nature—not however so as to alleviate the imputation of nature's worthlessness, but really and in effect to enhance it. Had nature been endowed with no such sense, all responsibility would have been taken away from her. Where there is no law there is no transgression; and it is just because men in all ages and in all countries are a law unto themselves, that the sweeping condemnation of Scripture can be carried universally round among the sons and daughters of our species.

35. This distinction in fact between the ethics and the objects of Theology will help us to defend aright the great Bible position of the depravity of our nature. It will lead us to perceive that there may be a morality without godliness, even as there may be a mathematics without astronomy. If we make proper discrimination, we shall acknowledge how possible it is that there may be integrity and humanity in our doings with each other—

* This subject will fall to be more thoroughly discussed in a Chapter on the Internal Existence of Christianity.

while the great unseen Being with whom we have most emphatically to do, is forgotten and disowned by us. We shall at length understand how, along with the play and reciprocation of many terrestrial moralities in our lower world, we may be dead, and just from our heedlessness of the objects, to all those celestial moralities by which we are fitted for a higher and a better world. We shall cease from a treacherous complacency in the generosity or uprightness of nature; and no longer be deceived, by the existence of social virtue upon earth, into the imagination of our most distant claim to that heaven, from the elevation and the sacredness of which all the children of humanity have so immeasurably fallen.

36. So far from the degree of natural light which we have contended for being any extenuation of human depravity, it forms the very argument on which the Apostle concluded that all, both Jews and Gentiles, were under sin. His inference from the universal possession of a conscience among men is, "so that they are without excuse." It is not because they are blind that they are chargeable—but it is because they to a certain extent see, that therefore their sin remaineth with them. We indeed think that the view which we have given may be turned to the defence of Orthodoxy, when the light of a man's conscience and the natural virtues of his life are pleaded in mitigation of that deep and desperate wickedness which is ascribed to him in the Bible. For it suggests this reply—There may be a mathematics without astronomy—there may be an Ethics without Theology. Even though the phenomena of the visible heavens are within the reach of human observation—yet, if we will not study them, we may still have a terrestrial geometry; but a celestial we altogether want, nay, have wilfully put away from us. And so also, we may be capable of certain guesses and discoveries respecting God—yet, if we will not prosecute them, we may still have a terrestrial morals, and yet be in a state of practical atheism. The face of human society may occasionally brighten with the patriotism and the generosity and the honour which reciprocate from one to another amongst the members of the human family—and yet all may be immersed in deepest unconcern about their common Father who is in heaven—all may be living without God in the world.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE DUTY WHICH IS LAID UPON MEN BY THE PROBABILITY OR EVEN
THE IMAGINATION OF A GOD.

1. WE have already seen that even though the Objects of Theology lay under total obscurity, there might be a distinct and vigorous play of the Ethics notwithstanding—kept in actual exercise among those objects which are seen and terrestrial, and in readiness for eventual exercise on the revelation of unseen and celestial objects. This, however, does not accurately represent the real state of nature—for in no age or country of the world, we believe, did the objects of Theology lie hidden under an entire and unqualified darkness. There is, in reference to them, a sort of twilight glimmering, more or less, among all nations—and the question is, What sort of regimen or responsibility may that man be said to lie under, whose sole guidance in Theology is that which a very indistinct view of its objects, though with certainly a more distinct sense of its ethics, may suggest?

2. This brings us to the consideration of the duty laid upon men by the probability or even the imagination of a God.

3. It must now be abundantly obvious, that along with nature's discernment of the ethics, she may labour at the same time under a comparative blindness as to the objects of Theological Science. On the hypothesis of an actually existent God, there may be an urgent sense in human consciences of the gratitude and the obedience which belong to Him. But still, while this ethical apprehension may be clear and vivid, there may be either a bright or a dull conviction in regard to the truth of the hypothesis itself. We should here distinguish the things which be distinct from each other; and carefully note that, along with a just discernment of the proprieties which belong to certain moral relations, the question may still be unresolved, whether these relations be in truth exemplified by any real and living beings in the universe. What is right under certain moral relations, supposing them to be occupied, is one consideration. What exists in nature or in the universe to occupy these relations is another. It does not follow that though nature should be able to pronounce clearly and confidently on the first of these topics, she can therefore pronounce alike confidently on the second of them.

The two investigations are conducted on different principles; and the two respective sorts of evidence upon which they proceed are just as different, as is the light of a mathematical demonstration from that light of observation by which we apprehend a fact or an object in Natural Philosophy. We have already conceded to nature the possession of that moral light by which she can to a certain, and we think to a very considerable extent, take accurate cognizance of the ethics of our science. And we have now to inquire in how far she is competent to her own guidance in seeking after the objects of the science.

4. The main object of Theology is God.

5. Going back then to the very earliest of our mental conceptions on this subject, we advert first to the distinction in point of real and logical import, between unbelief and disbelief. There being no ground for affirming that there is a God, is a different proposition from there being ground for affirming that there is no God. The former we apprehend to be the furthest amount of the atheistical verdict on the question of a God. The atheist does not labour to demonstrate that there is no God. But he labours to demonstrate that there is no adequate proof of there being one. He does not positively affirm the position, that God is not; but he affirms the lack of evidence for the position, that God is. Judging from the tendency and effect of his arguments, an atheist does not appear positively to refuse that a God may be—but he insists that He has not discovered Himself, whether by the utterance of His voice in audible revelation, or by the impress of His hand upon visible nature. His verdict on the doctrine of a God is only, that it is not proven. It is not that it is disproven. He is but an Atheist. He is not an Antitheist.

6. Now there is one consideration, which affords the inquirer a singularly clear and commanding position at the outset of this great question. It is this. We cannot, without a glaring contravention to all the principles of the experimental philosophy, recede to a further distance from the doctrine of a God, than to the position of simple atheism. We do not need to take our departure from any point further back than this, in the region of antitheism; for that region cannot possibly be entered by us but by an act of tremendous presumption, which it were premature to denounce as impious, but which we have the authority of all modern science for denouncing as unphilosophical. We can figure a rigidly Baconian mind, of a cast so slow and cautious and hesitating, as to demand more of proof ere it gave its con-

viction to the doctrine that there was absolutely and certainly a God. But, in virtue of these very attributes, would it, if a sincere and consistent mind, be at least equally slow in giving its conviction to the doctrine that there was absolutely and certainly not a God. Such a mind would be in a state neither for assertion nor for denial upon this subject. It would settle in ignorance or unbelief, which is quite another thing from disbelief. The place it occupied would be some mid-way region of scepticism—and if it felt unwarranted from any evidence before it that God is, it would at the very least feel equally unwarranted to affirm that God is not. To make this palpable, we have only to contrast the two intellectual states, not of theism and atheism, but of theism and antitheism—along with the two processes by which alone we can be logically and legitimately led to them.

7. To be able to say, then, that there is a God, we may have only to look abroad on some definite territory, and point to the vestiges that are given of His power and His presence somewhere. To be able to say that there is no God, we must walk the whole expanse of infinity, and ascertain by observation, that such vestiges are to be found nowhere. Grant that no trace of Him can be discerned in that quarter of contemplation which our puny optics have explored—does it follow that, throughout all immensity, a Being with the essence and sovereignty of a God is nowhere to be found? Because, through our loopholes of communication with that small portion of external nature which is before us, we have not seen or ascertained a God—must we therefore conclude of every unknown and untrodden vastness in this illimitable universe, that no Divinity is there?—Or because, through the brief successions of our little day, these heavens have not once broken silence, is it therefore for us to speak to all the periods of that eternity which is behind us; and to say, that never hath a God come forth with the unequivocal tokens of His existence? Ere we can say that there is a God—we must have seen, on that portion of Nature to which we have access, the print of His footsteps; or have had direct intimation from Himself; or been satisfied by the authentic memorials of His converse with our species in other days. But ere we can say that there is no God—we must have roamed over all nature, and seen that no mark of a Divine footstep was there; and we must have gotten intimacy with every existent spirit in the universe, and learned from each, that never did a revelation of the Deity visit him: and we must have searched, not into the re-

cords of one solitary planet, but into the archives of all worlds, and thence gathered, that, throughout the wide realms of immensity, not one exhibition of a reigning and living God ever has been made. Atheism might plead a lack of evidence within its own field of observation. But antitheism pronounces both upon the things which are, and the things which are not within that field. It breaks forth and beyond all those limits, that have been prescribed to man's excursive spirit, by the sound philosophy of experience; and by a presumption the most tremendous, even the usurpation of all space and of all time, it affirms that there is no God. To make this out, we should need to travel abroad over the surrounding universe till we had exhausted it, and to search backward through all the hidden recesses of eternity; to traverse in every direction the plains of infinitude, and sweep the outskirts of that space which is itself interminable; and then bring back to this little world of ours, the report of a universal blank, wherein we had not met with one manifestation or one movement of a presiding God. For man not to know of a God, he has only to sink beneath the level of our common nature. But to deny him, he must be a God himself. He must arrogate the ubiquity and omniscience of the Godhead.*

8. It affords a firm outset to this investigation, that we cannot recede a greater way from the doctrine to be investigated, than to the simple point of ignorance or unbelief. We cannot, without making inroad on the soundest principles of evidence, move one step back from this to the region of disbelief. We can figure an inquirer taking up his position in midway atheism. But he cannot, without defiance to the whole principle and

* This idea has been powerfully rendered by Foster in the following passage, extracted from one of his essays;—

"The wonder turns on the great process by which a man could grow to the immense intelligence that can know there is no God. What ages and what lights are requisite for this attainment! This intelligence involves the very attributes of Divinity, while a God is denied. For unless this man is omnipresent, unless he is at this moment in every place in the Universe, he cannot know but there may be in some place manifestations of a Deity by which even *he* would be overpowered. If he does not absolutely know every agent in the Universe, the one that he does not know may be God. If he is not himself the chief agent in the universe, and does not know what is so, that which is so may be God. If he is not in absolute possession of all the propositions that constitute universal truth, the one which he wants may be that there is a God. If he cannot with certainty assign the cause of all that he perceives to exist, that cause may be a God. If he does not know everything that has been done in the immeasurable ages that are past, some things may have been done by a God. Thus unless he knows all things, that is, precludes another Deity by being one himself, he cannot know that the Being whose existence he rejects, does not exist."

philosophy of evidence, make aggression thence on the side of antitheism. There is a clear intellectual principle, which forbids his proceeding in that direction; and there is another principle equally clear, though not an intellectual but a moral one, which urges him, if not to move, at least to look in the opposite direction. We are not asking him, situated where he is, to believe in God. For the time being, we as little expect a friendly as we desire a hostile decision upon the question. Our only demand for the present is, that he shall entertain the question. And to enforce the demand, we think that an effective appeal might be made to his own moral nature. We suppose him still to be an atheist, but no more than an atheist—for, in all right Baconian logic, the very farthest remove from theism at which he or any man can be placed by the lack of evidence for a God, is at the point of simple neutrality. We might well assume this point, as the utmost possible extreme of alienation from the doctrine of a Creator, to which the mind of a creature can in any circumstances be legitimately carried. We cannot move from it, in the direction towards antitheism, without violence to all that is just in philosophy; and we might therefore commence with inquiring, whether, in this lowest state of information and proof upon the question, there can be anything assigned, which should lead us to move, or at least to look in the opposite direction.

9. In the utter destitution, for the present, of any argument, or even semblance of argument, that a God is—there is, perhaps, a certain duteous movement which the mind ought to take, on the bare suggestion that a God may be. An object in moral science may be wholly unseen, while the Ethics connected with that object may not be wholly unfelt. The certainty of an actual God binds over to certain distinct and most undoubted proprieties. But so also may the imagination of a possible God—in which case, the very idea of a God, even in its most hypothetical form, might lay a responsibility, even upon atheists.

10. Here then is one palpable use for the distinction between the ethics and the objects of Theology, or between the Deontology and Ontology of it. We may have a moral nature for the one, even when in circumstances of utter blindness to the other. The mere conception of the objects is enough to set the ethics agoing. Though in the dark as to the question whether a God exists, yet on the bare imagination of a God, we are not at all in the dark as to the question of the gratitude and the obedience which are due to Him. There is a moral light in the midst of

intellectual darkness—an ethics that waits only for the presentation of the objects. The very idea of a God, even in its most hypothetical form, will bring along with it an instant sense and recognition of the moralities and duties that would be owing to Him. Should an actual God be revealed, we clearly feel that there is a something which we ought to be and to do in regard to Him. But more than this; should a possible God be imagined, there is a something not only which we feel that we ought, but a something which we actually ought to do or to be, in consequence of our being visited by such an imagination. The thought of a God not only suggests what would be our incumbent obligations, did such a Being become obvious to our convictions—but the thought of a God suggests what are the incumbent obligations which commence with the thought itself, and are anterior even to the earliest dawn of evidence for a Deity. We hold that there are such obligations; and our purpose now is, if possible, to ascertain them.

11. To make this palpable, we might imagine a family suffering under extreme destitution, and translated all at once into sufficiency or affluence by an anonymous donation. Had the benefactor been known, the gratitude that were due to him becomes abundantly obvious; and in the estimation of every conscience, nothing could exceed the turpitude of him who should regale himself on the bounties wherewith he had been enriched, and yet pass unheeding by the giver of them all. Yet does not a proportion of this very guilt rest upon him who knows not the hand that relieved him, yet cares not to inquire? It does not exonerate him from the burden of all obligation that he knows not the hand which sustains him. He incurs a guilt, if he do not want to know. It is enough to convict him of a great moral delinquency, if he have gladly seized upon the liberalities which were brought in secret to his door, yet seeks not after the quarter whence they have come—willing that the hand of the dispenser should remain for ever unknown, and not wanting any such disclosures as would lay a distinct claim or obligation upon himself. He altogether lives by the bounty of another; yet would rather continue to live without the burden of those services or acknowledgments that are due to him. His ignorance of the benefactor might alleviate the charge of ingratitude; but it plainly awakens the charge again, if he choose to remain in ignorance, and would shun the information that might dispel it. In reference then to this still undiscovered patron of his family,

it is possible for him to evince ingratitude; to make full exhibition of a nature that is unmoved by kindness and withholds the moral responses which are due to it, that can riot with utmost selfishness and satisfaction upon the gifts while in total indifference about the giver—an indifference which might be quite as clearly and characteristically shown, by the man who seeks not after his unknown friend, as by the man who slights him after that he has found him.

12. And further, this ingratitude admits of degrees. It may exist even in a state of total uncertainty as to the object of it; and without the smallest clue to the discovery of him. But should some such clue be put into his hand, and he forbear the prosecution of it—this would enhance the ingratitude. It were an aggravation of his baseness if there cast up some opening to a discovery, and he declined to follow it—if the probability fell in his way that might have guided him to the unseen hand which had been stretched forth in his behalf, and he shut his eyes against it—if he, satisfied with the bounty, were not merely content to live without the slightest notice of the benefactor, but lived in utter disregard of every notice that transpired upon the subject—loving the darkness rather than the light upon this question; and better pleased to grovel in the enjoyment of the gifts without the burden of any gratitude to that giver whom he rather wills to abide in secrecy. There is most palpable delinquency of spirit in all this; and it would become still more evident, should he distinctly refuse the calls that were brought within his hearing to prosecute an inquiry. The grateful man would not do this. He would be restless under the ignorance of him to whom he owed the preservation of his family. He would feel the uneasiness of a heart whose most urgent desire was left without its object. It is thus that, anterior to the knowledge of the giver, and far anterior to the full certainty of him—the moralities which spring from the obligation of his gifts might come into play. Even in this early stage, there is, in reference to him who is yet unknown, a right and a wrong—and there might be evinced either the worth of a grateful disposition, or there be incurred the guilt of its opposite. Under a discipline of penalties and rewards for the encouragement of virtue, one man might be honoured for the becoming sensibilities of his heart to one whom he never saw; and another be held responsible for his conduct to him of whom he utterly was ignorant.

13. It may thus be made to appear, that there is an ethics

connected with theology, which may come into play anterior to the clear view of any of its objects. More especially, we do not need to be sure of God, ere we ought to have certain feelings, or at least certain aspirations towards him. For this purpose we do not need fully and absolutely to believe that God is. It is enough that our minds cannot fully and absolutely acquiesce in the position that God is not. To be fit subjects for our present argument, we do not need to have explored that territory of nature which is within our reach; and thence gathered, in the traces of a designer's hand, the positive conclusion that there is a God. It is enough if we have not traversed, throughout all its directions and in all its extent, the sphere of immensity; and if we have not scaled the mysterious altitudes of the eternity that is past; nor, after having there searched for a divinity in vain, have come at length to the positive and the peremptory conclusion, that there is not a God. In a word, it is quite enough that man is barely a finite creature, who has not yet put forth his faculties on the question whether God is; neither has yet so ranged over all space and all time, as definitely to have ascertained that God is not—but with whom, though in ignorance of all proof, it still remains a possibility that God may be.

14. Now to this condition there attaches a most clear and incumbent morality. It is to go in quest of that unseen benefactor, who, for aught I know, has ushered me into existence, and spread so glorious a panorama around me. It is to probe the secret of my being and my birth; and, if possible, to make discovery whether it was indeed the hand of a benefactor that brought me forth from the chambers of nonentity, and gave me place and entertainment in that glowing territory which is lighted up with the hopes and the happiness of living men. It is thus that the very conception of a God throws a responsibility after it; and that duty, solemn and imperative duty, stands associated with the thought of a possible Deity, as well as with the sight of a present Deity, standing in full manifestation before us. Even anterior to all knowledge of God, or when that knowledge is in embryo, there is both a path of irreligion and a path of piety; and that law which denounces the one and gives to the other an approving testimony, may find in him who is still in utter darkness about his origin and his end, a fit subject for the retributions which she deals in. He cannot be said to have borne disregard to the will of that God whom he has found. But his is the guilt of impiety, in that he has borne disregard

to the knowledge of that God, whom he was bound by every tie of gratitude to seek after—a duty not founded on the proofs that may be exhibited for the being of a God, but a duty to which even the most slight and slender of presumptions should give rise. And who can deny that, antecedent to all close and careful examination of the proofs, there are at least many presumptions in behalf of a God, to meet the eye of every observer? Is there any so hardy as to deny, that the curious workmanship of his frame *may* have had a designer and an architect; that the ten thousand independent circumstances which must be united ere he can have a moment's ease, and the failure of any one of which would be agony, may not have met at random, but that there may be a skilful and unseen hand to have put them together into one wondrous concurrence, and that never ceases to uphold it; that there may be a real and a living artist, whose fingers did frame the economy of actual things, and who hath so marvellously suited all that is around us to our senses and our powers of gratification? Without affirming aught which is positive, surely the air that we breathe, and the beautiful light in which we expatiate, these elements of sight and sound so exquisitely fitted to the organs of the human framework, *may* have been provided by one who did benevolently consult in them our special accommodation. The graces innumerable that lie widely spread over the face of our world, the glorious concave of heaven that is placed over us, the grateful variety of seasons that, like Nature's shifting panorama, ever brings new entertainment and delight to the eye of spectators—these may, for aught we know, be the emanations of a creative mind, that originated our family and devised such a universe for their habitation. Regarding these, not as proofs, but in the humble light of presumptions for a God, they are truly enough to convict us of foulest ingratitude—if we go not forth in quest of a yet unknown, but at least possible or likely benefactor. They may not resolve the question of a God. But they bring the heaviest reproach on our listlessness to the question; and show that, anterior to our assured belief in his existence, there lies upon us a most imperious obligation to “stir ourselves up that we may lay hold of Him.”

15. Such presumptions as these, if not so many demands on the belief of man, are at least so many demands upon his attention; and then, for aught he knows, the presumptions on which he ought to inquire, may be more and more enhanced, till they brighten into proofs which ought to convince him. The *prima*

facie evidence for a God may not be enough to decide the question ; but it should at least decide man to entertain the question. To think upon how slight a variation, either in man or in external nature, the whole difference between physical enjoyment and the most acute and most appalling of physical agony may turn ; to think how delicate the balance is, and yet how surely and steadfastly it is maintained, so as that the vast majority of creatures are not only upheld in comfort, but often may be seen disporting themselves in the redundance of gaiety ; to think of the pleasurable sensations wherewith every hour is enlivened, and how much the most frequent and familiar occasions of life are mixed up with happiness ; to think of the food, and the recreation, and the study, and the society, and the business, each having an appropriate relish of its own, so as in fact to season with enjoyment the great bulk of our existence in the world ; to think that, instead of living in the midst of grievous and incessant annoyance to all our faculties, we should have awoke upon a world that so harmonized with the various senses of man, and both gave forth such music to his ear, and to his eye such manifold loveliness ; to think of all these palpable and most precious adaptations, and yet to care not whether in this wide universe there exists a being who has had any hand in them ; to riot and regale one's-self to the uttermost in the midst of all this profusion, and yet to send not one wishful inquiry after that Benevolence which, for aught we know, may have laid it at our feet—this, however shaded from our view the object of the question may be, is, from its very commencement, a clear outrage against its ethical proprieties. If that veil of dim transparency, which hides the Deity from our immediate perceptions, were lifted up ; and we should then spurn from us the manifested God—this were direct and glaring impiety. But anterior to the lifting of that veil, there may be impiety. It is impiety to be so immersed as we are, in the busy objects and gratifications of life, and yet to care not whether there be a great and a good spirit by whose kindness it is that life is upholden. It needs not that this great spirit should reveal Himself in characters that force our attention to Him, ere the guilt of our impiety has begun. But ours is the guilt of impiety, in not lifting our attention towards God, in not seeking after Him, if haply we may find Him.

16. Man is not to blame, if an atheist, because of the want of proof. But he is to blame, if an atheist, because he has shut his eyes. He is not to blame, that the evidence for a God has not

been seen by him, if no such evidence there were within the field of his observation. But he is to blame, if the evidence have not been seen, because he turned away his attention from it. That the question of a God may lie unresolved in his mind, all he has to do, is to refuse a hearing to the question. He may abide without the conviction of a God, if he so choose. But this his choice is matter of condemnation. To resist God after that He is known, is criminality towards Him; but to be satisfied that He should remain unknown, is like criminality towards Him. There is a moral perversity of spirit with him who is willing, in the midst of many objects of gratification, that there should not be one object of gratitude. It is thus that, even in the ignorance of God, there may be a responsibility towards God. The Discerner of the heart sees whether, for the blessings innumerable wherewith He has strewed the path of every man, He be treated like the unknown benefactor who was diligently sought, or like the unknown benefactor who was never cared for. In respect, at least, of desire after God, the same distinction of character may be observed between one man and another—whether God be wrapt in mystery, or stand forth in full development to our world. Even though a mantle of deepest obscurity lay over the question of his existence, this would not efface the distinction between the piety on the one hand which laboured and aspired after Him, and the impiety upon the other which never missed the evidence that it did not care for, and so grovelled in the midst of its own sensuality and selfishness. The eye of a heavenly witness is upon all these varieties; and thus, whether it be darkness or whether it be dislike which hath caused a people to be ignorant of God, there is with him a clear principle of judgment, that He can extend even to the outfields of atheism.

17. It would appear then, that, however shaded from the view of man are the objects of Theology, as in virtue of his moral nature he can feel and recognise in some degree the ethics of Theology—even in this initial state of his mind on the question of a God, there is an impellent force upon the conscience, which he ought to obey, and which he incurs guilt by resisting. We do not speak of that light which irradiates the termination of the inquirer's path, but of that embryo or rudimental light which glimmers over the outset of it; which serves at least to indicate the commencement of his way; and which, for aught he knows, may brighten, as he advances onwards, to the blaze of a full and finished revelation. At no point of this progress,

does "the trumpet give an uncertain sound," extending, if not to those who stand on the ground of antitheism (which we have already pronounced upon, and we trust proved to be madly irrational)—at least to those who stand on the ground of atheism, who, though strangers to the conviction, are certainly not strangers to the conception of a Deity. It is of the utmost practical importance, that even these are not beyond the jurisdiction of an obvious principle; and that a right obligatory call can be addressed to men so far back on the domain of irreligion and ignorance. It is deeply interesting to know, by what sort of moral force, even an atheist ought to be evoked from the fastness which he occupies—what are the notices, by responding to which, he should come forth with open eyes and a willing mind to this high investigation; and by resisting which, he will incur a demerit, whereof a clear moral cognizance might be taken, and whereon a righteous moral condemnation might be passed. The "fishers of men" should know the uttermost reach of their argument; and it is well to understand of religion, that, if she have truth and authority at all, there is a voice proceeding from her which might be universally heard—so that even the remotest families of earth, if not reclaimed by her, are thereby laid under sentence of righteous reprobation.

18. On this doctrine of the moral dynamics, which operate and are in force, even in our state of profoundest ignorance respecting God, there may be grounded three important applications.

19. The first is, that all men, under all the possible varieties of illumination, may nevertheless be the fit subjects for a judicial cognizance—insomuch that when admitted to the universal account, the Discerner of the heart will be at no loss for a principle on which they all might be reckoned with—as, corresponding to a very dim perception of the objects of religion, there might still be as much in operation of the ethics of religion as might lay a distinct responsibility even on the most wild and untutored of nature's children. Within the whole compass of the human family there exists not one outcast tribe that might not be made the subjects of a moral reckoning at the bar of heaven's jurisprudence—even though no light from the upper sanctuary hath ever shone upon them; and neither hath any light of science or of civilisation sprung up among themselves. In each untutored bosom there do exist the elements of a moral nature; and the peculiar character of each could be seen from the way in which

it responded to the manifestation of a Deity. And though only visited by the thought or the suspicion of a Deity, the same thing still could be seen from the way in which these children of nature were affected by it. Each would give his own entertainment to the thought; and, in the longings of a vague and undefined earnestness that arose to heaven from the solitary wild, might there be evinced as strong an affinity for God and for godliness, as in those praises of an enlightened gratitude that ascend from the temples of Christendom. It is thus that the Searcher of the inner man will find out data for a reckoning among all the tribes of this world's population—and that nowhere on the face of our globe doth spiritual light glimmer so feebly as not to supply the materials of a coming judgment on one and all of the human family.

20. It is thus that even to the most remote and unlettered tribes, men are everywhere the fit subjects for a judgment-day. Their belief, scanty though it be, hath a correspondent morality which they may either observe or be deficient in, and so be reckoned with accordingly. They have few of the facts in Theology; and these may be seen too through the hazy medium of a dull and imperfect evidence, or perhaps have only been shadowed out to them by the power of imagination. Their theology may have arisen no higher than to the passing suggestion of a God—a mere surmise or rumination about an unseen spirit, who, tending all their footsteps, was their guardian and their guide through the dangers of the pathless wilderness, who provides all the sustenance which this earth can supply, and hath lighted up these heavens in all their glory. Now in this thought, fugitive though it be, in these uncertain glimpses whether of a truth or of a possibility, there is that to which the elements of their moral nature might respond—so that to them, there is not the same exemption from all responsibility, which will be granted to the man who is sunk in hopeless idiotism, or to the infant of a day old. Even with the scanty materials of a heathen creed, a pure or a perverse morality might be grounded thereupon—whether, in those longings of a vague and undefined earnestness that arise from him who feels in his bosom an affinity for God and godliness; or, in the heedlessness of him who, careless of an unknown benefactor, would have been alike careless, although He had stood revealed to his gaze, with as much light and evidence as is to be had in Christendom. These differences attest what man is, under the dark economy of Paganism; and so give

token to what he would be, under the bright economy of a full and finished revelation. It is thus that the Searcher of the heart will find out data for a reckoning, even among the rudest of nature's children, or among those whose spiritual light glimmers most feebly—for faint and feeble though it be, it affords a test to the character of him whom it visits—whether he dismiss its suggestions with facility from his mind, or is arrested thereby into a grateful sense of reverence. Even the simple theology of the desert can supply the materials of a coming judgment—so that the Discerner of the inner man, able to tell who it is that morally acts and morally feels up to the light he has, or up to the objects that lie within his contemplation, will be at no loss for a principle on which He might clearly and righteously try all the men of all the generations that be upon the face of the earth.

21. We read in the Epistle to the Romans of a day when God shall judge the secrets of men—both of the Jews who shall be judged by the written law, and of the Gentiles who have the work of the law written in their hearts, and are a law to themselves. We may now perhaps comprehend more distinctly how this may be. Though it be true that the more clearly we know God, the more closely does the obligation of godliness lie upon us—yet there might be none so removed from the knowledge of God as to stand released from all obligation. There is the sense of a Divinity in every mind; and correspondent to that sense, there is a morality that is either complied with by the will or rebelled against—so that under all the possible varieties of illumination and doctrine which obtain in various countries of the world, there might be exemplified either a religiousness or an impiety of character. The heavenly witness who is on high can discern in every instance—whether to the conception of a great invisible power that floats indistinctly in many a bosom, but is nowhere wholly obliterated, there be such duteous regards of the heart or such duteous conformities of the life as morality would dictate, and out of this question can be gathered materials for a cognizance and a reckoning with all. The Searcher of hearts knows how to found a clear and righteous judgment even on those moral phenomena that are given forth by men in the regions of grossest heathenism—and though the condemnation will fall lightest where the ignorance has been most profound, and at the same time involuntary; yet none we think of our species are so deeply immersed in blindness of faculty about God, as that he might not be sisted at the bar of

heaven's jurisprudence, and there meet with a clear principle of condemnation to rest upon him.

22. The second important bearing of this principle is on the subject of religious education. For what is true of a savage is true of a child. It may rightly feel the ethics of the relation between itself and God, before it rationally apprehends the object of this relation. Its moral may outrun its argumentative light. Long anterior to the possibility of any sound conviction as to the character or existence of a God, it may respond with sound and correct feeling to the mere conception of Him. We hold that, on this principle, the practice of early, nay even of infantine religious education, may, in opposition to the invectives of Rousseau and others, be fully and philosophically vindicated. Even though the object should be illusory, still on this low supposition there is no moral deterioration incurred, but the contrary, by an education which calls forth a right exercise of the heart, even to an imaginary being. But should the object be real, then the advantage of that anticipative process by which it is addressed to the conception of the young, before it can be intelligently recognised by them, is, that though it do not at once enlighten them on the question of a God, it at least awakens them to the question. Though they are not yet capable of appreciating the proofs which decide the question, it is a great matter that, long before they have come to this, they can feel the moral propriety of giving it solemn and respectful entertainment. Anterior to a well-grounded belief in the objects of religion, there is a preparatory season of religious scholarship, commencing with childhood and reaching onward through successive stages in the growth of intellect—a very early and useful season of aspirations and inquiries prompted by a sense of duty even to the yet unknown God. Here it is, that the ethics of our science and the objects of our science stand most noticeably out from each other—for, at the very time that the objects are unknown, there is an impellent force upon the spirit, of a clear ethical dictate, enjoining us to acquire the knowledge of them.

23. And this early education can be vindicated not only on the score of principle, but also on the score of effect. Whether it properly illuminates or not, it at least prepares for those brighter means of illumination which are competent to a higher state of the understanding. If it do not rationally convince, it at least provides a responsibility, though not a security for that attention which goes before such a conviction. It does not con-

summate the process; but, in as far as the moral precedes the intellectual, it makes good the preliminary steps of the process—insomuch that, in every Christian land, the youth and the manhood are accountable for their belief, because accountable for their use or their neglect of that inquiry, by which the belief ought to have been determined. There is no individual so utterly a stranger to the name and the conception of a Divinity as to be without the scope of this obligation. They have all from their infancy heard of God. Many have been trained to think of Him, amidst a thousand associations of reverence. Some, under a roof of piety, have often lisped the prayers of early childhood to this unseen Being; and, in the oft-repeated sound of morning and evening orisons, they have become familiar to His name. Even they who have grown up at random through the years of a neglected boyhood, are greatly within the limits of that responsibility for which we plead. They have at least the impression of a God. When utterance of Him is made in their hearing, they are not startled as if by the utterance of a thing unnoticed and unknown. They are fully possessed, if not with the certainty, at least with the idea, of a great eternal Sovereign whose kingdom is the universe, and on whose will all its processes are suspended. Whosoever may have escaped from the full and practical belief of such a Being, he most assuredly hath not escaped from the conception of Him. The very imprecations of profaneness may have taught it to him. The very Sabbaths he spends in riot and blasphemy at least remind him of a God. The worship-bell of the church he never enters, conveys to him, if not the truth, at least an imagination of the truth. In all these ways, and in many more beside, there is the sense of a God upon his spirit—and if such a power of evidence hath not been forced upon his understanding as to compel the assurance that God is—at least such intimations have been given, that he cannot possibly make his escape from the thought that a God may be. In spite of himself, this thought will overtake him, and if it do not arrest him by a sense of obligation, it will leave guilt upon his soul. It might not make him a believer, but it ought to make him an inquirer—and in this indifference of his there is the very essence of sin—though it be against a God who is unknown.

24. And thirdly, we may thus learn to appreciate the plea on which the irreligious of all classes in society would fain extenuate their heedlessness—from the homely peasant who alleges his

want of scholarship, to the gay and dissipated voluptuary who, trenched in voluntary darkness, holds himself to be without the pale of a reckoning, because he demands a higher evidence for religion than has ever yet shone upon his understanding. This antecedency of the ethics, not to the conception, but at least to the belief of the objects, places them all within the jurisdiction of a principle—the violation of which brings guilt and danger in its train. Instead of waiting till the light of an overpowering manifestation shall descend upon their spirits, it is their part to lift up their attention to the light which is offered. It will not exempt them from blame that they have never found the truth which would have saved them—if their own consciences can tell that in good earnest they have never sought it. Their heedlessness about an unknown though possible God, is just the moral perversity that would make them heedless of a God who had been fully ascertained—and, rudely unsettled though they may deem their Theology to be, it may be enough to make them responsible for deepest seriousness about God; and if they want this seriousness, enough to convict them of most glaring impiety. This principle tells even at the outset of a minister's dealings with the most rustic congregations; and, all ignorant as they may be of the proofs by which religion is substantiated, there is still even in their untutored minds such an impression of probability, as, if not sufficient to decide the question, should at least summon all their faculties to the respectful entertainment of it.

25. We may thus perceive what that is, on which a teacher of religion finds an introduction for his topic, even into the minds of people in the lowest state both of moral and intellectual debasement. They may not have that in them, at the outset of his ministrations, which can enable them to decide the question of a God; but they have at least that in them, which should summon their attention to it. They have at least such a sense of the divinity, as their own consciences will tell, should put them on the regards and the inquiries of moral earnestness. This is a clear principle which operates at the very commencement of a religious course; and causes the first transition, from the darkness and insensibility of alienated nature, to the feelings and attentions of seriousness. The truth is, that there is a certain rudimental theology everywhere, on which the lessons of a higher theology may be grafted—as much as to condemn, if not to awaken the apathy of nature. What we have already said of the relation in which the father of a starving household

stands to the giver of an anonymous donation, holds true of the relation in which all men stand to the unseen or anonymous God. Though in a state of absolute darkness, and without one token or clue to a discovery, there is room for the exhibition of moral differences among men—for even then all the elements of morality might be at work, and all the tests of moral propriety might be abundantly verified; and still more, after that certain likelihoods had arisen, or some hopeful opening had occurred for investigating the secret of a God. There is the utmost moral difference that can be imagined between the man who would gaze with intense scrutiny upon these likelihoods, and the man who either in heedlessness or aversion would turn his eyes from them; between the man who would seize upon such an opening and prosecute such an investigation to the uttermost, and the man who either retires or shrinks from the opportunity of a disclosure, that might burden him both with the sense and with the services of some mighty obligation.

26. And the same moral force which begins this inquiry, also continues and sustains it. If there be power in the very conception of a God to create and constitute the duty of seeking after Him, this power grows and gathers with every footstep of advancement in the high investigation. If the thought of a merely possible Deity have rightfully awakened a sense of obligation within us to entertain the question; the view of a probable Deity must enhance this feeling, and make the claim upon our attention still more urgent and imperative than at the first. Every new likelihood makes the call louder, and the challenge more incumbently binding than before. In proportion to the light we had attained, would be the criminality of resisting any further notices or manifestations of that mighty Being with whom we had so nearly and so emphatically to do. Under the impulse of a right principle, we should follow on to know God—till, after having done full justice both to our opportunities and our powers, we had made the most of all the available evidence that was within our reach, and possessed ourselves of all the knowledge that was accessible.

27. But we shall expatiate no longer on the popular and practical applications of this principle—all-important though they be; and will only now advert to the distinction between the ethics and the objects of Theology, for the purpose of elucidating by a very obvious analogy the relation in which the Natural and the Christian Theology stand to each other.

28. And first, it is obvious that in virtue of our moral nature, such as it is, there might be a feeling of certain moral proprieties as appendant to certain relations between man and man, without any recognition by the mind of God. Though the world were to be transported beyond the limits of the divine economy—though the Supreme were now to stamp a perpetuity upon its present laws both of physical and mental nature, and then to abandon it for ever—though He were to consign it to some distant and solitary place in a reign of atheism, only leaving untouched the outward accommodations by which man is now surrounded, and the internal mechanism which he carries in his bosom—let there be no difference but one, namely, that all sense of a ruling Divinity were expunged, but that with this exception all the processes of thought and imagination and feeling went on upon their old principles—still would there be a morality among men, a recognition of the difference between right and wrong, just as distinct and decided as a recognition of the difference between beauty and deformity. There would be nought in such a translation of the human family to this new state that could break up the alliance between a view of loveliness in scenery, and the tasteful admiration of it; or between a view of integrity in character and the approval of its worth or its rectitude. By the supposition that we now make, the taste is left entire—and it has only to be presented with the same objects that it may be similarly affected as before. And by the same supposition, the moral nature is left entire—and it has only to be presented with the appropriate objects, that it may respond to them as it did before, and come forth with its wonted evolutions. The single difference is, that one object is withdrawn, that God henceforth is unheeded and unknown, that he is never present to the eye of the mind so as to call forth from the heart a sense of corresponding duty. But still in the utter absence of all thought and of all knowledge about God, there are other objects whereon, with the human constitution unchanged, the moral feeling and the moral faculty would find their appropriate exercise. There would still be the reciprocations of morality among men—the same relationship as before between injury and a sense of displeasure—between beneficence and a sense of gratitude—between a consciousness of guilt, towards a neighbour, if not towards God, between this consciousness and the pain of self-dissatisfaction—between the exposure of human villany or baseness upon the one hand and the out-

cries of public execration on the other. The voice of the inward monitor would still be heard. The voice of society whether in applause or condemnation would still be heard. Men would still continue to accuse or else to excuse each other. The whole system of our jurisprudence might remain as at present—and, superadded to it, there would be a court of conscience and, a court of public opinion, by which, even after the world had been desolated of all sense of God, a natural regimen of morality might still be upholden.

29. Let a mathematician retain his geometrical powers and perceptions entire; and though he should become an atheist, he will still apprehend a question of equality between one line and another. And let any one retain his moral powers and perceptions entire; and though he should become an atheist, he will still apprehend a question of equity between one man and another. Atheism does not hinder the resentment which he feels upon a provocation; neither does it hinder the instinctive sensibility which he feels at the sight of distress; neither does it hinder the quick and lively approval wherewith he regards an exhibition of virtue; nor yet the recoil of his adverse moral judgment with all its emotions of antipathy from some scene of perfidy or of violence. Though utterly broken loose from heaven, there would still be the same play of action and reaction upon earth. Both the obligation of a legal right, and the approbation of a moral rightness would continue to be felt—and as in the chamber of a man's own heart there would be a remorse upon the back of iniquity as before, and from the tribunal of society there would descend upon it a voice of rebuke as before—the obligations of morality would still have a meaning; and apart from the thought of God, there would be a sense as well as an understanding of moral obligation.

30. With the access which the geometrician has at present to the orbs and the movements which be on high—his mathematics do avail him for the computations of a sublime astronomy. Let this access be barred; and still his mathematics would avail him as before for all terrestrial positions and distances. And so with the access which either peasant or philosopher has to the knowledge of God, his morals do avail for pointing out the incumbent gratitude and the incumbent obedience. Let this access be somehow intercepted, let the face of the Divinity be mantled in thickest darkness, insomuch that the very conception of Him were banished from our world; and still would there remain a

sublunary morals that would take cognizance of the sublunary relationships as before. The astronomer in the one case might sink down into a landed surveyor. The aspiring candidate for heaven, in the other case, might sink down into a mere citizen of earth—yet there would be a surviving mathematics and also a surviving morals. The distinction between the right and the wrong would no more be obliterated by such an interception of our view towards the upper sanctuary, than the distinction between the east and the west would be cancelled by the destruction of the telescope, and the disappearance of all its wondrous revelations from the memory of our species. The earth that we tread upon would still continue to be a platform for the display and exercise of the moral proprieties—and as it was in the age of Greece and Rome, the period of a distorted theology, so would it be now in the period of an utterly extinct theology—virtue would be felt in its rightness, and also be felt in the obligation of it.

31. When Sir Isaac Newton was first made to know of the satellites of Jupiter, he had not an essentially new mathematics to learn that he might evolve the law of their movements. The only novelty lay in the facts, and not in the principles that he brought to bear upon them. The geometry which guided him along these celestial orbs was the very same by which he traced the path of a projectile on the surface of our own planet; and to obtain a just estimate of those mazy heavens that now were opened to his view, he had only to transfer the mathematics which he before had to another set of data. And it is the very same with the revelations of a higher moral, as with those of a higher physical economy. It is a revelation not of new principles, but of new objects addressed to our old principles. The very ethics that had been long in frequent and familiar exercise about the things within our knowledge, are available for such things as are now offered for the first time to our contemplation—even though our eye had not before seen, nor our ear heard, nor yet it had ever entered into our hearts to conceive of them. The very ethics that dictate our gratitude to an earthly benefactor, dictate also the transcending gratitude; the sublimer devotion that we owe to the benefactor who sitteth on high—just as the arithmetic which assigns the units of an earthly, is the same with that which assigns the millions of a distance that is heavenly. It is thus that the revelations of heaven meet with a law already written in the hearts of men upon earth—and so in the whole morality of that relationship which subsists between

men and their Maker, do we meet with analogies to the morality of men who live without God in the world.

32. Thus there is a natural philosophy which, when conversant with earthly objects alone, may be denominated the Science of Terrestrial Physics. And in like manner there is a moral philosophy which, when conversant with earthly objects alone, as with the various beings who occupy this globe, may be denominated the Science of Terrestrial Ethics.

33. But even within the cognizance of man's natural eye, there are heavenly objects whose paths and movements can be traced by him ; and so be made the subject of mathematical description and mathematical reasoning. When he lifts himself to the contemplation of them, he enters on the confines of a science distinct from the former, though comprehended with it under the general title of Natural Philosophy—even what may be called the science of the Celestial Physics. In as far as he prosecutes this science without the aid of instruments for the enlargement of his vision, he may be said to study the lessons of natural astronomy. There was such an astronomy prior to the invention of the telescope ; and even still, the limits could be assigned between those truths or doctrines of the whole science of astronomy which lie within the ken of the natural eye, and those that lie without the ken of the natural eye, but within the ken of the telescope.

34. And so truly of moral philosophy. Within the natural eyesight of the mind, there may be clearly perceived—not alone those objects of the science which are placed immediately around us upon earth ; but there may also be perceived, though dimly and hazily we allow, one heavenly object of the science. The light of nature reaches more or less a certain way into the region of celestial ethics ; and so there is a natural theology which, however dull or imperfect the medium through which it is viewed, presents us with something different from a total obscuration. There is a book of observation open to all men, in whose characters, indistinct though they be, we may read, if not the signals, at least the symptoms of a Divinity—and which, if not enough for the purpose of our seeing, are at least enough to make us responsible for the direction in which we are looking. The doctrines of this natural theology may not bear the decided impress of verities upon them—so that as the conclusions of a full and settled belief they may not be valuable. But they at least stand forth in the aspect of verisimilitudes—so that as calls to

attention and further inquiry they are highly valuable. There was such a theology prior to the Christian revelation—and even still there is a real, though not perhaps very definable limit between those truths of the whole science of theology which lie within the ken of nature, and those which lie without the ken of nature, but within the ken of revelation.

35. And lastly, the telescope hath immeasurably extended the dominion of astronomical science. Objects, though before within the limits of vision yet descried but faintly, have had vivid illumination shed upon them; and an immensity teeming with secrets before undiscoverable hath been evolved on the contemplation of men. A world hath been expanded into a universe; and natural astronomy shrinks into a very little thing, when compared with that mighty system which the great instrument of modern revelation hath unfolded. What an injustice to this noble science, on the part of one of its expounders—did he limit himself to the information of the eye, and forbear every allusion to the powers or informations of the telescope. What a creeping and inadequate representation could he bring forth of it, if with no other materials than the phenomena of vision, he was barred either by ignorance of the telescope, or by a wilful contempt for its performances, from the glories of the higher astronomy.

36. This consummates the analogy. By what may be termed an instrument of discovery too, a spiritual telescope, the science of Theology has been extended beyond its natural dimensions. By the word of God, the things of Heaven have been brought nigh to us; and the mysteries of an ulterior region, impalpable to the eye of man, because utterly beyond its reach, have been opened to his view. It is that boundary where the light of nature ends and the light of revelation begins, which marks the separation between the respective provinces of Moral Philosophy and the Christian Theology. In demonstrating the credentials of Scripture we authenticate as it were the informations of the telescope. In expounding the contents of Scripture we lay before you the substance of these informations. We affirm the vast enlargement which has thence accrued to Theology; from both the richness and the number of those places in the science to which man has been thereby introduced, and that otherwise would have been wholly inaccessible. There are men who can glory in the discoveries of modern science, and feel contemptuously of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet so meagre truly is their academic theism, notwithstanding the pomp of its demonstra-

tions—that to suppress the doctrines of the Gospel were to inflict the same mutilation on the high theme of the celestial ethics, as astronomy would undergo by suppressing the informations of the telescope.

37. We should not have expatiated at such length on this distinction between the Ethics and the Objects of Theology—had we not felt urged by the paramount importance of a principle which should be made as plain as may be to every understanding. And it is thus, that from the very embryo of thought or feeling on the subject of religion, and in the rudest possible state of humanity, there is what may be called a moving moral force on the spirit of man which, if he obey, will conduct him onward through successive manifestations, to what in his circumstances is a right state of belief in religion—and which if he resist, will supply the subject-matter of his righteous condemnation. It should be made obvious that, in no circumstances whatever, he is beyond the pale of Heaven's jurisprudence; and that whether or not he have light for the full assurance of his understanding, he has light enough to try his disposition towards God—both to prompt his desire towards Him, and give direction to his inquiries after Him. Even on the lowly platform of the Terrestrial Ethics this principle comes into operation; and in virtue of it, every mind which feels as it ought, and aspires as it ought, will be at least set in motion and come to all the light which is within its reach. "He that doeth truth," says the Saviour, "cometh to the light." He that is rightly affected by the Ethics of the question, cometh to the Objects: and thus an entrance is made on the field of the Celestial Ethics, and possession taken by the mind of at least one section of it—Natural Theology. But after this is traversed, and the ulterior or revealed Theology has come into prospect, we hold that the same impulse which carried him onwards to the first will carry him onwards to the second. We shall therefore resume the consideration of this principle after that we have ended our exposition of the natural or the academic theism. And next in importance to the question, "What are those conclusive proofs on the side of Religion which make it our duty to believe?" is the question, "What are those initial presumptions which make it our duty to inquire?"

38. It is impossible to say how much or how little of evidence for a God may lie in these first surmisings, these vague and shadowy imaginations of the mind respecting Him. They serve a great moral purpose notwithstanding—whether when enter-

tained and followed out by man they act as an impellent to further inquiry, or when resisted they fasten upon him the condemnation of impiety. An argument for the existence of a Divinity has been grounded on the fact of such being the universal impression. We may not be able precisely to estimate the argument; but this affects not the importance of the fact itself, as being a thing of mighty subservience to the objects of a Divine administration—bringing a moral force on the spirits of all men, and so bringing all within the scope of a judicial reckoning. This applies indeed to the whole system of Natural Theology. It may be of invaluable service, even though it fall short of convincing us. We may never thoroughly entertain the precise weight or amount of its proofs. But this does not hinder their actually being of a certain and substantive amount, whereupon follows a corresponding amount or aggravation of moral unfairness in our resistance of them—known to God though unknown to ourselves. Enough if it be such as to challenge our serious attention, though it may not challenge our full and definite belief—and whether Natural Theology has to offer such a proof on the side of religion as enables us absolutely to decide the question, yet high is the function which it discharges if it offer such a precognition as lays upon us the duty of further entertaining it.

39. For, after having traversed the field of Natural Theology and come to the ulterior margin of it, it will be found that though ignorant of all which is before us in Christianity, there will still be the same moving force carrying us forward to its investigations, as that which now makes it morally imperative upon us to prosecute the inquiry after God. If it be morally incumbent on us now to follow out the faintest incipient notices of a Deity, it will be equally incumbent on us then to follow out the same notices of a professed, if at all a likely messenger from the sanctuary of His special dwelling-place. Now this is precisely what we shall come within sight of, after having finished the lessons of natural theism. There will then be offered to our observation a certain historical personage, bearing at least such a creditable aspect and such verisimilitude of a divine commission, that we cannot without violence to the ethical principles of the subject bid it away from our mind by an act of summary rejection. In the revealed, as well as in the natural religion, there is a *prima facie* evidence which, if not amounting to a claim on our belief, at least amounts to a claim on our attention. There

may not *instanter* be put into our hands the materials of a valid proof, so as to challenge all at once from us a favourable verdict. But there will at least be put into our hands the materials of a valid precognition, so as to challenge from us a fair trial. It may not announce itself; and what question whether in science or in history ever does so?—it may not announce itself as worthy of our immediate conviction; but it will announce itself as worthy of an immediate hearing. If there be not so much at the very first, of the certainty of truth, as shall compel us to receive; there will at least be as much of the semblance of truth as should compel us to listen and to look after. And whether one looks to that expression of moral honesty which sits on the character and sayings of Jesus Christ, or casts a regard, however rapid and general, on the testimony and the sufferings and the apparent worth of those who followed in His train; and after this forbears a closer inquiry—he incurs the same delinquency of spirit which we have already charged upon him who can step abroad with open eye among the glories of the creation, yet remain unmoved by any desire of gratitude or even of curiosity to the question of a Creator.

40. But there is one special advantage which we should not omit noticing in our study of the Natural prior to our study of the Christian argument. It may not prepare us for justly estimating the outward credentials of the embassy—but it will enable us to recognise other credentials in the very substance and contents of the embassy. After, in fact, that the theology of the schools has done its uttermost, it but lands us in certain desiderata which, if not met and not satisfied, leave nothing to humanity but the utmost destitution and despair. But if, on the other hand, these desiderata are met by the counterpart doctrines of Christianity—if the unresolved problems of the one theology do find their solution and their adjustment in the revelations of the other theology, one cannot imagine a more inviting presumption in favour of Christianity—a presumption which may at length brighten into an overwhelming proof: and thus furnish conviction to a man who, though a perfect stranger to all erudition and history, may find enough of evidence struck out between his Bible and his conscience to light him on his path. This is an internal evidence—the rudimental lessons of which we are in fact learning while we study the lessons of natural theology—a system which, with all its defects, performs a very high preliminary function—seeing that, by its dim and dawning

probabilities, if not the obligation to believe, at least the obligation to inquire, is most rightfully laid upon us; and, that out of its very imperfections, an effective argument may be drawn in favour of that higher theology, in whose promises and truths every imperfection of nature meets with its appropriate and all-sufficient remedy.

41. Whether, then, at the commencement of the one inquiry or of the other, let us enter upon it in the spirit so admirably delineated by Seneca in the following sentence:—"Si introimus templa compositi, si ad sacrificia accessuri vultum submittimus, si in omne argumentum modestiæ fingimur; quanto hoc magis facere debemus, cum de sideribus, de stellis, de natura deorum disputamus, nequid temere, nequid impudenter, aut ignorantes affirmemus, aut scientes mentiamur."

CHAPTER III.

OF THE METAPHYSICS WHICH HAVE BEEN RESORTED TO ON THE SIDE OF THEISM.

DR. CLARKE'S A PRIORI ARGUMENT ON THE BEING OF A GOD.

1. ALL have heard of the famous *a priori* argument of Dr. Clarke—an argument which Dr. Reid does homage to as the speculation of superior minds; but whether it be as solid as it is sublime, he professes himself wholly unable to determine.*

2. On this subject Dr. Thomas Brown is greatly more confident. "I conceive," he tells us, "the abstract arguments which have been adduced to show that it is *impossible* for *matter* to have existed from eternity—by reasoning on what has been termed *necessary existence*, and the incompatibility of this *necessary existence* with the qualities of matter—to be relics of the mere *verbal logic* of the schools, as little capable of producing conviction as any of the wildest and most absurd of the technical scholastic reasonings, on the properties, or supposed properties, of entity and non-entity."

3. But let us not dismiss an argument, which so deeply infused what may be called the Theistical Literature of England for the first half of the last century, without some examination.

* "These," says Dr. Reid, "are the speculations of men of superior genius—but whether they be solid as they are sublime, or whether they be the wanderings of imagination into a region beyond the limits of the human understanding, I am unable to determine."

4. What, then, we hold to be the first questionable assumption in the reasonings of Dr. Clarke, is that by which he appears to confound a physical with either a logical or mathematical necessity. We feel no difficulty in conceding to him the necessary existence of that which has existed from eternity—and that the necessity for its existence resides in itself and not in anything apart from itself. That which has been created by something else both came into being, and continues, we may also admit, to be, in virtue of a power that is without it; and it is to this power, exoteric to itself, that we have to look for the ground both of its first and its abiding existence. But the thing which has existed for ever must also have some ground on which it continues to be, rather than that it should not be, or go to annihilation; and this ground on which at present it continues to be, must be the same with the ground on which it continued to be at any past moment. But if it never had a beginning, this ground or principle of existence must have been from everlasting—the present ground, in fact, on which it continues to exist, having abidden with it through the whole of its past eternity as the ground on which it exists at all. But as we are not to look for this ground in the fiat of another, it must be looked for in the necessity of its own nature—it contains within itself the necessity for its own existence.

5. Now what is the inference which Dr. Clarke has drawn from this necessity? The word is applied to speculative truths as well as to substantive things. The truth of a proposition is often necessarily involved in the terms of it, or in the definition of these terms—just as the properties of a circle lie surely enveloped in the description of a circle. Nay, a proposition may be so constructed that the opposite thereof shall involve at first sight a logical absurdity, so that this opposite cannot possibly be apprehended, or even imagined by the mind. Its truth is necessarily bound up in the very terms of it. It may be said to contain its own evidence within itself, or rather to contain within itself the necessity of its being admitted among the existent truths of Philosophy. The mind cannot, though it would, put it forth of its own belief; or, in other words, put it forth of the place which it occupies within the limits of necessary and universal truth. Now this test of a logical or mathematical necessity in the existent truths of speculation, he would make also the test of a physical necessity in the existent things of substantive and actual Nature. He confounds, we think, a logical

with an actual impossibility. Inasmuch that if the conception of the non-existence of any actual thing involve in it no logical impossibility, then that thing is not necessarily existent. He applies the same test to the things of which it is alleged that they necessarily exist, as to the propositions of which it is alleged that they are necessarily true. He holds that if things do necessarily exist, we cannot conceive this thing not to be—just as when propositions have in them an axiomatic certainty, we cannot conceive these things not to be true. And so, on the other hand, if we can conceive any existent thing not to be, than that thing exists but does not exist necessarily. It has not the ground of its existence in itself—even as a necessary truth has its evidence or the ground of its trueness in itself. And therefore the ground of its existence must be in another beside itself. It must have had a beginning. It must not have existed from eternity.

6. It will be at once seen how, when furnished with such an instrument of demonstration as this, he could, on the strength of a mere logical category, go forth on the whole of this peopled universe and pronounce of all its matter and of all mind but the one and universal mind that they have been created. We can conceive them not to exist—and this without any of that violence which is felt by the mind, when one is asked to receive as true that which carries some logical or mathematical contradiction on the face of it. "The only true idea," he says, "of a self-existent or necessarily existing Being, is the idea of a Being the supposition of whose not existing is an express contradiction." "But the material world," he afterwards says, "cannot possibly be such a being"—for "unless the material world exists necessarily, by an absolute necessity in its own nature, so as that it must be an express contradiction to suppose it not to exist; it cannot be independent and of itself eternal."* This argument is reiterated in the following terms—" 'Tis manifest the material world cannot exist necessarily, if without a contradiction we can conceive it either not to be or to be in any respect otherwise than it now is." He proceeds all along on the assumption that there is no necessity in the substantive existence of things, unless the denial of that existence involves a logical contradiction in terms. Nay, if without such contradiction we can imagine any variation in the modes or forms of matter from those which

* This and the other extracts from Clarke, given within inverted commas, are quotations from his "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God."

obtain actually, this is enough with him to expel from matter the property of self-existence. Ere we can award to matter this property, "it must," he says, "be a contradiction in terms to suppose more or fewer stars, more or fewer planets, or to suppose their size, figure, or motion, different from what it now is, or to suppose more or fewer plants and animals upon the earth, or the present ones of different shape and bigness from what they now are." At this rate, it will be observed, if we can imagine only five planets and without any such contradiction as that three and four make five—this of itself is proof that the actual state of the planetary system, or the actual state of matter whereof this system is a part, is not a necessary state, and so matter is not necessarily self-existent. In like manner the motion of matter is held not to be necessary, because it is no contradiction in terms to suppose any matter to be at rest. Thus throughout, our powers or possibilities of conception within, are with him the measures or grounds of inference as to the realities of Being without. He denies the necessary existence of matter, merely because we can conceive it not to exist; and the necessity of motion, because we can conceive of other directions to it than those which obtain actually; and a necessity for the actual order, or number, or figure of material things, because without logical absurdity we can conceive of them variously. The necessary trueness of eternal truths may be discovered thus, that in the terms of that proposition which affirmed their non-trueness there would be contradiction. And so he would have it that the necessary existence of eternal things may be discovered thus, that in the terms of that proposition which affirmed their non-existence there would be the like contradiction. And therefore when the opposite of any existent thing can be imagined without such contradiction, it exists not necessarily—nor is it of itself eternal. The logical is made to be identical with, or made to be the test and the measure of, the actual or the physical necessity. The one is confounded with the other; and this we hold to be the first fallacy of the *a priori* argument.

7. On the strength of this fallacy, the puny mind of man hath usurped for itself an intellectual empire over the high things of immensity and eternity—subjugating the laws of nature throughout all her wide amplitudes to the laws of human thought—and finding as it were within the little cell of its own cogitations the means of an achievement so marvellous, as that of pronouncing alike on all the objects of infinite space, and on all the events of

infinite duration. Because I can imagine Jupiter to be a sphere instead of a spheroid; and no logical absurdity stands in the way of such imagination—therefore Jupiter must have been created. Because he has only four satellites, whilst I can figure him to have ten; and there is not the same arithmetical falsity in this supposition, as in that three and one make up ten—therefore all the satellites must have had a beginning. Because I can picture of matter that it might have been variously disposed, that its motions and its magnitudes and its forms may have been different from what they are, and that space might have been more or less filled by it—because there is not, in short, a universal *plenum* all whose parts are immoveably at rest—in this Dr. Clarke beholds a sufficient ground for the historical fact that a time was when matter was not, or at least that to the power of another beside itself, it owes its place and its substantive being in our universe. We must acknowledge ourselves to be not impressed by such reasoning. For aught I know, or can be made by the light of nature to believe—matter may, in spite of those its dispositions which he calls arbitrary, have the necessity within itself of its own existence—and yet that be neither a logical nor a mathematical necessity. It may be a physical necessity—the ground of which I understand not, because placed transcendently above my perceptions and my powers—or lying immeasurably beyond the range of my contracted and ephemeral observation.

8. But we have only touched on what may be called the negative part of the *a priori* argument—that by which matter is divested of self-existence. Thence, on the stepping-stone of actual matter, existent though not self-existent, might we pass by inference to a superior and antecedent Being from whom it hath sprung. But this were descending to the *a posteriori* argument—whereas the high pretension is, that in the light of that same principle which enables the mind to discard from all matter the property of self-existence, may it without the intervention of any derived or created thing lay immediate hold on the truth of a self-existent God. This forms what we might call the positive part of the *a priori* argument. The truth is, if matter be not self-existent, because the supposition of its non-existence involves in it no felt and resistlessly felt contradiction; then the supposition of the non-existence of that which really is a self-existent Being must involve in it such a contradiction. “This necessity must,” to use the language of Dr. Clarke, “force itself

upon us whether we will or no, even when we are endeavouring to suppose that no such Being exists." This is the same principle on which we have animadverted already; but there appears, we think, to be a second and a distinct fallacy involved in the application of it. What is that in the whole compass of thought, whose existence must force itself upon the mind—and whose non-existence involves that contradiction which the mind with all its efforts cannot possibly admit into its belief. The answer is, space and time. We can imagine matter to be swept away, and the space which it occupies to be left behind. But we cannot imagine this space to be swept away. We cannot suppose either immensity or eternity to be removed out of the universe, any more than we can remove the relation of equality between twice two and four. "To suppose," he adds, "immensity removed out of the universe, or not necessarily eternal, is an express contradiction." "To suppose any part of space removed, is to suppose it removed from and out of itself; and to suppose the whole to be taken away, is supposing it be taken away from itself—that is, to be taken away while it still remains, which is a contradiction in terms." The language of Sir Isaac Newton to the same effect is—"Moveantur partes Spatii de locis suis, et movebuntur (ut ita dicam) de seipsis." Here then is a something, if you choose thus to designate either of the elements of space or time—here is a something which fulfils what is affirmed to be the essential condition of necessary existence. Its non-existence involves a contradiction which the mind cannot possibly receive; and its existence is forced upon the mind by a necessity as strong as either any logical or any mathematical.

9. Now it is at the transition which the argument makes from the necessary existence of space and time to the necessary existence of God, that we apprehend the second fallacy to lie. Eternity and immensity, it is allowed, are not substances—they are only attributes, and, incapable as they are of existing by themselves, they necessarily suppose a substantive Being in which they are inherent. "For modes and attributes," says Dr. Clarke, "exist only by the existence of the substance to which they belong." The denial, then, of such a Being is held to be tantamount to the denial both of infinite space and of everlasting successive duration—and so such denial involves contradiction in it. It is with him a contradiction in terms to assert no immensity and no eternity; and to suppose that there is no Being in the universe to which these attributes or modes

of existence are necessarily inherent is also a contradiction in terms. Now, it is here we think that the *non-sequitur* lies. We do not perceive how boundless space and boundless duration imply either a material or an immaterial substratum in which these may reside as but the modes or qualities. We can conceive unlimited space, empty, and empty for ever, of all substances whether material or immaterial—and we see neither logical nor mathematical impossibility in the way of such a conception. We do not feel with Dr. Clarke that the notion of immense space, as if it were absolutely nothing, is an express contradiction. Nor do we feel aught to convince in the scholastic plausibility of such sentences as the following:—"For nothing is that which has no properties or modes whatever. That is to say, it is that of which nothing can truly be affirmed, and of which everything can truly be denied, which is not the case of immensity or space." In spite of this, we can imagine no eternal and infinite Being in the universe—we can imagine an infinite nothing; nor do we feel that in so doing, we imagine eternity and immensity removed out of the universe, while they at the same time still continue there. There is nothing, it appears to us, in this scholastic jingle about modes and substances that leads by any firm or solid pathway to the stupendous conclusion of a God. Both Space and Time can be conceived without a substance of which they are but the attributes—nor is it at all clear that these modes imply a substantive Being to which they belong.*—Now the mainstay of the *a priori* argument is, that Eternity and Immensity are modes—and as we cannot rid ourselves of the conception of a stable existence in the modes, so neither therefore can we rid ourselves of the conception of an existent substance to which these modes belong. We repeat that we have no faith in the product of such excogitation as this—and should as little think of building upon it a system of Theism, as we should of subordinating the realities of History or Nature to the mere technology of Schoolmen.

10. However interesting, then, the modesty of Dr. Reid on the subject of the *a priori* argument, yet we cannot but regard the deliverance of the younger metaphysician, Thomas Brown, as greatly the sounder of the two—although in it, perhaps, there

* Sir Isaac Newton seems to have penned the following sentences of a Scholium Generale under some such conception as this:—"Deus non eternitas et infinitas, sed eternus et infinitus; non duratio vel spatium, sed durat et adest, et existendo semper et ubique durationem et spatium, eternitatem et infinitatem constituit."

is a certain air of confident temerity, especially as he only pronounces on the defects of the argument without expounding them. And if any futile or inconclusive argument have been devised for the support of religion, it a real service to discard it from the controversy altogether. It is detaching an element of weakness from the cause. A doctrine stands all the more firm when placed on a compact and homogeneous basis—instead of resting on a pedestal which, like the feet of Nebuchadnezzar's image, is partly of clay and partly of iron. Let us be assured that a weak or a wrong reason is not only not an accession, but is a positive mischief to the interests of truth—a mischief, indeed, which Dr. Brown has well adverted to in the following sentences:—"Still more superfluous must be all those reasonings with respect to the existence of the Deity, from the nature of certain conceptions of our mind, independent of the phenomena of design, which are commonly termed reasonings *a priori*, reasonings that, if strictly analyzed, are found to proceed on some assumption of the very truth for which they contend, and that, instead of throwing additional light on the argument for a Creator of the universe, have served only to throw on it a sort of darkness, by leading us to conceive that there must be some obscurity in truths which could give an occasion to reasonings so obscure. God, and the world which He has formed—these are our great objects. Everything which we strive to place *between* these is *nothing*. We see the universe, and, seeing it, we believe in its Maker. It is the universe, therefore, which is our argument, and our only argument; and as *it* is powerful to convince us, God *is*, or is *not*, an object of our belief." And again—"The arguments commonly termed *metaphysical*, on this subject, I have always regarded as absolutely void of force, unless in so far as they proceed on a tacit assumption of the physical argument, and, indeed, it seems to me no small corroborative proof of the force of this physical argument, that its remaining impression on our mind has been sufficient to save us from any doubt, as to that existence, which the obscure and laborious reasonings, *a priori*, in support of it, would have led us to *doubt*, rather than to *believe*."*

11. We shall not go over the whole unsatisfactory metaphysics of that period, and whereof Dr. Clarke is far the ablest advocate and expounder. For the sake of our intellectual discipline, it is well, however, to familiarize ourselves with his celebrated

* Brown's Lectures, xcii. and xciii.

demonstration, which though in effect vitiated by the one or two assumptions that we have specified, is nevertheless an admirable specimen of close and consecutive reasoning. It is not to be marvelled at, that possessed of such dialectic powers, he should have tinged with his own spirit almost all the authorship of natural theology at that period—till at length, in the impotent hands of his followers and imitators, it wrought itself out of all credit when unaccompanied by those redeeming qualities which buoyed up the performance of this great master, and has perpetuated its character as a standard and classical work, even to the present day. The whole of the Boyle lectureship, for example, was for many years deeply infused by it. Bentley, so able in other departments, presents us in his sermons on the subject, with what we should call, a perfect caricature of this *a priori* extravagance. It even deforms, at times, the pages of Foster, who is the most eloquent, and perhaps the best writer of that age on natural religion. As to Abernethy, we hold his book, in spite of the high character which was affixed to it some half century ago, as so utterly meagre and insipid, that one cannot without the slackening of all his mental energies, accomplish the continuous perusal of it—and therefore it really matters not what quarter he gives, in his pages of cold and feeble rationality, to the *a priori* argument. It is of more consequence to be told that it is an argument patronized by Wollaston, who, in his “Religion of Nature Delineated,” imitates Clarke in making our ignorance of the *Quomodo* the foundation of a positive argument. “If matter,” he says, “be self-existent, I do not see how it comes to be restrained to a place of certain capacity—how it comes to be limited in other respects—or why it should not exist in a manner that is in all respects perfect.” And just because *he sees not how*—therefore matter *must* derive its existence from some other being who causes it to be just what it is. Because we do not see the reason why matter should have been placed here and not there in immensity—because we cannot tell the specific cause of its various forms, and modifications, and movements—because of our inability to explore the hidden recesses of the past—and so to find out the necessary ground, if aught there is, for the being and the properties of every planet and of every particle—are we therefore to infer, that there is no such ground, and for no better reason than that just by us it is undiscoverable? The reasoning of Wollaston comes to this—Because we do not see how matter came to be restrained to a

particular place—therefore, it must not have been so restrained by an eternal necessity. Our own inference would have been diametrically the opposite of this. Because we see not how, we should say not how. It is a strange argument to found, as Clarke and Wollaston have done, on the impotence and incapacity of the human mind, that its very ignorance should authorize it to sport such positive and peremptory dogmata as have been advanced by them on the high mysteries of primeval being and primeval causation.

12. Dr. Clarke's style of reasoning upon this subject, has now fallen into utter disesteem and desuetude. He himself disclaims the old scholastic methods of argumentation, while there is much of his own that now ranks with the impracticable subtleties of the Middle Ages. He deals in the categories of a higher region than that which is at all familiar to human experience—and we fear that when he attempts to demonstrate the non-eternity of matter, and that to spirit alone belong the attributes of primeval necessity and self-existence, he leaves behind him that world of sense and observation within which alone the human mind is yet able to expatiate. After the modest declaration of Dr. Reid, it may be presumptuous in us to pass upon this argument a summary and confident rejection. But we may at least confess the total want of any impression which it has made upon our understanding—and that with all our partialities for the *argumentum a posteriori*, we hold it with Paley greatly more judicious, instead of groping for the evidence of a Divinity among the transcendental generalities of time, and space, and matter, and spirit, and the grounds of a necessary and eternal existence for the one, while nought but modifications and contingency can be observed of the other—we hold it more judicious simply to open our eyes on the actual and peopled world around us—or to explore the wondrous economy of our own spirits, and try if we can read, as in a book of palpable and illuminated characters, the traces or the forth-goings of a creative mind anterior to, or at least distinct from matter, and which both arranged it in its present order and continues to overrule its processes.

13. Nevertheless, let us again recommend the perusal of Clarke's Demonstration. One feels himself as if placed by it on the border of certain transcendental conceptions, the species of an ideal world, which men of another conformation may fancy, and perhaps even see to be realities. And certain it is, that the very existence of such high thoughts in the mind of man may be

regarded as the presentiment or promise of a high destination. So that however unable to follow out the reasonings of Clarke or Newton, when they convert our ideas of infinity and eternity into the elements of such a demonstration as they have bequeathed to the world—nothing, we apprehend, can be more just or beautiful than the following sentences of Dugald Stewart, when he views these ideas as the earnest of our coming immortality:—"Important use may also be made of these conceptions of immensity and eternity, in stating the argument for the future existence of the soul. For why was the mind of man rendered capable of extending his views in point of time, beyond the limit of human transactions; and, in point of space, beyond the limits of the visible universe—if all our prospects are to terminate here; or why was the glimpse of so magnificent a scene disclosed to a being, the period of whose animal existence bears so small a proportion to the vastness of his desires? Surely this conception of the necessary existence of space and time, of immensity and eternity, was not forced continually upon the thoughts of man for no purpose whatever? And to what purpose can we suppose it to be subservient, but to remind those who make a proper use of their reason of the trifling value of some of those objects we at present pursue, when compared with the scenes on which we may afterwards enter; and to animate us in the pursuit of wisdom and virtue, by affording us the prospect of an indefinite progression?"*

14. Before leaving this subject, we would remark on what may be called a certain subordinate application of the *a priori* argument—not for the demonstration of the being, but for the demonstration of the attributes of God. Dr. Clarke himself admits the impossibility of proving the divine intelligence in this way—though, with this exception, he attempts an *a priori* proof for the other natural attributes of the Godhead—and the argument certainly becomes more lucid and convincing as he carries it forward from these to the other attributes. The goodness, the truth, the justice of the Divinity, for example, may not only be inferred by an ascending process of discovery from the works and the ways of God—but they are also inferred by a process of derivation from the power, and the unity, and the wisdom. From the amplitude of His natural, they infer the equal amplitude of His moral characteristics,—judging Him superior to falsehood, because He is exempted from the temptations to weakness;

* Stewart's Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers. Vol. i. p. 336.

and to malignity, because exempted from the temptations to rivalry; and to caprice, because in the perfection of His wisdom there is the full guarantee for His doing always what is best. We give these merely as specimens of a style of reasoning which we shall not stop to appreciate—and instead of attempting any further to excogitate a Deity in this way, let us now search if there be any reflection of Him from the mirror of that universe which He has formed. It may be a lowlier—but we deem it a safer enterprise—instead of groping our way among the incomprehensibles of the *a priori* region, to keep by the certainties which are spread out before us on the region of sense and observation—to look at the actual economy of things, and thence gather as we may, such traces of a handiwork as might announce a designer's hand—to travel up and down on that living scene which can be traversed by human footsteps, and gazed at with human eyes—and search for the impress, if any there be, of the intelligent power that either called it into being, or that arranged the materials which compose it.

15. But our examination of the *a priori* reasoning will not be thrown away—if it guide our attempts to separate the weak from the strong parts of the Theistical argument. More especially it should help us to discriminate between the inference that is grounded on the true existence of matter, the inference that is grounded on the orderly arrangements of matter. The argument for the being of a God drawn from the former consideration, tinged as it is throughout with the *a priori* spirit, we hold to be altogether mystical and meaningless—inasmuch that for the doctrine of an original creation of matter we hold it essential that the light of revelation should be superadded to the dull and glimmering light, or rather perhaps to the impenetrable darkness of nature. We agree with Dr. Brown in thinking “that matter as an unformed mass, existing without relation of parts, would not of itself have suggested the notion of a Creator—since in every hypothesis something material or mental must have existed uncaused, and since existence, therefore, is not necessarily a mark of previous causation, unless we take for granted an infinite series of causes.” In the mere existence of an unshapen or unorganized mass, we see nothing that indicates its non-eternity or its derivation from an antecedent mind—while on the other hand, even though nature should incline us to the thought that the matter of this earth and these heavens was from everlasting, there might be enough in the goodly dis-

tribution of its parts to warrant the conclusion that Mind has been at work with this primeval matter, and at least fetched from it materials for the structure of many a wise and beneficent mechanism. It is well that Revelation has resolved for us the else impracticable mystery, and given us distinctly to understand, that to the fiat of a great Eternal spirit, matter stands indebted as well for its existence and its laws, as for its numerous collocations of use and of convenience. We hold that without a Revealed Theology we should not have known of the creation of matter out of nothing, but that by dint of a Natural Theology alone we might have inferred a God from the useful disposition of its parts. It is good to know what be the strong positions of an argument and to keep by them—taking up our intrenchments there—and willing to relinquish all that is untenable. It is not the way to advance but really to discredit the cause of Natural Theology, when set forward by its injudicious defenders to an enterprise above its strength. Nothing satisfactory can be made of those obscure and scholastic generalities by which matter is argued to be incongruous with Eternity; and that therefore, itself originated from nothing, it must have a creative mind for the antecedent not of its harmonies and adaptations alone but of its substantive Being. We should like a firmer stepping-stone than this by which to arrive at the conclusion of a God. For this purpose we would dissever the argument founded on the phenomenon of the mere existence of matter, from the argument founded on the phenomenon of the relations between its parts. The one impresses the understanding just as differently from the other, as a stone of random form lying upon the ground impresses the observer differently from a watch. The mere existence of matter, in itself, indicates nothing. They are its forms and its combinations and its organic structures which alone speak to us of a Divinity—just as it is not the clay but the shape into which it has been moulded that announces the impress of a Designer's hand. The metaphysical argument which we should like to discard from this controversy wants altogether to our mind the character of obviousness. We can afford to give it up. It is truly a dead weight upon the cause. It is like seeking for the indications of an artist's hand in the rude and raw material upon which he operates—when we might behold them at once in the finished work of those exquisite fabrications which hold forth irresistibly the marks of contrivance, and so of a contriver.*

* Let us here present the following short and judicious extract from Dr. Fiddes's work,

16. In combating an argument for a doctrine, we are not therefore combating the doctrine itself. Dr. Clarke has failed, we think, in his attempt to demonstrate the non-eternity of matter—but it follows not that because we have attempted to expose this failure, we advocate the eternity of matter. It is well that our belief in the truths of religion does not stand or fall with the success or the failure of any human expounder. We happen to think that on the abstract question of the creation of matter out of nothing, there is a want of clear and decisive manifestation by the light of nature; and that for the establishment of what we hold to be the right and orthodox position upon this question, there is an incompetency not in the *a priori* argument alone, but in every argument which the unaided reason of man can devise. We wonder not, for example, that Aristotle, unblest and unvisited as he was by any communication from Heaven, admitted both an eternal matter and an eternal mind into his creed—for in truth the brightest and most convincing evidences for the one might, for aught we know, consist with the aboriginal and everlasting occupancy of the other in our universe. These evidences, as we shall afterwards see, are grounded not on the existence of matter, but on the order and disposition of its parts—and point to the conclusion, not that there must have been an intelligent spirit that willed the matter into being, but that there must have been an intelligent spirit who willed it into all those beauteous and beneficial arrangements which we everywhere behold. It is revelation alone, we apprehend, which has completely fixed and ascertained the proposition, that God not only fashioned our universe into its present mechanism and form; but that He also created the materials from which it is composed. He not only moulded the clay; but He made it, and made it out of nothing. Nature perhaps cannot pronounce decisively on the making; but of the exquisite moulding, of the goodly dispositions and structures that bespeak contrivance and a contriver, it taketh ample cognizance—so that it cannot look with intelligence to any department of observation or of science without a powerful impression that the hand of a Divinity has been there.

entitled "Theologia Speculativa, or a Body of Divinity." "But to discover the weakness of any argument in particular which may be brought to prove a fundamental article of religion, is not, as some pious men have supposed, to do religion disservice—but only shows it does not stand in need of any artifices, and has nothing to fear from a fair, ingenuous, and free examination."

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE METAPHYSICS WHICH HAVE BEEN RESORTED TO ON THE SIDE OF THEISM.

(MR. HUME'S OBJECTION TO THE A POSTERIORI ARGUMENT, GROUNDED ON THE ASSERTION THAT THE WORLD IS A SINGULAR EFFECT.)

1. THE doctrine of innate ideas in the mind is wholly different from the doctrine of innate tendencies in the mind—which tendencies may lie undeveloped till the excitement of some occasion have manifested or brought them forth. In a newly-formed mind, there is no idea of nature or of a single object in nature—yet no sooner is an object presented, or is an event observed to happen, than there is elicited the tendency of the mind to presume on the constancy of nature. At least as far back as our observation extends, this law of the mind is in full operation. Let an infant for the first time in its life strike on the table with a spoon, and, pleased with the noise, it will repeat that stroke with every appearance of a confident anticipation that the noise will be repeated also. It counts on the invariableness wherewith the same consequent will follow the same antecedent. In the language of Dr. Thomas Brown, these two terms make up a sequence—and there seems to exist in the spirit of man, not an underived, but an aboriginal faith, in the uniformity of nature's sequences.

2. This instinctive expectation of a constancy in the succession of events is not the fruit of experience, but is anterior to it. The truth is that experience, so far from strengthening this instinct of the understanding, as it has been called, seems rather to modify and restrain it. The child who elicited a noise which it likes from the collision of its spoon with the table, would, in the first instance, expect the same result from a like collision with any material surface spread out before it—as if placed, for example, on the smooth and level sand of a sea-shore. Here the effect of experience would be to correct its first strong and unbridled anticipations—so that in time it would not look for the wished-for noise in the infliction of a stroke upon sand or clay, or the surface of a fluid, but upon wood, or stone, or metal. The office of experience here is not to strengthen our faith in the uniformity of nature's sequences, but to ascertain what the sequences actually are. The effect of the experience is not to

give the faith, but to the faith to add knowledge. At the outset of its experience, a child's confidence in the uniformity of nature is unbounded—and it is in the progress of its experience, that it meets with that which serves to limit the confidence and to qualify it. It goes forth upon external nature furnished beforehand with the expectation of the invariableness which obtains between nature's antecedents and her consequents—but it often falls into mistakes in estimating what the proper antecedents and consequents are. To ascertain this is the great use of experience. The great object of repetition in experiments is not to strengthen our confidence in the constancy of nature's sequences—but to ascertain what be the real and precise terms of each sequence. It is for this purpose that experiments are so varied—for in that assemblage of contemporaneous things amid which a given result takes place, it is often not known at the first which of the things is the strict and proper antecedent—and it is to determine this, that sometimes certain of the old circumstances are detached from the group and certain new ones added, till the discrimination has been precisely made between what is essential and what is merely accessory in the process.

3. This predisposition to count on the uniformity of nature is an original law of the mind, and is not the fruit of our observation of that uniformity. It has been well stated by Dr. Brown that there is no more of logical dependence between the propositions, that a stone has a thousand times fallen to the earth and a stone will always fall to the earth, than there is between the propositions that a stone has once fallen to the earth and a stone will always fall to the earth. "At whatever link of the chain we begin," he says, "we must always meet with the same difficulty, the conversion of the past into the future. If it be absurd to make this conversion at one stage of inquiry, it is just as absurd to make it at any other stage; and, as far as our memory extends, there never was a time at which we did not make the instant conversion." The truth is, that experience teaches the past only—not the future. It tells us what has happened before the present moment—and to infer from this what will happen afterwards, requires the aid of a distinct principle—the instinctive principle of belief, in short, whose reality we are now contending for.

4. The constancy of nature, and man's faith in that constancy, do not stand related to each other like the terms of a logical

proposition, or in the way of cause and consequence. There is a most beneficent harmony between the material and the mental law—but it is altogether a contingent harmony; and the adaptation of the one to the other is perhaps the most precious evidence within the compass of our own unborrowed light, for a presiding intelligence in the formation or arrangements of the universe. The argument unfolded by Dr. Paley with such marvellous felicity and power, is founded chiefly on the fitnesses that meet together in man's corporeal economy, and on the adjustments of its parts to external nature. It is true that our mental economy offers nothing so complex or so palpable on which to raise a similar argument; and yet can we instance a more wonderful adjustment, or one more prolific of good to our species, than that which obtains between the unexcepted uniformity of nature's processes, and the prior independent disposition which resides in the heart of man to count upon that uniformity, and to proceed on the unfaltering faith of it? Were it not for this, man should for ever remain a lost and bewildered creature among the appearances around him—and no experience of his could in the least help to unravel the confusion. The regularity of nature up to the present moment would be of no avail, without his faith in the continuance of that regularity—and it is only by the force of this instinctive anticipation, that the memorials of the past serve him as indices by which to guide his way through the futurity that lies before him. The striking accordancy is, that there should be such an expectation deposited in every bosom; and that from every department of the accessible creation there should be to this expectation the response or the echo of one wide and unexcepted fulfilment. It is like a whisper to the heart of man of a universal promise, which can only be executed by a hand of universal agency—and as if the same Being who infused the hope by an energy within, did, by a diffusive energy abroad, cause the response of an un-failing accomplishment to arise from all the amplitudes of creation and providence. This intuitive faith is not the acquisition of experience; but is given as if by the touch of inspiration for the purpose of stamping on experience all its value—not gathered by man from his observation of outward nature; but forming an original part of his own nature, and yet in such glorious harmony with all that is around him throughout the innumerable host of nature's sequences, that he never once by trusting in her constancy is disappointed or deceived. Such is

the steadfastness of her manifold processes that nature never misgives from her constancy. Such is the strength of his mental instinct that man never misgives from his confidence. Had it not been for the union of these two, man had been incapable of wisdom. The establishment of both bespeaks at once the wisdom and the faithfulness of a God.

5. But this harmony between the intellectual constitution of man and the general constitution of nature, is not only of use in a theological argument—it might also be applied to strengthen the foundations of our Philosophy. It forms a demonstration of the perfect safety wherewith we might confide in our ultimate or original principles of belief. We have experimental evidence of this in our anticipation of nature's constancy being so fully realized. This anticipation is not the fruit of experience, but is verified by experience. It is an instinct of the understanding; and that it should have been so met and responded to over the whole domain of creation is like the testimony of a concurrent voice from all things inanimate to the Creator's faithfulness. Seeing that one of the instinctive tendencies of the mind has been so palpably accredited from without—we may commit ourselves, as if to an infallible guidance, in following its other instinctive tendencies. There is a scepticism that is suspicious, as if they were so many false lights, of our original and universal principles, whether in judgment or taste or morals—and which looks upon them at best as but the results of an arbitrary organization. From the instance now before us, it is plain that the arbiter of our constitution, the artificer of the mechanism of our spirits, has at least most strikingly adapted it to the constitution and the mechanism of external things—the hope or belief of constancy in the one meeting in the other with the most rigid and invariable fulfilment. This is the strongest practical vindication which can be imagined, of the unshaken faith that we might place in the instinctive and primary suggestions of nature. It restores that feeling of security to our intellectual processes which the philosophy of Hume so laboured to unsettle: And we again feel a comfort and a confidence in the exercises of reason—when thus reassured in the solidity of those axioms which are reason's stepping-stones, in the substantive truth and certainty of those first principles whence all argumentation takes its rise.

6. But the mention of David Hume leads to the consideration of that atheistical argument which has been associated with his

name—an argument not founded, however, on any denial of the regularity of nature's sequences—but proceeding on the admission of that regularity; and only assuming the necessity of experience to ascertain what the sequences actually are. Mr. Hume's argument is this: After having once observed the conjunction between any two terms of an invariable sequence—it is granted that from the observed existence of either of the terms, we can conclude without observation the existence of the other—that from a perceived antecedent we can foretell its consequent, although we should not see it; or, on the other hand, from the perceived consequent we can infer the antecedent, although it should not have been seen by us. Having had the observation once of the two terms A and B, and of the causal relation between them, the appearance of A singly would warrant the anticipation of B, or of B singly the inference of A. But then it is required for any such inference that we should have had the observation or experience, at least once, of both these terms; and of the conjunction between them. If we have seen but once in our life a watch made, and coming forth of the hands of a watchmaker; we, in all time coming, can, on seeing the watch only, infer the watchmaker. But this full experience comprehensive of both terms is wanting, it is alleged, in the question of a God. We may have had an experience reaching to both terms of the sequence in watch-making—but we have had no such experience in world-making. Had we but seen a world once made, and coming forth from the observed fiat of an intelligent Deity, then the sight of every other world might have justified the inference, that for it too there behoved to have been a world-maker. It is the want of that completed observation which we so often have in the cases of human mechanism, that constitutes, it is apprehended, the flaw or failure in the customary argument for a God—as founded on the mechanism of nature. It is because the world is to us a singular effect—it is because we have only perceived the consequent a world, and never perceived the alleged antecedent the mandate of a Creator at whose forthputting some other world had sprung into existence—it is because in this instance we have but witnessed one term of a succession and never witnessed its conjunction with a prior term, that we are hopelessly debarred, it is thought, from ever coming soundly or legitimately to the conclusion of a God.

7. The following are so many of the passages from Hume

containing the argument in his own words: "But it is only when two species of objects are found to be constantly conjoined that we can infer the one from the other; and were an effect presented, which was entirely singular and could not be comprehended under any known species, I do not see that we could form any conjecture or inference at all concerning its cause. If experience and observation and analogy be indeed the only guides which we can reasonably follow in inferences of this nature—both the effect and cause must bear a similarity and resemblance to other effects and causes which we know, and which we have found in many instances to be conjoined with each other." * Again—"If we see a house, we conclude with the greatest certainty that it had an architect or builder; because this is precisely that species of effect which we have experienced to proceed from that species of cause. But surely you will not affirm that the universe bears such a resemblance to a house, that we can with the same certainty infer a similar cause, or that the analogy is here entire and perfect. The dissimilitude is so striking, that the utmost you can here pretend to is a guess, a conjecture, a presumption concerning a similar cause; and how that pretension will be received in the world, I leave you to consider."—"When two *species* of objects have always been observed to be conjoined together, I can *infer* by custom the existence of one, wherever I *see* the existence of the other; and this I call an argument from experience. But how this argument can have place, where the objects, as in the present case, are single, individual, without parallels or specific resemblance, may be difficult to explain. And will any man tell me, with a serious countenance, that an orderly universe must arise from some thought and act, like the human; because we have experience of it? To ascertain this reasoning, it were requisite that we had experience of the origin of worlds; and it is not sufficient surely that we have seen ships and cities arise from human art and contrivance."—"Can you pretend to show any such similarity between the fabric of a house, and the generation of a universe? Have you ever seen nature in any such situation as resembles the first arrangement of the elements? Have worlds ever been formed under your eye? and have you had leisure to observe the whole progress of the phenomena, from the first

* Hume's Essays, Vol. ii. p. 157, being an extract from his Essay on Providence and a Future State.

appearance of order to its final consummation? If you have, then cite your experience and deliver your theory." *

8. Now it appears to us that this argument of Hume has not been rightly met by any of his antagonists. Instead of resisting it, they have retired from it—and, in fact, done him the homage of conceding the principle on which it rests. They have suffered him to bear away one of the prime supports of Natural Theism; and, to make up for this loss, they have attempted to replace it with another support, which I hold to be altogether precarious. Hume denies that we have any experimental evidence for the being of a God—and that simply because we have not any experience in the making of worlds. Had we observed once or oftener the sequence of two terms A and B—then afterwards on our observing B, though alone, we might have inferred A. Had we observed, though only once, a God employed in making a world—then when another world was presented to our notice, we might have inferred a God. But we have never had the benefit of such observation; and hence the conclusion of Mr. Hume is, that the reasoning for a God is not founded on the basis of experience. Now how is this met both by Reid and Stewart?—by conceding that the argument for a God is not an experimental one at all—the inference of design from its effects being a result neither of reasoning nor of experience. When the question is put, On what then is the inference grounded?—the never-failing reply in a difficulty of this sort, and in which more than once these philosophers have taken convenient refuge, is, that it is grounded on an intuitive judgment of the mind.

9. Our own opinion of this evasion is that, to say the least, it was unnecessary—and we think that, without recurring to any separate principle on the subject, Mr. Hume's argument might be satisfactorily disposed of, though we had no other ground for the inference of a designing cause, than that upon which we reason from like consequents to the like antecedents that went before them.

10. It appears to us that these philosophers have most unnecessarily mystified the argument for a God, besides giving an untrue representation of the right argument. The considerations on which Reid and Stewart would resolve the inference of design from its effects into an original principle, distinct from that by which we infer any other cause from its effects, even our prior observation of the conjunction between them,

* The above extracts are taken from Hume's "Dialogues concerning Natural Religion."

appear to us most singularly weak and inconclusive. They say that we can only infer design on the part of a fellow-creature from its effects in this instinctive or intuitive way, because we never had any direct perception of his mind at all, and therefore never had a view of the antecedent but only of the consequent. But we have the evidence of consciousness, the strongest of all evidence, for the existence of our own mind ; we have both the antecedent and the consequent in this one instance, both the design and its effects when ourselves are the designers ; and, from the similarity of those effects which proceed from ourselves to those which proceed from our neighbours, we infer, on a sufficient experimental ground, that there are design and a designing mind on their part also. It comes peculiarly ill from Mr. Stewart, to say that we know nothing of mind but by its operations and effects, who himself has so oft affirmed that all our knowledge of matter comes to us in the same way : and that the properties of which sense informs us as belonging to the one, form no better evidence for the substantive existence of matter, than that for the substantive existence of mind afforded by the properties of which consciousness informs us as belonging to the other. And even though we should allow that, apart from all that experimental reasoning by which, from the observation of what passes with ourselves, we make inference as to what passes with others of our kind, we arrive by means of a direct and instinctive perception to the knowledge of the existence of other human minds beside our own—there is no analogy between this case and that of the Divine mind as inferred from the effects or the evidences of design in the workmanship of nature. God does not by this workmanship hold Himself forth to observers in visible personality as our fellow-creatures do. He has left for our inspection a thousand specimens of skilful and beauteous mechanism ; but he has left us to view them as separate from Himself. These philosophers would have us to infer a designing God from the works of nature, just as we infer a designing mind in man not from the works of man but from man in the act of working—even as if the Divine Spirit animated nature in the same manner as the human spirit animates the framework by which it is encompassed. Now the proper analogy is to view a piece of human workmanship, after it is completed and may be seen separately from the man himself ; and to compare this with the workmanship of nature viewed separately from God. We take cognizance of the former as the work of

man, just because in previous instances we have seen such work achieved by man. This consideration proceeds altogether upon experience; and what we have now to ascertain is, in how far experience warrants us to conclude a designing cause for the workmanship of nature. We hold that this conclusion too has a strict experience for its basis; and that notwithstanding that the principle has been given up by Stewart, as is evident from his following reply to Hume's argument. "The argument as is manifest proceeds entirely on the supposition that our inferences of design are in every case the result of experience, the contrary of which has been already sufficiently shown—and which indeed (as Dr. Reid has remarked), if it be admitted as a general truth, leads to this conclusion—that no man can have any evidence of the existence of any intelligent being but himself."*

11. Let us therefore resume our observations on the strong instinctive confidence of the human mind in the uniformity of nature—and thence apply ourselves to the consideration of this seemingly formidable argument.

12. We have already remarked on the perfect agreement which there is between the constancy of nature and the instinc-

* Stewart's *Philosophy of the Moral and Active Powers*, vol. ii. p. 25.

In this treatise Mr. Stewart has rather presented the opinions of others, than come forth in *propria persona* with any sustained pleading of his own; and, as in most of his other performances, instead of grappling with the question, he presents us with the literature of the question—made up of history therefore rather than of argument, and altogether composing but the outline of what had been said or reasoned by other men, though accompanied with a very few slight yet elegant touches from his own hand. We by no means agree with those who think of this interesting personage, that, considering the few substantive additions which he made to philosophy, he therefore, as a philosopher, had gained an unfair reputation. It is true, he has not added much to the treasures of science; yet, in virtue of a certain halo, which by the glow of his eloquence and the purity and nobleness of his sentiments he threw around the cause, he abundantly sustained the honours of it. It reminds us of what is often realized in the higher walks of society, when certain men vastly inferior to others both in family and in fortune, do, in virtue of a certain lofty bearing in which they are upheld by the consciousness of a grace and a dignity that natively belong to them, not usurp the highest place in fashion, but have that place most readily awarded to them by the spontaneous consent and testimony of all. It was thus with Stewart in the world of letters. His rank and reputation there were not owing either to the number or importance of the discoveries achieved by him. But he had what many discoverers have not. He had the sustained and the lofty spirit of a high-toned academic; and never did any child, whether of science or poetry, breathe in an atmosphere more purely ethereal. The *je ne sais quoi* of manner does not wield a more fascinating power in the circles of fashion, than did the indescribable charm of his rare and elevated genius over our literary circles; and, when we consider the homage of reverence and regard which he drew from general society, we cannot but wish that many successors may arise in his own likeness—who might build up an aristocracy of learning, that shall infuse a finer element into the system of life, than any which has ever been distilled upon it from the vulgar aristocracies of wealth or of power.

tive belief which men have in that constancy. There seems no necessary connexion between these two things. It might, for aught we know, have been otherwise. There might have been a tendency in the human mind always to look for the like event in the like circumstances—and this anticipation on our part may have been thwarted at every turn by the most capricious and unlooked for evolutions, on the part of the actual world that is around us. Or there might have been the same uniformity that there is in nature now—but no such constitutional propensity with us to count upon that uniformity. In either case we should not have profited by the lessons of experience. The remembrance of the past could have furnished no materials on which to ground or to guide our expectations of the future. It is not because of one thing that nature is constant; but it is because of two things that nature is constant, and that we have been endowed with an irresistible faith in that constancy—it is because of a concurrence in fact between two elements that might have been separated the one from the other, it is because of an adaptation between the mental economy in man and that general economy of things in the midst of which he is placed, that any wisdom at all can be reared on the basis of observation; or that, on the appearances which are before our eyes, we can either reason back to those which have preceded, or forward to those which are hereafter to ensue from them.

13. Our expectation of the constancy of nature in all time coming, because of our experience of that constancy in all past time, is not a deduction of reason, but an immediate and resistless principle of belief in the human constitution. It is no more the fruit of an argumentative process than any sensation or emotion is. That, on the observation of a certain event in given circumstances, there should be a confident anticipation of the same event in the same circumstances, this is the assumed principle of many a reasoning; but it is not reasoning which has conducted us thereto. It is an underived and intuitive belief, and not a belief that we reach by a succession of steps, and is, as far as we can discern, as strong in infancy as it is in mature and established manhood. It is vain to say that the constancy of nature throughout every former generation of the world, is a reason for the constancy of nature throughout every future generation of it. The two statements are distinct the one from the other—and there is surely no logical necessity why because the first statement is true, the second should be true also. Never-

theless, and without reasoning, we are led from believing by observation in the first, irresistibly to believe by anticipation in the second. There is a harmony, but it is a contingent harmony, between our strong instinctive conviction that it shall be so, and the unfailing universal accomplishment of it. The very strongest among the principles of the human understanding is faithfully responded to by the very surest among the processes of external nature; and this adaptation, due to no will and to no reasoning of ours, yet without which reasoning would be left without a basis, is perhaps the most striking proof which can be given, that man, even when stalking in the pride of his intellectual greatness along the high walk of philosophy, is but the creature of an instinct that should ever be leading him astray, had not God made the laws and the arrangements of his universe to correspond with it.

14. But while we thus advocate the independence of the two laws on each other, that is, of the mental or subjective law of man's instinctive faith in the constancy of nature, on the external or objective law of nature's actual constancy, it should well be understood that the view we are now to give of Hume's atheistical argument does not rest on any metaphysical theory whatever, as to the origin of this universal belief. Whether it be distinct from experience or the fruit of experience, it is not upon this that we join issue with our antagonist. Inquirers may differ as to the origin of our belief in the uniformity of nature's successions. On this topic we exact no particular opinion from them. It is enough if we agree in the soundness of that belief, whatever the descent or the derivation of it may have been. It is man's universal judgment that the same consequents are ever preceded by the same antecedents, and the two questions are altogether distinct from each other—whence does that judgment take its rise, and whether that judgment is a true one. We may differ or agree upon the first. It matters not, if we agree upon the second, which forms the basis of Hume's reasoning. We concede to him his own premises, even that we are not entitled to infer an antecedent from its consequent, unless we have before had the completed observation of both these terms and of the succession between them. We disclaim the aid of all new or questionable principles in meeting his objection, and would rest the argument *a posteriori* for the being of a God on a strictly experimental basis.

15. The uniformity of nature lies in this, that the same ante-

cedents are always followed by the same consequents. Grant that the former agree in every respect—then the latter will also agree in every respect. This invariable following of two events, the one by the other, is termed a sequence; and there is not a more unfailing or universal characteristic of nature than the constancy of these sequences.

16. For the argument of this chapter it is enough that we and our antagonists have a common belief in the constancy of these sequences, though they who think, as we do, that the belief is of instinctive origin, cannot but feel how wondrous the coincidence is between the constancy itself, and the fact that from the very first dawns of mental perception this constancy is counted upon. It does not at all appear that the experience of nature's constancy is first waited for ere it is anticipated by the mind. And even although it had to be waited for, and the observation had been made for years of nature's constancy—it is still to be explained why we should infer from this the same constancy in the years which are to come. It does not follow that because nature hath preceded in a certain invariable course throughout the whole retrospect of our experience, it must therefore do the same throughout the whole range of our future anticipations. The one fact does not necessarily involve the other. There has been an unfailing constancy in nature through the years that are past—and there appears no necessity which can be assigned, why on this account there should be as unfailing a constancy of nature through the years that are to come. It may be, or it may not be,—but yet the firm impregnable conviction of all is that most certainly it shall be, and this anticipation, which all without exception have, is followed up by the most unexcepted fulfilment.

17. The heat that is of a certain temperature will always melt ice. The impulse that hath once given direction and velocity, will always in the same circumstances be followed up with motion. The body that is raised from the earth's surface, and then left without support, will always descend. The position of the moon in a certain quarter of the heavens, will always be responded to by the rising or falling tides upon our shores. These antecedents may be variously blended—and this will give rise to different results; but the very same assemblage of antecedents will always be followed by the same consequents. Our own personal experience may have been limited to a few square miles of the earth that we tread upon—yet this would not hinder such

a faith in the immutability of nature, that we could bear it in confident application all over the globe. In other words, we count upon this constancy far beyond what we ever have observed of it—and still the topic of our wonder and gratitude is, that a belief in every way so instinctive should be followed up by an accomplishment so sure.

18. But we shall dilate no further on the general position, that our faith in the future constancy of nature is intuitive, and not deduced by any process of reasoning, however short, from our observation of its past constancy. Let us here recommend the masterly treatise of Dr. Thomas Brown on Cause and Effect—a philosopher who, with occasional inadvertencies in the ethical department of his course, hath thrown a flood of copious and original light over the mysteries of the human understanding; and who seems, in particular, to have grappled successfully with a question at one time dark and hopeless as the metaphysics of the schoolmen.

19. Without, therefore, expatiating any further on the origin of this belief, and certainly without laying the least argumentative stress upon it in the reasonings which we have now to offer—let it suffice for the present that there exists such a belief in our mind, and that it meets with its corresponding reality in nature.

20. There are two processes of inference which, however identical in their principle, may be distinguished the one from the other. When there is an invariable connexion between certain antecedents and certain consequents—then, upon our seeing the antecedents, we look confidently forward to the appearance of the consequents—or, when we see the consequents, we conclude that their proper antecedents have gone before them. But it may so happen, that various antecedents shall be mingled together at the same time—some of which have an influence upon the result, and some of which have none; but still so as to make it a necessary exercise of mind to disentangle the trains from each other, and to discriminate what be the terms which stand to each other in the strict relation of a sequence that is invariable.

21. But to descend from the obscure language of generalities upon this subject. Let us take the case of a watchmaker and a watch, the former being the antecedent and the latter the consequent—both of which, and the actual conjunction of which, we have already observed, if we have ever seen a watch made.

Now, on looking first to the antecedent, there is room for distinguishing between the proper and the accidental. It were wrong to say of this antecedent, that it comprises all the particulars which meet and are assembled together in the person of the watchmaker. It has nothing to do, for example, with the colour of his hair, or with the quality of his vestments, or with the height of his stature, or with the features of his countenance, or with the age and period of his life. The strict and proper antecedent is distinct from one and all of these particulars; and may be said to lie enveloped, as it were, in a mass or assemblage of contemporaneous things which have nothing to do with the fabrication of the watch. The watch, in fact, is the consequent of a purposing mind—putting itself forth in the execution of a mechanism for the indication of time, and possessed of competent skill and power for such an execution. The mind of the observer separates here the essential from the accessory. Should he ever again meet with the forth-putting of the same essential antecedent as before, he will expect the same consequent as before—even though he should never meet with an antecedent compassed about with the same accessories. The next watchmaker may differ from any he had ever before seen, in a multitude of particulars—in age, in stature, in dress, and general appearance, and a thousand other modifications which it were endless to specify. Yet how manifestly absurd to look for another consequent than a watch because of these accidental variations. It is not to any of these that the watch is a consequent at all. It is solely to a purposing mind, possessed of competent skill and power—and this was common both to the first and the second watchmaker. The next time that we shall see a watchmaker addressing himself to his specific and professional object, there is little probability that we shall see in him the very same assemblage of circumstantials that we ever witnessed before in any other individual of his order. And yet how absurd to say that we are now looking to a different antecedent from any that we ever before had the observation of—that, just as Hume calls the world a singular effect, we are now beholding in this new watchmaker the operation of a singular cause—and that therefore it is impossible to predict what sort of consequent it may be, that will come out of his hands. It is true that there are many circumstantial things in and about the man, which, if we admit as parts of the antecedent, will make up altogether a singular antecedent. But in the strict essential antecedent there

is no singularity. There is a purposing mind resolved on the manufacture of a watch, and endowed with a sufficient capacity for the achievement of its object. This is what we behold now, and what we have beheld formerly—and so, in spite of the alleged, and indeed the actual singularity of the whole compound assemblage, we look for the very same consequent as before.

22. What is true of the antecedent is true also of the consequent. There may be an indefinite number of accessory and accidental things, associated with that which is strictly and properly the posterior term of the sequence. In a watch it is the adaptation of rightly-shapen parts to a distinctly noticeable end, the indication of time—which forms the true consequent to the thought and agency of a purposing mind in the watchmaker. But in this said watch there are a thousand collateral things which, rightly speaking, form no part of the essential consequent—though altogether they go to a composition different perhaps, in some respects, from any that was ever exemplified before; and therefore go to the construction of a singular watch. There is the colour of the materials, there is their precise weight and magnitude, there is the species of metal—each of these and of many other things apart from that one thing of form and arrangement, which indicates the work and contrivance of an artist. Were the things with their existing properties presented before me in a confused mass, the inference of a designing cause would instantly vanish. It is the arrangement of things, obviously fashioned and arranged for the measurement of time, that forms the sole consequent—a consequent which does not comprise all the other circumstantial peculiarities that we have now specified, but which rather lies enveloped in the midst of them. These circumstantial things, it is very possible, were never precisely so blended as they are in the specimen before me. There never, it is most likely, was just such a colour, united with just such a weight, and with just such a magnitude, and with just such an exact order of parts in the machinery, as altogether obtain in the individual watch upon which I am now reasoning. When looked to, therefore, in this general and aggregate view, it may be denominated a singular effect. Yet who does not see that the inference of a designing cause is in no way spoiled by this? As a whole, it may be singular—but there is that in it which is not singular. There is the collocation of parts which has been exemplified in all other watches; and on which alone the inference is founded, of an artist with skill to devise and

power to execute, having been the producer of it. It is this which the observer separately looks to, and singles out, as it were, from all the collateral things which enter into the assemblage that is before his eyes. In the effect, the strict and proper consequent is the adjustment and adaptation of parts for an obvious end. In the cause, the strict and proper antecedent is a designing intelligence, wherewith there may at the same time be associated a thousand peculiarities of person, and voice, and manner, to him unknown—but to him of no importance to be known, for the purpose of establishing the sequence between a purposing mind which is not seen, and the piece of mechanism which is seen.

23. But ere we can bring this reasoning to bear on the Atheism of Hume, there is still a farther abstraction to be made. Hitherto, we separated the essential consequent from the accessories in a watch; so that, though each watch may be singular in respect of all its accessories taken together, yet all the watches have in common that essential consequent from which we infer the agency of design in the construction of them. That consequent is adaptation of parts for the specific end which the mechanism serves—that is, the measurement of time. But it should be further understood, that for the purpose of inferring design, it is not necessary that the end of the arrangement in question should be some certain and specific end. It is enough to substantiate the inference that the arrangement should be obviously conducive to some end—to any end. From what the end particularly is, we learn what the particular object was which the artist had in view; but for the purpose of warranting the general inference that there was an artist who had a something in view, it matters not what the end particularly is. It is enough that it be some end or other, and that an end which the structure or working of the machine itself obviously announces. In the case of a watch, the following are the counterpart terms of the sequence:—The consequent is a mechanism adapted for the *measurement of time*. And its counterpart antecedent is an intelligent adaptator, putting forth his ability and skill on the production of a mechanism for the *measurement of time*. But though we should lop off, as it were, the measurement of time or this specific end from each of these terms, and substitute in its stead an end generally, or a whatever end, the inference of an intelligent adaptator would still hold good. The consequent then would be a mechanism adapted for a *whatever*

end (and that an end to be learned from the examination of the mechanism itself); and its counterpart antecedent would be an intelligent adaptator for *that whatever end*. For either the more special or the more general inference, we equally arrive at an intelligent adaptator. When we in the consequent restrict our attention to what the end particularly is, then we proportionally restrict the antecedent to an intelligent mind bent on the accomplishment of that specific end. But when in the argument we make but a general recognition in the consequent of some end or other, the conclusion is equally general of an intelligent mind bent on the accomplishment of that some end or other. All this might be provided for in the reasoning, by laying proper stress on the distinction between the adaptation of parts for *the* end, and the adaptation of parts for *an* end. The latter, in fact, is the only essential consequent to the antecedent of a purposing mind, and from the appearance of the latter we are entitled to infer this antecedent. By taking this distinction along with us, we come to perceive how far the argument of final causes may be legitimately extended.

24. We already understand, then, how, on having seen one watch made, we are entitled to infer a maker for the second watch—though in many of its accessaries it may differ most widely, and therefore differ most widely on the whole, or as a compound assemblage from the first. With all these contingent variations in the two machines, there is one thing which they have in common—adaptation of parts for the end of measuring and indicating time; and this justifies the inference of a common antecedent—even a purposing mind that had this specific object in view. But we contend that, in all sound logic, we are warranted to extend the inference farther—not merely to a second watch, but to a second machine of any sort, though its use, or the end of its construction, was wholly different from that of a watch. If, for example, instead of a mechanism which served to mark a succession of hours, there were presented a mechanism which served to evolve a succession of musical harmonies, we should just as confidently infer an intelligent artist in the one case as in the other, although we had only seen the making of a watch, and never seen the making of a harmonicon. The truth is, that it is not the particular end either of the one machine or the other which leads to the inference of an intelligent maker; but the inference rests nakedly and essentially on this, that there is adaptation of parts for any end at all. Between

one watch and another there is this common consequent—adaptation of parts for *the* end; and on this we ground the conclusion of there having been design and a designer in the fabrication of each of them. But between the watch and the musical apparatus there is also a common consequent—not adaptation of parts for *the* end, but still adaptation for *an* end; and on this we are equally warranted to ground the conclusion of design having been employed in the formation of each of them. The definite article is always comprehensive of the indefinite; so that, whenever there is the end, there is always an end. But the indefinite is not also in the same way comprehensive of the definite, so that in the case of an adaptation having an end, it may not be the end which we have ever witnessed in the putting together of any former adaptation. Still it matters not. The inference, not of a mind purposing the specific thing for which we have formerly observed both a contrivance and a contriver, but still of a mind purposing something, or a purposing mind, is as legitimate as ever. And so there lies enveloped in the watch this consequent—the adaptation of parts for *the* end; but there also lies enveloped there the adaptation of parts for *an* end, and the latter we distinctly perceive to be in the music-box as well as in the timepiece. When we look to the latter machine, we feel sensible that we never before witnessed the putting forth of intelligence in the adaptation of parts for *the* end. In this respect there is novelty, because we never before saw a machine made for the performance of tunes. But we at the same time are abundantly sensible, that whether in the example of a watch or of something else, we have a thousand times witnessed the putting forth of intelligence in the adaptation of parts for *an* end. In this respect there is no novelty; so that, whether it be the watch that we have seen made, or the music-box that we have not seen made, there is the same firm basis of a sure and multiplied experience on which to rest the conclusion of an intelligent maker for both.

25. And thus it is that we do not even require a special experience in watchmaking to warrant the application of this argument from final causes, either to this or to any other machines whatever. There may be a thousand distinct products of art and wisdom in which our observation has been restricted to the posterior, and has never reached to the prior term of the sequence—that is, where we have seen the product, and never either witnessed the production nor seen the producer—and yet we have a

firm experimental basis on which to rest the inference, that a producer there was, and one, too, possessed of skill to devise and power to execute. The truth is, that we every day of our lives, and perhaps every hour of each day, witness the adaptation of means to *an* end, in connexion with design and a designer—though never perhaps to *the* end in any instance of hundreds of distinct machines which could be specified—and which, therefore, are in this respect to us singular effects. But still each of these machines has in it adaptation to *an* end, as well as adaptation to *the* end; has in it therefore that posterior term, of whose connexion with the prior term of an intelligent cause we have had daily observation. It is not, we should remark, on the adaptation to any object *quoad the* end—but on the adaptation to it *quoad an* end that the inference is grounded. It is thus that though introduced for the first time to the sight of a watch or a gun-lock or a cotton-mill or a steam-engine, we are as sure of intelligence having been engaged in the execution of each of them as if we had been present a thousand times at their fabrication. The truth is, that we have been present many thousand times, though not at the process of formation in either of these individual pieces of mechanism, yet at other processes which have enough in common with the former ones to make an experimental argument in every way as good. We have had lessons every day of our life, by which to read what the characteristics be of those arrangements that indicate a mind acting for *a* purpose; though not a mind acting for *the* purpose. This matters not. The conclusion is as good the one way as the other; the valid conclusion, if we will but reflect upon it, not of a subtle but of a sound and substantial process of reasoning.

26. And if we can thus infer the agency of design in a watch-maker, though we never saw a watch made, we can, on the very same ground, infer the agency of design on the part of a world-maker, though we never saw a world made. We concede it to our adversaries, that, when reasoning from the posterior term or consequent to the prior term or antecedent of a sequence, both terms must have been seen by us in conjunction on former occasions, else we are not warranted to infer the one from the other of them. We are aware of the use which they make of this principle. They tell us that we cannot argue from a world to a God, because the world, if an effect, is a singular effect—that we have no experience in the making of worlds, as we may have in the making of watches—that had we seen a world made and a

God employed about it, then, on being presented with another world, we might have inferred the agency of a God in the creation of it—and this they contend to be the whole length to which our experience can carry us. But they overlook the distinction between what is essential in the consequent, and what is merely circumstantial therein; and it is here that the whole mistake lies. The essential consequent we have seen produced or we have seen in conjunction with its proper antecedent a thousand times—and thus it is that we should confidently infer a designing artificer from the view of a watch, though we had just as little experience in the making of watches as we have in the making of worlds. We may never have seen a watch made—but in the watch before our eyes, we see the manifest adaptation of means to an end; and this we have frequently before witnessed, as the posterior term of a sequence, in connexion with the forthputting of sagacity and skill on the part of a purposing mind, as its prior term. We have not seen the whole consequent, named a watch, produced by the whole antecedent, named a watchmaker—but we have seen daily and familiarly that which is in the watch, adaptation of means to an end, produced by that which is in the watchmaker, a designing intellect. These two terms we have seen in constant conjunction in thousands of other instances; and we have therefore the warrant of a manifold experience for inferring that they were conjoined in this instance also. We carry the inference no further than to the skill and power of the artificer. It is this part, and this only, that we make the antecedent to the observed consequent before us. We may have never seen a watchmaker in contact with a watch—but we have often seen the effort and skill of a designing mind in contact with the adaptation of useful and subservient means. This has been a frequently observed sequence, from either term of which we may infer the other. Now the consequent of this sequence—the adaptation of useful and subservient means—lies enveloped in the watch; and we infer that the antecedent in this sequence—the effect and skill of a designing mind—lies enveloped in a watchmaker—so that though we should never have seen a watch made, and never seen a watchmaker employed in the formation of one—though we should never have had this particular experience, yet we have had experience enough to infer from the mechanism thereof the wisdom that presided over the fabrication.

27. In the case of God and the world we have only one term

of the sequence before us. We see the world, but we have never seen God; and far less have we ever seen Him employed in the formation of a world. We never saw the whole consequent, a world actually emanated and brought forth by the whole antecedent of a God. But both in the mechanism of the world, and in the innumerable products wherewith it teems, do we see the adaptation of means to desirable ends—and this we have seen emanated and brought forth in many hundreds of instances by a purposing mind as its strict and proper antecedent. It is thus that we hold ourselves to be abundantly schooled, and that, too, on the basis not of a partial but of a full experience, for the inference of a God. We carry the argument upward from the adaptations in nature to a contriving intellect; just because we have often witnessed similar adaptations, and witnessed them, too, in conjunction with an antecedent wisdom that planned and that performed them. It is because we have had manifold observation, and observation inclusive of both terms of the sequence, that from the one term in the present instance, even the adaptations which nature offers to our view, we infer the other term, even a designing mind, at whose will and by whose power and wisdom they have been effectuated. We have never seen a whole nature ordered into being—and which therefore in its entireness and totality may be denominated to us a singular effect—just as on the first sight of a watch—the watch regarded as a whole is to us a singular effect. But neither with the one nor the other is there any singularity in the essential consequent. The singularity lies only in certain circumstantialia which have properly no part in the reasoning, and which, for the proof of an antecedent wisdom in either case, may be dismissed from the sequences altogether. In that which the mind strictly bears regard to in this argument there is no singularity. We have seen a multitude of times over that which is in the watch, accommodation of parts to a desirable end—and whenever we had the opportunity of perceiving also the antecedent term, there was uniformly the mind of one who devised and purposed the end—and so, on the principle which gives truth to all our reasoning from experience, we infer the agency of such a mind in the formation of a watch, though it be a formation that we never witnessed. And the same of this world, though we never saw the formation of a world. Our present state gives us to see the posterior term—even all of creation that is visibly before us. Our past history hath not given us the oppor-

tunity of seeing the creation itself or of seeing the anterior term, even that agency by which it was effected. But in the course of our experience, we have seen adaptations innumerable conjoined with a prior agency, that in every instance was the agency of a scheming and a skilful intellect—and just as not from the watch but from the adaptations in it, so not from the world but from the adaptations in it, do we on the basis of an accumulated experience, reaching to both terms of many an actually-observed sequence, infer the existence of a world-maker, who contemplated and devised the various ends for which we behold so manifest a subserviency of parts in the universe around us.

28. After all, then, the economy of atheism would be a very strange one. We are led by the constitution of our minds to count at all times on the uniformity of nature—and it is an expectation that never deceives us. We are led to anticipate the same consequents from the same antecedents, or to infer the same antecedents from the same consequents—and we find an invariable harmony between the external truth of things and this inward trust of our own bosoms. Within the limits of sensible observation we experience no disappointment—and from such an adaptation of the mental to the material, we should not only argue for the existence of an intelligent Designer, but should hold it to be at once an indication of His benevolence and His truth that He so ordered the succession of all objects and events, as to make of it a universal fulfilment to the universal conviction which Himself had implanted in every human bosom. It were strange indeed if this lesson of nature's invariableness which is so oft repeated, and which within the compass of visible nature has never been found to deceive us, should only serve to land us in one great deception when we come to reason from nature to nature's God—or that in making that upward step which connects the universe with its originating cause, there should for once, and at this great transition, be the disruption of that principle whereof the whole universe, as far as we can witness or observe, affords so glorious a verification. Throughout all the phenomena in creation we find no exception to the constancy or the uniformity of sequences—and it were trully marvellous if the great phenomenon of creation itself, offered the only exception to a law, which, throughout all her diversities and details, she so widely exemplifies—or if, while in every instance along the world's history of a produced

adaptation, we find that there have been contrivance and a contriver, the world itself with all the vast and varied adaptations which abound in it, instead of one great contrivance, is either the product of blind necessity, or some random evolution of unconscious elements that had no sovereign mind either to create or to control them.

29. And here we may observe, that the very abstraction which we find to be necessary for the vindication of our cause from the sceptical argument of Mr. Hume, is that, too, on which we might find one of the proper refinements of a rational Theism. To preserve our argument, we had to detach all the accessaries from that which is common to the works of nature and of art, and so to generalize the consequent into adaptation for *an* end. In like manner should we detach all that is but accessory from the authors of nature and art—and so generalize the antecedent into that which is common to both, even an intelligent and a purposing mind. When we thus limit our view to the strict and proper consequent, we are led to limit it in like manner to the strict and proper antecedent. All we are warranted to conclude of the antecedent in a deduction thus generalized and purified, is that it is purely a mental one. This is the alone likeness between God and man to which the argument carries us. The gross imaginations of anthropomorphism are done away by it—and the argument by which we thus establish the reality of a God, serves also to refine and rationalize our conceptions of Him.

30. It is thus, then, that we would meet the argument by Hume, of this world being a singular effect. We have already said, that though unable to demonstrate a primitive creation of matter, we might have still abundant evidence of a God in the primitive collocation of its parts. And we now say, that though unable to allege our own observation or presence at the original construction of any natural mechanism—though we never saw the hand of an artist employed in the placing and adaptation of parts for *the* end of any such mechanism; yet, beholding as we do every day from our infancy adaptations for *an* end, and that too in conjunction with an antecedent mind which devised them, we have really had experience enough on which to ground the inference of a living and intelligent God. On comparing a work of nature with a work of human art, we find a posterior term common to both—not adaptation for *the* end, because each has its own specific use, and the one use is distinct from the other—

but adaptation for *an* end. It is on the strength of this similarity that we can carry the inference of a designing cause from the seen to the unseen in specimens of human handiwork; and, by a stepping-stone in every way as sure, from the seen handiwork of man to the unseen handiwork of God. In each we behold not subserviency to the same end, but subserviency to *an* end—and on this generality in the consequent of each, we infer for each an antecedent of like generality—a mind of commensurate wisdom to devise, and of commensurate power to execute, either of the structures that are placed before our eyes. It is not brute matter in lumpish and misshapen masses that indicates a Deity. It is matter in a state of orderly arrangement, as in the great apparatus of the heavens; or matter more finely and completely organized, as in the exquisite structures of the animal and vegetable kingdom. It is true we never saw such pieces of workmanship made; but we have seen other pieces made dissimilar to these only in *the* end of their fabrication, yet like unto these in subserviency to *an* end—dissimilar therefore in that which is not essential to our argument, but similar in that which is fully sufficient for our argument. It is precisely in the oversight of this distinction that the fallacy of the atheistical reasoning lies. The singularity that has been charged upon the world belongs to certain circumstantial things which have really no place in the premises of our argument, and are therefore not indispensable to the conclusion. In the essential premises there is no singularity. The formation of the whole world is like to nothing that we have ever witnessed; but in the formation of all that in the world holds out to us the lesson of a Divinity, there is likeness to that which we have often witnessed. We have, times and ways without number, had experience of both terms in the adaptation of parts to *an* end. It is on this experience—the experience of a completed sequence, that reason finds her conclusions. We never with the eye of sense have perceived the actual emanation of a creature from the fiat of its Creator. But we have often seen the succession between the working of a mind, and its workmanship, in a piece of fashioned and adjusted materialism. And therefore it is that the thousand goodly complications which be on the face of our world—the trees, and the flowers, and the insects, and the feathered birds, and the quadrupeds that browse upon the earth, and the fishes of the sea whose peculiar habitudes fit them for peopling that else desolate waste of mighty waters; and lastly, amidst this

general fulness both of animal and vegetable life, erect and intelligent man, curiously furnished in body and in mind, with aptitudes to all the objects of external nature, and which turn into a theatre of busy interest and enjoyment the crowded and the glowing scene over which he expatiates—therefore it is, we say, that all bears so legibly the impress of a governing spirit, that all speaks in reason's ear so loudly of a God.

31. By this reasoning we avoid the necessity of recurring to a new principle in order to repel or ward off an assault of infidelity—an expedient which, unless the principle be very obvious in itself, gives an exceeding frailty to the argument, and causes it to be received with distrust. Perhaps the tendency both of Reid and Stewart was to an excessive multiplication of the original laws in our mental constitution, which they all the more readily indulged, as it savoured so much of that unshrinking Baconian philosophy, from the application of which to the science of mind, they augured so sanguinely—and in virtue of which, unseduced by the love of simplicity, they would take their lesson as to the number of ultimate facts, whether in the world of mind or matter, from observation alone. Now it is well to acquiesce in every phenomenon, like that of magnetism, as if it were a distinct and ultimate principle of which no further account can meanwhile be given—so long as it withstands all the attempts of analysis to resolve it into another phenomenon of a more general and comprehensive quality. But this is very different from a gratuitous multiplication of first principles, and more especially from the confident affirmation of one before unheard of till framed for the accomplishment of a special service. It appears to be a resting of the theistical argument on a very precarious foundation, when the inference of design from its effects is made a principle *sui generis*—instead of making it what it really is, one case out of the many, where, by a principle more comprehensive, we, on the recurrence of the same consequent as before, infer the same antecedent as before. We deprecate the introduction of such an auxiliary as is calculated to give a mystical and arbitrary character to the Philosophy of Religion; and hold it a far better offering to the cause, when it is palpably made to rest on no other principles than those which are recognised and read of all men.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE HYPOTHESIS THAT THE WORLD IS ETERNAL.

1. BUT after all, it may be asked, Is the world an effect? May it not have lasted for ever—and might not the whole train of its present sequences have gone on in perpetual and unvaried order from all eternity? In our reasoning upon antecedents and consequents, we have presumed that the world is a consequent. Could we be sure of this, it may be thought, then, on the principle of our last chapter, let the adaptation of its parts to so many thousand desirable objects be referred, and on the basis of a multiplied experience too, to a designing cause as its strict and proper antecedent. But how do we know the world to be a consequent at all? Is there any greater absurdity in supposing it to have existed as it now is, at any specified point of time throughout the millions of ages that are past, than that it should so exist at this moment? Does what we suppose might have been then, imply any greater absurdity than what we actually see to be at present? Now might not the same question be carried back to any point or period of duration however remote—or, in other words, might not we dispense with a beginning for the world altogether? Such a consequent as our world—if consequent it really be—would require, it might be admitted, a designing cause as its antecedent. But why recur to the imagination of its being a consequent at all? Why not take for granted the eternity of its being, instead of supposing it the product of another, and then taking for granted the eternity of His being? And, after all, it may be thought, that the eternity of our world is but one gratuitous imagination instead of two—and, as to the difficulty of conceiving, this is a difficulty which we are not freed from by the theory of a God. Can we any more comprehend His past eternity than we can the past eternity of matter—the everlasting processes of thought any more than the everlasting processes of a material economy—a circulation of feeling and sentiment and purpose and effect that never had commencement in an aboriginal mind; than a circulation of planets, or that orb of revolution which is described by water through the elements of air and earth and ocean, or, finally, the series of animal and vegetable generations, never having had commencement in an

aboriginal mundane system. At this rate, the supposition of an intelligent Creator may only be a shifting of the difficulty from an eternal Nature to an eternal Author of Nature. If Nature is clearly made out to be a consequent, then it might be admitted that the adaptations which abound in it point to an intelligent and designing cause. But this remains to be proved, and till this is done, it is contended, that it is just as well to repose in the imagination of Eternal Harmonies in a Universe, as of Eternal Harmonies in the mind of One who framed it.

2. On this subject we have nothing to quote from Mirabaud, whose work on the System of Nature—though characterized more by its magniloquence than its magnificence, its plausibility than its power—is fitted by its gorgeous generalizations on nature and truth and the universe, to make tremendous impression on the unpractised reader. There is a certain phraseology which has on some minds the effect of a sublime and seducing eloquence, while it excites in others a sensation of utter distaste, as if absolutely oversatiated with vapidty and verbiage. This work is one of the products of Germany, and for upwards of fifty years has been well known in the continent of Europe. Its circulation has been much extended of late by the infidel press of our own country—where it is, we understand, working mischief among the half-enlightened classes of British society. We know nothing of the history of its author. In real strength and staple of thought he is a mere sentimental weakling when compared with Hume, from whose Dialogues on Natural Religion we shall give one or two extracts on the argument now in question.

3. "For aught we can know *a priori*, matter may contain the source or spring of order originally within itself as well as mind does; and there is no more difficulty in conceiving that the several elements from an internal unknown cause may fall into the most exquisite arrangement, than to conceive that their ideas in the great universal mind from a like internal unknown cause fall into that arrangement. The equal possibility of both these suppositions is allowed." Again—"If the material world rests upon a similar ideal world, this ideal world must rest upon some other; and so on without end. It were better, therefore, never to look beyond the present material world. By supposing it to contain the principle of its order within itself, we really assert it to be God; and the sooner we arrive at that Divine Being so much the better. When you go one step beyond the mundane system, you only excite an inquisitive humour, which it is im-

possible ever to satisfy. To say that the different ideas which compose the reason of the Supreme fall into order of themselves and by their own nature, is really to talk without any precise meaning. If it has a meaning, I would fain know why it is not as good sense to say that the parts of the material world fall into order of themselves and by their own nature. Can the one opinion be intelligible while the other is not so?" Lastly—"An ideal system arranged of itself without a precedent design is not a whit more explicable than a material which attains its order in like manner; nor is there any more difficulty in the latter supposition than in the former." "A mental world or universe of ideas requires a cause as much as does a material world or universe of objects; and if similar in its arrangement, must require a similar cause."

4. This is very distinctly put; and we think admits of as distinct and decisive a reply. The Atheist does not perceive why a material economy as exemplified in the world might not fall into order of itself, as well as a mental economy as exemplified in God. The precise difference between the two is, that we have had proof, as we shall attempt to show, of a commencement to our present material economy—we have had no such proof of a commencement to the mental economy which may have preceded it. There is room for the question, How came the material system of things into its present order?—because we have reason to believe that it has not subsisted in that order from eternity. There is no such room for the question, Why might not the material have fallen into its present order of itself, as well as the mental that is conceived to have gone before it? We have no reason to believe that this mental economy ever was otherwise than it now is. The latter question presumes that the mental did fall into order of itself, or which is the same thing, that the Divinity had a commencement. In the material economy, we have the vestiges before our eyes of its having had an origin, or, in other words, of its being a consequent—and we have furthermore the experience that in every instance which comes under full observation of a similar consequent—that is, of a consequent which involved, as the mundane order of things does so amply, the adaptation of parts to an end, the antecedent was a purposing mind which desired the end, and devised the means for its accomplishment. We might not have been called upon to make even a single ascent in the path of causation, had the world stood forth to view in the character or aspect of immutability.

But instead of this, both history and observation tell of a definite commencement to the present order—or, in other words, they oblige us to regard this order as the posterior term of a sequence; and we, in reasoning on the prior term, just follow the lights of experience when we move upward from the world to an intelligent mind that ordained it. It is this which carries us backward one step from the world to God; and the reason why we do not continue the retrogression beyond God is, that we have not met with an indication of His having had a commencement. In the one case there is a beginning of the present material system forced upon our convictions; and we proceed on the solid ground of experience, when we infer that it began in the devisings of an antecedent mind. In the other case, the case of the antecedent mind, there is no such beginning forced upon our convictions, and none therefore that we are called upon to account for. It is our part as far as in us lies to explain an ascertained difficulty, but not surely to explain an imagined one. We must have some reason for believing in the existence of a difficulty ere we are called upon to solve it. We have ample reason for regarding this world as a posterior term, and seeking after its antecedent. But we have no such reason for treating this antecedent as a posterior term, and seeking for its prior term in a higher antecedent. The one we see to be a changeable and a recent world. The other, for aught we know, may be an unchangeable and everlasting God. So that when the question is put—Why may not the material economy fall into order of itself, as well as the mental which we affirm to have caused it?—our reply is, that so far from this mental economy falling into order of itself, we have yet to learn that it ever had to fall into order at all. The one order, the material, we know, not to have been from everlasting. The other, the mental, which by all experience and analogy must have preceded the material, bears no symptom, which we can discover, of its ever having required any remoter economy to call it into being.

5. At the same time we must admit that on this question between the eternity of matter and the eternity of mind, there has been advanced, on the Theistical side of the controversy, a deal of speculation and argument with which our understandings do not at all coalesce. We have already stated the reasons of our having no confidence in the *a priori* argument—although both Sir Isaac Newton and Dr. Samuel Clarke were employed, we believe, in the construction of it. But besides this, there is a

world of not very certain *métaphysique*, we do think, about the necessity of mind to originate motion in the universe—and that were there nought but matter, all space would be alike filled with it, and all would be inert and immoveable. We have already given one specimen of this gratuitous style of arguing from Wollaston—and without offering any more from other writers of that period, we may state that in the general we feel no sympathy of understanding with much which has been written on the side of Natural Religion. There appears, for example, to be nothing substantial or effective in that reasoning which is founded on the comparison between mind in the abstract and matter in the abstract—or which, on the bare existence of matter apart from its collocations, would conclude the necessity of an antecedent Intelligence to originate it into being. The palpable argument for a God as grounded on the phenomena of visible nature lies, not in the existence of matter, but in the arrangement of its parts—a firmer stepping-stone to the conclusion—than the mere entity of that which is corporeal is to the previous entity of that which is spiritual. To us it marks far more intelligibly the voice of a God, to have called forth the beautiful and beneficent order of our world from the womb of chaos, than to have called forth the substance of our world from the chambers of nonentity. We know that the voice of God called forth both. But it is one of those voices which sounds so audibly and distinctly in Reason's ear. Of the other we have been told, and we think needed to be told, by Revelation.

6. The question to be resolved then is—not whether the matter of the world, but whether the present order of the world had a commencement?

7. Of the various reasons which might be alleged in favour of such a commencement, there are some that we would advance with much greater confidence than others. There is one by Dr. Paley which does not appear to us satisfactory—and in his statement of which, we think that for once he is metaphysically obscure. He, in his Natural Theology, brings it forward as a general position, that wherever we meet with an organic structure where there is the adaptation of complicated means to an end, the cause for its being must be found out of itself and apart from itself. This, at least, does not carry the instant assent of a proposition that announces at once its own evidence. Neither, although we think it a very impressive consideration, would we insist on the argument by which it is attempted to be proved,

that although the existence of each organic being can be accounted for by derivation from a parent of its own likeness—yet we are not on that account to acquiesce in the imagination of an infinitude for the whole race, as if the line of successive generations reached backward to eternity. It does seem as irrational so to conclude, as to say of an iron chain which ascends perpendicularly from the surface of our earth, and at its higher extremity was too distant for vision, that each link was sustained by the one immediately above it, and that simply if the whole had no termination each would have a support of this kind, and so the whole be supported. It seems as impossible that there should be an eternal race of men or animals, as that a chain rising infinitely upwards from our earth should hang upon nothing. If there be good reason for the belief, that there must be a suspending power for the whole chain at whatever height it may be conceived to go—there is at least the semblance of as good reason for the belief that there must be a prime originating power for the whole race, however remote the antiquity of its origin. But even this consideration we at present shall forego—thinking as we do that the non-eternity of our animal and vegetable races rests upon a basis of proof certainly as firm as this, and greatly more palpable.

8. This proof is of two kinds. The recency of the present order of things—the recency of the world, meaning by this term not the matter in respect to being, which forms its substratum; but the dispositions of matter, more especially as exemplified in the structures of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, which form its existing economy*—the commencement of the world in this sense of it may be learned, either from the evidence of history or the evidence of observation. If there have been a creation, it belongs to the order of historical events, and like any other such event might become the subject of a historical testimony—the authority of which might be tried by the rules and decided by the judgment of ordinary criticism. In this respect there is no difference between these two facts—the origin of a world and the origin of a kingdom. They are alike susceptible of being made known by competent and contemporaneous witnesses, and of being transmitted downward on a pathway of oral or written tradition—the continuity of which and the credibility of which are alike cognizable by the versant in that species of

* The proper and original meaning in fact both of the Greek κόσμος and the Latin mundus.

erudition. This evidence is distinct from that of direct and scientific observation, just as the evidence of a record for some bygone event is distinct from that of our senses. We might have documentary information as to the precise year of the building of a house, or we might be satisfied by marks and appearances of which we have the immediate eyesight, that it was built within the last century. In like manner we might have evidence, if not for the precise year or century at which the present system of visible things was put together, at least for all that we are in quest of as connected with our present argument, that it was put together at some time. The historical evidence for a commencement to the present order of the material world is all that we shall notice in this preliminary chapter—postponing our view of its observational evidence to the next book, when we treat of the proofs for the being of a God in the dispositions of matter.

9. There is one principle which should never be lost sight of, when investigating the Evidence of Religion, or indeed any evidence which relates to questions of fact. We mean the sound and sterling quality of that evidence which is either historical or experimental. The truth is, that the historical, when good and genuine, resolves itself into the experimental. The only difference is, that instead of our own observation, it substitutes the observation of others. We receive by our ears what we are assured by the diagnostics of credible testimony, that they have seen by their eyes. Historical evidence has thus the character, and, in proportion as it is substantiated, should have the effect, of the observational. Originally, it is the evidence of sense—and no one can question the paramount authority of this evidence over all the plausibilities of speculation. It is a very obvious principle, although often forgotten in the pride and prejudice of controversy, that what has been seen by one pair of human eyes is of force to countervail all that has been reasoned or guessed at by a thousand human understandings. This is just the Baconian principle in science—and all we want is the scrupulous and faithful application of it to religion. In this we would have religion to make common cause with philosophy—and in the formation of our creed, we should feel as little inclined as any of philosophy's most enlightened disciples to build an airy hypothesis on an unsubstantial foundation. We no more want to devise or excogitate a system by any creative exercise of our own, than the most patient of those physical inquirers

who question nature in their laboratories; and, upon a single adverse response, would dispost the theory of a whole millennium from its ascendancy over the schools. They seek for truth on the field of experiment alone; and if not able to stand this ordeal, neither the beauty of an opinion nor the inveteracy of its long possession will save it from its overthrow. Such is the deference which they, and such also is the deference which we would render to the authority of observation. In every question of fact, it is all in all. It is so in the things of science—it is so in things of sacredness. We would look at both, not through the medium of imagination, but of evidence—and that whether we sit in judgment on a question of our own science, or on a question of geology—whether we investigate the past history and present state of the Divine administration, or investigate the past physical history and actual state of our globe. In either, we should deem the real findings of one man to be of more value than the splendid fancies of a thousand men.

10. For example—in the latter science, we may have one doctrine on the degradation of the hills, and another on the encroachment or regress of the sea, and another on the relation between the position of the strata and the character of the fossil remains to be found in them. Of the last of these, it is evident, that the results of theory must give way to the results of observation, should they stand opposed to each other; and in reference to the two first, it is obvious, that there might be an evidence of history which should overbear the speculation. For instance, had we the authentic memorials of a trigonometrical survey taken two thousand years back, and with the same securities for its correctness that we have in the surveys of the present day, who would not prefer the informations of such a document to all the plausibilities of all the speculatists? It were in the very spirit of our modern science to learn of the height of our mountains and the line and locality of our shores, from the men who had then measured rather than from the men who were now arguing them—and it is just a recognition of the great principle that all the philosophy of actual being in the universe, to be solidly established, must rest on the basis of facts—when we affirm that the doctrines of science want an indispensable prop, if they are not found to quadrate with the sure depositions of history.

11. It is thus, we think, that in the strict philosophy of the question, the geological speculations of our day should come under the tribunal, or be brought to the touchstone of authentic

history. At a time when those physical characters are so confidently spoken of, which have been sculptured on rock, as it were, by the finger of nature, and wherewith she hath recorded the antiquity and revolutions of the globe; we are not to overlook those characters which have been transmitted to us from past ages on the vehicle of human testimony, deponing perhaps to the recency of our present world. We mean to affirm, that if some credible and authentic memorial of history stands in the way of any theory, there is violence done to the philosophy of observation—when such an element is not disposed of, and perhaps not so much as adverted to. It is not a comprehensive view which is taken of the question, by those who run waywardly and unbridled on some track of speculation, and who blink any of the evidence that legitimately bears upon it. In questions of fact, history, when marked with the usual signatures of truth, is not only a competent, but in most instances is the best voucher that can be appealed to. If the Baconian logic require that one's own observation should give the law to his own fancy, it equally requires that the observation or the findings of one man should give law to the fancy of another. Now history is the vehicle on which are brought to us the observations of other men, whether the path over which it has travelled be a distance in space or a distance in time—that is, whether they whose observations it bears to us are the men of other countries, or of by-gone ages. History if not direct is at least derivative observation; and, if rightly derived, is only observation at a distance instead of observation on the spot. There is an end of all solid philosophy, if such evidence is set aside—and that, to make room for the mere wantonness of the human spirit, that would fain substitute its own creations in the place of all which observation distinctly points out, or which history audibly tells of the creation by God. At this rate the fair domain of science is again laid open, as in the days of the schoolmen, to the misrule, the wild vagaries of unchastened imagination.

12. Hence it is that in the exceeding dimness of reason or of nature's light, we do feel the utmost value for all those historical notices which serve to indicate that the world had a beginning. Among the ambiguities of natural theism, and between the plausibilities which can be alleged on either side of this question—between an eternal universe whose laws and processes are now as they have ever been, and an eternal God who hath

ordained these laws and still overrules these processes—there is no evidence that we should more desiderate than what may be called the observational. We should like the question to be rescued from the obscurity of *métaphysique*—and that the clear experimental light of authentic and credible history were shed over it. If from the documents and vestiges of other times, there could be collected even so much as the bare fact, that, somehow or other the world had a beginning, this would make room for the argument of its having begun in the devices of a mind that had an aim and a purpose in the formation of it. Let it in this way be made out that the world really is a consequent—and then from what we observe of this consequent we might reason to an antecedent—from the adaptations which abound in it to objects that are palpable, might we reason to a mind which designed such adaptations because it desired such objects—from the beauties and the benefits of its most orderly arrangement, might we reason to an Intelligent Being who had the Taste to conceive what is lovely, and the Benevolence to institute what is useful, and both the Power and the Wisdom to frame a mechanism which moved in such exquisite harmony, and wrought off so abundant a happiness to that host of sentient creatures who are on the surface of our Earth. Let there only be evidence, whether in nature or in history, by which to get quit of the hypothesis that this world with all its present laws and harmonies must be eternal—and then, on the stepping-stone of a world so beautifully ordered and so bountifully filled, might we rise to the sound hypothesis of an Eternal Mind from whom this universe is an emanation. This would give full introduction to the reasonings *a posteriori*—carrying us at once from the indications of design to a primary designer. All that is needed is satisfactory evidence that these indications are not from Eternity—that the curious mechanism, for example, of our bodies hath not always existed, and been transmitted downwards from one generation to another by a law which hath been everlastingly in operation—in a word, that things have not continued to be as they are at present, we shall not say from the beginning of the Creation, for the fact of a Creation is that which we are now in quest of—but that they have not so been from Eternity.

13. But ere proceeding farther, there is still another principle which we would here interpose, in the shape of a lemma, on the general doctrine of the Evidences. Whatever strength there may be in the argument for the theology of revelation, it makes

a clear addition to the argument for certain propositions in the theology of nature—such as the being of a God, and the immortality of the soul. Now, there is a certain habit or order of conception among the advocates of religion, which serves to throw a disguise over the real strength of the cause. We often, in the first place, read of Christianity as being based upon natural religion, as if it was on the preliminary establishment of the one that the other was founded. But, in the second place, it is held preposterous and illogical to discuss the theism of nature on any other reasons than those which are furnished by the light of nature. Now, this habit of viewing the one as the foundation and the other as the superstructure, and at the same time of treating their evidences as wholly distinct and independent of each other, has had the effect, we should say, of unnecessarily weakening the defences of religion. What we contend for is, that it is logically a competent thing to take—if we may so term it—of the cement which goes to consolidate the structure, and that for the purpose of giving firmness and solidity to the foundation. For example, whatever of evidence there might be for the authority of the Jewish Scriptures, we have a right to appropriate for the support of natural theology, in as far as its doctrines enter into the contents or informations of that volume. If, instead of a succession of Jewish, it had been an equally numerous and creditable succession of authors in any other nation, we should have made this use of them. Had there been a continuous chain of credible and well-supported testimony, passing upward through a series of approved and classical writers in Rome, and Greece, and Egypt—each reiterating from their predecessors a consistent testimony regarding a succession of patriarchs and a flood in the early ages of the world, and a creation at the outset—their history would have been admitted to the proof, and been held as a most important witness in the question of a Deity. Now, what we contend is, that however insensible to the force and the value of it, this is a proof which we actually possess—and, by all sound criticism, not the less valid or impressive that it answers a double purpose, or that it makes at once for the leading truths of natural theology, and for the peculiarities both of the Jewish and the Christian faith. It is at all times competent for us to discuss the existence of God as a separate proposition, and to fetch from every quarter, where evidence can be found, all the arguments, whether of reason or of testimony, which can be brought to bear upon it. Though

natural religion should be indeed the basis, and Christianity but the erection which springs from it, still it may so happen, that from one and the same source there might be extracted a material for the consolidation of both, and so the whole fabric of religion may suffer by our restricting ourselves to a partial instead of a full use of that material. If the testimonies we have for the recency of our world, as now constituted, would have been so eagerly seized upon in behalf of natural theism, had they come to us through the channel of secular or profane history—then, we are not to lose the service of them even as present auxiliaries to our cause, unless it can be shown to us in what way they have become impotent or worthless, by their having descended to us through the channel of sacred history. We thus hold, that in virtue of the artificial process by which the whole argument has been conducted, there has been created what we should call an artificial scarcity of argument for the doctrines of natural religion. For there is no real scarcity. On the firm and frequent stepping-stones of a sustained history, we may rise to the observational evidence of a creation and a Creator; but, by the general practice of our guides and conductors, we are kept at the present stage of our inquiries from entering upon this path. The fact of creation is strictly a historical one, and is therefore susceptible of being proven by historical evidence, if such is to be found. And by all the signatures of valid or incorrupt testimony, we are directed to a place and a people among whom the registers both of creation and providence were deposited. Yet, on the existence of God, as a preliminary question, these leading credentials are kept out of sight, and we are presented instead with but the secondary or shadowy reflections of them in the oral traditions of other places and other people, or the dying and distant echoes of nations that had been scattered abroad over the face of the world. It is thus that the fundamental demonstrations and doctrines in a course of theology are made to lack of that strength which rightfully belongs to them. We go in pursuit of dim or mythological allusions, to be found in heathen writers; and should we catch at some remote semblance of the Mosaic story, whether in the literature of Greeks or Hindoos, we rejoice over it as if a treasure more precious than all that we possess. Now, whatever semblance may be found there, the substance of this argument is to be found in the succession of Jewish and Christian writers. We ask no special indulgence for them. We should

like them to be tested in the same way as all other authors; and, ere they are admitted as the chroniclers of past ages, to pass through the ordeal of the same criticism that they do. It is thus that we would trace, by its successive landmarks, what may be called the great central stream of that history which stretches from the commencement of our existing world to the present day; and it is only thus that our minds can be adequately possessed with the richness and power of the historical evidences for a God.*

14. We are far from meaning to insinuate that, beside the direct testimony of the sacred volumes, there are not other memorials of the world's recency which are worthy of our regard—such probabilities, even within the range of Nature's discernments of a recent Creation, or at least of a first (however remote) origin of Things, as might serve to demonstrate that we live in the

* Of the coincidences between profane authors and the Mosaic history, we have a very good *précis* in the 16th Section of the 1st Book of "Grotius on the Truth of the Christian Religion"—with a copious exemplification in the footnotes which are appended to it—tending to show that the most ancient tradition among all nations is exactly agreeable to the religion of Moses. In support of this he quotes from the remains of the Phœnician histories, from the accounts transmitted to us of the Indians and Egyptians, from the traditions preserved both in Greek and Latin and Jewish and Christian writers, of whom, from the stores of his vast and varied erudition, he presents us with many interesting specimens. The notices which he collects from these multifarious sources respect chiefly the chaos out of which our present system was formed, the framing of animals, the creation of man after the divine image and the dominion given to him over the creatures, the energy of the divine word in the production of all things, the priority of darkness to light, the infusion of life into all that is vital by the Spirit of God, the formation of man from the matter of the earth, the division of time into weeks, with the special honour rendered by various distinct nations to the seventh day. In further corroboration of the harmony between profane and sacred history, we are presented with allusions to the primitive nakedness of our race, to the innocence and simplicity and happiness of a golden age, to the history respecting Adam's fall, and the great longevity of the patriarchs. To these must be added the almost universal tradition of a deluge—with many gleanings of ancient authorship about its minuter particulars, as the ark in which a few of our race were preserved and other species of animals, the place on which it rested, the sending forth from it of a dove and a raven. Besides these, resemblances can be traced between the current legends of various writers on the one hand, and on the other the scriptural narratives of the tower of Babel and the rite of circumcision, the histories of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, the later scriptural narratives which respect Elijah, Elisha, and Moses. It is well, that in these shadowy reflections there is none of that incongruity with sacred history which can affect the truth and authority of its informations. But when we consider the weight and number of the immediate testimonies that we possess in support of these informations, the continuity and strength of their evidence, the marks both internal and external which demonstrate the authenticity of the Bible, we cannot but regard it as a marvellous phenomenon, that inquirers should feel the satisfaction as of a stronger evidence in these hazy reflections of the truth, than when they view it in its own direct and primary radiance.

midst of a derived and not of an everlasting system ; that many of the most exquisite structures which arrest the eye and the admiration of beholders are, in the only important sense of the term, consequents, and that no other antecedent can be found for them than the fiat of an intelligent Creator. There have many such vestiges been collected and appealed to, such as the recency of science—the limited range of our historical traditions, mounting upwards to only a few thousand years—the vast capacity of the species for general or collective improvement contrasted with the little progress which they have yet made, and which marks, it is supposed, but a comparatively modern origin to the human family—the expansive force of population, and yet its shortness still from the territory and resources of a globe, that could accommodate so many hundreds more of millions upon its surface. These and several more taken chiefly from the history of nations, and the migration of tribes as indicated by the spread and the similarity of cognate languages, have been much insisted on for the purpose of building up an argument, and strengthening the barrier against the tide of a desolating Atheism. They are of some value, we admit. It is well that, if not very great or sensible confirmations of, they are at least in coincidence with the main narrative. They shed a fainter light on the question, but they show nothing opposite to what is shown by the light of the direct testimonies.

15. After all, they are the direct testimonies, handed down from one to another in the stream of Jewish and Christian Authors, which constitute the main strength and solidity of the historical argument for the historical fact of the Creation. There might be fitter occasions for entering into the detail of this Evidence—but we hold it not out of place to notice even at present the strong points of it. In tracing the course upwards from the present day, we arrive by a firm and continuous series of authors at that period, when not only the truth of the Christian story is guaranteed by thousands of dying martyrs—but when the Old Testament Scriptures, these repositories of the Jewish story, obtained a remarkable accession to their evidence which abundantly compensates for their remoteness from our present age. We allude to the split that took place between two distinct and independent or, stronger still, two bitterly adverse bodies of witnesses at the outset of the Christian economy. The publicity of the New Testament miracles—the manifest sincerity of those who attested them, as evinced by their cruel sufferings in the

cause, not of opinions which they held to be true, but of facts which they perceived by their senses—the silence of inveterate and impassioned enemies most willing, if they could, to have transmitted the decisive refutation of them to modern times—these compose the main strength of the argument for our later Scriptures. And then, beside the references in which they abound to the former Scriptures—and by which, in fact, they give the whole weight of their authority to the Old Testament—we have the superadded testimony of an entire nation, now ranged in zealous hostility against the Christian Faith, and bent upon its overthrow. They who are conversant in the practice, or who have reflected most on the Philosophy of Evidence, know well how to estimate the strength which lies in a concurrence of testimonies where collusion is impossible; and still more where one of the parties, inflamed with hatred and rivalry against the other, could almost choose to disgrace themselves for the sake of involving their adversaries in disgrace and discredit along with them. It is this which stamps a character and a credit on the archives of the Jewish history, whereof it were vain to seek another exemplification over again in the whole compass of erudition. These memorials of our race, which they had no interest in preserving—for, mainly, they were but the records of their own perversity and dishonour, had been handed down to them by uncontrolled tradition from former ages; and were now embodied in the universal faith of the people. And when the two great parties diverged however widely asunder in every other article of belief—they held a firm agreement in this, the perfect integrity of at least the historical Scriptures. Had there been a juggle here, why did not an enraged priesthood stand forth to expose it—that along with it they might expose the weakness of that alleged prophecy which formed one great pillar of the Christian argument? How, in the fierce conflicts of this heated partisanship, did not the secret break out of an imposition on the credulity of mankind, if imposition there was?—and out of this fell warfare among the impostors who were for palming upon the world the miracles of the present or the memorials of the past, ought not that very effervescence to have arisen which would have swept the imposture of both religions from the face of the earth? It says everything for the truth both of the Christian story and of the Hebrew records, that they survived this hurricane; and more especially that, ere the observances of the Mosaic ritual were

done away, so strong a demonstration should have been given of the national faith in those documents by which the solemnities of the Jewish religion were incorporated with the facts of the Jewish history. The virtue of an institution like the Passover to authenticate the narrative in which it took its professed origin, and of which it is the standing memorial, has been ably expounded by Leslie and others. It is thus that we are carried upwards through a medium of historic light to the times of the Patriarchs—or even though we ascend not the ladder, but abide as it were at the bottom of it, we shall find in the Jews of the present day, the characteristics of a singular race which bespeak them to be a monument of old revelations. They have maintained their separate identity, as no other nation ever did, among the tempests and the fluctuations in which they have been cradled for two thousand years—and now stand before us as a living evidence of their past story—and an evidence along with it, that throughout the long succession of those fitful turmoils which have taken place in the wars and politics of our world for so many centuries—there has been indeed the controlling agency of a God mixed up with the history of human affairs.

16. Now the truth of the continuous narrative, which forms the annals of this wondrous people, would demonstrate a great deal more than what we at present are in quest of—that the world had a beginning—or rather that many of the world's present organizations had a beginning, and have not been perpetuated everlastingly from one generation to another, by those laws of transmission which now prevail over the wide extent of the animal and vegetable kingdoms. We hold the Jewish Scriptures to be authentic memorials of this fact—and although we might afterwards find a better place for the contents both of the Jewish and Christian revelations—yet we cannot forbear, amid all that is imagined about the sufficiency of the natural argument, to offer our passing homage to these greater and lesser lights of our Moral Hemisphere, which have, both of them together, poured a flood of radiance over the field of Natural Religion, and so as to have manifested many objects there which would have been but dimly seen by the eye of Nature. Believing, as we do, that the surest of all philosophy is that which rests on the basis of well-accredited facts, in justice to our views on the strict science of the question, we must state the informations even of the Old Testament to be far more satisfying to ourselves than all the vaunted theorems of academic

demonstration. There is a great reigning spirit by which the varied authorship of this book is so marked and harmonized—there is such a unity of design and contemplation in writings that lie scattered over the tract of many centuries—there is such a stately and consistent march from the first dawnings of this singular history, towards that great evolution in which the whole prophecy and priesthood of the consecrated land converged and terminated—there is withal such an air of simple and venerable greatness over this earlier record—such loftiness in its poetry—such obvious characters of truth and sanctity and moral earnestness throughout all its compositions, as superadd the strongest weight of internal testimony to the outward and historical evidence by which it is supported. This may afterwards be more distinctly unfolded—but we cannot even at this stage of our inquiries withhold all reference to a Book on whose aspect there sits the expression of most unfeigned honesty, and in whose disclosures we have lessons of the sublimest Theism.

BOOK II.

PROOFS FOR THE BEING OF A GOD IN THE DISPOSITIONS OF MATTER.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE LAWS OF MATTER AND THE DISPOSITIONS OF MATTER.

1. We have already adverted to the style of that argumentation which has been employed, for the purpose of demonstrating the creation of matter from the mere existence of it; and charged it with the same obscurity and want of obviousness which characterize the *a priori* reasoning. We do not perceive how, on the observation of an unshapen mass, there can, from its *being* alone, be drawn any clear or strong inference in favour of its non-eternity; or that simply because it now is, a time must have been when it was not. We cannot thus read in the entity of matter, a prior non-entity or an original commencement for it; and something more must be affirmed of matter than barely that it is, ere we can discern that either an artist's mind or an artist's hand has at all been concerned with it.

2. But more than this. This matter, whether an organized solid or a soft and yielding fluid, congregated apparently at random in the receptacle which holds it, might exhibit a number of properties and manifest itself to be the subject of various laws, without announcing that either a creative power or an intelligent purpose had to do with the formation of it. For of what significancy is it towards any conclusion of this sort—that an isolated lump is possessed of hardness or solidity or weight; or that we can discern in it the law of cohesion, and the law of impulse, and the law of gravitation? These laws might all be detected in any one body, or they might be shared in common throughout an aggregate of bodies, scattered about in rude disorder; yet exhibiting no trace whatever of a first production, at

the mandate of any living potentate, or any subsequent distribution which bespoke a skilful and scheming intellect which presided over it. Matter must have had some properties to certify its existence to us, it being by its properties alone, and not by any direct view of its naked substratum that we come to recognise it—so that, to learn of matter at all, it must have had some properties or other belonging to it. Now these properties might be conceived of variously, and all the actual laws of the material system might be discovered in a confused medley of things strewn around without any principle of arrangement—its chemical, and optical, and magnetic, and mechanical laws; and yet from the study of these, no argument might be drawn in favour of a God, who either called the matter into being, or endowed it with the attributes which we find it to possess.

3. The main evidence, then, for a God, as far as this can be collected from visible nature, lies not in the existence of matter, neither in its laws, but in its *dispositions*. This distinction between the laws and the dispositions of matter has been overlooked by theists; or at least not been brought forward with sufficient prominence. Nevertheless it is essential, not only for the purpose of exhibiting the argument in its strength, but of protecting it from the sophistry of infidels.

4. It may be difficult to discriminate, or at least to characterize by a single word, what that is in matter apart from laws, which we would single out as affording the chief argument for a God. It is not enough to say that, in contradistinction to the properties of matter, we would appeal to the collocation of its parts. No doubt a very great proportion of the evidence that we are now seeking to demonstrate lies in the right placing of things, but not the whole of it; and this, therefore, is only a specimen of our meaning, without being the full and general exemplar of it. It is not from some matter being harder than others that we infer a God; but when we behold the harder placed where it is obviously the most effective for a beneficial end, as in the nails and claws and teeth of animals, in this we see evidence for a God. It is not the law of refraction in optics that manifests to us a designer; but there is a very striking manifestation of Him in the position of the lenses of the eye, and of the retina behind it—being such as to make the rays of light converge into that picture which is indispensable for the purposes of vision. It is not from the law alone of muscular contraction in animal substances that we argue for a God; but

from the circumstance, that wherever a collection of fibres having this property is to be found in the complicated framework of a living creature, the moving force thereby established is always in conjunction with a something that is moveable, and with motions that subserve a useful end—insomuch that along with an apparatus of moving forces, we have a corresponding apparatus of parts to be moved; and furnished, too, with the requisite joints or hinges—in other words, not the right powers only, but the right mechanics for giving operation and effect to the powers. Now, though these adaptations may all be quoted as adaptations of place, and therefore as instances of wise and beneficial collocation, it is not right placing alone which gives rise to all our beneficial adaptations. Things must be rightly shaped and rightly proportioned; and besides, looking to laws and forces alone, one can imagine that were all the other dispositions of our present actual economy to remain as they are, a mere change in the intensity of these forces would be the occasion of many grievous maladjustments—as a gravitation of ten times greater force towards the centre of the earth, with only the present powers of locomotion in those who inhabit the surface of it; or more intense affinities of cohesion in the various material substances within the use or reach of man; or an atmosphere and ether for the propagation of light, of different elasticity than what is now so exquisitely suited to our present susceptibilities of sound and vision.* These instances are enough to prove that the term “collocation” does not of itself suffice for expressing the distinction at which we now aim. A different centrifugal influence on each planet of our system might have given to each an elongated instead of a nearly circular orbit, and the benefits of such an orbit cannot therefore be referred to collocation alone. The term “collocation” no doubt might express by a single word that which in this argument is contrasted to “Law.” But a better perhaps might be found. It certainly does not comprehend all which we wish to include in it, as marking design at its first setting up. It is not the mere placing of the parts of matter which affords decisive indication of this, but of parts shaped and sized in the most beneficial way—beside being endowed with the very forces or motions that were the most suitable in the given circumstances. Beside

* Whewell, in the second chapter of the Introduction to his truly admirable Bridgewater Treatise, distinguishes both between the force of a law and its intensity or rate, which latter is an arbitrary magnitude.

the original placing of Jupiter and his satellites, we must advert in the argument for intelligence to the original direction and intensity of the motions which were communicated to them. Beside the situation of the parts in an anatomical mechanism, reference must be had both to the form and magnitude of the parts. Perhaps, then, instead of the collocations, it were better, as more expressive of whatever in matter might be comprehended under the head of its arbitrary arrangements, that we contrasted the dispositions of matter with its laws.

5. For the purpose, then, of viewing aright what that is in which, nakedly and singly, the chief strength of the natural argument for a God lies—we should not only distinguish between the existence of matter and its dispositions, but also between the laws of matter and its dispositions. We have already said, that we detach an ingredient of weakness from the cause, when we give up that part of the argument which is founded on the bare existence of matter; and we at least bring out more prominently, because more separately, the main strength of the argument—when we discriminate between the evidence for a Divine wisdom in the laws of matter, and the evidence for a Divine wisdom in the disposition of its parts. If matter have existed from eternity, it must have had properties of some kind; and why not, it is asked, as well the actual properties which characterize it as any others? La Place, indeed, goes so far as to found an atheistical insinuation on the doctrines which he professes to demonstrate—that every virtue which radiates from a central point diminishes in intensity with the squares of the distances; and hence, if gravitation be a property at all, the actual law of gravitation is an essential property of matter. Now, it is not sufficiently adverted to, that we can even afford to give up the evidence as indicated singly by the laws, because of the overpassing evidence which is indicated by the collocations of matter. Laws of themselves would announce nought whatever of the hand or mind of an artificer. The truth is, that with laws and without collocations or dispositions, we should still have but a heaving, turbid, disorderly chaos—whereas it is by the collocations as adapted to the laws that the only decisive indications of counsel or contrivance are given. We can imagine all the present and existing laws of matter to be in full operation; and yet, just for the want of a right local disposition of parts, the universe might be that wild undigested medley of things, in which no one trace or character of a designing architect was at all discernible. Bodies

may have gravitated from all eternity through the wide expanse of nature, as they do now. Light may have diffused itself by emanation from various sources with its present velocity. Fluids may have commixed with solids; and each class of substances have had the very properties which they possess at this moment. All the forces, whether of mechanics or of chemistry, or even of physiology, might have been inherent in the various substances of nature; and yet in the random play of all these physical energies, nothing still but a chaos might have emerged, that gave no indication whatever of a presiding mind, which directed the principles and the processes of this immense universe, to any one end or object that mind can be conceived as set upon. A headlong gravitation might have amalgamated all the matter of the universe into one mass. And what of this matter was in a liquid or aerial form might have buoyed all the lighter substances to the exterior of this rude mundane system. And motion might have been excited by those inequalities of temperature which the ceaseless operations of chemistry give rise to. And this motion, whether communicated by impulse or withstood by resistance, might have ever and anon been renewed by the partial action of the evolved heat on the susceptible fluids of that turbid and ever-heaving mass which constituted the whole universe—and thus a perpetual vortex of movements might have been kept up, all under the guidance of those very laws which it is the object of our existing philosophy to ascertain. There might have been the rotation of a vast unwieldy sphere; and the coherence of its parts by attraction; and the play of various activities among the particles of the mass; and even such vegetative or animate tendencies as, with a right assortment of the substances in which they reside, might have given birth to the two great families of the great physiological kingdom, but, without such assortment, ever and anon fell short and were frustrated in the formation of a complete organic being. All this is conceivable with the present laws, just if without the present collocations. In truth, there is not one law of matter which now falls under the observation of inquirers, that, if unaccompanied with such a collocation as shall suit the parts of matter to each other, might not have had place in the random and undirected turbulence of a chaos. The laws of matter uphold its movements—but they are its dispositions which guide the movements. They are the laws which carry forward the processes or evolutions of a framework. But it is collocation which made the

framework. In other words, design is not indicated by the mere properties of matter, but by a right placing of the parts of matter. One can imagine all the properties of matter to have existed before that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, and summoned the parts of matter into that order and harmony which are now before our eyes. Even then, in the void and formless abyss, it is conceivable that there might have been a harmoniousness in one set of bodies, and transparency in another, and opaque solidity in a third, and the tendency to crystallize or to run even into organic harmonies in a fourth—and light might have radiated from any quarter where it resided, and been reflected and refracted according to the very laws which characterize the optics of our present world; and yet, altogether instead of a world with the regularities which are exhibited by ours, there might have been nought but a wild and indescribable medley of things, with all the activities which abound in our present system, but without one indication of purpose or aim in any of its arrangements. And, confining ourselves to one example, the refraction of light in its passage from a rarer to a denser medium might have obtained in a chaos as well as in a world. The wisdom, therefore, that appears in the formation of an eye is not properly indicated by the law, but by the adaptation of the parts of this organ to the law—not by the law or property of refraction, but by the situation of the refracting fluids, which so bend the rays that emanate from the points which be without, as that they should meet in points which are within. Neither does the law which connects vision with the formation of a picture composed of these points, of itself indicate a purpose—but this purpose is instantly recognised in the situation of a retina spread out in the very place where all this refracted light is collected, and so furnishing the canvas as it were on which the indispensable picture might be received. The law of varying refraction, by which the distance of the picture behind the pupil varies either with the convexity of the pupil or with the distance of the objects—it is not this which of itself indicates the hand of Intelligence. But the decisive indication lies in the placing of those various muscles wherewith the organ is so curiously set—by some of which the pupil might be rounded or flattened, and by others of which the retina might be either placed nearer to the front of the eye or drawn back to a greater distance from it. The term *convenience* is equivalent to utility, and had its origin doubtless in this, that utility results from the

coming together of parts. And it is just the coming together of those parts which compose the mechanism of the eye that gives the impression of a fabricator's hand—and tells us how the eye was fashioned as it is and placed where it is for the purpose which it so distinctly serves.

6. In every work of human fabrication, they are the dispositions, more especially the collocations, and the dispositions alone, which announce the design which appears to have been in the making of it. They form the sufficient, for they form in truth the sole indication of the artist's mind that devised, and the artist's hand that executed. We do not accredit him with the original formation of the materials—neither do we accredit him with the laws and properties of matter. He did not establish the properties of matter—he only took advantage of these properties by a right disposition of the parts of matter. He did not institute the laws—but he turns these laws to his purpose; and this purpose is indicated not by the laws, but by such a disposition of substantive and tangible things as places them in the way of the law's operation. The watchmaker did not give to the main-spring its elasticity—but he coiled it up, and so placed it in the barrel as to impress a rotatory direction thereupon. He did not give to matter its power of cohesion; but he availed himself of this power, when he connected the barrel by a chain with the fusee, and so communicated a circular movement to the latter. He did not give its property to the lever; but there must have been a maker who had this property in his eye, when by means of a train of wheel-work, he placed a succession of revolving levers between the moving force and the balance-wheel which communicates a certain regulated pace to the handles of the dial-plate. He did not give to glass its transparency; but he made use of this its property, when he employed it as a covering, which might protect the dial-plate without concealing it. The design is not indicated by any one of the laws; but by such a collocation of pieces as made these laws conspire to the accomplishment of some palpable end. All the parts of this beautiful machinery, if misshapen and disjointed from each other, might be huddled together into a little chaos—and on the examination of each, there might be detected all the principles which give movement and efficacy to the mechanism of the timepiece—but the design is gathered purely from the arrangement of the materials. It is because of an elastic spring being there; and a fusee connected with it by a chain being

here ; and because the varying diameters of this cone are so accommodated to the variations in the elastic force of the spring, as to make it equalize the movement of the whole ; and because, placed in the very order that favours the operation of so many different laws, there are the wheels with their teeth lapping into each other, and the regulator, and the vibrating balance, and the indices on the outer face, and the glass that protects and yet keeps it visible—in a word, it is not because of things being endowed with given properties, but because of things being so put together as that these properties are made to be useful, that we infer contrivance in the watch. The properties might all have been detected in the medley of its rude and unfashioned materials. But it is because of a shape and distribution that evolved the properties towards some useful accomplishment—it is because of this, that we recognise a designer's hand in the whole fabrication. In short, it is adaptation and that alone which gives the impression of a designing cause—and to make this a complete and warrantable impression, we do not need to conceive of the designer that he either originated a substance or endowed it with properties. It is enough that he turned the substance and its properties to account by collocation. And what is true of a watch is true of a world. We do not need to demonstrate the non-eternity of matter. We do not need to involve ourselves in any question about the essential and the arbitrary properties of matter. We make our single appeal to its dispositions. It is in these that we behold the finger of a God—and in these that there is most unequivocal impress of the mind which presided over the formation of all things.

7. In the performances of human art, the argument for design that is grounded on the useful dispositions of matter, stands completely disentangled from the argument that is grounded on the useful laws of matter—for in every implement or piece of mechanism constructed by the hands of man, it is in the latter apart from the former, that the indications of contrivance wholly and exclusively lie. We do not accredit man with the establishment of any laws for matter—yet he leaves enough by which to trace the operations of his intelligence in the collocations of matter. He does not give to matter any of its properties ; but he arranges it into parts—and by such arrangement alone, does he impress upon his workmanship the incontestable marks of design ; not in that he has communicated any powers to matter, but in that he has intelligently availed himself of these powers,

and directed them to an obviously beneficial result. The watch-maker did not give its elasticity to the main-spring, nor its regularity to the balance-wheel, nor its transparency to the glass, nor the momentum of its varying forces to the levers of his mechanism—yet is the whole replete with the marks of intelligence notwithstanding, announcing throughout the hand of a maker who had an eye on all these properties, and assigned the right place and adjustment to each of them, in fashioning and bringing together the parts of an instrument for the measurement and indication of time. Now, the same distinction can be observed in all the specimens of natural mechanism. It is true that we accredit the author of these with the creation and laws of matter, as well as its dispositions; but this does not hinder its being in the latter and not in the former, where the manifestations of skill are most apparent, or where the chief argument for a Divinity lies. The truth is, that mere laws, without collocations, would have afforded no security against a turbid and disorderly chaos. One can imagine of all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a watch, that they may have been huddled together, without shape and without collocation, into a little chaos or confused medley;—where, in full possession of all the properties which belong to the matter of the instrument, but without its dispositions, every evidence of skill would have been wholly obliterated. And it is even so with all the substantive things which enter into the composition of a world. Take but their forms and collocations away from them, and this goodly universe would instantly lapse into a heaving and disorderly chaos—yet without stripping matter of any of its properties or powers. There might still, though operating with random and undirected activity, be the laws of impulse, and gravitation, and magnetism, and temperature, and light, and the forces of chemistry, and even those physiological tendencies which, however abortive in a state of primitive rudeness, or before the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters, waited but a right distribution of the parts of matter, to develop into the full effect and establishment of animal and vegetable kingdoms. The thing wanted for the evolution of this chaos into an orderly and beneficial system is not the endowing of matter with right properties; but the forming of it into things of right shape and magnitude, and the marshalling of these into right places. This last alone would suffice for bringing harmony out of confusion; and, apart altogether from the first, or, without involving our-

selves in the metaphysical obscurity of those questions which relate to the origination of matter, and to the distinction between its arbitrary and essential properties, might we discern, in the mere arrangements of matter, the most obvious and decisive signatures of the artist-hand which has been employed on it.

8. It is thus, I imagine, that we might clear away the obscurer from the distincter parts of the theistical argument. Laws without collocations would not exempt the universe from the anarchy of a chaos. All the existent laws of the actual universe would not do it—and, were the present collocations destroyed, we see nothing in the present laws which have even so much as a tendency to restore them. For example, let the human species be extinguished; and, for aught we see, there is no force and no combination of forces in Nature which could replace the organic creature man, made up as he is of such curious and manifold collocations. Apart from the established line of derivation, we do not even see an abortive tendency towards the formation of any such distinct organic being whatever, whether animal or vegetable. So that if by any chance our race should be extinguished, then, unless by the fiat of a Creator, the surface of our globe would remain for ever desolated of all its rational generations. If we can demonstrate, then, whether from Nature or History, that there was a time when our human species was not—we should hold this to be a sure stepping-stone to the demonstration of a God.

9. The evidence for design in a workmanship of art is grounded exclusively on the shapes and collocations of things; and in no way presupposes either a creation of matter, or an infusion of its properties, on the part of the artificer. And the very same evidence we might have entire, in the workmanship of Nature—whatever the obscurities may be which rest on the eternity of matter, or on the essential and inseparable qualities which may be conceived to belong to it. We do not escape from this evidence by ascribing self-existence to body, and asking why its present properties might not have obtained from everlasting? There is still enough of evidence for an overruling mind, if the present arrangements be not from everlasting. When these arrangements commenced, there was a turning of the properties of matter by the new adaptation of its parts to the fulfilment of certain ends—and in this alone we have the same entire evidence for design, that we have in the fabrications of human intelligence. Grant that there may have been light

from all eternity, and that there might also have been fluids which had the power of bending the direction of its rays. Still if ever a time was when man was not—we ask, how came the fluids to be so disposed in the pupil of the eye, and the retina to be placed at such a distance behind—as to make the pencils meet on that visual tablet, and there spread out a picture of nature for the information of the living occupier within? What brought the manifold muscles around this delicate and complex organ, and set each in that very position, and gave to each that very limit and path by which it could best add to the perfection of this instrument for the purposes of sight? It is not enough to say that the law by which the successions of the animal kingdom are upholden, is that in virtue of which each parent transmits its own likeness throughout all generations. We speak on the supposition of a first parent, a supposition that we shall endeavour to substantiate afterwards—and, in reference to him we would ask, not who established the laws of life, and of nourishment, and of sensation, and of thought, which make man what he is—but who brought such an innumerable assemblage of circumstances together, and by the adaptation of each to all the rest, upholds the living creature in the exercise of all his functions and all his faculties? Who so curiously organized him—and set him all over with so many fitnesses both of one part to another, and of all to the constitution of external things? Who gave him the lungs that could breathe in no other atmosphere—and the eyes that an intenser day-light than ours might have overborne into utter blindness—and the ears that either might have been insensible to the actual sounds of external nature, or on which these sounds would have inflicted the agony of a loudness that was intolerable—and the sensibility of touch that might under a random economy have been far too delicate for the rude exposures of this world's elements, or too obtuse for any intimation even from the rudest of their collisions? And how came such a complex anatomy into being, made up of more than ten thousand parts, the want of any one of which would bring discomfort or utter destruction on the creature who has been provided with it? The laws of nature can explain the succession of its events; but these laws do not inform us of the way in which such an arrangement or such a collocation of many things has been brought about, as to make the working of these laws subserve an accomplishment which, but for the adaptation of one part to another, would have utterly been frustrated.

10. This difference between the Laws of Matter and the Dispositions of Matter is one of great argumentative importance. In astronomy, for example, when attending to the mechanism of the planetary system, we should instance at most but two laws—the law of gravitation; and perhaps the law of perseverance, on the part of all bodies, whether in a state of rest or of motion, till interrupted by some external cause. But had we to state the dispositions of matter in the planetary system, we should instance a greater number of particulars. We should describe the arrangement of its various parts, whether in respect to situation, or magnitude, or figure—as the position of a large and luminous mass in the centre; and of the vastly smaller but opaque masses which circulated around it, but at such distances as not to interfere with each other; and of the still smaller secondary bodies which revolved about the planets. And we should include in this description the impulses in one direction, and nearly in one plane, given to the different moving bodies; and so regulated as to secure the movement of each in an orbit of small eccentricity. The dispositions of matter in the planetary system were fixed at the original setting up of the machine. The laws of matter were ordained for the working of the machine. The former, that is, the dispositions, make up the framework, or what may be termed the apparatus of the system. The latter, that is, the laws, uphold the performance of it.

11. Now the tendency of atheistical writers is to reason exclusively on the laws of matter, and to overlook its dispositions. Could all the beauties and benefits of the astronomical system be referred to the single law of gravitation, it would greatly reduce the strength of the argument for a designing cause. La Place, as if to fortify still more the atheism of such a speculation, endeavoured to demonstrate of this law—that, in respect of its being inversely proportional to the square of the distance from the centre, it is an essential property of matter. La Grange had previously established—that but for such a proportion, or by the deviation of a thousandth part from it, the planetary system would go into derangement—or, in other words, that the law, such as it is, was essential to the stability of the present mundane constitution. La Place would have accredited the law—the unconscious and unintelligent law—that thing according to him of blind necessity, with the whole of this noble and beautiful result—overlooking what La Grange held to be indispensable as concurring elements in his demonstration of it—certain dispositions

along with the law—such as the movement of all the planets, first in one direction, second nearly in one plane, and then in nearly circular orbits. We are aware that according to the discoveries, or rather perhaps to the guesses of some later analysts, the three last circumstances might be dispensed with; and yet notwithstanding, the planetary system, its errors still remaining periodical, would in virtue of the single law oscillate around a mean estate that should be indestructible and everlasting. Should this come to be a conclusively settled doctrine in the science, it will extenuate, we admit, the argument for a designing cause in the formation of a planetarium. But it will not annihilate that argument—for there do remain certain palpable utilities in the dispositions as well as laws of the planetary system, acknowledged by all the astronomers; such as the vastly superior weight and quantity of matter accumulated in its centre, and the local establishment there of that great fountain of light and heat from which the surrounding worlds receive throughout the whole of their course an equable dispensation. What a maladjustment would it have been had the luminous and the opaque matter changed places in the firmament; or the planets, by the eccentricity of their orbits, been subject to such vicissitudes of temperature as would certainly, in our own at least, have entailed destruction both on the animal and vegetable kingdoms.

12. We hold that there is strong evidence for the commencement of our planetary system—though we shall not attempt to expound it at present—and the more, as there is a greatly overpassing evidence for the commencement of the organic systems in our animal and vegetable kingdoms, which are far more replete with the indications of design than is the mechanism of the heavens, as unfolded to us by astronomy. Let us therefore meanwhile assume a beginning for our solar system; and then, though we should not be able to disprove the eternity of matter, or that it had all the laws and properties which we now observe from everlasting; still these laws and properties, though perfectly sufficient to account for the working of the planetary mechanism, are not sufficient to account for the original collocation of its parts. They may account for the operation of the machine, but not for the fabrication of it. If we have evidence for its being at one time set up, we are in the profoundest ignorance of any law by which it behoved to be set up according to its present arrangement. Why, for example, should all the luminous matter have been accumulated in the centre? Why

should the fountain-head of light and of heat have been throned, as it were, in that place whence it could emanate its gracious influences with best advantage on those worlds, which, by the weight of its superior attraction, it could compel to a close attendance upon itself? Why, instead of this great central fire around which the planets move, and whence they receive through every part of their course an almost equable dispensation—might there not have been an opaque mass in the midst of that planetarium which now is lighted up so gorgeously; and wandering suns that, moving as comets do, might have scorched and left to freeze alternately the fixed and immoveable opaque in the midst of the firmament? And there are other adaptations—a rotation around every axis that affords a grateful succession of day and night—a progressive movement in space which, along with the inclination of the axis to the plane of revolution, leads on the seasons through the round of their beneficent journey—the satellites that reflect though they do not radiate, and cast their pale but useful lustre over the wintry and benighted regions of the worlds which they encompass—the distance at which the planets are kept from each other, and the free uncumbered amplitude which is thus left for moving without interruption, and without even any hurtful disturbance from their mutual gravitations. These are the few, but still the contingent simplicities which might or might not have taken place, and on the actual concurrence of which, those worlds resemble our own in certain great characteristics, which we know are indispensable to the sustenance and the being of all its animated generations. We are aware of no force now in operation that could have carried out these planets to their respective distances from the sun—that could then, instead of simply leaving them to fall back into the mass of that great luminary, have projected them at about right angles to the line which lay between them—that could have directed the impulses so as that, in most instances, there should have been an axis with an angle of inclination to the plane of the orbit—that should have so tempered the velocity of the centrifugal motion as to have given to each a nearly circular path—that, in like manner, should have launched the satellites around their primaries, and thus have given rise to that beauteous and beneficent mechanism which the laws of nature might keep in action, but which no laws of nature that we have any access to could have framed or put together. To constitute a machine is one thing—to continue it in operation is another. The latter might be done

in virtue of the properties of matter, and the former not be referrible to any one material agent within the compass of our knowledge. Although we should concede to Atheists, that the laws of matter had been long antecedent to the formation of the planetary system, yet formed as the system may have been in accommodation to these laws, there might, by the mere adjustment of its parts (and an adjustment which no blind and unconscious forces that we at least know of could have given rise to), to subserve some striking and palpable ends, there might be evidence, in this goodly fabrication, of a purpose by an Artist's mind, and of an Artist's hand put forth on the execution of it.

13. But whatever defect or doubtfulness of evidence there may be in the mechanism of the heavens—this is amply made up for in a more accessible mechanism near at hand. If either the dispositions of matter in the former mechanism be so few, or the demonstrable results of its single law be so independent of them, that the agency of design rather than of necessity or chance be less manifest than it otherwise would be in the astronomical system; nothing, on the other hand, can exceed the force and concentration of that proof, which is crowded to so marvellous a degree of enhancement within the limits of the anatomical system. It is this which enables us to draw so much weightier an argument for a God, from the construction of an eye than from the construction of a planetarium. And here it is quite palpable, that it is in the dispositions of matter more than in the laws of matter, where the main strength of the argument lies, though we hear much more of the wisdom of Nature's laws than of the wisdom of her collocations.* Now it is true that the law of refraction is indispensable to the faculty of vision;

* This distinction between the laws and the collocations of matter is overlooked by atheistical writers, as in the following specimen from the "Système de la Nature" of Mirabaud. "These prejudiced dreamers," speaking of believers in a God, "are in an ecstasy at the sight of the periodical motion of the planets; at the order of the stars; at the various productions of the earth; at the astonishing harmony in the component parts of animals. In that moment, however, they forget the laws of motion; the power of gravitation; the forces of attraction and repulsion; they assign all these striking phenomena to unknown causes, of which they have no one substantive idea."

When Professor Robison felt alarmed by the attempted demonstration of La Place, that the law of gravitation was an essential property of matter, lest the cause of natural theology should be endangered by it—he might have recollected that the main evidence for a Divinity lies not in the laws of matter, but in their collocations—because of the utter inadequacy in the existing laws to have originated the existing collocations of the material world. So that if ever a time was, when these collocations were not—there is no virtue in the laws that can account for their commencement, or that supersedes the fiat of a God.

but the laws indispensable to this result are greatly outnumbered by the dispositions which are indispensable to it—such as the rightly sized and shaped lenses of the eye, and the rightly placed retina spread out behind them, and at the precise distance where the indispensable picture of external nature might be formed, and presented as it were for the information of the occupier within; and then, the variety and proper situation of the numerous muscles, each intrusted with an important function, and all of them contributing to the power and perfection of this curious and manifoldly complicated organ. It is not so much the endowment of matter with certain properties, as the arrangement of it into certain parts, that bespeaks here the hand of an artist; and this will be found true of the anatomical structure in all its departments. It is not the mere chemical property of the gastric juice that impresses the belief of contrivance; but the presence of the gastric juice, in the very situation whence it comes forth to act with advantage on the food, when received into the stomach, and there submitted to a digestive process for the nourishment of the animal economy. It is well to distinguish these two things. If we but say of matter that it is furnished with such powers as make it subservient to many useful results, we keep back the strongest and most unassailable part of the argument for a God. It is greatly more pertinent and convincing to say of matter, that it is distributed into such parts as to insure a right direction and a beneficial application for its powers. It is not so much in the establishment of certain laws of matter that we can discern the aims or the purposes of intelligence, as in certain dispositions of matter, that put it in the way of being usefully operated upon by the laws. Insomuch, that though we conceded to the atheist the eternity of matter, and the essentially inherent character of all its laws, we could still point out to him, in the manifold adjustments of matter, its adjustments of place, and figure, and magnitude, the most impressive signatures of a Deity. And what a countless variety of such adjustments within the compass of an animal, or even a vegetable framework! In particular, what an amount and condensation of evidence for a God in the workmanship of the human body! What bright and convincing lessons of theology might man (would he but open his eyes) read on his own person—that microcosm of divine art, where, as in the sentences of a perfect epitome, he might trace in every lineament or member the finger and authorship of the Godhead!

14. It is thus that the evidence yielded by one department of nature for a God, differs so much in strength from that yielded by another. It varies with the number of independent circumstances which must meet together for the production of some given end. Should it require, for example, the concurrence of ten such circumstances to bring about a useful result, the argument for design founded on this concurrence has inconceivably greater force than when it requires only three or four. According to the doctrine of chances, the evidence should grow in a rapid multiple ratio with the increase in the number of those contingent things which enter into an arrangement, and are indispensable to the effect of it. It is precisely for this reason, that anatomy is so much more prolific of argument for a God than astronomy. There is a vastly greater number of independent parts and relations in the anatomical system, than—when viewed largely and generally, the only way in which it can be viewed by us—there is in the system of the heavens. There is a prodigiously more concentrated proof of contrivance within the little compass of an eye, than in the wide survey of an astronomer there is within the compass of the planetarium. Hence the more slender evidence for a God in the great movements of astronomy. The number of independent circumstances which meet together upon the arena of this wondrous science is comparatively small: A great body in the centre, kept there by the one law of gravitation, which binds upon it the attendance of its revolving worlds; a single impulse upon each of these worlds to impress upon them both the projectile and the rotatory movements—though so regulated, we admit, as to secure a nearly circular orbit to them all; the inclination of the axis in most of them to the orbit of revolution, which could still have been impressed in dependence on the random spot where the first impulse was given; a similar treatment for each of the satellites, with this peculiarity in the comets—their being struck either with more unequal force in proportion to their distance from the sun, or in a more acute direction to the radius vector of their orbits. These make up, as it were, the few simple contingencies on the union of which the mechanism of our celestial economy was framed at the first, and is upholden afterwards. It is because so few, that there is more room for the supposition that their combination might have been fortuitous; and hence astronomy is not the best medium through which to prove the agency of an intelligent Creator—although, in the language of Dr.

Paley, if this can be proved by other means, it shows beyond all other sciences the magnificence of His operations.

15. In the proportion that we lessen the number of contingent things which enter into any useful combination, we weaken the argument for its having originated in design, or in a designing cause. Had both the rotatory and the projectile motions of a planet required three impulses—that is, two equal and opposite forces to spin it round its axis, and then a progressive force to set it forward—this would have afforded all the stronger evidence for the hand of a God. But these two motions, as well as the inclination of the axis to the plane of the orbit, can all be insured by one impulse in a direction oblique to the planet's surface. This in so far attenuates the argument for a Divine agency having been concerned in the putting together of this marvellous framework. But it is worthy of remark, that this same consideration which tends to reduce the strength of the evidence for a God, tends also to the demonstration of His greatness on the supposition of His existence being established on other grounds. This reduction of the progressive and rotatory movements to one impulse, ushers the mind of the inquirer into larger views of the constitution of our universe. The sun is known to have a revolution round its own axis; and this, if not communicated by two equal and opposing forces, that leave it stationary in space, would bespeak the application only of one force, which must give it a progressive motion also. If, then, he be moving forward through immensity, he must carry the whole planetary system along with him, even as Jupiter does his secondary system of satellites around the sun. This points to the common centre of a higher system than ours, around which suns with their attendant planets are revolving. And whereas, we have been in the habit of looking to the revolution of our Georgium Sidus as the most magnificent sweep of which we had direct observation—this may be but a humble epicycle to that great circuit, in which all the suns of our universe, with their attendant systems, are so many fellow-travellers on the scale of a higher astronomy.

16. The chief, then, or at least the usual subject-matter of the argument, is the obvious adaptation wherewith creation teems, throughout all its borders, of means to a beneficial end. And it is manifest that the argument grows in strength with the number and complexity of these means. The greater the number of independent circumstances which must meet together

for the production of a useful result—then, in the actual fact of their concurrence, is there less of probability for its being the effect of chance, and more of evidence for its being the effect of design. A beneficent combination of three independent elements is not so impressive or so strong an argument for a Divinity, as a similar combination of six or ten such elements. And every mathematician, conversant in the doctrine of probabilities, knows how, with every addition to the number of these elements, the argument grows in force and intensity, with a rapid and multiple augmentation—till at length, in some of the more intricate and manifold conjunctions, those more particularly having an organic character and structure, could we but trace them to a historical commencement, we should find, on the principles of computation alone, that the argument against their being fortuitous products, and for their being the products of a scheming and skilful Artificer, was altogether overpowering.

17. We might apply this consideration to various departments in nature. In astronomy, the independent elements seem but few and simple, which must meet together for the composition of a planetarium. One uniform law of gravitation, with a force of projection impressed by one impulse on each of the bodies, could suffice to account for the revolutions of the planets round the sun, and of the satellites around their primaries, along with the diurnal revolution of each, and the varying inclinations of the axes to the planes of their respective orbits. Out of such few contingencies, the actual orrery of the heavens has been framed. But in anatomy, to fetch the opposite illustration from another science, what a complex and crowded combination of individual elements must first be effected, ere we obtain the composition of an eye—for the completion of which mechanism, there must not only be a greater number of separate laws, as of refraction and muscular action and secretion; but a vastly greater number of separate and distinct parts, as the lenses, and the retina, and the optic nerve, and the eyelid and eyelashes, and the various muscles wherewith this delicate organ is so curiously beset, and each of which is indispensable to its perfection, or to the right performance of its functions. It is passing marvellous that we should have more intense evidence for a God in the construction of an eye, than in the construction of the mighty planetarium—or that, within less than the compass of a handbreadth, we should find in this lower world a more pregnant and legible inscription of the Divinity, than can be gathered from

a broad and magnificent survey of the skies, lighted up though they be, with the glories and the wonders of astronomy.

18. But while nothing can be more obvious than that the proof for design in any of the natural formations is the stronger, in proportion to the number of separate and independent elements which have been brought together, and each of which contributes essentially to its usefulness—we have long held it of prime importance to the theistical argument, that clear exhibition should be made of the distinction not generally adverted to, and which we have now attempted to expound, between Dispositions and Laws in the material world.

19. Our argument hitherto has been, that even though matter, with all its properties, had existed from eternity, there might still be room for the indication of a great master spirit being concerned in those existing arrangements of matter, by which its properties have been made subservient to certain ends which were desirable. We have no doubt that this overruling spirit hath both created the matter and established the properties—although the cause of theism can afford to give this up, and can find enough in the order and adaptation of things to prove that the hand of a Divinity has been there. There is less, we admit, of this evidence in the movements of astronomy—because of the very few distinct and independent elements which are concerned in them. Yet we cannot, in spite of the atheistical evasion which has been made from it, refrain from adverting to the actual law of gravitation as being inversely proportional to the squares of the distances. La Place and others affirm it to be an essential property of matter, that every virtue which is propagated from a centre should diminish in intensity in this very proportion—and so would rob us of the argument for a God that may be founded on the contingency of this law. Nevertheless, seeing that we have such abundant evidence for a Divinity from other quarters, we will appropriate the honours of this law to the presiding intelligence who ordained it. It is the beautiful discovery of La Grange, that this is the only law which is consistent with the permanency of the planetary system—that if the law of mutual attraction between its bodies had deviated by a thousandth part from that which actually obtains, the mutual disturbances which take place among the planets themselves would at length have deranged the whole economy of their movements—that the errors would have accumulated in one direction, so as at length either to have brought the planets

to the sun, or sent them to irreclaimable distances away from it; but that now the errors alternate between one direction and another, reaching to a maximum upon one side, which it never can exceed, and then oscillating back again so as to keep a little way to the right or the left of a certain mean state, which forms the invariable and indestructible average of a system that, under other laws of gravitation, would have contained within itself the principles of its own dissolution.

20. In virtue of the distinction between the laws of matter and its dispositions, we might perhaps release ourselves from a certain atheistical imagination which, without assuming the shape of a distinct principle, or coming forth in aught like a formal avowal, is apt to maintain its hold over the spirits and conceptions chiefly of physical inquirers. There is a mystery inscrutable in the creation of matter out of nothing; and, on the other hand, if it have existed from everlasting, why may it not, unchangeable in character as in being, have had the very properties from everlasting which are now exhibited before our eyes? And all the phenomena of this our material universe are held to be the evolution of these properties. Now, the distinction is here overlooked between the phenomena of successive nature, and the phenomena of contemporaneous nature, on which distinction Professor Robison of Edinburgh founded his definitions of natural philosophy and natural history—making it the office of the one to classify the resemblances which take place among the events of the material Universe; and of the other, to classify the resemblances which take place among the objects of the material Universe. Conceive the eye to be open for an indivisible moment of time, and that at that moment all the senses of a living and perfectly intelligent observer were alive, to all the properties of all the things in external nature which were fitted to impress them—then the registration and orderly arrangement of all the properties thus taken cognizance of, on the instant, form the business of the one science—which therefore, if completed, would make known to us the colour and the form, and the weight and the taste, and the sonorous and tangible qualities, and lastly, the structure or collocation among the parts of everything that exists. But if, instead of one moment, we introduce the element of time into our observations of Nature, then we shall not fail to perceive incessant changes going on in all that is around us; and it is the business of these other sciences to record and to classify these changes. Now what we affirm is, that the

powers of our existing natural philosophy have not given rise to the arrangements of our existing natural history; and that if these arrangements were destroyed, these powers are not able to replace them. They may account for the evolution of things or substances collocated in a certain way; but they did not originate the collocations—and if it can be demonstrated that ever a time was when certain mechanisms were not, that are now in full operation, or certain organic forces and combinations that now sustain the life and enjoyment of millions, then it is at the commencement of these that we require the fiat of a God; the interposition of a living and purposing agent who moulded the forms, and brought together the parts of the various goodly constructions which are now before our eyes.

21. This fine generalization of Robison ranges all philosophy into two sciences—one the science of contemporaneous nature; the other, the science of successive nature. When the material world is viewed according to this distinction, the whole science of its contemporaneous phenomena is comprehended by him under the general name of Natural History, which takes cognizance of all those characters in external nature that exist together at the instant, and which may be described without reference to time—as smell, and colour, and size, and weight, and form, and relation of parts, whether of the simple inorganic or more complex organic structures. It is when the elements of time and motion are introduced, that we are presented with the phenomena of successive nature; and the science that embraces these is, in contradistinction to the former, termed Natural Philosophy. This latter science may be separated or subdivided further into natural philosophy, strictly and indeed usually so called, whose province it is to investigate those changes which take effect in bodies by motions that are sensible and measurable; and chemistry, or the science of those changes which take effect in bodies by motions which are not sensible, or, at least, not measurable, and which cannot therefore be made the subjects of mathematical computation or reasoning. This last, again, is capable of being still further partitioned into the science which investigates the changes effected by means of insensible motion in all inorganic matter, or chemistry strictly and usually so called; and the science of physiology, whose province it is to investigate the like changes that take place in organic bodies, whether of the animal or vegetable kingdoms.

22. Or, the distinction between these two sciences of contem-

poraneous and successive nature may otherwise be stated thus. The one, or natural history, is conversant with objects—the other, or natural philosophy in its most comprehensive meaning, is conversant with events. It is obvious that the dispositions of matter come within the province of the former science—while the laws of matter, or the various moving forces by which it is actuated, fall more properly under the inquiries of the latter science. Now, adopting this nomenclature, we repeat it as a most important assertion for the cause of natural theology, that should all the present arrangements of our existing natural history be destroyed, there is no power in the laws of our existing natural philosophy to replace them. Or, in other words, if ever a time was, when the structure and dispositions of matter, under the present economy of things were not—there is no force known in nature, and no combination of forces that can account for their commencement. The laws of nature may keep up the working of the machinery; but they did not and could not set up the machine. The human species, for example, may be upholden, through an indefinite series of ages, by the established law of transmission; but were the species destroyed, there are no observed powers of nature by which it could again be originated. For the continuance of the system and of all its operations, we might imagine a sufficiency in the laws of nature; but it is the first construction of the system which so palpably calls for the intervention of an artificer, or demonstrates so powerfully the fiat and finger of a God.

23. This distinction between nature's laws and nature's collocations is mainly lost sight of in those speculations of geology, the object of which is to explain the formation of new systems emerging from the wreck of old ones. They proceed on the sufficiency of nature's laws for building up the present economy of things out of the ruins of a former economy, which the last great physical catastrophe on the face of our earth had overthrown. Now, in these ruins, viewed as materials for the architecture of a renovated world, there did reside all those forces, by which the processes of the existing economy are upholden; but the geologists assign to them a function wholly distinct from this, when they labour to demonstrate that by laws, and laws alone, the framework of our existing economy was put together. It is thus that they would exclude the agency of a God from the transition between one system, or one formation, and another; although it be precisely at such transition when this agency

seems most palpably and peculiarly called for. We feel assured that the necessity for a Divine intervention, and, of course, the evidence of it, would have been more manifest, had the distinction between the laws of matter and its collocations been more formally announced, or more fully proceeded on by the writers on natural theism. And yet it is a distinction that must have been present to the mind of our great Newton, who expressly affirms that a mechanism of wonderful structure could not arise by the mere laws of nature. In his third printed letter to Bentley, he says, that, "the growth of *new systems* out of *old ones*, without the mediation of a Divine power, seems to me apparently absurd;" and that "the system of nature was *set in order* in the beginning, with respect to size, figure, proportions, and properties, by the counsels of God's own intelligence."*

24. One precious fruit of the recent geological discoveries may be gathered from the testimony which they afford to the destruction of so many terrestrial economies now gone by, and the substitution of the existing one in their place. If there be truth at all in the speculations of this science, there is nothing which appears to have been more conclusively established by them than a definite origin or commencement for the present animal and vegetable races. Now we know what it is which upholds the whole of the physiological system that is now before our eyes,—even the successive derivation of each individual member from a parent of its own likeness; but we see no force in nature, and no complication of forces, which can tell us what it was that originated the system. It is at this passage in the history of nature, where we meet with such pregnant evidence for the interposition of a designing cause,—an evidence, it will be seen, of prodigious density and force, when we compute the immense number and variety of those aptitudes, whether of form or magnitude or relative position, which enter into the completion of an organic structure. It is in the numerical superiority of the distinct collocations to the distinct laws of matter, that the superior

* Towards the end of the third book of Newton's Optics, we have the following very distinct testimony upon this subject: "For it became Him who created them to set them in order. And if He did so, it is unphilosophical to seek for any other origin of the world; or to pretend that it might arise out of a chaos by the mere laws of nature; though being once formed, it may continue by those laws for many ages."

This disposition to resolve the collocations into the laws of nature proves, in the expressive language of Granville Penn, how strenuously, not "physical science," but only some of its disciples have "laboured to exclude the *Creator* from the *details* of His own creation; straining every nerve of ingenuity to ascribe them *all* to *secondary causes*."

evidence of the former lies. We do not deny that there is argument for a God in the number of beneficial, while, at the same time, distinct and independent laws wherewith matter is endowed. We only affirm a million-fold intensity of argument in the indefinitely greater number of beneficial, and at the same time distinct and independent number of collocations whereinto matter has been arranged. In this respect the human body may be said to present a more close and crowded and multifarious inscription of the Divinity, than any single object within the compass of visible nature. It is instinct throughout with the evidence of a builder's hand; and thus the appropriate men of science who can expound those dispositions of matter which constitute the anatomy of its framework, and which embrace the physiology of its various processes, are on secure and firm vantage-ground for an impressive demonstration. This we shall attempt to show more fully in our next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

NATURAL AND GEOLOGICAL PROOFS FOR THE COMMENCEMENT OF OUR PRESENT TERRESTRIAL ECONOMY.

1. THE historical argument which we have already attempted to unfold for the non-eternity of our present world, has been exposed to a certain collision with the speculations of those naturalists, who have founded their theories on the vestiges of certain revolutions which may have taken place in the state of our globe. It is not for the vindication of the Mosaic account that we now advert to this, but for the exposition of what we should term the geological argument in behalf of a Deity. On this subject there are many, and these perhaps an increasing number, who think that there might be conceded to the geologists an indefinite antiquity for the matter of our globe—and that, without violation even to the strict literalities of the book of Genesis—not one of which, save when allowance is evidently to be made for the use of popular language, they would feel disposed to give up for any imaginations or reasonings which philosophy has yet set forth upon the subject. All, according to them, which can positively be gathered from the first chapter of that book is a great primary act of creation, at how remote a period is uncer-

tain—after which our world may have been the theatre of many changes and successive economies, the traces or memorials of which might be observable at the present day. It leaves on the one hand abundant scope to those who are employed in the investigation of these memorials, if it be granted that the Mosaic narrative fixes, only the antiquity of our present races, and not the antiquity of the earth that is peopled by them. But on the other hand, we should not tamper with the record by allegorizing any of its passages or phrases. We should not, for example, protract the six days into so many geological periods—as if by means of a lengthened natural process to veil over the fiat of a God, that phenomenon, if we may so term it, which of all others seems the most offensive to the taste of some philosophers, and which they are most anxious to get rid of. We hold the week of the first chapter of Genesis to have been literally a week of miracles—the period of a great creative interposition, during which, by so many successive evolutions, the present economy was raised out of the wreck and materials of the one which had gone before it. But on this we need not speak decisively—for in whatever way the controversy is adjusted, there remains argument for a God. Should, in the first place, the Mosaic account be held to supersede all those speculations in geology which would stretch the antiquity even of our earth beyond the period at which man was created—this were deferring to the historical evidence of the Old Testament—that book which of all others speaks most directly for a God, and which in fact may be regarded as the formal and express document in which the authoritative register of creation is found. Or should it be allowed, in the second place, that the sacred penman does not fix the antiquity of our globe but only of our species—this leaves the historical argument entire, and enables us to superadd any geological argument which may be founded on certain characters of vicissitude in the history of our globe, that are alike recognised by all the systems of geology. Or, thirdly, should, instead of Scripture superseding or harmonizing with geology, geology be held as superseding Scripture—an imagination which of course we disown—still the argument for a creative interposition would not in consequence be banished from our world. It is the establishment of this last position to which at present we address ourselves. There are certain alleged processes in geology which, if true, show unequivocally, we have long thought, the marks and footsteps of a Divinity. There are some, we are aware, who

have founded thereupon a melancholy Deism—our business now is to demonstrate, that even in this walk of inquiry, abused as it has been thus far to the purposes of licentious speculation, there are to be met the strongest of Nature's evidences against the system of a still dismal and wretched Atheism.

2. But let us here premise that our argument does not rest on the truth of any one of the geological theories. It is enough, if causes of decay and destruction are at work which are now undermining the present harmony of things; and which must therefore have brought to an end any economy that may have gone before it. All those who conceive of our globe that it had an existence, and was the theatre of physical changes anterior to the commencement of the scriptural era, agree in this. We are not called upon to intermeddle with the controversies of geological science, when it is by means of a universal article of belief that we attempt to establish the necessity of a Creative Interposition. We do not make ourselves responsible for any of the theories, although we select one for the purpose of illustration—seeing, in fact, that our argument rests not on the specialty of any of the Ante-Mosaical creeds, but on an assumption which is nearly common to them all. For, generally speaking, they proceed on the rise and disappearance of certain distinct and successive economies of nature on the face of our globe—the decay or destruction of each implying the extinction of at least so many of the animal and vegetable races proper to its era. It is on this, and this alone, that our argument is based; and we do not need therefore, for the purpose of upholding it, to advocate any one geological system in preference to others—seeing that it rests not on the peculiarities of one creed, but on one article very generally if not universally to be found in them.

3. Our object in adverting to the speculations of geology, is to direct the eye to a point in the physical history which it assigns to our globe, when, on every principle of our commonly received philosophy, there would be required a special interposition on the part of a God. It is to exhibit what we have long regarded as the nearest to a direct and experimental manifestation of a Creative Process. It is to make demonstration of a time when the goodliest specimens of organization that now abound in our world did not exist—and are therefore a consequent, from which we are fully warranted to reason of the antecedent that went before it. We know not from what quarter to borrow a more effectual weapon, for putting to flight the

atheistical imagination of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, being upheld by a chain that is lost in a posterior direction among the obscurities of the distant future, and lost in an anterior direction among the still more formidable recesses of the eternity that is past. It is enough, if, amid the loose and unsettled speculations of geology, they generally point to this, that the chain is not endless, but has had a definite commencement—and that therefore our present races were originated in a way different from that in which they are now perpetuated by successive generations.

4. Let us now offer, then, a short exposition of this argument with Cuvier's theory of the earth, on which not to ground, but only to illustrate the argument.

5. The water of our present ocean holds certain substances in solution, and is thereby adapted to the support of certain marine animals. Now, it is conceivable that the nature of this solution may be changed, either by coming into contact with new substances and dissolving them, or by a mere change in the proportion of its present ingredients. But it is probable, that after the changes had been accomplished to a certain degree in the waters of the ocean, the present generation of marine animals could not exist in them. Those of them which were formed in nice dependence on the constitution of their element would be the first to fall a sacrifice to its progressive alterations—the hardier would then follow; and, after the lapse of ages, it is conceivable that the change of element might be so great as to bring along with it the entire destruction of the existing genera.

6. The remains of marine animals must be accumulated every year in the bottom of the ocean. But this is not the only deposition that is going on there. There is an incessant deposition of sediment carried down by innumerable rivers, and obtained from the wearing of those various materials which compose the land. In addition to this, there may be the chemical precipitation of matter in a solid form from the water of the ocean itself. All these depositions may be spread over the bottom of the sea in successive layers or strata. They may be hardened, by long-continued pressure, into the consistency of stone. There may have been thousands of shells imbedded in them; and what is more, the form even of the softer fishes may be retained in petrification, and handed down to the observation of very distant ages.

7. All this may be going on in the vast and inaccessible soli-

tudes of the deep; but how can the vestiges of such a process ever be submitted to actual observation? The ocean may change its place. There are known causes perfectly competent to the production of such an effect. What is now dry land may be submerged, and the deserted bed of the ocean may come to be inhabited by land animals. By an exercise of creative power, the sea may be stocked with new generations, adapted to the last changes which its waters have undergone; and by another exercise of created power, the new land which has been formed may also be peopled with living beings. If there be a rational being among the last, like man, he might observe the traces of that process which took place in the last era of the history of the globe. He might learn, from the vestiges of marine animals firmly imbedded in the stratified rock, that the ground he is now treading upon was at one time covered with the waters of the sea; and by comparing specimens extracted from the fossil productions around him with the fishes of the present ocean, he might come to the wonderful conclusion, that the former species have been extinguished, and given place to a new and totally dissimilar generation.

8. But this is not all. The various tribes of land animals now multiply and die, and deposit their remains in that very region which abounds with the marine productions of a former era. The sediment of rivers is not all carried forward immediately to the sea. A great part of it is arrested in its progress, and goes either to accumulate a soil upon their banks, or to form alluvial land at their mouths. The skeletons of land animals are enveloped in this mass of mineral substances. The ocean which has changed its place once, may do it again. It may make a second irruption upon the land, and sweep away whole genera of living creatures from the globe. The surface that is left dry may be re peopled by a few out of the many who may have escaped this catastrophe, or an ever watchful Deity may again interfere, and, by another exercise of creative power, may occupy the new formed land by other generations.

9. In this way, the remains of land and of sea animals may be assembled together in the same neighbourhood. The successive retreats and irruptions of the ocean may produce, not one, but a series of alternations. And the strata which are around us, each evincing its own relative antiquity by its position, and exhibiting the remains of its own peculiar animals, may serve the double purpose of recording the great revolutions

which have taken place both in the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and upon the surface of our globe.

10. And, apart from any violent changes in the place of the ocean, it must be obvious that the surface of the globe is not in a state of permanency. There is a constant wearing of the land. Even its hardest materials could not resist for ever the incessant operation of the air and the moisture and the frost to which they are subjected. The mighty continent would at length wax old and disappear, and the world that we now live in become a howling solitude of waters.

11. To this it now tends, and thus to all appearance must it remain through eternity, but for a change in the place of the ocean—and a change that may happen long before the degradation of the land to its own level. A slight change in the axis of the earth would be altogether adequate for such an effect. It is to the diurnal revolution of the earth round its axis that we owe the deviation of its figure from a perfect sphere. The earth is so much flattened at the poles, and so much elevated at the equator, that the former are nearer to the centre of the earth than the latter by so many English miles. What would be the effect, then, if the axis of the earth were suddenly shifted? If the polar and equinoctial regions were to change places, there would be a tendency towards an elevation of these miles in the one region, and as great a depression in the other—and the more transferable parts of the earth's surface would be the first to obey this tendency. The ocean would rush towards the new equator. The cohesion of the solid parts would, it is likely, offer a feeble resistance, and give way to this mighty *conatus*; nor would the earth become quiescent till a new and elevated equator was formed at right angles to the former one, and passing through the present poles.

12. But it is not necessary to assume so entire a change in the position of the Earth's axis as to produce so great a difference in any of the existing levels—nor would any single impetus indeed suffice to accomplish such a change. The transference of the poles from their present situation by a few degrees, would give rise to a revolution sudden enough and mighty enough for a great physical era in the history of the globe—and a change of level indeed for a single quarter of a mile, would overwhelm its fairest regions, and destroy the vast majority of its living animals.

13. To show that we fear nothing from infidel science, let us

present the following extract from La Place, the ablest and most exalted of its votaries, who in his book entitled "The System of the World," after having reasoned on the likelihood that in the course of ages a comet might interfere with our earth, thus pictures the effects of the collision:—"It is easy to represent the effect of such a shock upon the Earth—the axis and motion of rotation changed—the waters abandoning their ancient position to precipitate themselves towards the new equator—the greater part of men and animals drowned in a universal deluge, or destroyed by the violence of the shock given to the terrestrial globe—whole species destroyed—all the monuments of human industry reversed—such are the effects which the shock of a comet would produce. . . . We see, then, why the Ocean has abandoned the highest mountains on which it has left incontestable marks of its former abode. We see why the animals and plants of the south may be transported into the climates of the north, where their relics and impressions are still to be found—lastly, it explains the short period of the existence of the moral world, whose earliest monuments do not go much farther back than three thousand years. The human race reduced to a small number of individuals in the most deplorable state, occupied only with the immediate care of their subsistence, must necessarily have lost the remembrance of all sciences and of every art; and when the progress of civilisation has again created new wants, everything was to be done again as if man had been just placed upon the Earth. But whatever may be the cause assigned by philosophers to these phenomena, we may be perfectly at ease with respect to such a catastrophe during the short period of human life."

14. We may now understand what is meant by a formation. There is a formation going on just now at the bottom of our present ocean by those muddy depositions which are brought to it from all the rivers; and which, laid the one over the other, will form, it is supposed, the strata of a new continent. Mixed up with this there must be a constant accumulation going on both of shells and skeletons—and from the bony parts of the numerous and rapid generations by which the sea is peopled, there must accrue a perpetual addition to the solid materials of that deposit, which, by the operation of a coming catastrophe, may be the dry land of the next geological era. There is at present both a forming and a hardening process going forward under the waters of the deep—so that, when these waters shall have shifted

their position, there will emerge a continent of the same firm and concrete texture with that which is now inhabited by ourselves—and like it too, lifted here and there into Alpine elevations, by the mighty violence that will then be abroad over the whole surface of the world. It is obvious that this new land will have been mainly built up from the waste and demolition of the present one—insomuch as now it is principally fed by the supply of new matter swept off from the earth by the flow of rivers, and transported into the cavities of the deep. It is thus that in geological language our present continent becomes the father of a new one; and that itself hath had a father and a grandfather, which venerable personage can further lay claim to an ancestry; and thus it is that on the face of our world there are characters by which to trace what may be called the pedigree of successive formations—the most recent of these formations being that which preceded the very last catastrophe; and the intervals between the catastrophes marking the distinct eras of a globe, which, for aught we know, might have been the theatre of many revolutions.

15. Now to come nearer to our argument. Correspondent to the marks by which one set of professional men, even the geologists, have arranged these various formations in the order of their antiquity—there is another set of professional men, even the anatomists or comparative anatomists, who, in the course of their independent researches, have, by the study of fossil remains, ascertained, they think, many of the species and genera of living creatures by which the world has been peopled during the respective eras of its physical history. It is certainly conceivable that a few stragglers may have survived the operation of one catastrophe—and transmitted their own proper genera and species to the era which immediately succeeded it, so as to leave a thin sprinkling of the same remains over the next formation in the series of the world's changes. But it would appear, from the observations of Cuvier and others, that though in this way an occasional species may have survived one or two of these destructive revolutions, yet that each catastrophe annihilated the great majority of the existing genera, and that a very few more swept every trace of them away from the surface of the globe. In none of the old formations hath he ascertained the vestige of the human skeleton—marking the recent origin of our own species. It is only in the latest of these formations that he discovered traces indeed of any of our existing genera of animals.

And, in proportion as he carries his observation upward among the senior formations, does he lose sight of all resemblance to any of the known living creatures by which our earth is peopled. But there is still, it is affirmed, a most distinct, and various, and perfectly ascertained population; and these older formations are crowded with the remains of it. But they are wholly distinct from the animals of the present system. Or, in other words, at each new catastrophe old races must have perished—and the world been stocked with new races distinct and diverse from the former ones.

16. It is to this peculiar object that the inquiries of the celebrated M. Cuvier are directed. Upon the former conclusions of geologists respecting the positions of the different strata and the order of their formation, he grafts his own speculations as to the fossil remains which exist in them; and he finds that in proportion to the antiquity of the strata, is the dissimilarity of these remains to the present genera. Of the remains of sea animals, he says, “that their species and even their genera change with the strata; and although the same species occasionally recurs at small distances, it is generally the case that the shells of the ancient strata have forms peculiar to themselves—that they gradually disappear till they are not to be seen at all in the recent strata—still less in the existing seas, in which, indeed, we never discover their corresponding species, and where several even of their genera are not to be found—that, on the contrary, the shells of the recent strata resemble, as it respects the genera, those which still exist in the sea—and that in the last formed and loosest of these strata, there are some species which the eye of the most expert naturalist cannot distinguish from those which at present inhabit the ocean.”

17. From this extract it will be perceived that the alleged revolutions are numerous. From the marks of rapidity and violence which are to be met with, it would also appear that they have been sudden. To this purpose might be alleged the breaking and overturning of the strata; and the heaps of debris and rounded pebbles which are found among the solid strata in various places.

18. And at length to bring our argument to a point. In conjunction with these phenomena, take the two following doctrines which are now held as being among the most firmly established in natural history. In the first place, were it not for certain residual phenomena which can with difficulty be disposed of,

there is now about utterly exploded the old doctrine of a spontaneous or equivocal generation. As far as can be traced with positive certainty by the eye of observation, it is not known that either animal or vegetable is brought into existence in any other way than by transmission from an animal or vegetable of the same species. Many of those appearances which were at one time conceived to indicate the contrary to this, on a more strict and close examination have been reduced to the ordinary process—and the more narrowly that the search is prosecuted, the more is the semblance of exception done away; insomuch that we might hold it as being nearly the universal creed of naturalists, that throughout both the animal and the vegetable kingdom, each individual hath had a parent of his own likeness. This may at least be affirmed of all the distinct and definite specimens which compose the great bulk, whether of the zoology or botany of our present era—so far at least, as that it might with all safety be affirmed of all the species which are known to propagate themselves, that there has not yet been discovered the slightest tendency to the formation of the individuals of these species in any other way than by ordinary generation. However indeterminate the questions may yet be which respect certain obscure or animalcular cases, this surely does not affect the generality or invariableness of the doctrine in regard to all the well-known members whether of the vegetable or animal family—to the palpable trees or plants of the former, to the palpable quadrupeds or birds of the latter, as exemplified in the lion, the horse, the dog, or the elephant. Whatever discovery might have yet been made, or whatever lack of discovery might yet remain in the microscopic or otherwise dark and perhaps inaccessible departments of nature—this does not affect the obvious and unaccepted truth as it relates to the overwhelming majority of our living generations—viz., that among all the other complicated processes, whether of fermentation, or of putrefaction, or of electric and chemical agency, which are now going on in the vast laboratory of nature, there is not one of them which approximates in the least towards the formation of such organic beings—each of which, in fact, is the link of a chain composed of links that are altogether similar to itself—each formed, and formed in no other way, than by a derivative process along the steps of a successive generation. It will at once be seen therefore how many are those exquisite and complex structures which are formed by the collocation of parts; and such a collocation

as a well-known physical law doth transmit, but which no physical law can originate, that we are acquainted with—insomuch that we perceive not the slightest tendency to aught like the spontaneous formation of them. This holds true of all those individuals in our existing animal and vegetable races that come forth in the established line of their transmission, so perfectly organized—yet without that line we never observe even the smallest abortive or partial approximation to them. The mechanical and the chemical, however variously they are blended, never once approach in any of their results to the physiological, at least in such specimens as these. So that, if we can but demonstrate a beginning for any such separate and independent races in the physiological kingdom, we shall obtain, in our opinion, the nearest possible view that is anywhere afforded within the limits of our creation, of the fiat of a God.

19. The next doctrine which we have now to make use of, is no less the universal faith of naturalists than the former. It is that the species do not run the one into the other. They are separated; and that by barriers which are permanent and invincible. Should there even be a mingling of two contiguous species, the power either of transmitting this one anomaly, or of extending it any further, ceases, as in the mule, with the immediate offspring. There is thus an instantaneous check in the way of that transformation by which the species may have been confounded and merged into one another—or at length been metamorphosed into other races which bore no resemblance whatever to their progenitors. Within the limits of a species there might be manifold varieties; but these limits can never be transgressed to the formation of another distinct and enduring species in the animal kingdom. Let us combine these two doctrines. There is in reference to almost, if not universally, to all actual races no spontaneous generation—therefore in the existing generation of each species, we behold the present link of a chain, all whose preceding links have been similar to the one that is before our eyes. There is no transition of the species into each other—therefore they present us with so many separate chains, and which have maintained the separation during the whole currency of their existence. They diverge not into other species, nor is one species appended to another. They have either had distinct origins, or they have been distinct from all eternity. If the latter, it is not likely that they would have survived an indefinite number of catastrophes, each of which might have swept

off whole genera from the face of our earth, and all of which would (but for new collocations which no observed law can account for) have by this time left it in a state of desolation. But it is more distinct and decisive than any likelihood—that in the older formations no vestiges of our present genera are to be found; and that under our present economy, or even in the more recent formations, there are no vestiges of the older genera. A few of the earlier species, it would appear, may have survived one or two of those dreadful shocks to which our planet is exposed—but in the whole amount, it seems palpable that, on the one hand, there has been an entire destruction of the ancient species, and, on the other, an entire renovation of species wholly distinct and dissimilar from the former. The older chains of succession have been suddenly terminated, as if broken off at their lower extremities. And the more recent chains, instead of being to be traced through the midway passage of a great geological tempest, for the older formations, those earlier records of our globe hold out no indication of them—the recent chains have after a catastrophe had their first and definite origin. Now the question is, Who or what is the originator? All the busy processes of nature which are going on around us, fail towards even so much as the formation of an organic being, endowed with the faculty of self-transmission. All the possible combinations which human ingenuity can devise, are baffled in the enterprise. And, save by that peculiar tie which connects the one link of this concatenation with the other, there is not in all the known resources of nature and art, another method by which such a creature can be formed. How then are the first links to be accounted for? Is there aught in the rude and boisterous play of a great physical catastrophe that can germinate those exquisite structures, which, during our yet undisturbed economy, have been transmitted in pacific succession to the present day? What is there in the rush and turbulence and mighty clamour of such great elements—of ocean heaved from its old resting-place, and lifting its billows above the Alps and the Andes of a former continent—what is there in this to charm into being the embryos of an infant family wherewith to stock and to repopulate a now desolated world? We see in the sweeping energy and uproar of this elemental war, enough to account for the disappearance of all the old generations—but nothing that might cradle any new generations into existence, so as to have effloresced on ocean's deserted bed the life and the loveliness

which are now before our eyes. At no juncture, we apprehend, in the history of the world, is the interposition of Deity more manifest than at this; nor can we better account for so goodly a creation emerging again into new forms of animation and beauty from the wreck of the old one, than that the Spirit of God moved on the face of the chaos, and that nature, turned by the last catastrophe into a wilderness, was again repeopled at the utterance of His word.

20. Those rocks which stand forth in the order of their formation, and are each imprinted with their own peculiar fossil remains, have been termed the archives of nature where she hath recorded the changes that have taken place in the history of the globe. They are made to serve the purpose of scrolls or inscriptions, on which we might read of those great steps and successions by which the earth has been brought to its present state. And should these archives of nature be but truly deciphered, we are not afraid of their being openly confronted with the archives of revelation. It is unmanly to blink the approach of light from whatever quarter of observation it may fall upon us—and these are not the best friends of Christianity who feel either dislike or alarm, when the torch of science or the torch of history is held up to the Bible. For ourselves, we are not afraid when the eye of an intrepid, if it be only of a sound philosophy, scrutinizes, however jealously, all its pages. We have no dread of any apprehended conflict between the doctrines of Scripture and the discoveries of science—persuaded as we are, that whatever story the geologists of our day shall find to be engraven on the volume of nature, it will only the more accredit that story which is graven on the volume of revelation.

21. “And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day. And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creep-

eth upon the earth after his kind ; and God saw that it was good. And God said, Let us make man in our image after our likeness ; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image ; in the image of God created he him : male and female created he them."

22. We have again to repeat that our reasoning is applicable not to one only but to all the Ante-Mosaic theories. To have place for it indeed, we have only to assume that the world has undergone such revolutions or been the subject of such violent operations as have been destructive of entire species that formerly existed upon its surface. Of this it is admitted by all that there are undoubted vestiges—giving us therefore sound reason to believe, that on the supposition of an eternal world, all the species by which it was peopled at some highly remote period must, by the continuance and repetition of the causes which destroyed several of them, have at length been swept away. The question would thus meet us—Whence arose the species now in actual being? seeing that they have not subsisted from eternity. All nature and experience reclaim against the spontaneous generation of them—thus leaving us no other inference, than that organic structures of collocation so manifold and exquisite could only have sprung from the hands of a designer, from the fiat of a God.

23. There are many who, in expounding the science of natural theology, would shrink from all recognition of Scripture—as if this were a mixing together of things altogether disparate or incongruous. There is a want, we shall not say of good feeling, but of good philosophy in this, unless we confine ourselves to the express object of ascertaining how much of evidence for a God is furnished by the light of nature alone. The strength of the argument, upon the whole, on the side of religion, is often weakened by this jealous or studied disunion of the truth in one department from the truth in another ; but believing as we do, that, instead of a conflict, there is a corroborative harmony between them—we shall advert once more to the Mosaic account of the creation ; and more especially as the reconciliation of this history with the indefinite antiquity of the globe seems not impossible ; and that without the infliction of any violence on any of the literalities of the record.

24. The following are the first two verses in the Book of

Genesis. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep: and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Now let it be supposed that the work of the first day in the Mosaic account of the creation, begins with the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. The detailed history of creation in the first chapter of Genesis begins at the middle of the second verse; and what precedes might be understood as an introductory sentence, by which we are most appositely told both that God created all things at the first; and that afterwards, by what interval of time it is not specified, the earth lapsed into a chaos, from the darkness and disorder of which the present system or economy of things was made to arise. By this hypothesis neither the first verse, nor the first half of the second verse forms any part of the narrative of the first day's operations—the whole forming a preparatory sentence, disclosing to us the initial act of creation at some remote and undefined period; and the chaotic state of the world, at the commencement of those successive acts of creative power, by which out of rude and undigested materials the present harmony of nature was ushered into being. Between the initial act and the details of Genesis, the world, for aught we know, might have been the theatre of many revolutions, the traces of which geology may still investigate, and to which she, in fact, has confidently appealed as the vestiges of so many successive continents that have now passed away. The whole speculation has ministered a vain triumph to infidelity—seeing first that the Historical Evidence of Scripture is quite untouched by those pretended discoveries of natural science; and that, even should they turn out to be substantial discoveries, they do not come into collision with the narrative of Moses. Should, in particular, the explanation that we now offer be sustained, this would permit an indefinite scope to the conjectures of geology—and without any undue liberty with the first chapter of Genesis. We may here state that there is no argument, saving that grounded on the usages of popular language, which would tempt us to meddle with the literalities of that ancient, and as appears to us authoritative record. Its main difficulty lies in the work of the fourth day, upon which God is said to have made two great lights, the greater to rule the day, and the lesser to rule the night, and the stars also. Yet even this could be got over, if we adopt a principle which even

Granville Penn has found necessary for the adjustment of his views—though himself a violent, and, we think, an unnecessary alarmist upon this question. He supposes the Mosaic description to proceed not in the order of creation actually, but in its order optically—or, in other words, that the sun and moon were not first made, but first made visible on the fourth day. We earnestly recommend, however, the perusal of his mineral and Mosaical geologies—not because of our great confidence in his skill or science as a naturalist, but because of a certain admirable soundness in many of those views that are purely theological. If he have erred in the one science, there is a redeeming force in the worth and stability of certain weighty aphorisms that he has given forth in relation to the other science. He does not respect enough the indications of nature and experience—and certain it is, that these might be so far disregarded as to invalidate some of our best arguments on the side of theism. If, for example, fossil remains are not to be looked upon as the vestiges of living creatures, it would follow, that what we have been in the habit of considering as forms of nice and excellent adaptation may have been produced without an object, and so, after all, be perfectly meaningless. We may assume with all safety that real shells were never formed by nature without the design of covering an animal—and hence, if we ever meet in any situation, however novel or unexpected, with a shell or a tooth, we should confidently refer to the fish which the one enclosed, to the jaw-bone in which the other was inserted. Else we shall give countenance to the atheist's argument, that even animals themselves might have been casual productions.*

* Bishop Patrick's theory was that of an elemental chaos; and at the beginning of his commentary he argues for such a chaos, between the first production of which and the creation of light he imagines an indefinite period. He then supposes a work of six days.

Rosenmüller again, the German commentator and critic, conceives a previous earth, or a first production and a subsequent renovation.

The chief difficulty in the way of this supposition is the work of the fourth day, of which by our translation it is said—"Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day, and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."—Even Granville Penn contributes some help to the solution of this difficulty, when he tells us that the description in the first chapter of Genesis proceeds not in the order of the creation actually, but in its order optically.

But the most complete solution of this difficulty of which we know, has been furnished

25. We regret that Penn, or Gisborne, or any other of our Scriptural geologists should have entered upon this controversy without a sufficient preparation of natural science; and laid as much stress too on the argument which they employed, as if the whole truth and authority of revelation depended on it. It is thus that the cause of truth has often suffered from the misguided zeal of its advocates, anxiously struggling for every one position about which a question may have been raised; and so landing themselves at times in a situation of most humiliating exposure to the argument or ridicule of their adversaries. They weaken the line of defence by extending it. They multiply their vulnerable points by spreading their detachments and their outworks over too great a surface, when they might have concentrated their strength within the limits of an impregnable fortress. They raise too loud an outcry of alarm, and lift too high a note of preparation, on the assault by their enemies of some insignificant outpost which might with all safety be conceded to them—so that when it does come to be occupied by assailants, there is just

by Rosenmüller. On the fourth day, he says, that “if any one who is conversant with the genius of the Hebrew, and free from any previous bias of his judgment, will read the words of this article in their natural connexion, he will immediately perceive that they import a direction or determination of the heavenly bodies to certain uses which they were to supply to the earth. The words *יהי מארה* (in the 14th verse) are not to be separated from the rest, or to be rendered ‘fiat luminaria,’ let there be lights—that is, ‘let lights be made;’ but rather ‘let lights be’—that is, ‘serve in the expanse of heaven’—inserviant in *expanso cœlorum*—for distinguishing between day and night, and let them be or serve for signs and for seasons, and for days and years. For we are to observe that the verb *יהי* to be in construction with the prefix *ל* ‘for,’ is generally employed to express the direction or determination of a thing to an end, and not the production of the thing—for example, Numb. x. 31; Zech. viii. 19, and in many other places.”

He further argues thus—“But the difference between the singular *יהי* and the plural *יהיו* in the 14th verse, demands a corresponding difference in the interpretation; and therefore if we would make that difference literally apparent, we must thus literally interpret—*Fiat luminaria in firmamento cœli ad dividendum inter diem et noctem, ut sint, in signa, et tempora, et in dies, et in annos, et sint ad illuminandum super terram.*’ That is, ‘*Fiat ut luminaria sint in signa, &c., et ad illuminandum, &c.*’ The particle *ו* signifies ‘ut’ in three hundred passages, and *ויהיו* signifies ‘ut sint’ in several of them. This interpretation, therefore, yields this literal sense in our language—‘Let it be, that the lights in the firmament of heaven, for dividing between the day and the night, be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years,’—that is, finally—‘Let the lights in the firmament of heaven, for dividing between the day and night, be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years; and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so:’” so that Rosenmüller’s induction from the construction of this passage is, “de determinatione astrorum ad certos quosdam usus orbi terrarum præstandis, esse sermonem—non de productione”—or that the narrative in these verses “respects the determination of the heavenly bodies to the performance of some certain uses to the earth—not to the production of these bodies.”

as tremendous a shout of victory on the one side as there was of misplaced dread and violence upon the other. Meanwhile the citadel abideth in its ancient security, as commanding in its site and as strong in all its essential battlements as ever; and in the consciousness of this strength, might they who look abroad from its turrets, eye with perfect tolerance, if not with complacency, the petty warfare that is occasionally breaking out at their remoter outskirts. It is right to be vigilant—but it is not right to waste the strength or the credit of a good cause upon the defence of an untenable position, and more especially if that position be wholly insignificant. It is thus that in the management of what may be called intellectual tactics, it is good to keep by the strong points of an argument, and to abstain by all means from laying any more of weight on the minor or collateral reasonings than these reasonings will bear.

26. We have long regarded the contest between the cause of revelation on the one hand, and the infidelity of the geological schools upon the other, as merely an affair of outposts, which, however terminating, will leave the main strength of the Christian argument unimpaired. We have already endeavoured to show how without any invasion, even on the literalities of the Mosaic record, the indefinite antiquity of the globe might safely be given up to naturalists, as an arena whether for their sportive fancies or their interminable gladiatorship. On this supposition, the details of that operation narrated by Moses, which lasted for six days on the earth's surface, will be regarded as the steps by which the present economy of terrestrial things was raised, about six thousand years ago, on the basis of an earth then without form and void. While, for aught of information we have in the Bible, the earth itself may, before this time, have been the theatre of many lengthened processes—the dwelling-place of older economies that have now gone by; but whereof the vestiges subsist even to the present day, both to the needless alarm of those who befriend the cause of Christianity, and to the unwarrantable triumph of those who have assailed it.

27. Let us never quit the strongholds of the Christian argument in hazarding a mere affair of outposts, unless we are quite sure of the ground we stand upon. There are certain zealous defenders of Christianity who in this way have done an injury to the cause. And it does give rise to a most unnecessary waste of credit and confidence, it does give the enemies of religion a most unnecessary triumph, when its defenders expose their ignorance

in the maintenance of a position which, even though given up, leaves Christianity as firmly based as ever, on those miraculous and prophetic and experimental evidences which substantiate the Bible as the authentic record of an authentic communication from Heaven to Earth, as a Book indited by holy men-of God, who stood charged, not with the matters of physical science, but with those transcendently higher matters which relate to the moral guidance and the moral destiny of our species.

28. Yet whatever room there might be for wise and sound policy in managing the Christian argument, there is no reason at all for the pusillanimous feeling of dismay. Our cause may suffer a partial and temporary discredit from the mismanagement of its friends—but not all the strength and subtlety of its most powerful adversaries can achieve its permanent overthrow. Those days have gone by of triumphant anticipation to the enemies of the cross, when the wit of Voltaire, and the eloquence of Rousseau, and the sophistry of Hume, entered into menacing combination on the side of infidelity. These have all been withstood—and on the arena, too, of literary and intellectual debate, where many a feat of championship has been performed, in repelling those successive attacks, which under the semblance of philosophy have been made upon the Faith. For after all, it is but a semblance and nothing more. That demi-infidel spirit, which for a generation or two has kept such hold of the seats of philosophy, did not find its ascendancy there till we had sunk down to an age of little men. Those great master-spirits of a former age, after whom there appeared the pigmies of what may be called a second-rate philosophy, were wholly exempted from it. In the days of proudest achievement and most colossal minds it was comparatively unknown; and so far from feeling a disgrace or a descent in Christianity, the illustrious names of Newton, and Locke, and Bacon, and Boyle, stand all associated with the defence and illustration of it.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE STRENGTH OF THE EVIDENCES FOR A GOD IN THE PHENOMENA OF VISIBLE AND EXTERNAL NATURE.

1. We include among the phenomena of external nature whatever can be exposed to the observation of human eyes—and

therefore, the organization and mechanism of our own bodies. There is distinct and additional evidence for a God—and that too, we think, the strongest and most influential of any, grounded on a phenomenon purely mental, and so coming under the dominion of consciousness alone. This we shall advert to afterwards; but meanwhile, we should like to offer a brief recapitulation of what we deem to be the strong points of the Theistical argument, as far as it has yet been proceeded in; that by means of a condensed view we may perceive distinctly wherein it is that the main force of the reasoning lies.

2. The first strong point of this argument is grounded on the distinction which we have already endeavoured to make palpable between the laws of matter and the collocations of matter. In the reasoning for a God from the mere existence of matter, we certainly do not remark any strong point of argument whatever. And then, when this argument from the existence of matter is given up, there remains another obscure and indeterminable controversy about its properties, as to which of them may be essential, and which of them must have been communicated at the will and by the appointment of a devising and purposing and intelligent Being. Now, so long as the argument carries either at the existence or at the laws of matter, we do not think that we have yet come to any lucid or effective consideration upon the subject. We hold that at this part of the question, the cause of Natural Theology has suffered from the confidence joined with the obscurity of those reasonings which have been made use of by its supporters; and that it were therefore a mighty service to the cause did we separate what in it is decisive, and what in it is doubtful, from each other.

3. They are the collocations, then, which form by far the most unequivocal tokens of a Divinity that the material world has to offer. We understand the term in a more comprehensive sense than that which is conveyed by its mere etymology. We mean not only that the parts of matter have been placed in right correspondence to each other; but that these parts, so placed, have been rightly sized and rightly shaped, for some obviously beneficial end of the combination in question—and moreover, that forces of a right intensity and direction have been made to meet together, so as to be productive of some desirable result. The world is full of such collocations—and the strong circumstance is, that there is nothing in the yet ascertained laws of matter that could have given rise to them—insomuch that if at this

moment any of them were destroyed, there appears nothing in these laws which could possibly replace them. It is true, that in astronomy, the argument founded on these, is all the less impressive, that it requires but the concurrence of few independent circumstances to complete the astronomical system. Such a concurrence, however, is indispensable—and in virtue of this it is, that the planetarium has been so exquisitely formed as never to deviate far from a mean state, but only to oscillate a little way on either side of it—else the system would have contained within itself the elements of its own destruction. It marks what the atheistical tendency is, that La Place should have ascribed this beautiful result to a law, and not to the collocations. He seems to have felt throughout his reasonings, wherein it was that the plausibility of atheism chiefly lay. But this also carries in it an intimation to us, wherein it is that the main strength lies of the argument for a Divinity. No doubt, the law is indispensable, and enters as one element into the calculation. But we have already noticed that the collocations are equally indispensable; and they enter as other elements into the calculation. So that if ever a time was when these collocations were not; if the present order of the heavens has had a commencement,—there seems nothing in any of the discovered laws or forces of matter which could have originated them. They seem only referable to the fiat and finger of a God.

4. But the argument gathers prodigiously in strength, when we descend from the celestial to the terrestrial collocations of things; from the contingencies which meet together in the formation of an astronomical, to those which meet together in the formation of an anatomical system; from the simple mechanism of the heavens, into which so few simplicities are required to enter, to those complex organic mechanisms, which require such a prodigiously varied and manifold combination. Could we but demonstrate a commencement for them, then the argument rises to almost the force of infinity for a God. And it seems impossible to escape from the belief of such a commencement, whatever opinion we may entertain as to the authority of the professed historical vouchers for the historical fact of a creation. If that authority be deferred to, then there is no practical need, at least, for any further reasoning on the subject. But if, on the other hand, it be set aside, as has been done by many on the strength of certain geological theories, then our argument is complete, if in these very theories there be the palpable proofs of a com-

mencement to the present order of things. This is what we have endeavoured to demonstrate—not that we have any distrust in the authority of Moses as a historian, but that we hold it right to show, as it were, all the sides of our argument, and that all round it is impregnable—capable, therefore, of being shaped to every variety of speculation, and of gaining proselytes to its high cause from the disciples of all the sciences.

5. Now, the most essential stepping-stone of this argument is a doctrine that has become the almost universal creed of naturalists—that there is no spontaneous generation, at least in reference to the vast majority of known species; to which we superadd the equally admitted doctrine—that there is no transmutation of the species. It is now upwards of a century since the evidence of the former became so palpable, as to constitute it into an article of philosophical belief—and the advocates of Theism in that day were not blind to the importance of it. We will find it, and deservedly, the subject of gratulation and triumph to Bentley and others. It goes to establish an impassable barrier between the physiological on the one hand, and the chemical or the mechanical on the other—insomuch that we have never distinctly made out of all the processes in chemistry, or of all the principles and powers in natural philosophy, that they even approximate to the formation of an organic being, at least of an organic being which has the property of self-transmission. Of almost all our living races it may be said, that we do not perceive so much as a rudimental or abortive tendency to it; whereas, had there been an equivocal generation, and had our present animal and vegetable races originated in such a lucky combination as favoured their complete development, we should, for one instance that succeeded, have witnessed a thousand frustrated in the progress—all nature teeming, as it were, with abortions innumerable; and for each new species brought to perfection under our eyes, we should have beheld millions falling short at the incipient, and at all the progressive stages of formation, with some embryo stifled in the bud, or some half-finished monster, checked by various adverse elements and forces in its path to vitality. Now, in the whole compass of observation, no such phenomena are to be found. We do not see any of the species with which we are at all familiar brought forward in this way, and wait in vain for such from the immatured buddings of animal and vegetable formation. Each actual variety through the great extent of the ascertained physiological kingdom is

perfect in its way; and there is a distinct invariable line of transmission in which, but never out of which, we behold the production of each of them. Could we only demonstrate, then, a commencement for all or for any of these lines, we should be conducted to the period when there took place a most skilful, a most complete, a most varied collocation—and that by means which nature, that great goddess of the infidel philosophy, as far as the eye of philosophy ever has explored, does not hold in any of her magazines. We should see, in striking exemplification, the collocations of matter taking place, and by other means than by any laws of matter which we at least are acquainted with; and on comparing the manifold fitness of the collocations with the impotency of the laws, we should have the nearest experimental argument that can be given for the energy of a creative word, for the fiat and the forthgoings of a Deity.

6. The commencement, then, even of any of our animal or vegetable races would seem to decide this question. Let us by any means be made to know of any of the existing generations, that historically it had a first and a definite origin, and this of itself would carry in it the demonstration of a God. But the proper argument in behalf of this, or of any historical fact, is historical evidence; and to overlook the strength of such evidence for a creation in the Jewish Scriptures, were not merely unchristian, but unphilosophical. Yet it is with the air, and apparently under the sanction of philosophy, that this evidence has of late been contravened. The plausibilities of geological science or speculation have been brought to bear against it. Instead of looking to the narrative of Scripture, we are called upon to look at the demonstration of certain lengthened processes which this science would substitute, and wherewith it would set aside the authority of Moses. Yet, in these very processes do we behold, and in characters the most vivid and discernible, the footsteps of a Deity. In the attempt to escape from Christianity, geologists have been caught or involved more surely in theism. Under all systems which ascribe to matter an indefinite antiquity, each successive economy in our world is supposed to contain within itself the elements of decay, or to be exposed to certain processes of violence and destruction. This vexed and agitated globe has been conceived of as the theatre of such revolutions, that though the earth itself, in matter and substantive being, has survived them, the frail organic creatures upon its surface could not have survived them. It matters not

how the alleged catastrophes have been brought about—whether by fire from the centre, or by ocean heaved from its old resting-place, and, in one mighty resistless tide, sweeping, as with the besom of destruction, those continents on which the animals of a former era had for thousands of ages held their unmolested habitation. It is enough if by one catastrophe whole species or genera have been extinguished; and if, by an indefinite number of them throughout past eternity, all the genera at one time in the world might now have disappeared. The question still is unresolved, What the origin, or whence the existence of our present races? Not by spontaneous generation, we are taught by natural science, in one of its most authoritative lessons. Not, as we know from another of its lessons, by the transmutation of old species into new ones. Not by any combination that we have ever observed of all the known powers and principles in creation; and thus are we enabled to refer those things in nature, which of all others have most exquisite and manifold collocations, the most certainly to a definite origin, the most nearly to the finger of a Creator.

7. There is another strong point in the argument; and which has been turned with great effect by theistical writers to the service of the cause. In reasoning on the perfect symmetry and commodiousness of the animal machine, there is a certain infidel evasion that has been made from the argument. It has been affirmed that most of the alleged fitnesses, in the construction of an organic being, are not only indispensable to comfort but indispensable to life, so that the race could not have survived the want of them; and that, therefore, it is impossible, from the nature of the thing, that any of the opposite unfitnesses can ever be found in any of our existing specimens. At this rate it will be observed of the actual races, that they are regarded but as the fortunate relics which, amid an infinity of chances, have realized all the necessary conditions for the upholding of vitality, and for the transmitting of it to successive generations. They are the lucky few which, by the mathematical doctrine of probabilities, were certainly to be looked for in a countless multitude of failures or abortions. Any mal-convenience which is incompatible with life cannot, from the very nature of the case, be presented to observation; and therefore cannot be appealed to by reasoners on the atheistical side of the argument. Now they complain of this as the loss of an advantage—whereas on the side of their antagonists there are so

many random productions, they affirm, which in an infinity of combinations are not more than might have been expected, but a plausible and confident appeal to which will make the worse appear the better argument.

8. Our first reply to this has in some measure been anticipated. Any such embryo formations as we have supposed have never once been witnessed by us. Exterior to the established line of transmission, there is not even an incipient movement to be seen, in any department of nature, towards the production of animals or vegetables endowed with the faculty of afterwards transmitting themselves. We see no example in all the multi-form combinations of chemistry and mechanics, however aided by various and variously-blended physical influences, of any half-formed mechanism of this sort passing onward to its completion, but arrested in its progress and thrown back again, because of some deficient sense or organ that is essential to vitality. The argument represents nature as teeming with abortions, whereas in the whole compass of nature, no such abortion, and not even the tendency to it, has been found.

9. But our second reply we hold to be still more satisfactory. There can be conceived many thousands of maladjustments, each of which would be incompatible with comfort and not incompatible with life—yet none of which we ever see realized. The argument of the atheists presupposes of every adaptation in the animal frame, which we plead in proof of design, that it is essential to vitality—but it is not so. The nails, for example, at the extremities of our fingers, and the position of which we ascribe to collocation, but they to the blind direction of a physical law—may be conceived to have been otherwise situated, without any such hazard to the life of man as would have led to the extinction of the race. They might have been ranged in separate horny excrescences round the wrist, instead of being ranged as now at the places where they are most serviceable. In like manner, the teeth might have been less conveniently posited than they are actually—or the cutting and grinding teeth might have changed places, instead of being fixed and arranged in the very way that makes them the most effective. We are quite sure that by going in detail over the human body, many thousands of changes could be pointed out, each entailing severe trouble and discomfort upon man, yet without hazard to the being of the individual or to the endurance of the species. How, then, is the actual optimism of the human frame to be

accounted for? Why is it that no alteration can be proposed either in shape or locality which would not deteriorate the mechanism? There is, no doubt, a certain limit beyond which, if the changes were to proceed, they would prove incompatible with life, and so expunge the specimen altogether from observation—but how comes it, that between this limit and the actual state of every existing species, we see nothing awkward, nothing misplaced, nothing that admits of being mended—without one of those inaptitudes or disproportions which either a blind nature, or a sportive and capricious chance, must have infallibly and in myriads given rise to? Whence no idle excrescences in those complicated systems? How comes each part to be in such exquisite harmony with the whole? What but manifold experience could have taught the anatomist to ground such confident inferences on the uses of everything that he discovers in the animal framework—and whence can it be, but from the actual design which presided over these formations, that, when reasoning on final causes, he is in the best possible track for the enlargement of his science? Whence the certainty, the almost axiomatic certainty of the position, that there is nothing useless in the anatomical structure? And that, on the contrary, anatomists never reason more safely, than when they presume and reason on a universal usefulness. And this principle, so far from misleading, which in a random economy of things it would infallibly have done, has often been the instrument of anatomical discovery. Could this have been the case under a mere system either of headlong forces, or of fortuitous combinations? Would not the monstrous, and the grotesque, and the incongruous, have ever and anon been obtruded upon our view—and when instead of this we behold such significancy in every part and in every function of the physiological system, does not this tell most significantly of a God?

10. There is an infinity of examples to the same effect in the inferior creation. As one instance out of the many, we find wings attached to the animals, who, from the smallness or comparative lightness of their bodies, can obtain the benefit of them. Why not wings on horses and other large animals, who could shift well enough to live though they could not use their wings? And here there occurs to us the remarkable instance of a congruity in the parts of animals, greatly subservient to their accommodation, yet experimentally proved in a familiar case to be not essential to life. We all know that the necks of quadrupeds,

as is magnificently set forth in the camelopard, are in general commensurate with their fore-legs. The same proportion is observed in birds, especially those which feed upon grass. The obvious design of this collocation is that they may be enabled to reach the ground conveniently with their bills. Now there is no exception to this rule by which the length of the neck keeps pace with that of the legs in land fowls—but there is an exception in the case of those water-fowls that feed on the produce of water bottoms—as the swan, whose neck is much larger in proportion than its legs, and also the goose, both of which birds seek for their food in the slimy bottom of lakes or pools. Now it so happens of the goose that it can live upon land with its long neck and short legs—though the disproportion under which it labours gives an obvious awkwardness to its appearance and gait—besides, we have no doubt, subjecting it to a certain degree of inconvenience in feeding. Here, then, is one example of an incongruity consistent with life, and fully authorizing the question, Why, under a random or unintelligent economy of things, there is not an infinite multitude of such examples among living animals? It will be perceived of this one example, that, while it both furnishes and illustrates the argument on which we now insist, it carries in it no exception to the wisdom of the Creator. The animal is amphibious. Its natural habitat is the margin of lakes. It may live on land, but it can live on water—and is furnished with its long neck for the sake of the additional food obtained from this latter element.

11. Before quitting this subject, we may remark that the exception which takes place in the proportion between the necks and the legs is peculiar to those birds that are webfooted. Now is there aught, we would ask, in a disproportion between necks and legs that is fitted by the mere operation of a blind and physical energy to produce these webs? Or, can the adjustment of parts so remote and unconnected be ascribed to anything but collocation?

12. There is a very pleasing information recently given in a most entertaining book of travels by Mr. Waterton. It respects the sloth—an animal which creeps along the ground with every symptom of distress, as if it laboured under the pain and discomfort of some very grievous maladjustment. According to the narrative of this very adventurous traveller, he has cleared up this apparent exception to the order of perfect adaptation throughout the animal kingdom. The creature, it would appear, when

on the ground, is out of its element. Its natural habitat is among the branches of trees, which branches interlaced with each other afford a continuous path for hundreds of miles in the extensive forests of South America. Its feet, it would appear, were not made for pressing upon the earth, but for lapping into each other, so as to suspend the animal with its back undermost on those horizontal branches, along which it warps its way from one tree to another. When it regains its natural situation, it instantly recovers, it is said, its natural alacrity, and exchanges the agony it experienced, when in a state of violence, for the ease and enjoyment of one who feels himself at home. The frame and habitudes of the creature are thus found, as with all other animals, to be exactly suited to the place of its proper occupation—so as no longer to stand in the way of the general doctrine—that each creature is perfect in its kind, and all very good.*

13. In order to taste the richness and power of the theistical argument, one would need to enter upon the details of it. For doing aught like adequate justice to the theme, we should go piecemeal over the face of this vast and voluminous creation; and show how, in the exquisite textures of every leaf and every hair and every membrane, Nature throughout all her recesses was instinct with contrivance, and in the minute as well as the magnificent announced herself the workmanship of a Master's hand. We cannot venture on the statistics of so wide and so exuberant a territory. The variety in which we should lose ourselves, the Psalmist hath expressively designed by the epithet of "manifold"—and this sets forth the significancy of that scriptural expression, "the manifold wisdom of God." It is to us interminable. When told that we might expatiate for weeks together on the habitudes and economy of a single insect, we may guess how arduous the enterprise would be, to traverse the whole length and breadth of a land, so profusely overspread and so densely peopled with the tokens of a planning and presiding Deity. It would be to compass all philosophy—it would be to

* Dr. Buckland has treated this subject scientifically in a recent paper, "On the Adaptation of the Structure of the Sloths to their peculiar mode of Life," in which he demonstrates that, so far from being chargeable with imperfection or monstrosity, the construction of the sloth "adds another striking case to the endless instances of perfect mechanism and contrivance, which we find pervading every organ of every creature, when viewed in relation to the office it is destined to fulfil; and affords a new exemplification of the principle, which has been so admirably illustrated by the judicious Paley, 'that the animal is fitted to its state.'"

describe the encyclopedia of human knowledge ; and out of the spoils collected from every possible quarter of contemplation, to make an offering to Him of whom it has been eloquently said, that He sits enthroned on the riches of the universe. It would be to trace the footsteps of a Being, who, while He wields with giant strength the orbs of immensity, pencils every flower upon earth, and hangs a thousand dew-drops around it—at one time walking in greatness among the wonders of the firmament, and at another, or rather at the same time, scattering beauty of all sorts in countless hues and inimitable touches around our lowly dwelling-places. He hath indeed lighted up most gloriously the canopy that is over our heads—He hath shed unbounded grace and decoration on the terrestrial platform beneath us. Yet these are only parts of His ways—for the whole of His productiveness and power who can comprehend? This will be the occupation of eternity—amid that diversity of operations at present so baffling, to scan the counsels of the God who worketh all in all.

14. Our limits do not permit so much as an entrance upon this field—let us therefore recommend the study of those authors who have ventured upon the enterprise, and have followed it up with a more or a less successful execution. Mixed up with the unsatisfactory metaphysics of that period, the reader will find a good deal of solid argumentation in the sermon preached about the beginning of the last century at the Boyle Lectureship—though we confess that on this question we have greater value for the works of Ray and Derham than for them all put together. Even these however have been now superseded by the masterly performance of Dr. Paley—a writer of whom it is not too much to say, that he has done more than any other individual who can be named to accommodate the defence both of the Natural and the Christian Theology to the general understanding of our times. He, in particular, has illustrated with great felicity and effect the argument for a God from those final causes which may be descried in the appearances of nature ; and, although he has confined himself chiefly to one department, that is the anatomical, yet that being far the most prolific of this sort of evidence, he has altogether composed from it a most impressive pleading on the side of Theism. He attempts no eloquence ; but there is all the power of eloquence in his graphic representation of natural scenes and natural objects—just as a painter of the Flemish School may without any creative faculty of his own, but on the strength of his imitative faculties only, minister to

the spectators of his art all those emotions both of the Sublime and Beautiful which the reality of visible things is fitted to awaken. And so without aught of the imaginative, or aught of the ethereal about him, but in virtue of the just impression which external things make upon his mind, and of the admirable sense and truth wherewith he reflects them back again, does our author, by acting merely the part of a faithful copyist, give a fuller sense of the richness and repleteness of this argument, than is or can be effected by all the elaborations of an ambitious oratory. Of him it may be said, and with as emphatic justice as of any man who ever wrote, that there is no nonsense about him—and so, with all his conceptions most appropriate to the subject that he is treating, and these bodied forth in words, each of which is instinct with significancy and most strikingly appropriate—we have altogether a performance neither vitiated in expression by one clause or epithet of verbiage, nor vitiated in substance by one impertinence of prurient or misplaced imagination. His predominant faculty is judgment; and therefore it is that he is always sure to seize on the relevancies or strong points of an argument, which never suffer from his mode of rendering them, because, to use a familiar but expressive phrase, they are at all times exceedingly well put. His perfect freedom from all aim and all affectation is a mighty disencumbrance to him—he having evidently no other object than to give forth in as clear and correct delineation as possible, those impressions which nature and truth had spontaneously made on his own just and vigorous understanding. So that, altogether, although we should say of the mind of Paley, that it was of a decidedly prosaic or secular cast—although we should be at a loss to find out what is termed the poetry of his character, and doubt, in fact, whether any of the elements of poetry were there—although never to be found in the walk of sentiment or of metaphysics, or indeed in any high transcendental walk whatever, whether of the reason or of the fancy; yet to him there most unquestionably belonged a very high order of faculties. His most original work is the *Horæ Paulinæ*, yet even there he discovers more of the observational than the inventive; for after all, it was but a new track of observation which he opened up, and not a new species of argument which he devised that might immortalize its author, like the discovery of a before unknown calculus in the mathematics. All the mental exercises of Paley lie within the limits of sense and of experience; nor would one ever think of awarding

to him the meed of genius. Yet in the whole staple and substance of his thoughts, there was something better than genius—the home-bred product of a hale and well-conditioned intellect, that dwelt in the *ipsa corpora* of truth, and studied use and not ornament in the drapery wherewith he invested it. We admit that he had neither the organ of high poetry nor of high metaphysics—and perhaps would have recoiled from both as from some unmeaning mysticism of which nothing could be made. Yet he had most efficient organs notwithstanding—and the volumes he has given to the world, plain perspicuous and powerful, as was the habitude of his own understanding—fraught throughout with meaning, and lighted up not in the gorgeous colouring of fancy but in the clearness of truth's own element—these volumes form one of the most precious contributions which, for the last half century, have been added to the theological literature of our land.

15. It has been said that there is nothing more uncommon than common sense. It is the perfection of his common sense which makes Paley at once so rare and so valuable a specimen of our nature. The characteristics of his mind make up a most interesting variety, and constitute him into what may be termed a literary phenomenon. One likes to behold the action and reaction of dissimilar minds; and therefore it were curious to have ascertained how he would have stood affected by the perusal of a volume of Kant, or by a volume of lake poetry. We figure that he would have liked Franklin; and that, coming down to our day, the strength of Cobbett would have had in it a redeeming quality to make even his coarseness palatable. He would have abhorred all German sentimentalism; and of the *a priori* argument of Clarke, he would have wanted the perception chiefly because he wanted patience for it. His appetite for truth and sense would make him intolerant of all which did not engage the discerning faculties of his soul—and from the sheer force and promptitude of his decided judgment, he would throw off *instanter* all that he felt to be uncongenial to it. The general solidity of his mind posted him as if by gravitation on the *terra firma* of experience, and restrained his flight into any region of transcendental speculation. Yet Coleridge makes obeisance to him; and differently moulded as these men were, this testimony from the distinguished metaphysician and poet does honour to both.

16. Having thus dwelt as long as our limits will admit, on

the evidences of design in external nature—it is all-important to remark, that on the one hand, there might be innumerable most lucid indications of design in particular instances, while on the other, a mystery impenetrable may hang over the general design of Creation. The lesson that there is a presiding intelligence may shine most vividly forth in the details of the universe—and yet the drift, or what we should term the policy of the universe, may be wrapt in profoundest secrecy from our view. The world may teem all over with the indications of contrivance—and yet the end which the Contriver had in view, the moving cause which impelled Him to the formation of the world, or the final destination that awaits it, may all baffle the comprehension of men, who nevertheless can read the inscription of a manifold and marvellous wisdom on every page in the volume of nature. So that on the one hand, there may be overpowering light, while on the other, there is hopeless and unconquerable darkness. In the workmanship of nature we behold an infinity of special adaptations to special objects, each of which bespeaks a sovereign mind that plans and purposes—yet there may the deepest obscurity hang over the question, What is the plan or purpose of this workmanship on the whole? It is just as when looking to an individual man, we cannot but recognise the conceptions of an architect in the teeth, and the eyes, and the hands, and all the parts of manifest subserviency which belong to him—yet remain unable to solve the enigma of his being, or to fathom the general conception of the Divinity in thus ushering a creature to existence, that he may live in restless vanity, and die in despair. And what is true of an individual is true of a species or of a universe. Throughout, and in its separate parts, it may be pregnant with the notices of a Divinity—yet in reference both to its creation and its government, to the principle in which it originated and the consummation in which it issues, there may be an overhanging mystery—and man, all clear and confident on the question that God is, may abide notwithstanding in deepest ignorance of His purposes and His ways.

BOOK III.

PROOFS FOR THE BEING AND CHARACTER OF GOD IN THE CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN MIND.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE EVIDENCE AFFORDED BY THE PHENOMENA
AND CONSTITUTION OF THE HUMAN MIND FOR THE BEING OF A GOD.

1. THERE are many respects in which the evidence for a God, given forth by the constitution of the human body, differs from the evidence given forth by the constitution of the human spirit. It is with the latter evidence that we have now more peculiarly to deal; but at present we shall only advert to a few of its distinct and special characteristics. The subject will at length open into greater detail and development—yet a brief preliminary exposition may be useful at the outset, should it only convey some notion of the difficulties and particularities of this branch of the argument.

2. A leading distinction between the material and the mental fabrications is, the far greater complexity of the former, at least greater to all human observation. Into that system of means which has been formed for the object of seeing, there enter at least twenty separate contingencies, the absence of any one of which would either derange the proper function of the eye, or altogether destroy it. We have no access to aught like the observation of a mental structure; and all of which our consciousness informs us is a succession of mental phenomena. Now in these we are sensible of nothing but a very simple antecedent followed up, and that generally on the instant, by a like simple consequent. We have the feeling and still more the purpose of benevolence followed up by complacency. We have the feeling or purpose, and still more the execution of malignity, or rather the recollection of that execution, followed up by remorse. However manifold the apparatus may be which enables us to see an

external object—when the sight itself, instead of the consequent in a material succession, becomes the antecedent in a mental one; or, in other words, when it passes from a material to a purely mental process; then, as soon does it pass from the complex into the simple; and, accordingly, the sight of distress is followed up, without the intervention of any curiously-elaborated mechanism that we are at all conscious of, by an immediate feeling of compassion. These examples will, at least, suffice to mark a strong distinction between the two inquiries, and to show that the several arguments drawn from each must at least be formed of very different materials.

3. There are two distinct ways in which the mind can be viewed, and which constitute different modes of conception, rather than diversities of substantial and scientific doctrine. The mind may either be regarded as a congeries of different faculties; or as a simple and indivisible substance, with the susceptibility of passing into different states. By the former mode of viewing it, the memory, and the judgment, and the conscience, and the will, are conceived of as so many distinct but co-existent parts of mind, which is thus represented to us somewhat in the light of an organic structure, having separate members, each for the discharge of its own appropriate mental function or exercise. By the latter, which we deem also the more felicitous mode of viewing it, these distinct mental acts, instead of being referred to distinct parts of the mind, are conceived of as distinct acts of the whole mind—insomuch that the whole mind remembers, or the whole mind judges, or the whole mind wills, or, in short, the whole mind passes into various intellectual states, or states of emotion, according to the circumstances by which at the time it is beset, or to the present nature of its employment. We might thus either regard the study of mind as a study in contemporaneous nature; and we should then, in the delineation of its various parts, be assigning to it a natural history—or we might regard the study of mind as a study in successive nature; and we should then, in the description of its various states, be assigning to it a natural philosophy. When such a phrase as the anatomy of the human mind is employed by philosophers, we may safely guess that the former is the conception which they are inclined to form of it.* When such a phrase again as the physiology of the human mind is made use of, the latter is the con-

* It is under this conception, too, that writers propose to lay down a map of the human faculties.

ception by which, in all probability, it has been suggested. It is thus that Dr. Thomas Brown designates the science of mind as mental physiology. With him, in fact, it is altogether a science of sequences, his very analysis being the analysis of results, and not of compounds.

4. Now, in either view of our mental constitution there is the same strength of evidence for a God. It matters not for this, whether the mind be regarded as consisting of so many useful parts, or as endowed with as many useful properties. It is the number, whether the one or other of these, out of which the product is formed of evidence for a designing cause. The only reason why the useful dispositions of matter are so greatly more prolific of this evidence than the useful laws of matter, is, that the former so greatly outnumber the latter. Of the twenty independent circumstances which enter into beneficial concurrence in the formation of an eye, that each of them should be found in a situation of optimism, and none of them occupying either an indifferent or a hurtful position—it is this which speaks so emphatically against the hypothesis of a random distribution, and for the hypothesis of an intelligent order. Yet this is but one out of the many like specimens, wherewith the animal economy thickens and teems in such marvellous profusion. By the doctrine of probabilities, the mathematical evidence, in this question between the two suppositions of intelligence or chance, will be found, even on many a single organ of the human framework, to preponderate vastly more than a million-fold on the side of the former. We do not affirm of the human mind that it is so destitute of all complication and variety, as to be deficient altogether in this sort of evidence. Let there be but six laws or ultimate facts in the mental constitution, with the circumstance of each of them being beneficial; and this of itself would yield no inconsiderable amount of precise and calculable proof, for our mental economy being a formation of contrivance, rather than one that is fortuitous or of blind necessity. It will at once be seen, however, why mind, just from its greater simplicity than matter, should contribute so much less to the support of natural theism, of that definite and mathematical evidence which is founded on combination.

5. But, although in the mental department of creation, the argument for a God that is gathered out of such materials, is not so strong as in the other great department—yet it does furnish a peculiar argument of its own, which, though not grounded on

mathematical data, and not derived from a lengthened and logical process of reasoning, is of a highly effective and practical character notwithstanding. It has not less in it of the substance, though it may have greatly less in it of the semblance of demonstration, that it consists of but one step between the premises and the conclusion. It is briefly, but cannot be more clearly and emphatically expressed than in the following sentence:—"He that formed the eye, shall he not see? He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know?" That the parent cause of intelligent beings shall be itself intelligent is an aphorism, which, if not demonstrable in the forms of logic, carries in the very announcement of it a challenging power over the acquiescence of almost all spirits. It is a thing of instant conviction, as if seen in the light of its own evidence, more than a thing of lengthened and laborious proof. It may be stigmatized as a mere impression—nevertheless the most of intellects go as readily along with it, as they would from one *contiguous* step to another of many a stately argumentation. If it cannot be exhibited as the conclusion of a syllogism, it is because of its own inherent right to be admitted there as the major proposition. To proscribe every such truth, or to disown it from being truth, merely because incapable of deduction, would be to cast away the first principles of all reasoning. It would banish the authority of intuition, and so reduce all philosophy and knowledge to a state of universal scepticism—for what is the first departure of every argument but an intuition, and what but a series of intuitions are its successive stepping-stones? We should soon involve ourselves in helpless perplexity and darkness, did we insist on everything being proved, and on nothing being assumed—for valid assumptions are the materials of truth, and the only office of argument is to weave them together into so many pieces of instruction for the bettering or enlightening of the species.

6. We are not to estimate the strength or clearness of that Natural Theology which obtains throughout the mass of our population, by the impression of our scientific arguments upon their understandings—whether these be metaphysical or drawn from the study of external nature. Whether they comprehend the reasoning that is grounded on the arrangements of the material world or not, they are in immediate contact with other phenomena, which far more promptly suggest and far more powerfully convince them of a God. With all the defect and inferiority which have been ascribed to the department of mind,

as being less fertile of evidence for a God than the department of matter, it is really in the former where the most influential of that evidence is to be found. There may be a greater difficulty in evolving the mental than the material proofs; but they are not on that account the less effective on the popular understanding—when, without the formality of an inferential process, the most illiterate of the species recognise a presiding Deity in the felt workings of their own spirit, and more especially the felt supremacy of conscience within them. There seems but one step from the consciousness of the mind that is felt to the conviction of the mind that originated—for that blind and unconscious matter cannot, by any of her combinations, evolve the phenomena of mind, is a proposition seen in its own immediate light, and felt to be true with all the speed and certainty of an axiom. It is to such truth, as being of instant and almost universal consent, that, more than to any other, we owe the existence of a natural theology among men; yet, because of the occult mysticism wherewith it is charged, it is well that ours is a cause of such rich and various argument; that in her service we can build up syllogisms, and expatiate over wide fields of induction, and amass stores of evidence, and, on the useful dispositions of matter alone, can ground such large computations of probability in favour of an intelligent cause or maker for all things, as might silence and satisfy the reasoners.

7. Still, both with philosophers and with the common people, the belief of a God may be altogether a thing of inference, and not of direct intuition—and perhaps it were safer, did we confine ourselves to this idea. Yet let us advert though but briefly and incidentally to the notion, that among all men there is a certain immediate and irresistible sense of God. We are by no means sure but there may. We at least conceive that with but one fact within the hold and the intimate conviction of all, and but one step of an inferential process therefrom, we come to the most powerful and practical impression which nature gives of a Deity. This fact is the felt supremacy of conscience within us—and the conclusion is the actual supremacy of a living Judge and Ruler over us. We shall not pretend to say whether there may not be a quicker discernment than this—nay, even the instantaneous view of a God in the light of a still more direct manifestation. We should feel as if liable to the charge of mysticism, did we make any confident averment of such an intuition. But we, may at least say of all innate thoughts and

impressions of the Divinity, that, if they do exist, it is no mysticism to affirm of them, that they will be of great practical effect in religion—even though we should not be able to ascertain them. They are not the less influential, though unseen—morally of powerful operation, though metaphysically never analyzed or beyond the reach of analysis. Even if they suggest but the imagination of a God, they are not without their importance in Theology—laying man under a most direct obligation to entertain the subject, and fastening a great moral delinquency upon his irreligious neglect of it.

8. And there is one inquiry in Natural Theology, which the constitution of the mind, and the adaptation of that constitution to the external world, are pre-eminently fitted to illustrate—we mean the character of the Deity. We hold that the material universe affords decisive attestation to His natural perfections, but that it leaves the question of His moral perfections involved in profoundest mystery. The machinery of a serpent's tooth, for the obvious infliction of pain and death upon its victims, may speak as distinctly for the power and intelligence of its Maker as the machinery of those teeth, which, formed and inserted for simple mastication, subserve the purposes of a bland and beneficent economy. An apparatus of suffering and torture might furnish as clear an indication of design, though a design of cruelty, as does an apparatus for the ministration of enjoyment furnish the indication also of design, but a design of benevolence. Did we confine our study to the material constitution of things, we should meet with the enigma of many perplexing and contradictory appearances. We hope to make it manifest, that in the study of the mental constitution, this enigma is greatly alleviated, if not wholly done away; and, at all events, that within this peculiar department of evidence there lie the most full and unambiguous demonstrations, which nature hath anywhere given to us, both of the benevolence and the righteousness of God.

9. If, in some respects, the phenomena of mind tell us less decisively than the phenomena of matter, of the existence of God, they tell us far more distinctly and decisively of His attributes. We have already said that, from the simplicity of the mental system, we met with less there of that evidence for design which is founded on combination, or on that right adjustment and adaptation of the numerous particulars, which enter into a complex assemblage of things, and which are essential to some

desirable fulfilment. It is not, therefore, through the medium of this particular evidence—the evidence which lies in combination—that the phenomena and processes of mind are the best for telling us of the Divine existence. But if otherwise, or previously told of this, we hold them to be the best throughout all nature for telling us of the Divine character. For if once convinced, on distinct grounds, that God is, it matters not how simple the antecedents or the consequents of any particular succession may be. It is enough that we know what the terms of the succession are, or what the effect is wherewith God wills any given thing to be followed up. The character of the ordination, and so the character of the ordainer, depends on the terms of the succession; and not on the nature of that intervention or agency, whether more or less complex, by which it is brought about. And should either term of the succession, either the antecedent or consequent, be some moral feeling, or characteristic of the mind, then the inference comes to be a very distinct and decisive one. That the sight of distress, for example, should be followed up by compassion, is an obvious provision of benevolence, and not of cruelty, on the part of Him who ordained our mental constitution. Again, that a feeling of kindness in the heart should be followed up by a feeling of complacency in the heart, that in every virtuous affection of the soul there should be so much to gladden and harmonize it, that there should always be peace within when there is conscious purity or rectitude within; and, on the other hand, that malignity and licentiousness, and the sense of any moral transgression whatever, should always have the effect of discomfiting, and sometimes even of agonizing the spirit of man—that such should be the actual workmanship and working of our nature, speaks most distinctly, we apprehend, for the general righteousness of Him who constructed its machinery and established its laws. An omnipotent patron of vice would have given another make, and a moral system with other and opposite tendencies to the creatures whom he had formed. He would have established different sequences; and, instead of that oil of gladness which now distils, as if from a secret spring of satisfaction, upon the upright; and, instead of that bitterness and disquietude which are now the obvious attendants on every species of delinquency, we should have had the reverse phenomena of a reversely constituted species, whose minds were in their state of wildest disorder when kindling with the resolves of highest excellence; or were in their best and happiest,

and most harmonious mood, when brooding over the purposes of dishonesty, or frenzied with the passions of hatred and revenge.

10. In this special track of observation, we have at least the means or data for constructing a far more satisfactory demonstration of the Divine attributes, than can possibly be gathered, we think, from the ambiguous phenomena of the external world. In other words, it will be found that the mental phenomena speak more distinctly and decisively for the character of God than do the material phenomena of creation. And it should not be forgotten that whatever serves to indicate the character, serves also to confirm the existence of the Divine Being. For this character, whose signatures are impressed on nature, is not an abstraction, but must have residence on a concrete and substantive Being, who hath communicated a transcript of Himself to the workmanship of His own hands. It is thus that, although in this special department, there is greater poverty of evidence for a God, in as far as that evidence is grounded on a skilful disposition of parts—yet, in respect of another kind of evidence, there is no such poverty; for, greatly more replete as we hold it to be with the unequivocal tokens of a moral character, we, by that simple but strong ligament of proof which connects a character with an existence, can, in the study of mind alone, find a firm stepping-stone to the existence of a God. Our universe is sometimes termed the mirror of Him who made it. But the optical reflection, whatever it may be, must be held as indicating the reality which gave it birth; and whether we discern there the expression of a reigning benevolence, or a reigning justice, these must not be dealt with as the aerial or the fanciful personifications of qualities alone, but as the substantial evidences of a just and benevolent, and withal a living God. So that after all, if the constitution of our moral nature bear upon it decisive indications of the character of God, it must furnish at the same time strong indications of His Being. The discovery of a character implies the discovery of an existence. We cannot separate qualities of any description from the proper substance in which they reside, and, if told of an absolute goodness and rightness in the economy of the universe, we cannot dissever our observation of such attributes as these from our belief of a good, and righteous, and withal a living Governor by whom they are realized.

11. But beside this peculiar evidence afforded by mind for the being of a God, we shall, in connexion with the study of its

phenomena and its laws, meet with much of that evidence which lies in the manifold, and, withal, happy conjunction of many individual things, by the meeting together of which, some distinctly beneficial end is accomplished, brought about in that one way and in no other. For it ought further to be recollected, that, simple as the constitution of the human mind is, and proportionally unfruitful, therefore, as it may be of that argument for a God, which is founded on the right assortment and disposition of many parts, or even of many principles; yet, on reflection will it be found that the materials even of this peculiar argument lie abundantly within the province of this contemplation. For beside the mental constitution of man, we can view the adaptation of that constitution to external nature. We might demonstrate not only that the mind is rightly constituted in itself, but that the mind is rightly placed in a befitting theatre for the exercise of its powers. We might prove of the world and its various objects, that they are suited to the various capacities of this inhabitant—this moral and intelligent creature, of whom it is palpable that the things which are around him bear a fit relation to the laws or the properties which are within him. There is ample room here for the evidence of collocation. Yet there remains this distinction between the mental and corporeal economy of man, that whereas the evidence arising from collocation is more rich and manifold in the bodily structure itself, than even in its complex and numerous adaptations to the outer world;* the like evidence in the mental department, is meagre, as afforded by the subjective mind, when compared with the evidence of its various adjustments and fitnesses to the objective universe around it, whether of man's moral constitution to the state of human society, or of his intellectual to the various objects of physical investigation.

12. The great object of philosophy is to ascertain the simple or ultimate principles, into which all the phenomena of nature may by analysis be resolved. But it often happens, that in this attempt she stops short at a secondary law, which might be demonstrated, by further analysis, to be itself a complex derivative of the primitive or elementary laws. Until this work of analysis be completed, we shall often mistake what is compound for what is simple, both in the philosophy of mind and the

* Yet Paley has a most interesting chapter on the adaptations of external nature to the human framework, though the main strength and copiousness of his argument lie in the anatomy of the framework itself.

philosophy of matter—being frequently exposed to intractable substances or intractable phenomena in both, which long withstand every effort that science makes for their decomposition. It is thus that the time is not yet come, and may never come, when we shall fully understand what be all the simple elements or simple laws of matter, and what be all the distinct elementary laws, or, as they have sometimes been termed, the ultimate facts in the constitution of the human mind. But we do not need to wait for this communication ere we can trace, in either department, the wisdom and beneficence of a Deity; for many are both the material and mental processes which might be recognised as pregnant with utility, and so, pregnant with evidence for a God, long before the processes themselves are analyzed. The truth is, that a secondary law, if it do not exhibit any additional proof of design in a distinct useful principle, exhibits that proof in a distinct and useful disposition of parts; for, generally speaking, a secondary law is the result of an operation by some primitive law, in peculiar and new circumstances. For example, the law of the tides is a secondary law, resolvable into one more general and elementary—even the law of gravitation. But we might imagine a state of things, in which the discovery of this connexion would have been impossible—as a sky perpetually mantled with a cloudy envelopment, which, while it did not intercept the light either of the sun or moon, still hid these bodies from our direct observation. In these circumstances, the law of the tides and the law of gravitation, though identical in themselves, could not have been identified by us; and so, we might have ascribed this wholesome agitation of the sea and of the atmosphere to a distinct power or principle in nature, affording the distinct indication of both a kind and intelligent Creator. Now, this inference is not annihilated—it is not even enfeebled—by the discovery in question; for, although the good arising from tides in the ocean and tides in the air is not referable to a peculiar law, it is at least referable to a peculiar collocation. And this holds of all the useful secondary laws in the material world. If they cannot be alleged in evidence for the number of beneficial principles in nature, they can at least be alleged in evidence for the number of nature's beneficial arrangements. If they do not attest the multitude of useful properties, they at least attest the multitude of useful parts in nature, and the skill, guided by benevolence, which has been put forth in the distribution of them. So that, long ere the philosophy of matter is

perfected, or all its phenomena and its secondary laws have been resolved into their original and constituent principles, may we, in their obvious and immediate utility alone, detect as many separate evidences in nature as there are separate facts in nature, for a wise and benevolent Deity.

13. And the same will be found true of the secondary laws in the mental world, which, if not as many distinct beneficial principles in the constitution of the mind, are the effect of as many distinct and beneficial arrangements in the objects or circumstances by which it is surrounded. We have not to wait the completion of its still more subtle and difficult analysis, ere we come within sight of those varied indications of benevolent design which are so abundantly to be met with, both in the constitution of the mind itself, and in the adaptation thereto of external nature. Some there are, for example, who contend that the laws of taste are not primitive but secondary—that our admiration of beauty in material objects is resolvable into other and original emotions, and, more especially, by means of the associating principle, into our admiration of moral excellence. Let the justness of this doctrine be admitted; and its only effect on our peculiar argument is, that the benevolence of God in thus multiplying our enjoyments, instead of being indicated by a distinct law for suiting the human mind to the objects which surround it, is indicated both by the distribution of these objects and by their investment with such qualities as suit them to the previous constitution of the mind—that He hath pencilled them with the very colours, or moulded them into the very shapes, which suggest either the graceful or the noble of human character; that He hath imparted to the violet its hue of modesty, and clothed the lily in its robe of purest innocence, and given to the trees of the forest their respective attitudes of strength or delicacy, and made the whole face of nature one bright reflection of those virtues which the mind and character of man had originally radiated. If it be not by the implantation of a peculiar law in mind, it is at least by a peculiar disposition of tints and forms in external nature, that He hath spread so diversified a loveliness over the panorama of visible things; and thrown so many walks of enchantment around us; and turned the sights and the sounds of rural scenery into the ministers of so much and such exquisite enjoyment; and caused the outer world of matter to image forth in such profusion those various qualities, which at first had pleased or powerfully affected us in the inner

world of consciousness and thought. It is by the modifying operation of circumstances that a primary is transmuted into a secondary law; and if the blessings which we enjoy under it cannot be ascribed to the insertion of a distinct principle in the nature of man, they can at least be ascribed to a useful disposition of circumstances in the theatre around him.

14. In like manner there are some who would resolve our sense of property into an original instinct, an ultimate fact in the mental constitution; and then quote it as the distinct instance of a wise and beneficial ordination—connecting with it, as we have a right to do, all the advantages which accrue to society from the desire of property and from the respect for it which exists among men. Others, again, think they can reduce this appropriating tendency in the mind to a simpler and more primitive law; yet they do not thereby annihilate the evidence for design—for, if not a distinct principle in human nature, it is at least a distinct effect or development of that nature placed in circumstances which call forth this peculiar affection—to the obvious good of whole communities, in the stimulus given to industry, in the order and security attendant on a distribution which is the object of general acquiescence. The same observation applies to the relative affections, which may either be regarded as peculiar instincts of our nature, or as modifications of a simpler nature in peculiar circumstances. On either supposition we might still recognise the wisdom of a God, if not in the establishment of certain additional laws, in having implanted so many distinct and original feelings within the human breast—at least in the establishment of certain dispositions, in having arranged the human species into so many distinct families.

15. It is thus that philosophical discovery, which is felt by many to enfeeble the argument for a God, when it reduces two or more subordinate to simpler and anterior laws, does in fact leave that argument as entire as before—for if, by analysis, it diminish the number of beneficial properties whether in matter or mind, it replaces the injury which it may be supposed to have done in this way to the cause of theism, by presenting us with as great an additional number of beneficial arrangements in nature. And further, it may not be out of place to observe, that there appear to be two distinct ways by which an artificer might make manifest the wisdom of his contrivances. He may either be conceived of as forming a substance, and endowing it with the fit properties; or as finding a substance with certain given pro-

perties, and arranging it into fit dispositions for the accomplishment of some desirable end. Both the former and the latter of these we ascribe to the Divine Artificer—of whom we imagine, that He is the Creator as well as the Disposer of all things. It is only the latter that we can ascribe to the human artificer, who creates no substance, and ordains no property; but finds the substance with all its properties ready made and put into his hands, as the raw material out of which he fashions his implements and rears his structures of various design and workmanship. Now it is a commonly received, and has indeed been raised into a sort of universal maxim, that the highest property of wisdom is to achieve the most desirable end, or the greatest amount of good, by the fewest possible means, or by the simplest machinery. When this test is applied to the laws of nature—then we esteem it, as enhancing the manifestation of intelligence, that one single law, as gravitation, should, as from a central and commanding eminence, subordinate to itself a whole host of most important phenomena; or that from one great and parent property, so vast a family of beneficial consequences should spring. And when the same test is applied to the dispositions, whether of nature or art—then it enhances the manifestation of wisdom, when some great end is brought about with a less complex or cumbersome instrumentality, as often takes place in the simplification of machines, when, by the device of some ingenious ligament or wheel, the apparatus is made equally, perhaps more effective, whilst less unwieldy or less intricate than before. Yet there is one way in which, along with an exceeding complication in the mechanism, there might be given the impression, of the very highest skill and capacity having been put forth on the contrivance of it. It is when, by means of a very operose and complex instrumentality, the triumph of art has been made all the more conspicuous, by a very marvellous result having been obtained out of very unpromising materials. It is true, that, in this case, too, a still higher impression of skill would be given, if the same or a more striking result were arrived at, even after the intricacy of the machine had been reduced, by some happy device, in virtue of which certain of its parts or circumvolutions had been superseded; and thus, without injury to the final effect, so much of the complication had been dispensed with. Still, however, the substance, whether of the machine or the manufacture, may be conceived so very intractable as to put an absolute limit on any further simplification, or as to create an

absolute necessity for all the manifold contrivance which had been expended on it. When this idea predominates in the mind—then all the complexity which we may behold, does not reduce our admiration of the artist, but rather deepens the sense that we have, both of the reconditeness of his wisdom, and of the wondrous vastness and variety of his resources. It is the extreme wideness of the contrast, between the sluggishness of matter, and the fineness of the results in physiology, which so enhances our veneration for the great Architect of Nature, when we behold the exquisite organizations of the animal and vegetable kingdoms.* The two exhibitions are wholly distinct from each other—yet each of them may be perfect in its own way. The first is held forth to us, when one law of pervading generality is found to scatter a myriad of beneficent consequences in its train. The second is held forth, when, by an indefinite complexity of means, a countless variety of expedients with their multiform combinations, some one design, such as the upholding of life in plants or animals, is accomplished. Creation presents us in marvellous profusion with specimens of both these—at once confirming the doctrine, and illustrating the significancy of the expression in which Scripture hath conveyed it to us, when it tells of the *manifold* wisdom of God.

16. But while, on a principle already often recognised, this multitude of necessary conditions to the accomplishment of a given end, enhances the argument for a God, because each separate condition reduces the hypothesis of chance to a more violent improbability than before; yet it must not be disguised that there is a certain transcendental mystery which it has the effect of aggravating, and which it leaves unresolved. We can understand the complex machinery and the circuitous processes to which a human artist must resort, that he might overcome the else uncomplying obstinacy of inert matter, and bend it in subserviency to his special designs. But that the Divine Artist who first created the matter and ordained its laws, should find the same complication necessary for the accomplishment of His purposes; that such an elaborate workmanship, for example, should be required to establish the functions of sight and hearing in the animal economy, is very like the lavish or ostensible ingenuity of a Being employed in conquering the difficulty which himself had raised. It is true, the one immediate purpose is served by it which we have just

* Dr. Paley would state the problem thus:—The laws of matter being given, so to organize it, as that it shall produce or sustain the phenomena, whether of vegetation or of life.

noticed—that of presenting, as it were, to the eye of inquirers a more manifold inscription of the Divinity. But if, instead of being the object of inference, it had pleased God to make Himself the object of a direct manifestation, then, for the mere purpose of becoming known to His creatures, this reflex or circuitous method of revelation would have been altogether uncalled for. That under the actual system of creation, and with its actual proofs, He has made His existence most decisively known to us, we most thankfully admit. But when question is made between the actual and the conceivable systems of Creation which God might have created, we are forced to confess that the very circumstances which, in the existing order of things, have brightened and enhanced the evidence of His being, have also cast a deeper secrecy over what may be termed the general policy of His government and ways. And this is but one of the many difficulties, which men of unbridled speculation and unobservant of that sound philosophy that keeps within the limits of human observation, will find it abundantly possible to conjure up on the field of natural theism. It does look an impracticable enigma that the Omnipotent God, who could have grafted all the capacities of thought and feeling on an elementary atom, should have deemed fit to incorporate the human soul in the midst of so curious and complicated a framework. For what a variegated structure is man's animal economy! What an apparatus of vessels and bones and ligaments! What a complex mechanism! What an elaborate chemistry! What a multitude of parts in the anatomy, and of processes in the physiology of this marvellous system! What a medley, we had almost said, what a package of contents! What an unwearied play of secretions and circulations and other changes incessant and innumerable! In short, what a laborious complication; and all to uphold a living principle which, one might think, could, by a simple fiat of omnipotence, have sprung forth at once from the great source and centre of the spiritual system, and mingled with the world of spirits—just as each new particle of light is sent forth by the emanation of a sunbeam, to play and glisten among fields of radiance.

17. But to recall ourselves from this digression among the possibilities of what might have been, to the realities of the mental system, such as it actually is. Ere we bring the very general observations of this chapter to a close, we would briefly notice an analogy between the realities of the mental and those of the corporeal system. The inquirers into the latter have

found it of substantial benefit to their science to have mixed up with the prosecution of it a reference to final causes. Their reasoning on the likely uses of a part in anatomy, has, in some instances, suggested or served as a guide to speculations which have been at length verified by a discovery. We believe, in like manner, that reasoning on the likely or obvious uses of a principle in the constitution of the human mind, might lead, if not to the discovery, at least to the confirmation of important truth—not perhaps in the science itself, but in certain of the cognate sciences which stand in no very distant relation to it. For example, we think it should rectify certain errors which have been committed both in jurisprudence and political economy, if it can be demonstrated that some of the undoubted laws of human nature are traversed by them; and so that violence is thereby done to the obvious designs of the Author of Nature. We do not hold it out of place, though we notice one or two of these instances, by which it might be seen that the mental philosophy, when studied in connexion with the palpable views of Him by whom all its principles and processes were ordained, is fitted to enlighten the practice of legislation, and more especially to determine the wisdom of certain arrangements which have for their object the economic wellbeing of society.

18. Whatever may be thought of the relative strength of the argument for a God, as drawn first from the material and then from the mental world, we cannot but feel that in the latter, there is, if not a superior strength, at least a superior and surpassing dignity. The superiority of mind to matter has often been the theme of eloquence to moralists. For what were all the wonders of the latter and all its glories without a spectator mind that could intelligibly view and that could tastefully admire them? Let every eye be irrevocably closed, and this were equivalent to the entire annihilation in nature of the element of light; and in like manner, if the light of all consciousness were put out in the world of mind, the world of matter, though as rich in beauty, and in the means of benevolence as before, were thereby reduced to a virtual non-entity. In these circumstances, the lighting up again of even but one mind would restore its being, or at least its significancy, to that system of materialism, which, untouched itself, had just been desolated of all those beings in whom it could kindle reflection, or to whom it could minister the sense of enjoyment. It were tantamount to the second creation of it—or, in other words, one living intelligent spirit

is of higher reckoning and mightier import than a dead universe.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE.

1. AN abstract question in morals is distinct from a question respecting the constitution of man's moral nature; and the former ought no more to be confounded with the latter, than the truths of geometry with the faculties of the reasoning mind which comprehends them. The virtuousness of justice was a stable doctrine in ethical science, anterior to the existence of the species; and would remain so, though the species were destroyed—just as much as the properties of a triangle are the enduring stabilities of mathematical science, and that though no matter had been created to exemplify the positions or the figures of geometry. The objective nature of virtue is one thing. The subjective nature of the human mind, by which virtue is felt and recognised, is another. It is not from the former, any more than from the eternal truths of geometry, that we can demonstrate the existence or attributes of God—but from the latter, as belonging to the facts of a creation emanating from His will, and therefore bearing upon it the stamp of His character. The nature and constitution of virtue form a distinct subject of inquiry from the nature and constitution of the human mind. Virtue is not a creation of the Divine will, but has had everlasting residence in the nature of the Godhead. The mind of man is a creation; and therefore indicates, by its characteristics, the character of Him, to the fiat and the forthgoing of whose will it owes its existence. We must frequently, in the course of this discussion, advert to the principles of ethics; but it is not on the system of ethical doctrine that our argument properly is founded. It is on the phenomena and the laws of actual human nature, which, itself one of the great facts of creation, may be regarded like all its facts, as bearing on it the impress of that mind which gave birth to creation.

2. But further. It is not only not with the system of ethical doctrine—it is not even with the full system of the philosophy of our nature that we have properly to do. On this last there is still a number of unsettled questions; but our peculiar argu-

ment does not need to wait for the conclusive determination of them. For example, there is many a controversy among philosophers respecting the primary and secondary laws of the human constitution. Now, if it be an obviously beneficial law, it carries evidence for a God, in the mere existence and operation of it, independently of the rank which it holds, or of the relation in which it stands to the other principles, of our internal mechanism. It is thus that there may, at one and the same time, be grounded on the law in question a clear theological inference; and yet there may be associated with it an obscure philosophical speculation. It is well that we separate these two; and, more especially, that the decisive attestation given by any part or phenomenon of our nature to the Divine goodness, shall not be involved in the mist and metaphysical perplexity of other reasonings, the object of which is altogether distinct and separate from our own. The facts of the human constitution, apart altogether from the philosophy of their causation, demonstrate the wisdom and benevolence of Him who framed it: and while it is our part to follow the light of this philosophy, as far as the light and the guidance of it are sure, we are not, in those cases, when the final cause is obvious as day, though the proximate efficient cause should be hidden in deepest mystery—we are not, on this account, to confound darkness with light, or light with darkness.

3. By attending throughout to this observation, we shall be saved from a thousand irrelevancies as well as obscurities of argument; and it is an observation peculiarly applicable, in announcing that great fact or phenomenon of mind, which, for many reasons, should hold a foremost place in our demonstration. We mean the felt supremacy of conscience—a phenomenon of much greater weight and promineny than are commonly assigned to it in the demonstrations of Natural Theism—a phenomenon without which we should, in the multitude of processes around us with the infinite diversity of their effects, feel ourselves but as in a world of enigmas; but which, singly and of itself, serves the office of a great light to overrule the cross or contradictory intimations that are given by the lesser ones. Philosophers there are, who have attempted to resolve this fact into ulterior or ultimate ones in the mental constitution; and who have denied to the faculty a place among its original and un-compounded principles. Sir James Mackintosh tells us of the generation of human conscience; and, not merely states, but endeavours to explain the phenomenon of its felt supremacy

within us. Dr. Adam Smith also assigns a pedigree to our moral judgments; but, with all his peculiar notions respecting the origin of the awards of conscience, he never once disputes their authority; or that, by the general consent of mankind, this authority is, in sentiment and opinion at least, conceded to them.* It is somewhat like an antiquarian controversy respecting the first formation and subsequent historical changes of some certain court of government, the rightful authority of whose decisions and acts is, at the same time, fully recognised. And so, philosophers have disputed regarding the court of conscience—of what materials it is constructed, and by what line of genealogy from the anterior principles of our nature it has sprung. Yet most of these have admitted the proper right of sovereignty which belongs to it; its legitimate place as the master and the arbiter over all the appetites and desires, and practical forces of human nature. Or, if any have dared the singularity of denying this, they do so in opposition to the general sense and general language of mankind, whose very modes of speech compel them to affirm that the biddings of conscience are of paramount authority—its peculiar office being to tell what all men should, or all men ought to do.

4. 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

* "Upon whatever," observes Dr. Adam Smith, "we suppose our moral faculties to be founded, whether upon a certain modification of reason, upon an original instinct called a moral sense, or upon some other principle of our nature, it cannot be doubted that they were given us for the direction of our conduct in this life. They carry along with them the most evident badges of this authority, which denote that they were set up within us to be the supreme arbiters of all our actions, to superintend all our senses, passions, and appetites, and to judge how far each of them was either to be indulged or restrained. It is the peculiar office of these faculties to judge, to bestow censure or applause upon all the other principles of our nature."—*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Part iii. chap. v.

conscience. In a word, it is not of a category, but of a 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 or character of that Being whose spirit hath devised and whose fingers have framed it.

5. For it is not an abstract question in Moral Science that we are now discussing. It is a question of fact, respecting man's moral nature—and as much to be decided by observation as the nature or properties of any substantive being. It is a fact which we learn or become acquainted with, just as we become acquainted with the constitution of a watch by the inspection of its mechanism. Conscience in man is as much a thing of observation as the regulator in a watch is a thing of observation. It depends for its truth, therefore, on an independent and abiding evidence of its own, under all the diversities of speculation on the nature of virtue. By the supremacy of conscience we affirm a truth which respects not the nature of Virtue but the nature of Man. It is, that in every human heart, there is a faculty—not, it may be, having the actual power, but having the just and rightful pretension to sit as judge and master over the whole of human conduct. Other propensities may have too much sway, but the moral propensity, if I may so term it, never can—for to have the presiding sway in all our concerns, is just that which properly and legitimately belongs to it. A man under anger may be too strongly prompted to deeds of retaliation—or under sensuality be too strongly prompted to indulgence—or under avarice be too closely addicted to the pursuit of wealth—or even under friendship be too strongly inclined to partiality—but he never can under conscience be too strongly inclined to be as he ought and to do as he ought. We may say of a watch that its mainspring is too powerful: but we would never say that a regulator is too powerful. We may complain of each of its other parts, that it has too much influence over the rest—but not that the part whose office it is to regulate and fix the rate of going has too much influence. And just as a watch cannot move too regularly, man cannot walk too con-

scientifically. The one cannot too much obey its regulator—the other cannot too much obey his conscience. In other words, conscience is the rightful sovereign in man—and if any other, in the character of a ruling passion, be the actual sovereign—it is a usurper. In the former case, the mind is felt to be in its proper and well-conditioned state; in the latter case, it is felt to be in a state of anarchy. Yet even in that anarchy, conscience, though despoiled of its authority, still lifts its remonstrating claims. Though deprived of its rights, it continues to assert them. Long after being stripped of its dominion over man, it still has its dwelling-place in his bosom; and even when most in practice disregarded, then it makes itself to be felt and heard.

6. The supremacy of conscience does not seem to have been sufficiently adverted to by Dr. Thomas Brown. He treats the moral feeling rather as an individual emotion, which takes its part in the enumeration along with others in his list, than as the great master-emotion that is not appeased but by its ascendancy over them all. Now, instead of a single combatant in the play of many others, and which will only obtain the victory, if physically of greater power and force; it should be viewed as separate and signalized from the rest by its own felt and inherent claim of superiority over them. Each emotion hath its own characteristic object wherewith it is satisfied. But the specific object of this emotion is the regulation of all the active powers of the soul—and without this, it is not satisfied. The distinction made by the sagacious Butler between the power of a principle and its authority, enables us, in the midst of all the actual anomalies and disorders of our state, to form a precise estimate of the place which conscience naturally and rightfully holds in man's constitution. The desire of acting virtuously, which is a desire consequent on our sense of right and wrong, may not be of equal strength with the desire of some criminal indulgence—and so, practically, the evil may preponderate over the good. And thus it is that the system of the inner man, from the weakness of that which claims to be the ascendant principle of our nature, may be thrown into a state of turbulence and disorder. So it may happen of a system of civil government, and just from the real power and the rightful authority being dissevered the one from the other. But still this does not hinder there being a rightful authority somewhere—and that it may have existence, although it may not have force to carry the execution of its dictates. It is the very same of the govern-

ment within. There might be pride and passion and sensuality and the love of ease, and a thousand more affections, each having its own object and its own degree of strength—and withal a conscience that claims the supremacy over all these; but which often of inferior strength to them all may suffer them to lord it over that domain of which it rightfully is the master and proprietor. To it belongs the mastery, although the mastery is often wrongfully taken away from it. But still our urgent and unescapable sense of the wrong; our remorse and self-dissatisfaction when conscience is disobeyed; the happiness and harmony which are felt within, when the voice of authority which it emits is also a voice of power; the well-conditioned state of the soul, when the moral faculty overrules all, and subordinates all—these are so many badges of the proper and native supremacy of conscience; and they evince that its part and office in the mechanism of our moral system is to act as regulator of the whole.

7. 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 disjoined 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 constitution 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.

8. And here it is of capital importance to distinguish between an original and proper tendency, and a subsequent aberration. This has been well illustrated by the regulator of a watch, whose office and primary design, and that obviously announced by the relation in which it stands to the other parts of the machinery, is to control the velocity of its movements. And we should still perceive this to have been its destination, even though, by accident or decay, it had lost the power of command which at the first belonged to it. We should not misunderstand the purpose of its maker, although, in virtue of some deterioration or derangement which the machinery had undergone, that purpose were now frustrated. And we could discern the purpose in the very make and constitution of the mechanism. We might even see it to be an irregular watch; and yet this needs not prevent us from seeing, that, at its original fabrication, it was made for the purpose of moving regularly. The mere existence and position of the regulator might suffice to indicate this—although it had become powerless, either from the wearing of the parts, or from some extrinsic disturbance to which the instrument had been exposed. The regulator, in this instance, may be said to have the right, though not the power of command, over the movements of the timepiece; yet the loss of the power has not obliterated the vestiges of the right; so that, by the inspection of the machinery alone, we both learn the injury which has been done to it, and the condition in which it originally came from the hand of its maker—a condition of actual as well as rightful

supremacy, on the part of the regulator, over all its movements. And a similar discovery may be made, by examination of the various parts and principles which make up the moral system of man: for we see various parts and principles there. We see Ambition, having power for its object, and without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Avarice, having wealth for its object, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and Benevolence, having for its object the good of others, without the attainment of which it is not satisfied; and the love of Reputation, having for its object their applause, without which it is not satisfied; and lastly, to proceed no further in the enumeration, Conscience, which surveys and superintends the whole man, whose distinct and appropriate object it is to have the entire control both of his inward desires and outward doings, and without the attainment of this it is thwarted from its proper aim, and remains unsatisfied. Each appetite, or affection of our nature, has its own distinct object; but this last is the object of Conscience, which may be termed the moral affection. The place which it occupies, or rather which it is felt that it should occupy, and which naturally belongs to it, is that of a governor, claiming the superiority, and taking to itself the direction over all the other powers and passions of humanity. If this superiority be denied to it, there is a felt violence done to the whole economy of man. The sentiment is, that the thing is not as it should be: and even after conscience is forced, in virtue of some subsequent derangement, from this station of rightful ascendancy, we can still distinguish between what is the primitive design or tendency, and what is the posterior aberration. We can perceive, in the case of a deranged or distempered watch, that the mechanism is out of order; but even then, on the bare examination of its workmanship, and more especially from the place and bearing of its regulator, can we pronounce that it was made for moving regularly. And in like manner, on the bare inspection of our mental economy alone, and more particularly from the place which conscience has there, can we, even in the case of the man who refuses to obey its dictates, affirm that he was made for walking conscientiously.

9. The distinction which we now labour to establish between conscience and the other principles of our nature, does not respect the actual force or prevalence which may, or may not, severally belong to them. It respects the universal judgment which, by the very constitution of our nature, is passed on the

question, which of all these should have the prevalence, whenever there happens to be a contest between them. All which we affirm is, that if conscience prevail over the other principles, then every man is led, by the very make and mechanism of his internal economy, to feel that this is as it ought to be; or, if these others prevail over conscience, that this is not as it ought to be. One, it is generally felt, may be too ambitious, or too much set on wealth and fame, or too resentful of injury, or even too facile in his benevolence, when carried to the length of being injudicious and hurtful; but no one is ever felt, if he have sound and enlightened views of morality, to be too conscientious. When we affirm this of conscience, we but concur in the homage rendered to it by all men, as being the rightful, if not the actual superior, among all the feelings and faculties of our nature. It is a truth, perhaps, too simple for being reasoned; but this is because, like many of the most important and undoubted certainties of human belief, it is a truth of instant recognition. When stating the supremacy of conscience, in the sense that we have explained it, we but state what all men feel; and our only argument, in proof of the assertion, is—our only argument can be, an appeal to the experience of all men.

10. Bishop Butler has often been spoken of as the first discoverer of this great principle in our nature; though, perhaps, no man can properly be said to discover what all men are conscious of. But certain it is, that he is the first who hath made the natural supremacy of conscience the subject of a full and reflex cognizance—and by this achievement alone hath become the author of one of the most important contributions ever made to moral science. It forms the argument of his three first sermons, in a volume which may safely be pronounced the most precious repository of sound ethical principles extant in any language. The authority of conscience, says Dugald Stewart, “although beautifully described by many of the ancient moralists, was not sufficiently attended to by modern writers, as a fundamental principle in the science of ethics, till the time of Dr. Butler.” It belongs to the very essence of the principle, that we clearly distinguish between what we find to be the actual force of conscience, and what we feel to be its rightful authority. These two may exist in a state of separation from each other just as in a Civil Government, the reigning power may, in seasons of anarchy, be dissevered from that supreme court or magistrate to whom it rightfully belongs. The me-

chanism of a political fabric is not adequately or fully described by the mere enumeration of its parts. There must also enter into the description the relation which the parts bear to each other; and more especially the paramount relation of rightful ascendancy and direction, which that part, in which the functions of Government are vested, bears to the whole. Neither is the mechanism of man's personal constitution fully or adequately described, by merely telling us in succession the several parts of which it is composed—as the passions, and the appetites, and the affections, and the moral sense, and the intellectual capacities, which make up this complex and variously gifted creature. The particulars of his mental system must not only be stated, each in their individuality; but the bearing or connexion which each has with the rest, else it is not described as a system at all. In making out this description, we should not only not overlook the individual faculty of conscience, but we must not overlook its relative place among the other feelings and faculties of our nature. That place is the place of command. What conscience lays claim to is the mastery or regulation over the whole man. Each desire of our nature rests or terminates in its own appropriate object, as the love of fame in applause, or hunger in food, or revenge in the infliction of pain upon its object, or affection for another in the happiness and company of the beloved individual. But the object of the moral sense is to arbitrate and direct among all these propensities. It claims the station and the prerogative of a mistress over them. Its peculiar office is that of superintendence, and there is a certain feeling of violence or disorder, when the mandates which it issues in this capacity are not carried into effect. Every affection in our nature is appeased by the object that is suited to it. The object of conscience is the subordination of the whole to its dictates. Without this it remains unappeased, and as if bereft of its rights. It is not a single faculty, taking its own separate and unconnected place among the other feelings and faculties which belong to us. Its proper place is that of a guide or a governor. It is the ruling power in our nature; and its proper, its legitimate business, is to prescribe that man shall be as he ought, and do as he ought. But instead of expatiating any further at present in language of our own, let us here admit a few brief sentences from Butler himself, that great and invaluable expounder both of the human constitution, and of moral science. "That principle by which we survey, and either approve or disapprove our own heart,

temper, and actions, is not only to be considered as what in its turn is to have some influence, which may be said of every passion, of the basest appetites; but likewise as being superior; as from its very nature manifestly claiming superiority over all others: insomuch that you cannot form a notion of this faculty, conscience, without taking in judgment, direction, and superintendency. This is a constituent part of the idea, that is of the faculty itself: and to preside and govern, from the very economy and constitution of man, belongs to it. Had it strength, as it has right; had it power, as it has manifest authority, it would absolutely govern the world." "This faculty was placed within us to be our proper governor; to direct and regulate all under principles, passions, and motives of action. This is its right and office. Thus sacred is its authority. And how often soever men violate and rebelliously refuse to submit to it, for supposed interest which they cannot otherwise obtain, or for the sake of passion which they cannot otherwise gratify; this makes no alteration as to the *natural right* and *office* of conscience." "As the idea of a civil constitution implies in it united strength, various subordinations under one direction, that of the supreme authority, the different strength of each particular member of the society not coming into the idea; whereas if you leave out the subordination, the union, and the one direction, you lose it; so reason, several appetites, passions, and affections, prevailing in different degrees of strength, is not that idea or notion of human nature which is meant when virtue is said to consist in following it, and vice in deviating from it; but that nature consists in these several principles considered as having a natural respect to each other, in the several passions being naturally subordinate to the one superior principle of reflection or conscience. Every bias, instinct, propension within, is a real part of our nature, but not the whole: Add to these the superior faculty, whose office it is to adjust, manage, and preside over them, and take in this its natural superiority, and you complete the idea of human nature. And as in civil government the constitution is broken in upon, and violated by power and strength prevailing over authority; so the constitution of man is broken in upon and violated by the lower faculties or principles within, prevailing over that which is in its nature supreme over them all. Thus when it is said by ancient writers, that tortures and death are not so contrary to human nature as injustice; by this, to be sure, is not meant, that the aversion to the former in mankind is less strong and

prevalent than their aversion to the latter : But that the former is only contrary to our nature considered in a partial view, and which takes in only the lowest part of it—that which we have in common with the brutes ; whereas the latter is contrary to our nature, considered in a higher sense, as a system and constitution, contrary to the whole economy of man.” The conclusion on the whole is—that “ man cannot be considered as a creature left by his Maker to act at random, and live at large up to the extent of his natural power, as passion, human wilfulness, happen to carry him ; which is the condition brute creatures are in : But that from his make, constitution, or nature, he is, in the strictest and most proper sense, a law to himself. He hath the rule of right within : What is wanting is only that he honestly attend to it.”

11. Now it is in these phenomena of Conscience that nature offers to us far her strongest argument for the moral character of God. Had He been an unrighteous being himself, would He have given to this, the obviously superior faculty in man, so distinct and authoritative a voice on the side of righteousness? Would He have so constructed the creatures of our species, as to have planted in every breast a reclaiming witness against himself? Would He have thus inscribed on the tablet of every heart the sentence of his own condemnation ; and is not this just as unlikely, as that He should have inscribed it in written characters on the forehead of each individual? Would He so have fashioned the workmanship of His own hands ; or, if a God of cruelty, injustice, and falsehood, would He have placed in the station of master and judge that faculty which, felt to be the highest in our nature, would prompt a generous and high-minded revolt of all our sentiments against the Being who formed us? From a God possessed of such characteristics, we should surely have expected a differently-moulded humanity ; or, in other words, from the actual constitution of man, from the testimonies on the side of all righteousness, given by the vicegerent within the heart, do we infer the righteousness of the Sovereign who placed it there. He would never have established a conscience in man, and invested it with the authority of a monitor, and given to it those legislative and judicial functions which it obviously possesses ; and then so framed it, that all its decisions should be on the side of that virtue which He himself disowned, and condemnatory of that vice which He himself exemplified. This is an evidence for the righteousness of God, which keeps its ground, amid all the disorders and aberrations to which

humanity is liable; and can no more, indeed, be deafened or overborne by these, than is the rightful authority of public opinion, by the occasional outbreakings of iniquity and violence which take place in society. This public opinion may, in those seasons of misrule when might prevails over right, be deforced from the practical ascendancy which it ought to have; but the very sentiment that it so ought, is our reason for believing the world to have been originally formed, in order that virtue might have the rule over it. In like manner, when, in the bosom of every individual man, we can discern a conscience, placed there with the obvious design of being a guide and a commander, it were difficult not to believe that, whatever the partial outrages may be which the cause of virtue has to sustain, it has the public mind of the universe in its favour; and that therefore He, who is the Maker and the Ruler of such a universe, is a God of righteousness. Amid all the subsequent deteriorations and errors, the original design, both of a deranged watch and of a deranged human nature, is alike manifest; first, of the maker of the watch, that its motions should harmonize with time; second, of the maker of man, that his movements should harmonize with truth and righteousness. We can, in most cases, discern between an aberration and an original law; between a direct or primitive tendency and the effect of a disturbing force, by which that tendency is thwarted and overborne. And so of the constitution of man. It may be now a loosened and disproportioned thing, yet we can trace the original structure—even as from the fragments of a ruin, we can obtain the perfect model of a building, from its capital to its base. It is thus that, however prostrate conscience may have fallen, we can still discern its place of native and original pre-eminence, as being at once the legislator and the judge in the moral system, though the executive forces of the system have made insurrection against it, and thrown the whole into anarchy. By studying the constitution, or what Butler calls the make of anything, we may divine the purpose of the maker. No one can mistake the design of the artificer in putting a regulator into a watch. It was to make it move regularly. And as little should we mistake the design of the Creator in putting a conscience into man's bosom. It was to make him walk conscientiously. Even although from some derangement in the machinery, the regulator had lost its power of control—yet from its plan of control the original purpose of it may still be abundantly manifest. And

in like manner, though from the unhingement of man's moral economy, conscience may have fallen from the actual sway, it still bespeaks itself to be a fallen sovereign, and that the place of sovereignty is that which natively and rightfully belongs to it. When what is obviously the regulating power has quitted its hold, whether of the material or the spiritual mechanism, we distinctly recognise of each that it is not in its natural state, but in a state of disorder, arising in the one case from the wear of the materials or from some shake that the machinery has received, arising in the other case either from some incidental disturbance, or from some inherent frailty and defect that attaches to the creature. There is a depth of mystery in everything connected with the existence and origin of evil in creation; yet, even in the fiercest uproar of our stormy passions, conscience, though in her softest whispers, gives to the supremacy of rectitude the voice of an undying testimony; and her light still shining in a dark place, her unquelled accents still heard in the loudest outcry of Nature's rebellious appetites, form the strongest argument within reach of the human faculties, that, in spite of all partial or temporary derangements, Supreme Power and Supreme Goodness are at one. It is true that rebellious man hath, with daring footstep, trampled on the lessons of conscience; but why, in spite of man's perversity, is conscience, on the other hand, able to lift a voice so piercing and so powerful, by which to remonstrate against the wrong, and to reclaim the honours that are due to her? How comes it that, in the mutiny and uproar of the inferior faculties, that faculty in man, which wears the stamp and impress of the highest, should remain on the side of truth and holiness? Would humanity have thus been moulded by a false and evil spirit; or would he have committed such impolicy against himself, as to insert in each member of our species a principle which would make him feel the greatest complacency in his own rectitude, when he feels the most high-minded revolt of indignation and dislike against the Being who gave him birth? It is not so much that conscience takes a part among the other faculties of our nature; but that conscience takes among them the part of a governor, and that man, if he do not obey her suggestions, still, in despite of himself, acknowledges her rights. It is a mighty argument for the virtue of the Governor above, that all the laws and injunctions of the governor below are on the side of virtue. It seems as if He had left this representative, or remaining witness, for Himself, in a

world that had cast off its allegiance; and that, from the voice of the judge within the breast, we may learn the will and the character of Him who hath invested with such authority His dictates. It is this which speaks as much more demonstratively for the presidency of a righteous God in human affairs, than for that of impure or unrighteous demons, as did the rod of Aaron, when it swallowed the rods of the enchanters and magicians in Egypt. In the wildest anarchy of man's insurgent appetites and sins, there is still a reclaiming voice—a voice which, even when in practice disregarded, it is impossible not to own; and to which, at the very moment that we refuse our obedience, we find that we cannot refuse the homage of what we ourselves do feel and acknowledge to be the best, the highest principles of our nature.

12. The question, then, is, Would any other than a God of righteousness have made creatures of such a moral constitution at the first—and, however inexplicable its subsequent derangement may be, would He have left a conscience in every breast which gave such powerful testimony to the worth and the permanent importance of morality? Shaded in all its original lineaments as the character of man now is, and dethroned although virtue be from the actual sovereignty, is there not still amongst us a general and abiding sense of her rightful sovereignty? Would even this imperfect but universal homage continue to be given, were it a wicked being who presided over the great family of nature, or breathed life and spirit and sentiment into the human framework? Would He have placed so deeply within us that faculty by which as if with moral compulsion we are constrained to hold in supreme reverence, the goodness which in all its characteristics is the reverse and the counterpart of His own nature? Would He have endowed the creatures which Himself hath made with an admiration of all that is most opposite to Himself—and how, if He be unrighteous, hath He put into every bosom such an indelible sense of the obligation and precedence of righteousness? Righteousness does not bear actual and unexcepted rule in the world—but there is a conscience in every man which proclaims that this rule it ought to have, and that though wrested from it, it is by the force of principles which are felt to be in their own nature inferior to conscience. Had there been no conscience in man, each propensity may at times have had its own temporary sway—as if gods of unequal strength shared the dominion over them. But there being a conscience,

invested with a rightful if not with an actual ascendancy which still keeps a remaining hold of our nature, and within the recesses of a moral system, in evident disorder still causes its voice to be heard—this phenomenon, of itself, gives a blow to impure polytheism, or at least degrades each member thereof to the rank of an inferior deity. The question is, whether He be a good or an evil spirit who presides over the destinies of our species. Were he an unrighteous God who has full sway over us, why is conscience that faculty which disowns unrighteousness and outlaws it, permitted by Him to assume the rank of an arbiter and not only to speak, but to speak as one having authority? If the actual artificer of man's moral mechanism be a wicked or a malignant spirit, it seems inexplicable that He should have placed such a judge and arbiter within us—one who bore constant testimony against the wrongness and the worthlessness of His own character. Thus to have written reproach against Himself in every heart is just as inexplicable as if He had legibly written His own disgrace upon every forehead. It is true, on the other hand, that if He be a righteous God who governs our world, humanity is in a state of revolt against Him—the result, however, not of the principles but of the passions, or of what humanity itself judges and feels to be the inferior of its faculties—still He is borne witness to by that within the breast which claims to be the superior, the supreme faculty, and which obviously announces itself to be if not *de facto*, at least *de jure* the ruling power.

13. However difficult from the very simplicity of the subject it may be to state or to reason the argument for a God, which is founded on the supremacy of Conscience, still historically and experimentally, it will be found, that it is of more force than all other arguments put together, for originating and upholding the natural theism which there is in the world. The theology of conscience is not only of wider diffusion, but of far more practical influence than the theology of academic demonstration. The ratiocination by which this theology is established, is not the less firm or the less impressive, that, instead of a lengthened process, there is but one step between the premises and the conclusion—or, that the felt presence of a judge within the breast, powerfully and immediately suggests the notion of a Supreme Judge and Sovereign, who placed it there. Upon this question, the mind does not stop short at mere abstraction; but, passing at once from the abstract to the concrete, from the law of the heart it makes the rapid inference of a lawgiver. It is the very rapidity of this inference

which makes it appear like intuition; and which has given birth to the mystic theology of innate ideas. Yet the theology of conscience disclaims such mysticism, built, as it is, on a foundation of sure and sound reasoning; for the strength of an argumentation in nowise depends upon the length of it. The sense of a governing principle within, begets in all men the sentiment of a living Governor without and above them, and it does so with all the speed of an instantaneous feeling; yet it is not an impression, it is an inference notwithstanding—and as much so as any inference from that which is seen, to that which is unseen. There is, in the first instance, cognizance taken of a fact—if not by the outward eye, yet as good, by the eye of consciousness, which has been termed the faculty of internal observation. And the consequent belief of a God, instead of being an instinctive sense of the Divinity, is the fruit of an inference grounded on that fact. There is instant transition made, from the sense of a Monitor within to the faith of a living Sovereign above; and this argument, described by all, but with such speed as almost to warrant the expression of its being felt by all, may be regarded, notwithstanding the force and fertility of other considerations, as the great prop of natural religion among men.

14. At all events, it is of the utmost value in theology, that there should be so much of truth, and of supremely important truth, placed so near us as to be laid hold of immediately by the mind—without the intervention of reasoning, and without any sensible exertion on the part of the discursive faculty, or of that faculty by which it is that we arrive at some distant conclusion by a train of inferences. Such, for example, are those truths which are seen, not merely in the light of the external senses, but in the light of consciousness, and which instantly become manifest, on the attention of the mind being turned towards them. There needs in these instances no lengthened argumentation to carry the belief, for the thing in question becomes palpable by our own vivid and intimate consciousness of our own nature. The supremacy of conscience is one of those truths—not come at by a series of stepping-stones, but seen at once, in the light of what may be termed an instant manifestation. Now, certain it is, that this fact or phenomenon in our nature depones strongly both for a God and for the supreme righteousness of His nature. But it depones to these immediately; or, at most, there is but one inferential step, which leads from the consciousness of what we feel to be in ourselves, to the impres-

sion of what we apprehend to be in Him from whom we derived our constitution and our being. There may here be one transition from the premises to the conclusion—but done with such rapidity by the mind, that it is not conscious of an argument. And this it is, we believe, which has given a certain innate or a prior character to some of the notions and feelings of natural theism. They may be soundly bottomed, notwithstanding—so that, though mingled with the fears or the fancies of superstition, we can discern the substantial workings of truth and reason on the subject of a God even in countries of grossest heathenism. For the felt supremacy of conscience established even there a certain natural regimen of morality, and gave the impression of a jurisprudence wherewith the idea of an avenger and judge stood irresistibly associated. The law written on the heart suggested a lawgiver, however indistinct their personification of him may have been. Even the barbarous theology of Greece and Rome, impure and licentious as it was, did not wholly obliterate what may be called the Theology of Natural Conscience.

15. And we mistake if we think it was ever otherwise, even in the ages of darkest and most licentious paganism. This theology of conscience has often been greatly obscured; but never, in any country, or at any period in the history of the world, has it been wholly obliterated. We behold the vestiges of it in the simple theology of the desert; and, perhaps, more distinctly there than in the complex superstitions of an artificial and civilized heathenism. In confirmation of this, we might quote the invocations to the Great Spirit from the wilds of North America. But, indeed, in every quarter of the globe where missionaries have held converse with savages—even with the rudest of Nature's children—when speaking on the topics of sin and judgment, they did not speak to them in vocables unknown. And as this sense of a universal law and a Supreme Lawgiver never waned into total extinction among the tribes of ferocious and untamed wanderers, so neither was it altogether stifled by the refined and intricate polytheism of more enlightened nations. The whole of classic authorship teems with allusions to a Supreme Governor and Judge; and when the guilty emperors of Rome were tempest-driven by remorse and fear, it was not that they trembled before a spectre of their own imagination. When terror mixed, which it often did, with the rage and cruelty of Nero, it was the theology of conscience which haunted him. It was not the suggestion of a capricious fancy which gave him the

disturbance, but a voice issuing from the deep recesses of a moral nature—as stable and uniform throughout the species as is the material structure of humanity, and in the lineaments of which we may read that there is a moral regimen among men, and therefore a moral Governor, who hath instituted, and who presides over it. Therefore it was that these imperial despots, the worst and haughtiest of recorded monarchs, stood aghast at the spectacle of their own worthlessness. It is true, there is a wretchedness which naturally and essentially belongs to a state of great moral unhingement; and this may account for their discomforts, but it will not account for their fears. They may, because of this, have felt the torments of a present misery. But whence their fears of a coming vengeance? They would not have trembled at nature's law, apart from the thought of nature's Lawgiver. The imagination of an unsanctioned law would no more have given disquietude than the imagination of a vacant throne. But the law, to their guilty apprehensions, bespoke a judge. The throne of heaven, to their troubled eye, was filled by a living monarch. Righteousness, it was felt, would not have been so enthroned in the moral system of man, had it not been previously enthroned in the system of the universe; nor would it have held such place and pre-eminence in the judgment of all spirits, had not the Father of Spirits been its friend and ultimate avenger. This is not a local or geographical notion. It is a universal feeling—to be found wherever men are found, because interwoven with the constitution of humanity. It is not, therefore, the peculiarity of one creed, or of one country. It circulates at large throughout the family of man. We can trace it in the theology of savage life; nor is it wholly overborne by the artificial theology of a more complex and idolatrous paganism. Neither crime nor civilisation can extinguish it; and whether in the *conscientia scelerum* of the fierce and frenzied Catiline, or in the tranquil contemplative musings of Socrates and Cicero, we find the impression of at once a righteous and a reigning Sovereign.

16. With this felt supremacy of conscience, we cannot rid ourselves of the impression that whatever the actual power or prevalence of vice may be in the world, it is but the tumult and insurrection of lower against higher elements—and that moral rectitude still undislodged from its empire in the pure region of sentiment and thought, sits aloft, as it were, in empyreal dignity; and from an eminence whence no power in earth or heaven can

dethrone her, commands the homage of all that is best and worthiest in nature. When there is war betwixt opinion and force, the latter may have the physical ascendancy, yet the former is ever counted the nobler antagonist—and thus it is, that although vice should have enlisted under its standard of rebellion all the families of mankind, there remains the moral greatness of virtue, as erect in the consciousness of its strength, as if it had the public mind of the universe upon its side. It is difficult to resist the feeling, that amid all the mystery of present appearances, the highest power is at one with the highest principle. And it confirms still more our idea of a government—that conscience not only gives forth her mandates with the tone and authority of a superior; but, as if on purpose to enforce their observance, thus follows them up with an obvious discipline of rewards and punishments. It is enough but to mention, on the one hand, that felt complacency which is distilled, like some precious elixir, upon the heart by the recollection of virtuous deeds and virtuous sacrifices; and, on the other hand, those inflictions of remorse, which are attendant upon wickedness, and wherewith, as if by the whip of a secret tormentor, the heart of every conscious sinner is agonized. We discern in these the natural sanctions of morality, and the moral character of Him who hath ordained them. We cannot otherwise explain the peace and triumphant satisfaction which spring from the consciousness of well-doing—nor can we otherwise explain the degradation as well as bitter distress which a sense of demerit brings along with it. Our only adequate interpretation of these phenomena is, that they are the present remunerations or the present chastisements of a God who loveth righteousness, and who hateth iniquity. Nor do we view them as the conclusive results of virtue and vice, but rather as the tokens and the precursors either of a brighter reward or of a heavier vengeance that are coming. It is thus that the delight of self-approbation, instead of standing alone, brings hope in its train; and remorse, instead of standing alone, brings terror in its train. The expectations of the future are blended with these joys and sufferings of the present; and all serve still more to stamp an impression, of which traces are to be found in every quarter of the earth—that we live under a retributive economy, and that the God who reigns over it takes a moral and judicial cognizance of the creatures whom He hath formed.

17. What, then, are the specific injunctions of conscience?

for on this question essentially depends every argument that we can derive from this power or property of our nature, for the moral character of God. If, on the one hand, the lessons given forth by a faculty, which so manifestly claims to be the pre-eminent and ruling faculty of our nature, be those of deceit and licentiousness and cruelty—then, from the character of such a law, should we infer the character of the lawgiver; and so feel the conclusion to be inevitable, that we are under the government of a malignant and unrighteous God, at once the patron of vice and the persecutor of virtue in the world. If, on the other hand, temperance, and chastity, and kindness, and integrity, and truth, be the mandates which generally, if not invariably, proceed from her—then, on the same principles of judgment, should we reckon that He who is the author of conscience, and who gave it the place of supremacy and honour, which it so obviously possesses in the moral system of man, was himself the friend and the exemplar of all those virtues which enter into the composition of perfect moral rectitude. In the laws and the lessons of human conscience, would we study the character of the Godhead, just as we should study the views and dispositions of a monarch, in the instructions given by him to the viceroy of one of his provinces. If, on the one hand, virtue be prescribed by the authority of conscience, and followed up by her approval, in which very approval there is felt an inward satisfaction and serenity of spirit, that of itself forms a most delicious reward; and if, on the other hand, the perpetrations of wickedness are followed up by the voice of her rebuke, in which, identical with remorse, there is a sting of agony and discomfort, amounting to the severest penalty—then are we as naturally disposed to infer of Him who ordained such a mental constitution, that He is the righteous governor of men, as if, seated on a visible throne in the midst of us, He had made the audible proclamation of His law, and by His own immediate hand, had distributed of His gifts to the obedient, and inflicted chastisements on the rebellious. The law of conscience may be regarded as comprising all those virtues which the hand of the Deity hath inscribed on the tablet of the human heart, or on the tablet of natural jurisprudence; and an argument for these being the very virtues which characterize and adorn Himself, is that they must have been transcribed from the prior tablet of His own nature.

18. We are sensible that there is much to obscure this inference in the actual circumstances of the world. More especially

—it has been alleged, on the side of scepticism, that there is an exceeding diversity of moral judgments among men; that, out of the multifarious decisions of the human conscience, no consistent code of virtue can be framed; and that, therefore, no consistent character can be ascribed to Him, who planted this faculty in the bosom of our species, and bade it speak so uncertainly and so variously.* But to this it may be answered, in the first place, that the apparent diversity is partly reducible into the blinding, or, at least, the distorting effect of passion and interest, which sometimes are powerful enough to obscure our perception, even of mathematical and historical truths, as well as of moral distinctions; and without therefore affecting the stability of either. It is thus, for example, that mercantile cupidity has blinded many a reckless adventurer to the enormous injustice of the slave-trade; that passion and interest together have transmuted revenge into a virtue; and that the robbery, which, if prosecuted only for the sake of individual gain, would have appeared to all under an aspect of most revolting selfishness, puts on the guise of patriotism, when a whole nation deliberates on the schemes, or is led by a career of daring and lofty heroism, to the spoliations of conquest. In all such cases, it is of capital importance to distinguish between the real character of any criminal action, when looked to calmly, comprehensively, and fully; and what that is in the action which the perpetrator singles out and fastens upon as his plea, when he is either defending it to others, or reconciling it to his own conscience. In as far as he knows the deed to be incapable of vindication, and yet rushes on the performance of it, there is but delinquency of conduct incurred, not a diversity of moral judgment; nor does conscience, in this case, at all betray any caprice or uncertainty in her decisions. It is but the conduct, and not the conscience, which is in fault; and to determine whether the latter is in aught chargeable with fluctuation, we must look not to man's performance, but to his plea. Two men may differ as to the moral

* On the uniformity of our moral judgments, we would refer to the 74th and 75th of Dr. Brown's Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. "If we bear in mind," says Sir James Mackintosh, "that the question relates to the coincidence of all men in considering the same qualities as virtues, and not to the preference of one class of virtues by some, and of a different class by others, the exceptions from the agreement of mankind, in their systems of practical morality, will be reduced to absolute insignificance; and we shall learn to view them as no more affecting the harmony of the moral faculties, than the resemblance of the limbs and features is affected by monstrous conformations, or by the unfortunate effects of accident and disease in a very few individuals."

character of an action ; but if each is resting the support of his own view on a different principle from the other, there may still be a perfect uniformity of moral sentiment between them. They own the authority of the same laws ; they only disagree in the application of them. In the first place, the most vehement denouncer of a guilty commerce is at one with the most strenuous of its advocates, on the duty which each man owes to his family ; and again, neither of them would venture to maintain the lawfulness of the trade, because of the miseries inflicted by it on those wretched sufferers who were its victims. The defender of this ruthless and rapacious system disowns not, in sentiment at least, however much he may disown in practice, the obligations of justice and humanity—nay, in all the palliations which he attempts of the enormity in question, he speaks of these as undoubted virtues, and renders the homage of his moral acknowledgments to them all. In the sophistry of his vindication, the principles of the ethical system are left untouched and entire. He meddles not with the virtuousness either of humanity or justice ; but he tells of the humanity of slavery, and the justice of slavery. It is true, that he heeds not the representations which are given of the atrocities of his trade—that he does not attend because he wills not to attend ; and in this there is practical unfairness. Still it but resolves itself into perversity of conduct, and not into perversity of sentiment. The very dread and dislike he has for the informations of the subject, are symptoms of a feeling that his conscience cannot be trusted with the question ; or, in other words, prove him to be possessed of a conscience which is just like that of other men. The partialities of interest and feeling may give rise to an infinite diversity of moral judgments in our estimate of actions ; while there may be the most perfect uniformity and stability of judgment in our estimate of principles : and, on all the great generalities of the ethical code, conscience may speak the same language, and own one and the same moral directory all the world over.

19. When consciences then pronounce differently of the same action, it is for the most part, or rather, it is almost always, because understandings view it differently. It is either because the controversialists are regarding it with unequal degrees of knowledge ; or, each, through the medium of his own partialities. The consciences of all would come forth with the same moral decision, were all equally enlightened in the circumstances, or in the essential relations and consequences of the deed in ques-

tion; and, what is just as essential to this uniformity of judgment, were all viewing it fairly as well as fully. It matters not, whether it be ignorantly or wilfully, that each is looking to this deed, but in the one aspect, or in the one relation that is favourable to his own peculiar sentiment. In either case, the diversity of judgment on the moral qualities of the same action, is just as little to be wondered at as a similar diversity on the material qualities of the same object—should any of the spectators labour under an involuntary defect of vision, or voluntarily persist either in shutting or in averting his eyes. It is thus that a quarrel has well been termed a misunderstanding, in which each of the combatants may consider, and often honestly consider, himself to be in the right; and that, on reading the hostile memorials of two parties in a litigation, we can perceive no difference in their moral principles, but only in their historical statements; and that, in the public manifestoes of nations when entering upon war, we can discover no trace of a contrariety of conflict in their ethical systems, but only in their differently put or differently coloured representations of fact—all proving, that, with the utmost diversity of judgment among men respecting the moral qualities of the same thing, there may be a perfect identity of structure in their moral organs notwithstanding; and that conscience, true to her office, needs but to be rightly informed, that she may speak the same language, and give forth the same lessons in all the countries of the earth.

20. It is this which explains the moral peculiarities of different nations. It is not that justice, humanity, and gratitude are not the canonized virtues of every region; or that falsehood, cruelty, and fraud would not, in their abstract and unassociated nakedness, be viewed as the objects of moral antipathy and rebuke. It is that, in one and the same material action, when looked to in all the lights of which, whether in reality or by the power of imagination, it is susceptible, various, nay, opposite moral characteristics may be blended; and that while one people look to the good only without the evil, another may look to the evil only without the good. And thus the identical acts which in one nation are the subjects of a most reverent and religious observance, may in another be regarded with a shuddering sense of abomination and horror. And this not because of any difference in what may be termed the moral categories of the two people, nor because, if moral principles in their unmixed generality were offered to the contemplation of either, either would

call evil good or good evil. When theft was publicly honoured and rewarded in Sparta, it was not because theft in itself was reckoned a good thing; but because patriotism, and dexterity, and those services by which the interests of patriotism might be supported, were reckoned to be good things. When the natives of Hindostan assemble with delight around the agonies of a human sacrifice, it is not because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of pain; but because they hold it good to rejoice in a spectacle of heroic devotion to the memory of the dead. When parents are exposed or children are destroyed, it is not because it is deemed to be right that there should be the infliction of misery for its own sake; but because it is deemed to be right that the wretchedness of old age should be curtailed, or that the world should be saved from the miseries of an over-crowded species. In a word, in the very worst of these anomalies, some form of good may be detected, which has led to their establishment; and still some universal and undoubted principle of morality, however perverted or misapplied, can be alleged in vindication of them. A people may be deluded by their ignorance; or misguided by their superstition; or not only hurried into wrong deeds but even fostered into wrong sentiments, under the influences of that cupidity or revenge, which are so perpetually operating in the warfare of savage or demi-savage nations. Yet, in spite of all the topical moralities to which these have given birth, there is an unquestioned and universal morality notwithstanding. And in every case where the moral sense is unfettered by these associations, and the judgment is uncramped either by the partialities of interest or by the inveteracy of national customs which habit and antiquity have rendered sacred—conscience is found to speak the same language; nor, to the remotest ends of the world, is there a country or an island where the same uniform and consistent voice is not heard from her. Let the mists of ignorance and passion and artificial education be only cleared away; and the moral attributes of goodness and righteousness and truth be seen undistorted, and in their own proper guise; and there is not a heart or a conscience throughout earth's teeming population, which could refuse to do them homage. And it is precisely because the Father of the human family has given such hearts and consciences to all His children, that we infer these to be the very sanctities of the Godhead, the very attributes of His own primeval nature.

21. There is a countless diversity of tastes in the world, because of the infinitely various circumstances and associations of men. Yet is there a stable and correct standard of taste notwithstanding, to which all minds, that have the benefit of culture and enlargement, are gradually assimilating and approximating. It holds far more emphatically true, that, in spite of the diversity of moral judgments, which are vastly less wide and numerous than the former, there is a fixed standard of morals, rallying around itself all consciences, to the greater principles of which a full and unanimous homage is rendered from every quarter of the globe; and even to the lesser principles and modifications of which, there is a growing and gathering consent with every onward step in the progress of light and civilisation. In proportion as the understandings of men become more enlightened, do their consciences become more accordant with each other. Even now there is not a single people on the face of the earth, among whom barbarity and licentiousness and fraud are deified as virtues—where it does not require the utmost strength, whether of superstition or of patriotism in its most selfish and contracted form, to uphold the delusion. Apart from these local, and, we venture to hope, these temporary exceptions, the same moralities are recognised and honoured; and, however prevalent in practice, in sentiment at least, the same vices are disowned and execrated all the world over. In proportion as superstition is dissipated, and prejudice is gradually weakened by the larger intercourse of nations, these moral peculiarities do evidently wear away; till at length, if we may judge from the obvious tendency of things, conscience will, in the full manhood of our species, assert the universality and the unchangeableness of her decisions. There is no speech nor language where her voice is not heard; her line is gone out through all the earth, and her words to the ends of the world.

22. On the whole, then, conscience, whether it be an original or a derived faculty, yet as founded on human nature, if not forming a constituent part of it, may be regarded as a faithful witness for God the author of that nature, and as rendering to His character a consistent testimony. It is not necessary, for the establishment of our particular lesson, that we should turn that which is clear into that which is controversial by our entering into the scientific question respecting the physical origin of conscience, or tracing the imagined pedigree of its descent from simpler or anterior principles in the constitution of man. For,

as has been well remarked by Sir James Mackintosh—"If Conscience be inherent, that circumstance is, according to the common mode of thinking, a sufficient proof of its title to veneration. But if provision be made in the constitution and circumstances of all men for uniformity, producing it by processes similar to those which produce other acquired sentiments, may not our reverence be augmented by admiration of that supreme wisdom, which, in such mental contrivances, yet more highly than in the lower world of matter, accomplishes mighty purposes by instruments so simple?" It is not, therefore, the physical origin, but the fact, of the uniformity of conscience, wherewith is concerned the theological inference that we attempt to draw from it. This ascendant faculty of our nature, which has been so often termed the Divinity within us, notwithstanding the occasional sophistry of the passions, is on the whole representative of the Divinity above us; and the righteousness, and goodness, and truth, the lessons of which it gives forth everywhere, may well be regarded both as the laws which enter into the juridical constitution, and as the attributes which enter into the moral character of God.

23. We admit a considerable diversity of moral observation in the various countries of the earth, but without admitting any correspondent diversity of moral sentiment between them. When human sacrifices are enforced and applauded in one nation—this is not because of their cruelty, but notwithstanding of their cruelty. Even there the universal principle of humanity would be acknowledged, that it were wrong to inflict a wanton and uncalled-for agony on any of our fellows—but there is a local superstition which counteracts the universal principle and overbears it. When in the republic of Sparta, theft, instead of being execrated as a crime, was dignified into an art and an accomplishment, and on that footing admitted into the system of their youthful education—it was not because of its infringement on the rights of property, but notwithstanding of that infringement, and only because a local patriotism made head against the universal principle and prevailed over it. Apart from such disturbing forces as these, it will be found that the sentiments of men gravitate towards one and the same standard all over the globe; and that, when once the obscurations of superstition and selfishness are dissipated, there will be found the same moral light in every mind, a recognition of the same moral law, as the immutable and eternal code of righteousness for all countries and all ages. We have already quoted the noble testimony of a

heathen, who tells us with equal eloquence and truth, that even amid all the perversities of a vitiated and endlessly diversified creed, Conscience sat mistress over the whole earth, and asserted the supremacy of her own unalterable obligations.*

24. Such, then, is our first argument for the moral character of God, and which, as a character implies an existence, might be resolved into an argument for the being of God—even the moral character of the law of conscience; that conscience which He hath inserted among the faculties of our nature, and armed with the felt authority of a master; and furnished with sanctions for the enforcement of its dictates; and so framed that, apart from local perversities of the understanding or the habits, all its decisions are on the side of righteousness. The inference is neither a distant nor an obscure one, from the character of such a law to the character of its lawgiver. Neither is it an inference, destroyed by the insurrection which has taken place on the part of our lower faculties, or by the actual prevalence of vice in the world. For this has only enabled conscience to come forth with another and additional demonstration of its sovereignty—just as the punishment of crime in society bears evidence to the justice of the government which is established there. In general, the inward complacency felt by the virtuous does not so impressively bespeak the real purpose and character of this the ruling faculty in man, as do the remorse, and the terror, and the bitter dissatisfaction, wherewith the hearts of the wicked are exercised. It is true, that, by every act of iniquity, outrage is done to the law of conscience; but there is a felt reaction within which tells that the outrage is resented; and then it is, that conscience makes most emphatic assertion of its high prerogative, when, instead of coming forth as the benign and generous dispenser of its rewards to the obedient, it comes forth like an offended monarch in the character of an avenger. Were we endowed with prophetic vision, so as to behold, among the yet undisclosed secrets of futurity, the spectacle of a judge, and a judgment-seat, and an assembled world, and the retributions of pleasure and pain to the good and to the evil; this were fetching from afar an argument for the righteousness of God. But the instant pleasure and the instant pain wherewith conscience follows up the doings of man, brings this very argument within the limits of actual observation. Only, instead of being manifested by the light of a preternatural revelation, it is suggested to us by one of the most

* Book I. c. 1. § 33.

familiar certainties of experience, for in these phenomena and feelings of our own moral nature, do we behold not only a present judgment, but a present execution of the sentence.

25. Some perhaps may imagine the same sort of transition in this reasoning from the abstract to the concrete, that there is in the *a priori* argument. The abettors of this argument talk of our notion of any part of space as an inch, being but itself a part of our entire and original notion of immensity; and in like manner, that our notion of any part of time as an hour, is but part of the entire and original notion of eternity that is in every mind. They regard our ideas of infinite space and infinite time as belonging to the simplest elements of thought; and that therefore the certainty of the things which they represent, carries in it all the light and authority of a first principle. And then upon the maxim that every attribute or quality implies a substantive Being in which it resides, they step from the abstract to the concrete, from the infinite extent and the infinite duration to an infinitely extended and an infinitely enduring God. We confess, though it should be called a similar transition from the abstract to the concrete, that we feel vastly greater confidence in passing by inference from a law to a lawgiver. The supremacy of conscience is a fact in the constitution of human nature—seen in the light of consciousness by each man, of his own individual specimen; and verified in the light of observation, as extending to every other specimen within the compass of his knowledge. And however quick the inference may be from the supremacy of conscience within the breast, to the Supreme Power who established it there, being Himself a righteous Sovereign, yet this is strictly an argument *a posteriori* both for the being and the character of God. It is the strongest, we apprehend, which nature furnishes for the moral perfections of the Deity; and even with all minds, or certainly with most minds, the most effective argument for His existence—though ushered into the creed of nature not by a train of inferences, but by the light of an almost immediate perception. It is thus that in our first addresses to any human being on the subject of religion, we may safely presume a God without entering on the proof of a God. He has already the lesson within himself—and it is a lesson which tells him more, or at least speaks to him with greater force than the whole of external nature. Instead of bidding him look to its collocations, he will be more powerfully impressed and occupied with the idea of a God, if he but hearken to the

voice of his own conscience. It gave direct suggestion of a ruling and a righteous God, even in the days of corrupted Paganism.—And still, with the unlettered of our present day, and apart from the light of Christianity, along with the popular demonology of inferior spirits, there is the paramount impression of a one moral Governor among men.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE INHERENT PLEASURE OF THE VIRTUOUS AND MISERY OF THE VICIOUS AFFECTIONS.

1. WE are often told by moralists that there is a native and essential happiness in moral worth; and a like native and essential wretchedness in moral depravity—insomuch that the one may be regarded as its own reward, and the other as its own punishment. We do not always recollect that this happiness on the one hand and this misery on the other, are each of them made up severally of distinct ingredients; and that thus, by mental analysis, we might strengthen our argument both for the being and the character of God. When we discover that into this alleged happiness of the good there enter more enjoyments than one, we thereby obtain two or more testimonies of the Divine regard for virtue; and the proof is enhanced in the same peculiar way that the evidence of design is, in any other department of creation, when we perceive the concurrence of so many separate and independent elements, which meet together for the production of some complex and beneficial result.

2. We have already spoken of one such ingredient. There is a felt satisfaction in the thought of having done what we know to be right; and, in counterpart to this complacency of self-approbation, there is a felt discomfort, amounting often to bitter and remorseful agony, in the thought of having done what conscience tells us to be wrong. This implies a sense of the rectitude of what is virtuous. But without thinking of its rectitude at all, without viewing it in reference either to the law of conscience or to the law of God, with no regard to jurisprudence in the matter—there is, in the virtuous affection itself, another and a distinct enjoyment. We ought to cherish and to exercise

benevolence; and there is a pleasure in the consciousness of doing what we ought: but beside this moral sentiment, and beside the peculiar pleasure appended to benevolence as moral, there is a sensation in the merely physical affection of benevolence; and that sensation, of itself, is in the highest degree pleasurable. The primary or instant gratification which there is in the direct and immediate feeling of benevolence is one thing: the secondary or reflex gratification which there is in the consciousness of benevolence as moral is another thing. The two are distinct of themselves; but the contingent union of them, in the case of every virtuous affection, gives a multiple force to the conclusion, that God is the lover, and, because so, the patron or the rewarder of virtue. He hath so constituted our nature, that, in the very flow and exercise of the good affections, there shall be the oil of gladness. There is instant delight in the first conception of benevolence. There is sustained delight in its continued exercise. There is consummated delight in the happy smiling and prosperous result of it. Kindness, and honesty, and truth, are of themselves, and irrespective of their rightness, sweet unto the taste of the inner man. Malice, envy, falsehood, injustice, irrespective of their wrongness, have of themselves the bitterness of gall and wormwood. The Deity hath annexed a high mental enjoyment not to the consciousness only of good affections, but to the very sense and feeling of good affections. However closely these may follow on each other—nay, however implicated or blended together they may be at the same moment into one compound state of feeling, they are not the less distinct on that account of themselves. They form two pleasurable sensations instead of one; and their apposition, in the case of every virtuous deed or virtuous desire, exhibits to us that very concurrence in the world of mind, which obtains with such frequency and fulness in the world of matter—affording in every new part that is added, not a simply repeated only, but a vastly multiplied evidence for design, throughout all its combinations. There is a pleasure in the very sensation of virtue; and there is a pleasure attendant on the sense of its rectitude. These two phenomena are independent of each other. Let there be a certain number of chances against the first in a random economy of things, and also a certain number of chances against the second. In the actual economy of things, where there is the conjunction of both phenomena—it is the product of these two numbers which represents the amount of evidence

afforded by them, for a moral government in the world, and a moral governor over them.

3. In the calm satisfactions of virtue, this distinction may not be so palpable, as in the pungent and more vividly felt disquietudes which are attendant on the wrong affections of our nature. The perpetual corrosion of that heart, for example, which frets in unhappy peevishness all the day long, is plainly distinct from the bitterness of that remorse which is felt in the recollection of its harsh and injurious outbreakings on the innocent sufferers within its reach. It is saying much for the moral character of God, that He has placed a conscience within us, which administers painful rebuke on every indulgence of a wrong affection. But it is saying still more for such being the character of our Maker—so to have framed our mental constitution, that, in the very working of these bad affections there should be the painfulness of a felt discomfort and discordancy. Such is the make or mechanism of our nature, that it is thwarted and put out of sorts, by rage, and envy, and hatred; and this irrespective of the adverse moral judgments which conscience passes upon them. Of themselves, they are unsavoury; and no sooner do they enter the heart, than they shed upon it an immediate distillation of bitterness. Just as the placid smile of benevolence bespeaks the felt comfort of benevolence; so, in the frown and tempest of an angry countenance, do we read the unhappiness of that man who is vexed and agitated by his own malignant affections—eating inwardly as they do on the vitals of his enjoyment. It is, therefore, that he is often styled, and truly, a self-tormentor; or, his own worst enemy. The delight of virtue in itself, is a separate thing from the delight of the conscience which approves it. And the pain of moral evil in itself, is a separate thing from the pain inflicted by conscience in the act of condemning it. They offer to our notice two distinct ingredients, both of the present reward attendant upon virtue, and of the present penalty attendant upon vice; and so, enhance the evidence that is before our eyes, for the moral character of that administration, under which the world has been placed by its Author. The appetite of hunger is rightly alleged, in evidence of the care wherewith the Deity hath provided for the well-being of our natural constitution; and the pleasurable taste of food is rightly alleged as an additional proof of the same. And so, if the urgent voice of conscience within, calling us to virtue, be alleged in evidence of the care wherewith the Deity

hath provided for the well-being of our moral constitution; the pleasurable taste of virtue in itself, with the bitterness of its opposite, may well be alleged as additional evidence thereof. They alike afford the present and the sensible tokens of a righteous administration, and so of a righteous God.

4. Our present argument is grounded, neither on the rectitude of virtue, nor on its utility in the grosser and more palpable sense of that term—but on the immediate sweetness of it. It is the office of conscience to tell us of its rectitude. It is by experience that we learn its utility. But the sweetness of it—the *dulce* of virtue, as distinguished from its *utile*, is a thing of instant sensation. It may be decomposed into two ingredients, with one of which conscience has to do—even the pleasure we have, when any deed or any affection of ours receives from her a favourable verdict. But it has another ingredient which forms the proper and the distinct argument that we are now urging—even the pleasure we have in the mere relish of the affection itself. If it be a proof of benevolence in God, that our external organs of taste should have been so framed, as to have a liking for wholesome food; it is no less the proof both of a benevolent and a righteous God, so to have framed our mental economy, as that right and wholesome morality should be palatable to the taste of the inner man. Virtue is not only seen to be right—it is felt to be delicious. There is happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease, or a heart's enjoyment, even in the first purposes of kindness, as well as in its subsequent performances. There is a certain rejoicing sense of clearness in the consistency, the exactitude of justice and truth. There is a triumphant elevation of spirit in magnanimity and honour. In perfect harmony with this, there is a placid feeling of serenity and blissful contentment in gentleness and humility. There is a noble satisfaction in those victories, which, at the bidding of principle, or by the power of self-command, may have been achieved over the propensities of animal nature. There is an elate independence of soul in the consciousness of having nothing to hide, and nothing to be ashamed of. In a word, by the constitution of our nature, each virtue has its appropriate charm; and virtue, on the whole, is a fund of varied, as well as of perpetual enjoyment, to him who hath imbibed its spirit, and is under the guidance of its principles. He feels all to be health and harmony within; and without, he seems as if to breathe in an atmosphere of beauteous transparency—proving how much

the nature of man and the nature of virtue are in unison with each other. It is hunger which urges to the use of food ; but it strikingly demonstrates the care and benevolence of God, so to have framed the organ of taste, as that there shall be a super-added enjoyment in the use of it. It is conscience which urges to the practice of virtue ; but it serves to enhance the proof of a moral purpose, and therefore of a moral character in God, so to have framed our mental economy, that in addition to the felt obligation of its rightness, virtue should of itself be so regaling to the taste of the inner man.

5. In counterpart to these sweets and satisfactions of virtue, is the essential and inherent bitterness of all that is morally evil. We repeat, that with this particular argument we do not mix up the agonies of remorse. It is the wretchedness of vice in itself, not the wretchedness which we suffer because of its recollected and felt wrongness, that we now speak of. It is not the painfulness of the compunction felt because of our anger upon which we at this moment insist, but the painfulness of the emotion itself ; and the same remark applies to all the malignant desires of the human heart. True, it is inseparable from the very nature of a desire, that there must be some enjoyment or other at the time of its gratification ; but, in the case of these evil affections, it is not unmixed enjoyment. The most ordinary observer of his own feelings, however incapable of analysis, must be sensible, even at the moment of wreaking, in full indulgence of his resentment, on the man who has provoked or injured him, that all is not perfect and entire enjoyment within ; but that in this, and indeed in every other malignant feeling, there is a sore burden of disquietude—an unhappiness tumultuating in the heart, and visibly pictured on the countenance. The ferocious tyrant, who has only to issue forth his mandate and strike dead at pleasure the victim of his wrath, with any circumstance, too, of barbaric caprice and cruelty which his fancy, in the very waywardness of passion unrestrained and power unbounded, might suggest to him—he may be said to have experienced through life a thousand gratifications, in the solaced rage and revenge, which, though ever breaking forth on some new subject, he can appease again every day of his life by some new execution. But we mistake it if we think otherwise than that, in spite of these distinct and very numerous—nay, daily gratifications if he so choose, it is not a life of fierce internal agony notwithstanding. It seems indispensable to the nature

of every desire, and to form part indeed of its very idea, that there should be a distinctly felt pleasure, or at least a removal at the time of a distinctly felt pain, in the act of its fulfilment; yet, whatever recreation or relief may have thus been rendered, without doing away the misery, often in the whole amount of it the intense misery, inflicted upon man by the evil propensities of his nature. Who can doubt, for example, the unhappiness of the habitual drunkard?—and that although the ravenous appetite, by which he is driven along a stormy career, meets every day, almost every hour of the day, with the gratification that is suited to it. The same may be equally affirmed of the voluptuary, or of the depredator, or of the extortioner, or of the liar. Each may succeed in the attainment of his specific object; and we cannot possibly disjoin from the conception of success, the conception of some sort of pleasure—yet in perfect consistency, we affirm, with a sad and heavy burden of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the whole. He is little conversant with our nature who does not know of many a passion belonging to it, that it may be the instrument of many pleasurable—nay, delicious or exquisite sensations, and yet be a wretched passion still—the domineering tyrant of a bondsman, who at once knows himself to be degraded, and feels himself to be unhappy. A sense of guilt is one main ingredient of this misery; yet physically, and notwithstanding the pleasure or the relief inseparable at the moment from every indulgence of the passions, there are other sensations of bitterness, which of themselves, and apart from remorse, would cause the suffering to preponderate.

6. There is an important discrimination made by Bishop Butler in his sermons; and, by the help of which, this phenomenon, of apparent contradiction or mystery in our nature, may be satisfactorily explained. He distinguishes between the final object of any of our desires, and the pleasure attendant on, or rather inseparable from, its gratification. The object is not the pleasure, though the pleasure be an unfailing and essential accompaniment on the attainment of the object. This is well illustrated by the appetite of hunger, of which it were more proper to say that it seeks for food, than that it seeks for the pleasure which there is in eating the food. The food is the object; the pleasure is the accompaniment. We do not here speak of the distinct and secondary pleasure which there is in the taste of food, but of that other pleasure which strictly and properly attaches to the gratification of the appetite of hunger.

This is the pleasure, or relief, which accompanies the act of eating; while the ultimate object, the object in which the appetite rests and terminates, is the food itself. The same is true of all our special affections. Each has a proper and peculiar object of its own; and the mere pleasure attendant on the prosecution or the indulgence of the affection is not—as has been clearly established by Butler, and fully reasserted by Dr. Thomas Brown—is not that object. The two are as distinct from each other, as a thing loved is distinct from the pleasure of loving it. Every special inclination has its special and counterpart object. The object of the inclination is one thing, the pleasure of gratifying the inclination is another; and, in most instances, it were more proper to say, that it is for the sake of the object than for the sake of the pleasure that the inclination is gratified. The distinction that we now urge, though felt to be a subtle, is truly a substantial one, and pregnant both with important principle and important application. The discovery and clear statement of it by Butler may well be regarded as the highest service rendered by any philosopher to moral science—and that from the light which it casts, both on the processes of the human constitution and on the theory of virtue. As one example of the latter service, the principle in question, so plainly and convincingly unfolded by this great Christian philosopher in his sermon on the love of our neighbour, strikes, and with most conclusive effect, at the root of the selfish system of morals—a system which professes that man's sole object, in the practice of all the various moralities, is his own individual advantage.* Now, in most cases of a special, and more particularly of a virtuous affection, it can be demonstrated that the object is a something out of himself and distinct from himself. Take compassion, for one instance out of the many. The object of this affection is the relief of another's misery, and in the fulfilment of this does the affection meet with its full solace and gratification—that is, in a something altogether external from himself. It is true, that there is an appropriate pleasure in the indulgence of this affection, even as there is in the indulgence of every other; and in proportion, too, to the strength of the affection, will be the greatness of the pleasure. The man who is doubly more compas-

* How is it that the utilitarians of our day make so little account of Butler, whom, nevertheless, some of them profess to idolize? The truth is, that the distinction which he has established between the object of an affection and its accompanying pleasure, strikes at the foundation of their system.

sionate than his fellow, will have doubly a greater enjoyment in the relief of misery; yet that, most assuredly, not because he of the two is the more intently set on his own gratification, but because he of the two is the more intently set on an outward accomplishment, the relief of another's wretchedness. The truth is, that just because more compassionate than his fellow, the more intent is he than the other on the object of this affection, and the less intent is he than the other on himself the subject of this affection. His thoughts and feelings are more drawn away to the sufferer, and therefore more drawn away *from* himself. He is the most occupied with the object of this affection; and, on that very account, the least occupied with the pleasure of its indulgence. And it is precisely the objective quality of these regards which stamps upon compassion the character of a disinterested affection. He surely is the most compassionate, whose thoughts and feelings are most drawn away to the sufferer, and most drawn away from self; or, in other words, most taken up with the direct consideration of him who is the object of this affection, and least taken up with the reflex consideration of the pleasure that he himself has in the indulgence of it. Yet this prevents not the pleasure from being actually felt—and felt, too, in very proportion to the intensity of the compassion; or, in other words, more felt the less it has been thought of at the time, or the less it has been pursued for its own sake. It seems unavoidable in every affection, that the more a thing is loved, the greater must be the pleasure of indulging the love of it; yet it is equally unavoidable, that the greater in that case will be our aim towards the object of the affection, and the less will be our aim towards the pleasure which accompanies its gratification. And thus, to one who reflects profoundly and carefully on these things, it is no paradox that he who has had doubly greater enjoyment than another in the exercise of compassion is doubly the more disinterested of the two; that he has had the most pleasure in this affection who has been the least careful to please himself with the indulgence of it; that he whose virtuous desires, as being the strongest, have in their gratification ministered to self the greatest satisfaction—has been the least actuated of all his fellows by the wishes, and stood at the greatest distance from the aims of selfishness.*

7. And moreover, there is a just and philosophical sense, in

* The purely disinterested character of a right religious affection might be proved by these considerations.

which many of our special affections, besides the virtuous, are alike disinterested with these; even though they have been commonly ranked among the selfish affections of our nature. The proper object of self-love is the good of self; and this calm general regard to our own happiness may be considered, in fact, as the only interested affection to which our nature is competent. The special affections are, one and all of them, distinct from self-love, both in their objects, and in the real psychological character of the affections themselves. The object of the avaricious affection is the acquirement of wealth; of the resentful, the chastisement of an offender; of the sensual, something appropriate or suited to that corporeal affection which forms the reigning appetite at the time. In many of these, is the good of self the proper discriminative object of the affection; and the mind of him who is under their power, and engaged in their prosecution, is differently employed from the mind of him who, at the time, is either devising or doing aught for the general or abstract end of his own happiness. None of these special affections is identical with the affection which has happiness for its object. So far from this, the avaricious man often, conscious of the strength of his propensity, and at the moment of being urged forward by it to new speculations, acknowledges in his heart, that he would be happier far, could he but moderate its violence, and be satisfied with an humbler fortune than that to which his aspirations would carry him. And the resentful man, in the very act of being tempest-driven to some furious onset against the person who has affronted or betrayed him, may yet be sensible that, instead of seeking for any benefit to himself, he is rushing on the destruction of his character, or fortune, or even life. And many is the drunkard who, under the goadings of an appetite which he cannot withstand, in place of self-love being the principle, and his own greatest happiness the object, knows himself to be on the road to inevitable ruin. There is an affection which has happiness for its object; but this is not the affection which rules and has the ascendancy in any of these instances. These are all special affections, grounded on the affinities which obtain between certain objects and certain parts of human nature; and which cannot be indulged beyond a given extent, without distemper and discomfort to the whole nature; so that, in spite of all the particular gratifications which follow in their train, the man over whom they tyrannize may be unhappy upon the whole. The very distinction between the

affection of self-love and the special affections, proves that there is a corresponding distinction in their objects; and this again, that many of the latter may be gratified, while the former is disappointed,—or, in other words, that, along with many particular enjoyments, the general state of man may be that of utter and extreme wretchedness. It is therefore a competent question, what those special affections are, which most consist with the general happiness of the mind; and this, notwithstanding that they all possess one circumstance in common—the unavoidable pleasure appendant to the gratification of each of them.*

8. This explanation will help us to understand wherein it is that the distinction, in point of enjoyment, between a good and an evil affection of our nature properly lies. For there is a certain species of enjoyment common to them all. It were a contradiction in terms to affirm otherwise; for it were tantamount to saying that an affection may be gratified without the actual experience of a gratification. There must be some sensation or other of happiness at the time when a man obtains that which he is seeking for; and if it be not a positive sensation of pleasure, it will at least be the sensation of a relief from pain, as when one meets with the opportunity of wreaking upon its object, that indignation which had long kept his heart in a tumult of disquietude. We therefore would mistake the matter, if we thought that a state even of thorough and unqualified

* The following are the clear and judicious observations of Sir James Mackintosh on this subject:—

“In contending, therefore, that the benevolent affections are disinterested, no more is claimed for them than must be granted to mere animal appetites and to malevolent passions. Each of these principles alike seeks its own object, for the sake simply of obtaining it. Pleasure is the result of the attainment, but no separate part of the aim of the agent. The desire that another person may be gratified, seeks that outward object alone, according to the general course of human desire. Resentment is as disinterested as gratitude or pity, but not more so. Hunger or thirst may be, as much as the purest benevolence, at variance with self-love. A regard to our own general happiness is not a vice, but in itself an excellent quality. It were well if it prevailed more generally over craving and short-sighted appetites. The weakness of the social affections, and the strength of the private desires, properly constitute selfishness; a vice utterly at variance with the happiness of him who harbours it, and as such, condemned by self-love. There are as few who attain the greatest satisfaction to themselves, as who do the greatest good to others. It is absurd to say with some, that the pleasure of benevolence is selfish, because it is felt by self. Understanding and reasoning are acts of self, for no man can think by proxy; but no man ever called them *selfish*,—why? Evidently because they do not *regard* self. Precisely the same reason applies to benevolence. Such an argument is a gross confusion of self, as it is a *subject* of feeling or thought, with self considered as the *object* of either. It is no more just to refer the private appetites to self-love because they commonly promote happiness, than it would be to refer them to self-hatred, in those frequent cases where their gratification obstructs it.”

wickedness was exclusive of all enjoyment—for even the vicious affections must share in that enjoyment, which inseparably attaches to every affection at the moment of its indulgence. And thus it is, that even in the veriest Pandemonium, might there be lurid gleams of ecstasy, and shouts of fiendish exultation—the merriment of desperadoes in crime, who send forth the outcries of their spiteful and savage delight, when some deep-laid villany has triumphed; or when, in some dire perpetration of revenge, they have given full satisfaction and discharge to the malignity of their accursed nature. The assertion therefore may be taken too generally, when it is stated, that there is no enjoyment whatever in the veriest hell of assembled outcasts; for even there, might there be many separate and specific gratifications. And we must abstract the pleasure essentially involved in every affection at the instant of its indulgence, and which cannot possibly be disjoined from it, ere we see clearly and distinctively wherein it is that, in respect of enjoyment, the virtuous and vicious affections differ from each other. For it is true, that there is a common resemblance between them; and that, by the universal law and nature of affection, there must be some sort of agreeable sensation, in the act of their obtaining that which they are seeking after. Yet it is no less true, that, did the former affections bear supreme rule in the heart, they would brighten and tranquillize the whole of human existence—whereas, had the latter the entire and practical ascendancy, they would distemper the whole man, and make him as completely wretched as he were completely worthless.

9. There is one leading difference, then, between a virtuous and a vicious affection—that there is always a felt sweetness in the very presence and contact of the former; whereas, in the presence and contact of the latter, there is generally, or very often at least, a sensation of bitterness. Let them agree as they may in the undoubted fact of a gratification in the attainment of their respective ends, the affections themselves may be long in existence and operation before their ends are arrived at; and then it is, we affirm, that if compared, there will be found a wide distinction and dissimilarity between them. The very feeling of kindness is pleasant to the heart; and the very feeling of anger is a painful and corrosive one. The latter, we know, is often said to be a mixed feeling—because of both the pleasure and the pain which are said to enter into it. But it will be found that the pleasure, in this case, lies in the prospect of full and

final gratification ; and very often, in a sort of current or partial gratification which one may experience beforehand, in the mere vent or utterance by words of the labouring violence that is within—seeing that words of bitterness, when discharged on the object of our wrath, are sometimes the only, and even the most effective, executioners of all the vengeance that we meditate ; besides that, by their means, we may enlist in our favour the grateful sympathy of other men—thus obtaining a solace to ourselves, and aggravating the punishment of the offender, by exciting against him, in addition to our own hostility, the hostile indignation of his fellows. And thus too is it, that, in the case of anger, there may not only be a completed gratification at the last, by the infliction of a full and satisfactory chastisement ; but a gratification, as it were by instalments, with every likely purpose of retaliation that we may form in our bosoms, and every sentence of keen and reproachful eloquence that may fall from our lips. And so anger has been affirmed to be a mixed emotion, from confounding the pleasure that lies in the gratification of the emotion, with the pleasure that is supposed to lie in the feeling of the emotion. But the truth is, that, apart from the gratification, the emotion is an exceedingly painful one—insomuch that the gratification mainly lies in the removal of a pain, or in the being ridded of a felt uneasiness. Compassion may, in the same way, be termed a mixed feeling. But on close attention to these two affections, and comparison between them, it will be found, that all the pleasure of anger lies in its gratification, and all the pain of it in the feeling itself—whereas all the pain of compassion lies in the disappointment of its gratification, while in the feeling itself there is nought but pleasure. Let the respective gratifications of these two affections—the one, by the fulfilled retaliation of a wrong ; the other, by the fulfilled relief of a suffering—let these gratifications be put out of notice altogether, that we might but attend to the yet ungratified feelings themselves : and we cannot imagine a greater difference of state between two minds, than that of one which luxuriates in the tenderness of compassion, and that of another which breathes and is infuriated with the dark passions and the still darker purposes of resentment ; or we may appeal to the experience of the same mind, which at one time may have its hour of meditated kindness, and at another, its hour of meditated revenge. We speak of these two, not in the moment of their respective triumphs, not of the sensations attendant on the success of each

—but of the direct and instant sensations which lie in the feelings themselves. They form two as distinct states in the moral world, as sunshine and tempest are in the physical world. We have but to name the elements which enter into the composition of each, in order to suggest the utter contrariety which obtains between them—between the calm and placid cheerfulness on the one hand of that heart which is employed in conceiving the generous wishes, or in framing the liberal and fruitful devices of benevolence; and, on the other hand, the turbulence and fierce disorder of the same heart, when burning disdain, or fell and implacable hatred has taken possession of it—the reaction of its own affronted pride, or aggrieved sense of the injury which has been done to it.

10. But perhaps the most favourable moment for comparison between them is when each is frustrated of its peculiar aim; and so each is sent back upon itself with that common suffering to which all the affections are liable—the suffering of a disappointment. We shall be at no loss to determine on which side the advantage lies, if we have either felt or witnessed benevolence in tears, because of the misery which it cannot alleviate; and rage, in the agonies of its defeated impotence, because of the haughty and successful defiance of an enemy, whom with vain hostility it has tried to assail, but cannot reach. We have the example of a good affection under disappointment, in the case of virtuous grief or virtuous indignation; and of a bad affection under disappointment, in the case of envy, when, in spite of every attempt to calumniate or depress its object, he shines forth to universal acknowledgment and applause, in all the lustre of his vindicated superiority. It marks how distinct these two sets of feelings are from each other, that, with the former, even under the pain of disappointment, there is a something in the very taste and quality of the feelings themselves, which acts as an emollient or a charm, and mitigates the painfulness—while, with the latter, there is nought to mitigate, but everything to exasperate, and more fiercely to agonize. The malignant feelings are no sooner turned inwardly by the arrest of a disappointment from without, than they eat inwardly; and when foiled in the discharge of their purposed violence upon others, they recoil—and without one soothing ingredient to calm the labouring effervescence, they kindle a hell in the heart of the unhappy owner. Internally there is a celestial peace and satisfaction in virtue, even though in the midst of its outward discomfiture, it be com-

pelled to weep over the unredressed wrongs and sufferings of humanity. On the other hand, the very glance of disappointed malevolence bespeaks of this evil affection, that of itself it is a fierce and fretting distemper of the soul, an executioner of vengeance for all the guilty passions it may have fanned into mischievous activity, and for all the crimes it may have instigated.

11. And this contrast between a good and an evil affection, this superiority of the former to the latter is fully sustained, when instead of looking to the state of mind which is left by the disappointment of each, we look to the state of mind which is left by their respective gratifications—the one a state of sated compassion, the other of sated resentment. There is one most observable distinction between the states of feeling, by which an act of compassion on the one hand, and of resentment on the other, are succeeded. It is seldom that man feasts his eyes on that spectacle of prostrate suffering which, in a moment of fury, he hath laid at his feet; in the same way that he feasts his eyes on that picture of family comfort which smiles upon him from some cottage home, that his generosity had reared. This looks as if the sweets of benevolence were lasting, whereas the sweets of revengeful malice, such as they are, are in general but momentary. An act of compassion may extinguish for a time the feeling of compassion, by doing away that suffering which is the object of it; but then it generally is followed up by a feeling of permanent regard. An act of revenge, when executed to the full extent of the desire or purpose, does extinguish and put an end to the passion of revenge; and is seldom, if ever, followed up by a feeling of permanent hatred. An act of kindness but attaches the more, and augments a friendly disposition towards its object. It were both untrue in itself, and unfair to our nature to say, that an act of revenge but exasperates the more, and always augments, or even often augments, a hostile disposition towards its object. It has been said that we hate the man whom we have injured: but whatever the truth of this observation may be, certain it is, that we do not so hate the man of whom we have taken full satisfaction for having injured us; or, if we could imagine aught so monstrous, and happily so rare, as the prolonged, the yet unquelled satisfaction of one, who could be regaled for hours with the sighs of him whom his own hands had wounded; or for months and years, with the pining destitution of the household whom himself had impoverished and brought low: this were because the measure of the revenge had not

equalled the measure of the felt provocation, only perhaps to be appeased and satiated by death. This, at length, would terminate the emotion. And here a new insight opens upon us into the distinction between a good and a bad affection. Benevolence, itself of immortal quality, would immortalize its objects; malignity, if not appeased, by an infliction short of death, would destroy them.* The one is ever strengthening itself upon old objects, and fastening upon new ones; the other is ever extinguishing its resentment towards old objects by the pettier acts of chastisement, or if nothing short of a capital punishment will appease it, by dying with their death. The exterminating blow, the death which "clears all scores"—this forms the natural and necessary limit even to the fiercest revenge; whereas the outgoings of benevolence are quite indefinite. In revenge, the affection is successively extinguished; and if relumed, it is upon new objects. In benevolence, the affection is kept up for old objects, while ever open to excitement from new ones; and hence a living and a multiplying power of enjoyment, which is peculiarly its own. On the same principle that we water a shrub just because we had planted it, does our friendship grow and ripen the more towards him on whom we had formerly exercised it. The affection of kindness for each individual object survives the act of kindness, or rather is strengthened by the act. Whatever sweetness may have been originally in it, is enhanced by the exercise; and so far from being stifled by the first gratification, it remains in greater freshness than ever for higher and larger gratifications than before. It is the perennial quality of their gratification, which stamps that superiority on the good affections we are now contending for. Benevolence both perpetuates itself upon its old objects, and expands itself into a wider circle as it meets with new ones. Not so with revenge, which generally disposes of the old object by one gratification; and then must transfer itself to a new object, ere it can meet with another gratification. Let us grant that each affection has its peculiar walk of enjoyment. The history of the one walk presents us with a series of accumulations; the history of the other with a series of extinctions.

12. But in dwelling on this beautiful peculiarity, by which a good affection is distinguished from a bad one, we are in danger of weakening our immediate argument. We bring forward the matter a great deal too favourably for the malignant desires of

* So true it is, that he who hateth his brother with implacable hatred is a murderer.

the human heart, if, while reasoning on the supposition of an enjoyment, however transitory in their gratification, we give any room for the imagination that even this is unmixed enjoyment. We have already stated, that, of themselves, and anterior to their gratification, there is a painfulness in these desires; and that when by their gratification we get quit of this painfulness, we might after all obtain little more than a relief from misery. But the truth is, that, generally speaking, we obtain a great deal less on the side of happiness than this; for, in most cases, all that we obtain by the gratification of a malignant passion, is but the exchange of one misery for another; and this apart still from the remorse of an evil perpetration. There is one familiar instance of it, which often occurs in conversation—when, piqued by something offensive in the remark or manner of our fellows, we react with a severity which humbles and overwhelms him. In this case, the pain of the resentment is succeeded by the pain we feel in the spectacle of that distress which ourselves have created; and this, too, aggravated perhaps by the reprobation of all the bystanders, affording thereby a miniature example of the painful alternations which are constantly taking place in the history of moral evil; when the misery of wrong affections is but replaced, to the perpetrator himself, by the misery of the wrong actions to which they have hurried him. It is thus that a life of frequent gratification may, notwithstanding, be a life of intense wretchedness. It may help our imagination of such a state, to conceive of one, subject every hour to the agonies of hunger, with such a mal-conformation at the same time in his organ of taste, that, in food of every description, he felt a bitter and universal nausea. There were here a constant gratification, yet a constant and severe endurance—a mere alternation of cruel sufferings—the displacement of one set of agonies, by the substitution of other agonies in their room. This is seldom, perhaps never realized in the physical world; but in the moral world it is a great and general phenomenon. The example shows at least the possibility of a constitution, under which a series of incessant gratifications may be nothing better than a restless succession of distress and inquietude; and that such should be the constitution of our moral nature, as to make a life of vice a life of vanity and cruel vexation, is strong experimental evidence of Him who ordained this constitution, that He hateth iniquity, that He loveth righteousness.

13. But the peculiarity which we have been incidentally led to notice, is, in itself, pregnant with inference also. We should augur hopefully of the final issues of our moral constitution, as well as conclude favourably of Him who hath ordained it—when we find its workings to be such, that, on the one hand, the feeling of kindness towards an individual object, not only survives, but is indefinitely strengthened by the acts of kindness; and, on the other hand, that, not only does an act of revenge satiate and put an end to the feeling of revenge, but even, that certain acts of hostility towards the individual object of our hatred will make us relent from this hatred, and at length extinguish it altogether. May we not perceive in this economy a balance in point of tendency, and at length of ultimate effect on the side of virtue? May it not warrant the expectation, that, while benevolence, that great conservative principle of being, has in it a principle conservative of itself as well as of its objects, the outbursts of evil are but partial and temporary; and that the moral world, viewed as a progressive system, and now only in its transition state, has been so constructed as to secure both the perpetuity of all the good affections, and the indefinite expansion of them to new objects, and over a larger and ever-widening territory? At all events, whatever reason there may be to fear, that, in the future arrangements of nature and providence, both virtue and vice will be capable of immortality—we might gather from what passes under our eyes, in this rudimental and incipient stage of human existence, that even with our present constitution, virtue alone is capable of a blissful immortality. For malice and falsehood carry in them the seeds of their own wretchedness, if not of their own destruction. Only grant the soul to be imperishable; and if the character of the governor is to be gathered from the final issues of the government over which he presides—it says much for the moral character of Him who framed us, that, unless there be an utter reversal of the nature which Himself has given, then, in respect to the power of conferring enjoyment or of maintaining the soul in its healthiest and happiest mood, it is righteousness alone which endureth for ever, and charity alone which never faileth.

14. And besides taking account of the special enjoyments which attach to the special virtues, we might observe on the general state of that mind which, under the consistent and comprehensive principle of being or doing what it ought, studies rightly to acquit itself of all the moral obligations. Beside the

perpetual feast of an approving conscience, and the constant recurrence of those particular gratifications which attach to the indulgence of every good affection—is it not quite obvious of every mind which places itself under a supreme regimen of morality, that then it is in its best possible condition with regard to enjoyment: like a well-strung instrument, in right and proper tone, because all its parts are put in right adjustment with each other? If conscience be indeed the superior faculty of our nature, then, every time it is cast down from this pre-eminence, there must be a sensation of painful dissonance; and the whole man feels out of sorts, as one unhinged or denaturalized. This perhaps is the main reason that a state of well-doing stands associated with a state of well-being; and why the special virtue of temperance is not more closely associated with the health of the body, than the general habit of virtue is with a wholesome and well-conditioned state of the soul. There is then no derangement, as it were, in the system of our nature—all the powers, whether superior or subordinate, being in their right places, and all moving without discord and without dislocation. It were anticipating our argument, did we refer at present to the confidence and regard wherewith a virtuous man is surrounded in the world. We have not yet spoken of the adaptations to man's moral constitution from without, but only of the inward pleasures and satisfactions which are yielded in the workings of the constitution itself. And surely when we find it to have been so constructed and attuned by its Maker, that, in all the movements of virtue there is a felt and grateful harmony, while a certain jarring sense of violence and discomposure ever attends upon the opposite—we cannot imagine how the moral character of that Being who Himself devised this constitution, and established all its tendencies, can be more clearly or convincingly read than in phenomena like these.

15. We have already said that the distinction so well established by Butler, between the object of our affection and its accompanying, nay, inseparable pleasure, was the most effectual argument that could be brought to bear against the selfish system of morals. The virtuous affection that is in a man's breast simply leads him to do what he ought; and in that object he rests and terminates. Like every other affection, there must be a pleasure conjoined with the prosecution of it; and at last, a full and final gratification in the attainment of its object. But the object must be distinct from the pleasure, which itself

is founded on a prior suitableness between the mind and its object. When a man is actuated by a virtuous desire, it is the virtue itself that he is seeking, and not the gratification that is in it. His single object is to be or to do rightly—though, the more intent he is upon this object, the greater will, the greater must be his satisfaction if he succeed in it. Nevertheless, it is not the satisfaction which he is seeking; it is the object which yields the satisfaction—the object, too, for its own sake, and not for the sake of its accompanying or its resulting enjoyment. Nay, the more strongly, and therefore the more exclusively, set upon virtue for its own sake, the less will he think of its enjoyment, and yet the greater will his actual enjoyment be. In other words, virtue, the more disinterested it is, is the more prolific of happiness to him who follows it; and then it is that, when freest of all from the taints of mercenary selfishness, it yields to its votary the most perfect and supreme enjoyment. Such is the constitution of our nature, that virtue loses not its disinterested character; and yet man loses not his reward; and the author of this constitution, He who hath ordained all its laws and its consequences, has given signal proof of His own supreme regard for virtue, and therefore of the supreme virtue of His own character, in that He hath so framed the creatures of His will, as that their perfect goodness and perfect happiness are at one. Yet the union of these does not constitute their unity. The union is a contingent appointment of the Deity; and so is at once the evidence and the effect of the goodness that is in His own nature.

16. This, then, is our second argument for the moral character of God, grounded on the moral constitution of man; and prior, as yet, to any view of its adaptation to external nature. It is distinct from the first argument, as grounded on the phenomena of conscience, which assumes the office of a judge within the breast, all whose decisions are on the side of benevolence and justice; and which is ever armed with a certain power of enforcement, both in the pains of remorse and the pleasures of self-approbation. These, however, are distinct and ought to be distinguished from the direct pleasures of virtue in itself, and the direct pains of vice in itself, which form truly separate ingredients, on the one hand of a present and often very painful correction, on the other hand, of a present and very precious reward.

CHAPTER IV.

THE POWER AND OPERATION OF HABIT.

1. WE have as yet been occupied with what may be termed the instant sensations, wherewith morality is beset in the mind of man—with the voice of conscience which goes immediately before, or with the sentence, whether of approval or condemnation, which comes immediately after it; and latterly, with those states of feeling which are experienced at the moment when under the power of those affections, to which any moral designation, be it of virtue or vice, is applicable—the pleasure which there is in the very presence and contact of the one, the distaste, the bitterness which there is in the presence and contact of the other.

2. These phenomena of juxtaposition, as they may be termed; these contiguous antecedents and consequents of the moral and the immoral in man, speak strongly the purpose of Him who ordained our mental constitution, in having inserted there such a constant power of command and encouragement on the side of the former, and a like constant operation of checks and discouragements against the latter. But, perhaps, something more may be collected of the design and character of God, by stretching forward our observation prospectively in the history of man, and so extending our regards to the more distant consequences of virtue or vice, both on the frame of his character and the state of his enjoyments. By studying these posterior results, we approximate our views towards the final issues of that administration under which we are placed. That defensive apparatus, wherewith the embryo seed of plants is guarded and protected, might indicate a special care or design in the preserver of it. What that design particularly is comes to be clearly and certainly known, when, in the future history of the plant, we learn what the functions of the seed are, after it has come to maturity; and then observe, that, had it been suffered universally to perish, it would have led—not to the mortality of the individual, for that is already an inevitable law, but to the extinction and mortality of the species.

3. For tracing forward man's moral history, or the changes which take place in his moral state, it necessary that we should

advert to the influence of habit. Yet it is not properly the philosophy of habit wherewith our argument is concerned, but with the leading facts of its practical operation. A beneficial effect might still remain an evidence of the Divine goodness, by whatever steps it should be efficiently or physically brought about—its power in this way depending not on the question how it is, but on the fact that so it is. It were really, therefore, deviating from our own strict and pertinent line of inquiry, did we stop to discuss the philosophic theory of habit, or suspend our own independent reasoning till that theory was settled—beside most unwisely and unnecessarily attaching to our theme, all the discredit of an obscure or questionable speculation. It is with palpable and sure results both in the material and mental world, more than with the recondite processes in either that theism has chiefly to do; and it is by the former more than by the latter that the cause of theism is upholden.

4. We might only observe in passing, that the modification introduced by Dr. Thomas Brown into the theory of habit, was perhaps uncalled for, even for the accomplishment of his own purpose, which was to demonstrate that it required no peculiar or original law of the human constitution to account for its phenomena. He resolves the whole operation of habit into the law of suggestion—only he would extend that law to states of feeling, as well as to thoughts or states of thought.* We are all aware that if two objects have been seen or thought of together on any former occasion, then the thought of one of them is apt to suggest the thought of the other, and the more apt, the more frequently that the suggestion has taken place; insomuch that, if the suggestion have taken place very often, we shall find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to break the succession between the thought which suggests and the thought which is suggested by it. Now Dr. Brown has conceived it necessary to extend this principle to feelings as well as thoughts

* The following is the passage, taken from his forty-third lecture, in which Dr. Brown seems to connect feeling with feeling, by the same mental law which connects thought with thought. "To explain the influence of habit in increasing the tendency to certain actions, I must remark—what I have already more than once repeated—that the suggesting influence which is usually expressed in the phrase *association of ideas*, though that very improper phrase would seem to limit it to our ideas or conceptions only, and has unquestionably produced a mistaken belief of this partial operation of a general influence—is not limited to those more than to any other states of mind, but occurs also with equal force in other feelings, which are not commonly termed ideas or conceptions; that our desires or other emotions, for example, may, like them, form a part of our trains of suggestion," &c. See another equally ambiguous passage in his sixty-fourth lecture.

—insomuch that, if on a former occasion a certain object have been followed up by a certain feeling, or even if one feeling have been followed up by another, then the thought of the object introduces the feeling, or the one feeling introduces the other feeling into the mind, on the same principle that thought introduces thought. Now we should rather be inclined to hold that thought introduces feeling, not in consequence of the same law of suggestion whereby thought introduces thought, but in virtue of the direct power which lies in the object of the thought to excite that feeling. When a voluptuous object awakens a voluptuous feeling, this is not by suggestion, but by a direct influence of its own. When the picture of that voluptuous object awakens the same voluptuous feeling, we would not ascribe it to suggestion, but still put it down to the power of the object, whether presented or only represented, to awaken certain emotions. And as little would we ascribe the excitement of the feeling to suggestion, but still to the direct and original power of the object—though it were pictured to us only in thought, instead of being pictured to us in visible imagery. In like manner, when the thought of an injury awakens in us anger, even as the injury itself did at the moment of its infliction, we should not ascribe this to that peculiar law which is termed the law of suggestion, and which undoubtedly connects thought with thought; but we should ascribe it wholly to that law which connects an object with its appropriate emotion—whether that object be present to the senses, or have only been recalled by the memory and is present to the thoughts. We sustain an injury, and we feel resentment in consequence, without surely the law of suggestion having had aught to do with the sequence. We see the aggressor afterwards, and our anger is revived against him, and with this particular succession the law of suggestion has certainly had to do—not, however, in the way of thought suggesting feeling, but only in the way of thought suggesting thought. In truth, it is a succession of three terms. The sight of the man awakens a recollection of the injury; and the thought of the injury awakens the emotion. The first sequence, or that which obtains between the first and second term, is a pure instance of the suggestion of thought by thought, or, to speak in the old language, of the association of ideas. The second sequence, or that which obtains between the middle and last term, is still, Dr. Brown would say, not an instance of suggestion, but of thought suggesting the feeling

wherewith it was formerly accompanied. Whereas, in our apprehension, it is due not to the law of suggestion but to the law which connects an object, whether present at the time or thought upon afterwards, with its counterpart emotion. Still the result is the same, however differently accounted for. One can think, surely, of the resentment which now occupies him, as well as he can think of a past resentment—indeed, it is difficult to imagine how he can feel a resentment without thinking of it. Let some one thought, then, by the proper law of suggestion, have introduced the thought of an injury that had been done to us; this second thought introduces the feeling of resentment, not by the law of suggestion, but by the law which relates an object, whether present or thought upon, to its appropriate emotion; this emotion is thought upon, and, not the emotion but the thought of the emotion, recalls the thought of the first emotion that was felt at the original infliction of the injury; and this thought again recalls to us the thought of the injury itself, and perhaps the thought of other or similar injuries, which, as at the first, excites anew the feeling of anger, but, at this particular step, by means of a law different from that of suggestion, even the law of our emotions, in virtue of which certain objects, when present in any way to the cognizance of the understanding, awaken certain sensibilities in the heart. It is thus that thoughts and feelings might reciprocally introduce each other, not by means of but one law of suggestion extending in common to them both, but by the intermingling of two laws in this repeating or circulating process—even the law of suggestion, acting only upon the thoughts; and the law of emotion, by which certain objects, when presented to the senses or to the memory, have the power to awaken certain correspondent emotions. We in this way get quit of the mysticism which attaches to the notion of mere feelings either suggesting or being suggested by other feelings, separately from thoughts—more especially when, by the association of thoughts or of ideas alone, and the direct power which lies in the objects of these ideas to awaken certain emotions, all the phenomena, *as far as they depend on suggestion*, are capable of being explained. A certain thought or object may suggest the thought of a former provocation; this thought might excite a feeling of resentment; the resentment thus felt or thought upon, might send back the mind to a still more vivid impression of its original cause; and this again might prolong or waken the resentment anew, and in greater freshness than

before. The ultimate effect might be a fierce and fiery effervescence of irascible feeling. Yet not by the operation of one law, but of two distinct laws in the human constitution; the first that, in virtue of which, thoughts suggest thoughts; the second that, in virtue of which, the object thus thought upon awakens the emotion that is suited to it.

5. But while we have ventured to offer this correction on the language of Dr. Brown, we are far from being satisfied that the law of suggestion alone will account for the evergrowing inveteracy of habit. It supplies, we think, a strong auxiliary force; but is not the only force concerned in the operation. It accounts for the increased importunity of the solicitations from without; but, over and above this, we apprehend that the progress of repeated indulgence induces a subjective change upon the mind—in virtue of which there is an increasing susceptibility, or rather a greater strength, if it may be so called, of inertia, or passiveness within—so that the propensities become every day more headlong, and that too with a less power of resistance than before.

6. But though for once we have thus adverted to the strict philosophy of the subject, it will be apparent, that, in this instance, it is of no practical necessity for the purposes of our argument; and it is truly the same in many other instances, where, if instead of reasoning theologically on the palpable operations of the mechanism, we should reason scientifically on the *modus operandi*, we would run into really irrelevant discussions. The theme of our present chapter is the effects of Habit, in as far as these effects serve to indicate the design or character of Him who is the author of our mental constitution. It matters not to any conclusion of ours, by what recondite, or, it may be, yet undiscovered process these effects are brought about; and whether the common theory, or that of Dr. Brown, or that again as modified and corrected by ourselves, is the just one. It is enough to know, that, if any given process of intermingled thought and feeling have been described by us once, there are laws at work, which, on the first step of that process again recurring, would incline us to describe the whole of the process over again; and with the greater power and certainty, the more frequently that process has been repeated. We are perfectly sure that the more frequently any particular sequence between thought and thought may have occurred, the more readily will it recur; so that when once the first thought has entered the mind, we may all the more confidently reckon on its being followed up by the second. This,

so far at least as suggestion is concerned, we hold enough for explaining the ever-recurring force and facility wherewith feelings also will arise and be followed up by their indulgence—and that, just in proportion to the frequency wherewith in given circumstances they have been awakened and indulged formerly. In as far as the objects of gratification are the exciting causes which stimulate and awaken the desires of gratification, then, any process which insures the presence and application of the causes, will also insure the fulfilment of the effects which result from them. If it be the presence or perception of the wine that stands before us which stirs up the appetite; and if, instead of acting on the precept of looking not unto the wine when it is red, we continue to look till the appetite be so inflamed that the indulgence becomes inevitable—then, as we looked at it continuously when present, will we, by the law of suggestion, be apt to think of it continuously when absent. If the one continuity was not broken by any considerations of principle or prudence—so the less readily will the other continuity be broken in like manner. When we revisit the next social company, we shall probably resign ourselves to the very order of sensations that we did formerly; and the more surely, the oftener that that order has already been described by us. And as the order of objects, with their sensations when present, so is the order of thoughts with their desires when absent. This order forces itself upon the mind with a strength proportional to the frequency of its repetition; and desires, when not evaded by the mind shifting its attention away from the objects of them, can only be appeased by their indulgence.

7. It is thus that he who enters on a career of vice, enters on a career of headlong degeneracy. If even for once we have described that process of thought and feeling, which leads, whether through the imagination or the senses, from the first presentation of a tempting object to a guilty indulgence—this of itself establishes a probability, that, on the recurrence of that object, we shall pass onward by the same steps to the same consummation. And it is a probability ever strengthening with every repetition of the process, till at length it advances towards the moral certainty of a helpless surrender to the tyranny of those evil passions, which we cannot resist, just because the will itself is in thralldom, and we choose not to resist them. It is thus that we might trace the progress of intemperance and licentiousness, and even of dishonesty, to whose respective solicitations we have

yielded at the first—till, by continuing to yield, we become the passive, the prostrate subjects of a force that is uncontrollable, only because we have seldom or never in good earnest tried to control it. It is not that we are struck of a sudden with moral impotency; but we are gradually benumbed into it. The power of temptation has not made instant seizure upon the faculties, or taken them by storm. It proceeds by an influence that is gently and almost insensibly progressive—just as progressive, in truth, as the association between particular ideas is strengthened by the frequency of their succession. But even as that association may at length become inveterate, insomuch that when the first idea finds entry into the mind, we cannot withstand the importunity wherewith the second insists upon following it; so might the moral habit become alike inveterate—thoughts succeeding thoughts, and urging onward their counterpart desires, in that wonted order, which had hitherto connected the beginning of a temptation with its full and final victory. At each repetition would he find it more difficult to break this order, or to lay an arrest upon it—till at length, as the fruit of this wretched regimen, its unhappy patient is lorded over by a power of moral evil, which possesses the whole man, and wields an irresistible or rather an unresisted ascendancy over him.

8. But this melancholy process, leading to a vicious indulgence, may be counteracted by an opposite process of resistance, though with far greater facility at the first—yet a facility ever augmenting, in proportion as the effectual resistance of temptation is persevered in. That balancing moment, at which pleasure would allure, and conscience is urging us to refrain, may be regarded as the point of departure or divergency, whence one or other of the two processes will take their commencement. Each of them consists in a particular succession of ideas with their attendant feelings; and whichever of them may happen to be described once, has, by the law of suggestion, the greater chance, in the same circumstances, of being described over again. Should the mind dwell on an object of allurements, and the considerations of principle not be entertained—it will pass onward from the first incitement to the final and guilty indulgence by a series of stepping-stones, each of which will present itself more readily in future; and with less chance of arrest or interruption by the suggestions of conscience than before. But should these suggestions be admitted, and far more, should they prevail—then, on the principle of association,

will they be all the more apt to intervene, on the repetition of the same circumstances; and again break that line of continuity, which, but for this intervention, would have led from a temptation to a turpitude or a crime. If on the occurrence of a temptation formerly, conscience did interpose, and represent the evil of a compliance, and so impress the man with a sense of obligation, as led him to dismiss the fascinating object from the presence of his mind, or to hurry away from it—the likelihood is, that the recurrence of a similar temptation will suggest the same train of thoughts and feelings, and lead to the same beneficial result; and this is a likelihood ever increasing with every repetition of the process. The train which would have terminated in a vicious indulgence, is dispossessed by the train which conducts to a resolution and an act of virtuous self-denial. The thoughts which tend to awaken emotions and purposes on the side of duty find readier entrance into the mind; and the thoughts which awaken and urge forward the desire of what is evil more readily give way. The positive force on the side of virtue is augmented by every repetition of the train which leads to a virtuous determination. The resistance to this force on the side of vice is weakened, in proportion to the frequency wherewith that train of suggestions which would have led to a vicious indulgence, is broken and discomfited. It is thus that when one is successfully resolute in his opposition to evil, the power of making the achievement and the facility of the achievement itself are both upon the increase; and virtue makes double gain to herself by every separate conquest which she may have won. The humbler attainments of moral worth are first mastered and secured; and the aspiring disciple may pass onward in a career that is quite indefinite to nobler deeds and nobler sacrifices.

9. And this law of habit, when enlisted on the side of righteousness, not only strengthens and makes sure our resistance to vice, but facilitates the most arduous performances of virtue. The man whose thoughts, with the purposes and doings to which they lead, are at the bidding of conscience, will, by frequent repetition, at length describe the same track almost spontaneously—even as in physical education, things laboriously learned at the first, come to be done at last without the feeling of an effort. And so, in moral education, every new achievement of principle smooths the way to future achievements of the same kind; and the precious fruit or purchase of each moral victory is to set us on higher and firmer vantage-ground for the conquests of prin-

ciple in all time coming. He who resolutely bids away the suggestions of avarice, when they come into conflict with the incumbent generosity; or the suggestions of voluptuousness, when they come into conflict with the incumbent self-denial; or the suggestions of anger, when they come into conflict with the incumbent act of magnanimity and forbearance—will at length obtain, not a respite only, but a final deliverance from their intrusion. Conscience, the longer it has made way over the obstacles of selfishness and passion—the less will it give way to these adverse forces, themselves weakened by the repeated defeats which they have sustained in warfare of moral discipline; or, in other words, the oftener that conscience makes good the supremacy which she claims—the greater would be the work of violence, and less the strength for its accomplishment, to cast her down from that station of practical guidance and command which of right belongs to her. It is in great part because, in virtue of the law of suggestion, those trains of thought and feeling, which connect her first biddings with their final execution, are the less exposed at every new instance to be disturbed, and the more likely to be repeated over again, that every good principle is more strengthened by its exercise, and every good affection is more strengthened by its indulgence than before. The acts of virtue ripen into habits; and the goodly and permanent result is, the formation or establishment of a virtuous character.

10. This, then, forms a distinct argument in the mental constitution for the virtuous character of Him who ordained it. The voice of authority within bidding us to virtue; and the immediate delights attendant on obedience, certainly speak strongly for the moral character of that administration under which we are placed. But, by looking to posterior and permanent results, we have the advantage of viewing the system of that administration in progress. Instead of the insulated acts, we are led to regard the abiding and the accumulating consequences—and by stretching forward our observation through larger intervals and to more distant points in the moral history of men, we are in likelier circumstances for obtaining a glimpse of their final destination; and so of seizing on this mighty and mysterious secret—the reigning policy of the Divine government, whence we might collect the character of Him who hath ordained it. And surely, it is of prime importance to be noted in this examination, that by every act of virtue we become more powerful for its

service ; and by every act of vice we become more helplessly its slaves ; or, in other words, were these respective moral regimens fully developed into their respective consummations, it would seem, as if by the one, we should be conducted to that state, where the faculty within, which is felt to be the rightful, would also become the reigning sovereign, and then we should have the full enjoyment of all the harmony and happiness attendant upon virtue—whereas by the other, those passions of our nature felt to be inferior, would obtain the lawless ascendancy, and subject their wretched bondsmen to the turbulence, and the agony, and the sense of degradation, which, by the very constitution of our being, are inseparable from the reign of moral evil.

11. We might not fully comprehend the design or meaning of a process, till we have seen the end of it. Had there been no death, the mystery of our present state might have been somewhat alleviated. We might then have seen, in bolder relief and indelible character, the respective consummations of vice and virtue—perhaps the world partitioned into distinct moral territories, where the habit of many centuries had given fixture and establishment, first, to a society of the upright, now in the firm possession of all goodness, as the well-earned result of that wholesome discipline through which they had passed ; and second, to a society of the reprobate, now hardened in all iniquity, and abandoned to the violence of evil passions no longer to be controlled and never to be eradicated. We might then have witnessed the peace, the contentment, the universal confidence and love, the melody of soul that reigned in the dwellings of the righteous ; and contrasted these with the disquietudes, the strifes, the fell and fierce collisions of injustice and mutual disdain and hate implacable, the frantic bacchanalian excesses with their dreary intervals of remorse and lassitude, which kept the other region in perpetual anarchy, and which, constituted as we are, must trouble or dry up all the well-springs of enjoyment, whether in the hearts of individuals or in the bosom of families. We could have been at no loss to have divined, from the history and state of such a world, the policy of its Ruler. We should have recognised, in that peculiar economy, by which every act, whether of virtue or vice, made its performer still more virtuous or more vicious than before, a moral remuneration on the one hand, and a moral penalty on the other—with an enhancement of all the consequences, whether good or evil, which flowed

from each of them. We could not have mistaken the purposes and mind of the Deity—when we saw thus palpably, and through the demonstrations of experience, the ultimate effects of these respective processes; and, in this total diversity of character, with a like total diversity of condition, were made to perceive, that righteousness was its own eternal reward, and that wickedness was followed up, and that for ever, with the bitter fruit of its own ways.

12. Death so far intercepts the view of this result, that it is not here the object of sight or of experience. Still, however, it remains the object of our likely anticipation. The truth is, that the process which we are now contemplating, the process by which character is formed and strengthened and perpetuated, suggests one of the strongest arguments within compass of the light of nature, for the immortality of the soul. In the system of the world we behold so many adaptations, not only between the faculties of sentient beings, and their counterpart objects in external nature; but between every historical progression in nature, and a fulfilment of corresponding interest or magnitude which it ultimately lands in—that we cannot believe of man's moral history, as if it terminated in death. More especially when we think of the virtuous character, how laboriously it is reared, and how slowly it advances to perfection; but, at length, how indefinite its capabilities of power and of enjoyment are, after this education of habits has been completed—it seems like the breach of a great and general analogy, if man is to be suddenly arrested on his way to the magnificent result, for which it might well be deemed that the whole of his life was but a preparation; having just reached the full capacity of an enjoyment, of which he had only been permitted, in this evanescent scene, a few brief and passing foretastes. It were like the infliction of a violence on the continuity of things, of which we behold no similar example, if a being so gifted were thus left to perish in the full maturity of his powers and moral acquisitions. The very eminence that he has won, we naturally look upon as the guarantee and the precursor of some great enlargement beyond it—warranting the hope, therefore, that Death but transforms without destroying him, or, that the present is only an embryo or rudimental state, the final development of which is in another and future state of existence.

13. This is not the right place for a full exposition of this argument. We might only observe, that there is an evidence

of man's immortality, in the moral state and history of the bad upon earth, as well as of the good. The truth is, that nature's most vivid anticipations of a conscious futurity on the other side of death, are the forebodings of guilty fear, not the bright anticipations of confident and rejoicing hope. We speak not merely of the unredressed wrongs inflicted by the evil upon the righteous, and which seem to demand an after-place of reparation and vengeance. Beside those unsettled questions between man and man, which death breaks off at the middle, and for the adjustment of which one feels as if it were the cry of eternal justice that there should be a reckoning afterwards—beside these, there is felt, more directly and vividly still, the sense of a yet unsettled controversy, between the sinner and the God whom he has offended. The notion of immortality is far more powerfully and habitually suggested by the perpetual hauntings or misgivings of this sort of undefined terror, by the dread of a coming penalty—rather than by the consciousness of merit, or of a yet unsatisfied claim to a well-earned reward. Nor is the argument at all lessened by that observed phenomenon in the history of guilt, the decay of conscience ; a hebetude, if it may be so termed, of the moral sensibilities, which keeps pace with the growth of a man's wickedness, and, at times, becomes quite inveterate towards the termination of his mortal career. The very torpor and tranquillity of such a state, would only appear all the more emphatically to tell, that a day of account is yet to come, when, instead of rioting, as heretofore, in the impunity of a hardihood that shields him alike from reproach and fear, conscience will at length re-awaken to upbraid him for his misdoings ; at once the assertor of its own cause, and the executioner of its own sentence. And even the most desperate in crime, do experience, at times, such gleams and resuscitations of moral light, as themselves feel to be the precursors of a revelation still more tremendous—when their own conscience, fully let loose upon them, shall, in the hands of an angry God, be a minister of fiercest vengeance. Certain it is, that, if death, instead of an entire annihilation, be but a removal to another and a different scene of existence, we see in this, when combined with the known laws and processes of the mind, the possibility, at least, of such a consummation. There is much in the business, and entertainments, and converse, and day-light of that urgent and obtruding world by which we are surrounded, to carry off the attention of the mind from its own guiltiness, and so, to suspend that agony, which, when

thrown back upon itself and dissevered from all its objects of gratification, will be felt without mitigation and without respite. In the busy whirl of life, the mind, drawn upon in all directions, can find, outwardly and abroad, the relief of a constant diversion from the misery of its own internal processes. But a slight change in its locality or its circumstances, would deliver it up to the full burden and agony of these; nor can we imagine a more intense and intolerable wretchedness, than that which would ensue, simply by rescinding the connexion which obtains in this world between a depraved mind and its external means of gratification—when, forced inwardly on its own haunted tenement, it met with nothing there but revenge unsatiated; and raging appetites, that never rest from their unappeased fermentation; and withal, joined to this perpetual sense of want, a pungent and pervading sense of worthlessness. It is the constant testimony of criminals, that, in the horrors and the tedium of solitary imprisonment, they undergo the most appalling of all penalties—a penalty, therefore, made up of moral elements alone; as neither pain, nor hunger, nor sickness, necessarily forms any of its ingredients. It strikingly demonstrates the character of Him who so constructed our moral nature, that from the workings of its mechanism alone, there should be evolved a suffering so tremendous on the children of iniquity, insomuch that a sinner meets with sorest vengeance when simply left to the fruit of his own ways—whether by the death which carries his disembodied spirit to its Tartarus; or by a resurrection to another scene of existence, where, in full possession of his earthly habits and earthly passions, he is nevertheless doomed to everlasting separation from their present counterpart and earthly enjoyments.

14. There is a distinction sometimes made between the natural and arbitrary rewards of virtue, or between the natural and arbitrary punishments of vice. The arbitrary is exemplified in the enactments of human law; there in general being no natural or necessary connexion between the crimes which it denounces and the penalties which it ordains for them—as between the fine or the imprisonment or the death upon the one hand, and the act of violence, whether more or less outrageous, upon the other. The natural, again, is exemplified in the workings of the human constitution; there being a connexion, in necessity and nature, between the temper which prompted the act of violence, and the wretchedness which it inflicts on him who is the unhappy subject, in his own bosom, of its fierce and restless

agitations. It is thus that not only is virtue termed its own reward, but vice its own greatest plague or self-tormentor. We have no information of the arbitrary rewards or punishments in a future state but from revelation alone. But of the natural, we have only to suppose that the existing constitution of man, and his existing habits, shall be borne with him to the land of eternity; and we may inform ourselves now of these, by the experience of our own felt and familiar nature. Our own experience can tell that the native delights of virtue, unaided by any high physical gratifications, and only if not disturbed by grievous physical annoyances, were enough of themselves to constitute an elysium of pure and perennial happiness; and again, that the native agonies of vice, unaided by any inflictions of physical suffering, and only if unalleviated by a perpetual round of physical enjoyments, were enough of themselves to constitute a dire and dreadful Pandemonium. They are not judicially awarded, but result from the workings of that constitution which God hath given to us; and they speak as decisively the purpose and character of Him who is the author of that constitution as would any code of jurisprudence proclaimed from the sanctuary of heaven, and which assigned to virtue, on the one hand, the honours and rewards of a blissful immortality—to vice, on the other, a place of anguish among the outcasts of a fiery condemnation.

BOOK IV.

EVIDENCES FOR A GOD IN THE ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MENTAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE GENERAL ADAPTATION OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

1. IT needs but a cursory observation of life to be made sensible, that man has not been endowed with a conscience, without, at the same time, being placed in a theatre which afforded the most abundant scope and occasion for its exercise. The truth is, that, in the multitude of fellow-beings by whom he is surrounded, and in the manifold variety of his social and family relations, there is a perpetual call on his sense of right and wrong—insomuch, that to the doings of every hour throughout his waking existence, one or other of these moral designations is applicable. It might have been stigmatized as the example of a mal-adjustment in the circumstances of our species, had man been provided with a waste feeling or a waste faculty, which remained dormant and unemployed from the want of counterpart objects that were suited to it. The wisdom of God admits of glorious vindication against any such charge in the physical department of our nature, where the objective and subjective have been made so marvellously to harmonize with each other; there being, in the material creation, sights of infinitely varied loveliness, and sounds of as varied melody, and many thousand tastes and odours of exquisite gratification, and distinctions innumerable of touch and feeling to meet the whole compass and diversity of the human senses—multiplying without end, both the notice that we receive from external things, and the enjoyments that we derive from them. And as little in the moral department of our nature is any of its faculties, and more especially the great and master faculty of all, left to languish from

the want of occupation. The whole of life, in fact, is crowded with opportunities for its employment—*or* rather, instead of being represented as the subject of so many distinct and ever-recurring calls, conscience may well be represented as the constant guide and guardian of human life; and, for the right discharge of this its high office, as being kept on the alert perpetually. The creature on whom conscience hath laid the obligation of refraining from all mischief, and rendering to society all possible good, lives under a responsibility which never for a single moment is suspended. He may be said to possess a continuity of moral being; and morality, whether of a good or evil hue, tinges the whole current of his history. It is a thing of constancy as well as a thing of frequency; for, even when not carried forth into action, it is not dormant, but possesses the mind in the form of a cherished purpose or cherished principle—*or*, as the Romans expressed it, of a perpetual will either to that which is good or evil. But over and above this, the calls to action are innumerable. In the wants of others; in their powers of enjoyment; in their claims on our equity, our protection, or our kindness; in the various openings and walks of usefulness; in the services which even the humblest might render to those of their own family, or household, or country; in the application of that comprehensive precept, to do good unto all men as we have opportunity—we behold a prodigious number and diversity of occasions for the exercise of moral principle. It is possible that the lessons of a school may not be arduous enough nor diversified enough for the capacity of a learner. But this cannot be affirmed of that school of discipline, alike arduous and unremitting, to which the great Author of our being hath introduced us. Along with the moral capacity by which He hath endowed us, He hath provided a richly-furnished gymnasium for its exercises and its trials, where we may earn, if not the triumphs of virtue, at least some delicious foretastes of that full and final blessedness for which the scholarship of human life, with its manifold engagements and duties, is so obviously fitted to prepare us.

2. But let us now briefly state the adaptation of external nature to the moral constitution of man, with a reference to that threefold generality which we have already expounded.* We have spoken of the supremacy of conscience, and of the inherent pleasures and pains of virtue and vice, and of the law and operation of habit—as forming three distinct arguments for the moral

* Book III., Chapters ii., iii., & iv.

goodness of Him, who hath so constructed our nature, that by its workings alone, man should be so clearly and powerfully warned to a life of righteousness—should in the native and immediate joys of rectitude, earn so precious a reward—and, finally, should be led onward to such a state of character, in respect of its confirmed good or confirmed evil, as to afford one of the likeliest prognostications which nature offers to our view of an immortality beyond the grave, where we shall abundantly reap the consequence of our present doings, in either the happiness of established virtue, or the utter wretchedness and woe of our then inveterate depravity. But hitherto we have viewed this nature of man, rather as an individual and insulated constitution, than as a mechanism acted upon by any forces or influences from without. It is in this latter aspect that we are henceforth to regard it; it being the proper design of the Book on which we have entered to state the adaptations of the objective to the subjective, or of external nature to the mental constitution of man. It should be recollected, however,* that in our view of external nature, we comprehend, not merely all that is external to the world of mind—for this would restrict us to the consideration of those reciprocal actings which take place between mind and matter. We further comprehend all that is external to one individual mind, and therefore the other minds which are around it; and so, as pregnant with the evidence of a Divine wisdom, it is our part to unfold the actings and reactings that take place between man and man in society.

3. And first, in regard to the power and sensibility of conscience, there is a most important influence brought to bear on each individual possessor of this faculty from without, and by his fellow-men. It will help us to understand it aright, if we reflect on a felt and familiar experience of all men—even the effect of a very slight notice, often of a single word, from one of our companions, to recall some past scene or transaction of our lives, which had long vanished from our remembrance; and would, but for this reawakening, have remained in deep oblivion to the end of our days. The phenomenon can easily be explained by the laws of suggestion. Our wonted trains of thought might never have conducted the mind to any thought or recollection of the event in question—whereas, on the occurrence of even a very partial intimation, all the associated circumstances come into vivid recognition; and we are transported

* See Introductory Chapter, § 1, 2, 3.

back again to the departed realities of former years, that had lain extinct within us for so long a period, and might have been extinct for ever, if not lighted up again by an extraneous application. How many are the days since early boyhood, of which not one trace or vestige now abides upon the memory! Yet perhaps there is not one of these days, the history of which could not be recalled by means of some such external or foreign help to the remembrance of it. Let us imagine, for example, that a daily companion had, unknown to us, kept a minute and statistical journal of all the events we personally shared in; and the likelihood is that, if admitted to the perusal of this document, even after the lapse of half a lifetime, our memory would depone to many thousand events which had else escaped into utter and irrecoverable forgetfulness. It is certainly remarkable that, on some brief utterance by another, the stories of former days should suddenly reappear, as if in illumined characters, on the tablet from which they had so totally faded; that the mention of a single circumstance, if only the link of a train, should conjure to life again a whole host of sleeping recollections: and so, in each of our fellow-men, might we have a remembrancer, who can vivify our consciousness anew, respecting scenes and transactions of our former history which had long gone by: and which, after having vanished once from a solitary mind left to its own processes, would have vanished everlastingly.

4. It is thus that, not only can one man make instant translation of his own memory; but on certain subjects, he can even make instant translation of his own intelligence into the mind of another. A shrewd discerner of the heart, when laying open its heretofore unrevealed mysteries, makes mention of things which at the moment we feel to be novelties; but which, almost at the same moment, are felt and recognised by us as truths—and that, not because we receive them upon his authority, but on the independent view that ourselves have of their own evidence. His utterance, in fact, has evoked from the cell of their imprisonment, remembrances which, but for him, might never have been awakened; and which, when thus summoned into existence, are so many vouchers for the perfect wisdom and truth of what he tells. A thousand peculiarities of life and character, till then unnoticed, are no sooner heard by us, although for the first time in our lives, than they shine before the mind's eye, in the light of a satisfying demonstration. And the reason is, that the materials of their proof have been actually stored up within

us, by the history and experience of former years, though in chambers of forgetfulness—whence, however, they are quickly and vividly called forth, as if with the power of a talisman, by the voice of him, who no sooner announces his proposition, than he suggests the bygone recollections of our own, which serve to confirm it. The pages of the novelist, or the preacher, or the moral essayist, though all of them should deal in statements alone, without the formal allegation of evidence, may be informed throughout with evidence notwithstanding; and that, because each of them speaks to the consciousness of his readers, unlocking a treasury of latent recollections, which no sooner start again into being, than they become witnesses for the sagacity and admirable sense of him with whom all this luminous and satisfying converse is held. It is like the holding up of a mirror, or the response of an echo to a voice. What the author discovers, the reader promptly and presently discerns. The one utters new things; but that light of immediate manifestation in which the other beholds them, is struck out of old materials which himself, too, had long since appropriated, but laid up in a dormitory, where they might have slumbered for ever—had it not been for that voice which charmed them anew into life and consciousness. This is the only way in which the instant recognition of truths before unheard of and unknown, can possibly be explained. It is because their evidence lies enveloped in the reminiscences of other days, which had long passed into oblivion; but are again presented to the notice of the mind by the power of association.

5. This is properly a case of intellectual rather than of moral adaptation; and is only now adverted to for the purpose of illustration. For a decayed conscience is susceptible of like resuscitation with a decayed memory. In treating of the effects of habit, we briefly noticed the gradual weakening of conscience, as the indulgences of vice were persisted in. Its remonstrances, however ineffectual, may, at the first, have had a part in that train of thought and feeling, which commences with a temptation, and is consummated in guilt; but in proportion to the frequency where-with the voice of conscience is hushed, or overborne, or refused entertainment by the mind, in that proportion does it lift a feebler and a fainter voice afterwards—till at length it may come to be unheard; and any suggestions from this faculty may either pass unheeded, or perhaps drop out of the train altogether. It is thus that many a foul or horrid immorality may come at length

to be perpetrated without the sense or feeling of its enormity. Conscience, with the repeated stiflings it has undergone, may, as if on the eve of extinction, have ceased from its exercises. This moral insensibility forms, in truth, one main constituent in the hardihood of crime. The conscience is cradled into a state of stupefaction; and the criminal, now a desperado in guilt, may prosecute his secret depravities, with no relentings from within, and no other dread upon his spirit, than that of discovery by his fellow-men.

6. And it is on the event of such discovery that we meet with the phenomenon in question. When that guilt, to which he had himself become so profoundly insensible, is at length beheld in the light of other minds—it is then that the scales are made to fall from the eyes of the offender; and he, as if suddenly awoke from lethargy, stands aghast before the spectacle of his own worthlessness. It is not the shame of detection, nor the fear of its consequences, which forms the whole of this distress. These may aggravate the suffering; but they do not altogether compose it—for often besides, is there a resurrection of the moral sensibilities within the bosom of the unhappy criminal, as if roused at the touch of sympathy, with the pronounced judgments and feelings of other men. When their unperverted and unwarped consciences, because free from the delusions which encompass his own, give forth a righteous sentence—they enlist his conscience upon their side, which then reasserts its power, and again speaks to him in a voice of thunder. When that continuous train between the first excitement of some guilty passion, and its final gratification, from which the suggestions of the moral faculty had been so carefully excluded, is thus arrested and broken—then does conscience, as if emancipated from a spell, at times recover from the infatuation which held it; and utter reproaches of its own, more terrible to the sinner's heart, than all the execrations of general society. And whatever shall forcibly terminate the guilty indulgence, may, by interrupting the accustomed series of thoughts, and purposes, and passions, also dissipate and put an end to the inveteracy of this moral or spiritual blindness. The confinement of a prison-house may do it. The confinement of a deathbed may do it. And, accordingly, on these occasions does conscience, after an interval it would seem, not of death but only of suspended animation, come forth with the might of an avenger, and make emphatic representation of her wrongs.

7. But this influence which we have attempted to exhibit in bold relief, by means of rare and strong exemplification, is in busy and perpetual operation throughout society—and that more to prevent crime than to punish it; rather to maintain the conscience in freshness and integrity than to reanimate it from a state of decay, or to recall its aberrations. Indeed, its restorative efficacy, though far more striking, is not so habitual, nor in the whole amount so salutary, as its counteractive efficacy. The truth is, that we cannot frequent the companionships of human life without observing the constant circulation and reciprocal play of the moral judgments among men, with whom there is not a more favourite or familiar exercise than that of discussing the conduct and pronouncing on the deserts of each other. It is thus that every individual, liable in his own case to be misled or blinded by the partialities of interest and passion, is placed under the observation and guardianship of his fellows, who, exempted from his personal or particular bias, give forth a righteous sentence and cause it to be heard. A pure moral light is by this means kept up in society, composed of men whose thoughts are ever employed in “accusing or else excusing one another”—so that every individual conscience receives an impulse and a direction from sympathy with the consciences around it. We are aware that the love of applause intervenes at this point as a distinct and auxiliary influence. But the primary influence is a moral one. Each man lives under a consciousness of the vigilant and discerning witnesses who are on every side of him; and his conscience, kept on the alert and kept in accordance with theirs, acts both more powerfully and more purely than if left to the decay and the self-deception of its own withering solitude. The lamp which might have waxed dim by itself, revives its fading lustre by contact and communication with those which burn more brightly in other bosoms than its own; and this law of interchange between mind and mind, forms an important adaptation in the mechanism of human society.

8. But to revert for a moment to the revival of conscience after that its sensibilities had become torpid for a season; and they are quickened anew, as if by sympathy, with the moral judgments of other men. This phenomenon of conscience seems to afford another glimpse or indication of futurity. It at least tells with what facility that Being who hath all the resources of infinity at command, could, and that by an operation purely mental, inflict the vengeance of a suffering the most exquisite

on the children of disobedience. He has only to re-open the fountains of memory and conscience; and this will of itself cause distillation within the soul of the waters of bitterness. And if, in the voice of earthly remembrancers and earthly judges, we observe such a power of re-awakening—we might infer not the possibility alone but the extreme likelihood of a far more vivid re-awakening, when the offended Lawgiver Himself takes the judgment into His own hands. If the rebuke of human tongues and human eyes be of such force to revive the sleeping agony within us, what may we not feel, when the adverse sentence is pronounced against us from the throne of God, and in the midst of a universal theatre? If, in this our little day, the condemnation is felt to be insupportable, that twinkles upon us from the thousand secondary and subordinate lustres by which we are surrounded—what must it be when He, by whose hand they have all been lighted up, turns towards us the strength of His own countenance; and, with His look of reprobation sends forth trouble and dismay over the hosts of the rebellious?*

9. But besides the pleasures and pains of conscience, there is, in the very taste and feeling of moral qualities, a pleasure or a pain. This formed our second general argument in favour of God's righteous administration; † and our mental constitution, even when viewed singly, furnishes sufficient materials on which to build it. But the argument is greatly strengthened and enhanced by the adaptation to that constitution of external nature, more especially as exemplified in the reciprocal influences which take place between mind and mind in society; for the effect of this adaptation is to multiply both the pleasures of virtue and the sufferings of vice. The first, the original pleasure, is that which is felt by the virtuous man himself; as, for example, by the benevolent, in the very sense and feeling of that kindness whereby his heart is actuated. The second is felt by him who is the object of this kindness—for merely in the conscious possession of another's good-will, there is a great and distinct enjoyment. And then the manifested kindness of the former awakens gratitude in the bosom of the latter; and this, too, is a highly pleasurable emotion. And lastly, gratitude sends

* Dr. Abercrombie, in his interesting work on the Intellectual Powers, states some remarkable cases of resuscitated and enlarged memory, which remind one of the explanation given by Mr. Coleridge of the opening of the books in the day of judgment. It is on the opening of the book of conscience that the sinner is made to feel the truth and righteousness of his condemnation.

† Book III. chap. iii.

back a delicious incense to the benefactor who awakened it. By the purely mental interchange of these affections, there is generated a prodigious amount of happiness; and that altogether independent of the gratifications which are yielded by the material gifts of liberality on the one hand, or by the material services of gratitude on the other. Insomuch that we have only to imagine a reign of perfect virtue; and then, in spite of the physical ills which essentially and inevitably attach to our condition, we should feel as if we had approximated very nearly to a state of perfect enjoyment among men; or, in other words, that the bliss of paradise would be almost fully realized upon earth, were but the moral graces and charities of paradise firmly established there, and in full operation. Let there be honest and universal good-will in every bosom, and this be responded to from all who are the objects of it by an honest gratitude back again; let kindness, in all its various effects and manifestations, pass and repass from one heart and countenance to another; let there be a universal courteousness in our streets, and let fidelity and affection and all the domestic virtues take up their secure and lasting abode in every family; let the succour and sympathy of a willing neighbourhood be ever in readiness to meet and to overpass all the want and wretchedness to which humanity is liable; let truth, and honour, and inviolable friendship between man and man, banish all treachery and injustice from the world; in the walks of merchandise, let an unfailing integrity on the one side, have the homage done to it of unbounded confidence on the other—insomuch that each man reposing with conscious safety on the uprightness and attachment of his fellow, and withal rejoicing as much in the prosperity of an acquaintance, as he should in his own, there would come to be no place for the harassments and the heartburnings of mutual suspicion or resentment or envy: who does not see, in the state of a society thus constituted and thus harmonized, the palpable evidence of a nature so framed, that the happiness of the world and the righteousness of the world kept pace the one with the other? And it is all-important to remark of this happiness, that, in respect both to quality and amount, it mainly consists of moral elements; so that, while every giver who feels as he ought, experiences a delight in the exercise of generosity which rewards him a hundred-fold for all its sacrifices; every receiver who feels as he ought, rejoices infinitely more in the sense of the benefactor's kindness, than in the physical gratification or fruit

of the benefactor's liberality. It is saying much for the virtuousness of Him who hath so moulded and so organized the spirit of man, that, apart from sense and from all its satisfactions, but from the ethereal play of the good affections alone, the highest felicity of our nature should be generated; that, simply by the interchange of cordiality between man and man, and one benevolent emotion re-echoing to another, there should be yielded to human hearts, so much of the truth and substance of real enjoyment—so that did justice, and charity, and holiness, descend from heaven to earth, taking full and universal possession of our species, the happiness of heaven would be sure to descend along with them. Could any world be pointed out where the universality and reign of vice effected the same state of blissful and secure enjoyment that virtue would in ours—we should infer that he was the patron and the friend of vice who had dominion over it. But when assured, on the experience we have of our actual nature, that in the world we occupy, a perfect morality would, but for certain physical calamities, be the harbinger of a perfect enjoyment—we regard this as an incontestable evidence for the moral goodness of our own actual Deity.

10. And in such an argument as the present, although the main beatitudes of virtue are of a moral and spiritual character, its subserviency to the physical enjoyments of life ought not to be overlooked, though perhaps too obvious to be dwelt upon. The most palpable of these subserviencies is the effect of benevolence in diffusing abundance among the needy, and so alleviating the ills of their destitution. This is so very patent as not to require being expatiated on. Yet we might notice here one important adaptation, connected with the exercise of this morality—realized but in part, so long as virtue has only a partial occupation in society; but destined, we hope, to receive its entire and beautiful accomplishment, when virtue shall have become universal. It is well known that certain collateral but very serious mischiefs attend the exercise of a profuse and capricious and indiscriminate charity; that it may, in fact, augment and aggravate the indigence which it tries to relieve, beside working a moral deterioration among the humbler classes, by ministering to the reckless improvidence of the dissipated and the idle—an operation alike injurious to the physical comfort of the one party, and to the moral comfort of the other. These effects are inevitable, so long as the indiscriminate benevolence

of the rich meets with an indefinite selfishness and rapacity on the part of the poor. But this evil will be mitigated and at length done away, with the growth of principle among mankind; and more especially, when, instead of being confined to one of these classes, it is partitioned among both. Let the wealthy be as generous as they ought in their doings, and the poor be as moderate as they ought in their expectations and desires; and then will that problem, which has so baffled the politicians and economists of England, find its own spontaneous, while at the same time its best adjustment. Let an exuberant yet well directed liberality on the one side come into encounter, instead of a sordid and insatiable appetency, with the recoil of delicacy and self-respect upon the other, and the noble independence of men who will work with their own hands rather than be burdensome; and then will the benefactions of the wealthy and the wants of the indigent not only meet but overpass. The willingness of the one party to give, will exceed the willingness of the other to receive; and an evil which threatens to rend society asunder, and which law, in her attempts to remedy, has only exasperated, will at length give way before the omnipotence of moral causes. This, as being one of many specimens, tells most significantly that man was made for virtue, or that this was the purpose of God in making him—when we find, that through no other medium than the morality of the people, can the sorest distempers of society be healed. The impotence of human wisdom, and of every political expedient which this wisdom can devise for the well-being of a state, when virtue languishes among the people, is one of the strongest proofs which experience affords, that virtue was the design of our creation. And we know not how more emphatic demonstration can be given of a virtuous Deity, than when we find society to have been so constructed by His hands, that virtue forms the great alternative on which the secure or lasting prosperity of a commonwealth is hinged—so that for any aggregate of human beings to be right physically and right economically, it is the indispensable, while at the same time the all-effectual condition, that they should be right morally.

11. Nothing can be more illustrative of the character of God, or more decisive of the question, whether His preference is for universal virtue or for universal vice in the world, than to consider the effect of each on the well-being of human society—even that society which He did Himself ordain, and whose

mechanism is the contrivance of His own intellect, and the work of His own hands. It may not be easy to explain the origin of that moral derangement into which the species has actually fallen ; but it affords no obscure or uncertain indication of what the species was principally made for, when we picture to ourselves the difference between a commonwealth of vice and a commonwealth of virtue. We have already said enough on the obvious connexion which obtains between the righteousness of a nation and the happiness of its families ; and it were superfluous to dilate on the equally obvious connexion which obtains between a state of general depravity, and a state of general wretchedness and disorder. And the counterpart observation holds true, that, as the beatitudes of the one condition, so the sufferings of the other are chiefly made up of moral elements. If, in the former, there be a more precious and heartfelt enjoyment in the possession of another's kindness, than in all the material gifts and services to which that kindness has prompted him—so in the latter, may it often happen, that the agony arising from simple consciousness of another's malignity, will greatly exceed any physical hurt, whether in person or property, that we ever shall sustain from him. A loss that we suffer from the dishonesty of another is far more severely felt, than a tenfold loss occasioned by accident or misfortune ; or, in other words, we find the moral provocation to be greatly more pungent and intolerable than the physical calamity. So that beside the material damage, too palpable to be insisted on at any length, which vice and violence inflict upon society, there should be taken into account the soreness of spirit, the purely mental distress and disquietude which follow in their train—of which we have already seen, how much is engendered even in the workings of one individual mind ; but susceptible of being inflamed to a degree indefinitely higher, by the reciprocal working of minds, all of them hating and all hateful to each other. In this mere antipathy of the heart, more especially when aided by nearness and the opportunities of mutual expression, there are sensations of most exquisite bitterness. There is a wretchedness in the mere collision of hostile feelings themselves, though they should break not forth into overt acts of hostility ; in the simple demonstrations of malignity, apart from its doings ; in the war but of words and looks and fierce gesticulations, though no violence should be inflicted on the one side or sustained upon the other. To make the aggressor in these purely mental conflicts intensely

miserable, it is enough that he should experience within him the agitations and the fires of a resentful heart. To make the recipient intensely miserable, it is enough that he should be demoniacally glared upon by a resentful eye. Were this power which resides in the emotions by themselves sufficiently reflected on, it would evince how intimately connected, almost how identified, wickedness and wretchedness are with each other. To realize the miseries of a state of war, it is not necessary that there should be contests of personal strength. The mere contests of personal feeling will suffice. Let there be mutual rage and mutual revilings; let there be the pangs and the outcries of fierce exasperation; let there be the continual droppings of peevishness and discontent; let disdain meet with equal disdain; or even, instead of scorn from the lofty, let there but the slights and the insults of contempt from men who themselves are of the most contemptible; let there be haughty defiance, and spiteful derision, and the mortifications of affronted and irritated pride—in the tumults of such a scene, though tumults of the mind alone, there were enough to constitute a hell of assembled maniacs or of assembled malefactors. The very presence and operation of these passions would form their own sorest punishment. To have them perpetually in ourselves is to have a hell in the heart. To meet with them perpetually in others is to be compassed about with a society of fiends, to be beset with the miseries of a Pandemonium.

12. Whether we look, then, to the separate or the social constitution of humanity, we observe abundant evidence for the mind and meaning of the Deity, who both put together the elements of each individual nature, and the elements which enter into the composition of society. We cannot imagine a more decisive indication of His favour being on the side of moral good, and His displeasure against moral evil, than that, by the working of each of these constitutions, virtue and happiness on the one hand, vice and wretchedness on the other, should be so intimately and inseparably allied. Such sequences or laws of nature as these, speak as distinctly the character of Him who established them, as any laws of jurisprudence would the character of the monarch by whom they were enacted: And to learn this lesson, we do not need to wait for the distant consequences of vice or virtue. We at once feel the distinction put upon them by the hand of the Almighty, in the instant sensations which He hath appended to each of them—implicated as their effects are with the very

fountain-head of moral being, and turning the hearts which they respectively occupy, into the seats either of wildest anarchy, or of serene and blissful enjoyment.

13. The law and operation of habit, as exemplified in one individual mind, formed the theme of our third general argument.* The only adaptation which we shall notice to this part of our mental constitution in the framework of society, is that afforded by the changes which it undergoes in the flux of its successive generations—in virtue of which, the tender susceptibilities of childhood are placed under the influence of that ascendant seniority which precedes or goes before it. At first sight, it may be thought of this peculiarity, that it tells equally in both directions—that is, either in the transmission and accumulation of vice, or in the transmission and accumulation of virtue in the world. But there is one circumstance of superiority in favour of the latter, which bids us look hopefully onward to the final prevalence of the good over the evil. We are aware of the virulence wherewith, in families, the crime and profligacy of a depraved parentage must operate on the habits of their offspring; and of the deadly poison which, in crowded cities, passes with quick descent from the older to the younger, along the links of youthful companionship; and even of those secret, though, we trust, rare and monstrous societies, which, in various countries, and various ages, were held for the celebration of infernal orgies, for the initiation of the yet unknowing or unpractised in the mysteries of vice. But after every deduction has been made for these, who does not see that the systematic and sustained effort, the wide and general enterprise, the combination of numbers in the face of day, and with the sympathies of an approving public, give a prodigious balance on the side of moral education? The very selfishness of vice and expansiveness of virtue give rise to this difference between them—the one centered on its own personal enjoyments, and, with a few casual exceptions, rather heedless of the principles of others than set on any schemes or speculations of proselytism; the other, by its very nature, aspiring after the good of the whole species, and bent on the propagation of its own likeness, till righteousness and truth shall have become universal among men. Accordingly, all the ostensible countenance and exertion in the cause of learning, whether by governments or associations, is on the side of virtue; while no man could dare to front the public eye with a scheme of discipleship

* Book III. chap. iv.

in the lessons whether of fraud or profligacy. The clear tendency, then, is to impress a right direction on the giant power of education; and when this is brought to bear, more systematically and generally than heretofore, on the pliant boyhood of the land—we behold, in the operation of habit, a guarantee for the progressive conquests, and at length the ultimate and universal triumph of good over evil in society. Our confidence in this result is greatly enhanced, when we witness the influence even of but one mind among the hundreds of any given neighbourhood, if zealously and wisely directed to the object of moral and economical improvement. Let that most prolific of all philanthropy then be fully and fairly set on foot, which operates, by means of education, on the early germs of character; and we shall have the most effective of all agency engaged, for the production of the likeliest of all results. The law of habit, when looked to in the manageable ductility of its outset, presents a mighty opening for the production of a new era in the moral history of mankind; and the same law of habit, when looked to in the maturity of its fixed and final establishment, encourages the expectation of a permanent as well as universal reign of virtue in the world.

14. Even in the yet chaotic and rudimental state of the world, we can observe the powers and the likelihoods of such a consummation; and what gives an overbearing superiority to the chances on the side of virtue is, that parents, although the most sunken in depravity themselves, welcome the proposals, and receive with gratitude the services of Christian or moral philanthropy in behalf of their families. However hopeless, then, of reformation among those whose vicious habits have become inveterate, it is well that there should be so wide and unobstructed an access to those among whom the habits have yet to be formed. It is this which places education on such firm vantage-ground, if not for reclaiming the degeneracy of individuals, yet for reclaiming after the lapse of a few generations the degeneracy of the species; and however abortive many of the schemes and enterprises in this highest walk of charity may hitherto have proved, yet the manifest and growing attention to the cause does open a brilliant moral perspective for the ages that are to come. The experience of what has been done locally by a few zealous individuals, warrants our most cheering anticipations of what may yet be done universally—when the powers of that simple but mighty instrument which they employ, if brought to bear on that most malleable of all subjects, the infancy of human exist-

ence, come to be better understood, and put into busy operation over the whole length and breadth of the land. In the grievous defect of our national institutions, and the wretched abandonment of a people left to themselves, and who are permitted to live recklessly and at random as they list—we see enough to account both for the profligacy of our crowded cities, and for the sad demoralization of our neglected provinces. But on the other hand, we feel assured that, in an efficient system of wise and well-principled instruction, there are capabilities within our reach for a great and glorious revival. We might not know the reason, why, in the moral world, so many ages of darkness and depravity should have been permitted to pass by—any more than we know the reason, why, in the natural world, the trees of a forest, instead of starting all at once into the full efflorescence and stateliness of their manhood, have to make their slow and laborious advancement to maturity, cradled in storms, and alternately drooping or expanding with the vicissitudes of the seasons. But, though unable to scan all the cycles either of the moral or natural economy, yet may we recognise such influences at work, as, when multiplied and developed to the uttermost, are abundantly capable of regenerating the world. One of the likeliest of these influences is the power of education—to the perfecting of which so many minds are earnestly directed at this moment; and for the general acceptance of which in society, we have a guarantee in the strongest affections and fondest wishes of the fathers and mothers of families.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SPECIAL AND SUBORDINATE ADAPTATIONS OF EXTERNAL NATURE TO THE MORAL CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

1. We have hitherto confined our attention to certain great and simple phenomena of our moral nature, which, though affording a different sort of evidence for the being of God from the organic and complicated structures of the material world—yet, on the hypothesis of an existent Deity, are abundantly decisive of His preference for virtue over vice, and so of the righteousness of His own character. That He should have inserted a great master faculty in every human bosom, all whose decisions are on the side of justice, benevolence, and truth, and condemna-

tory of their opposites; that He should have invested this conscience with such powers of instant retribution, in the triumphs of that complacency wherewith He so promptly rewards the good, and the horrors of that remorse wherewith He as promptly chastises the evil; that beside these, He should have so distinguished between virtue and vice,* as that the emotions and exercises of the former should all be pleasurable, and of the latter painful to the taste of the inner man; that He should have so ordained the human constitution, as that by the law of habit, virtuous and vicious lives, or series of acts having these respective moral qualities, should issue in the fixed and permanent results of virtuous and vicious characters—these form the important generalities of our moral nature. And while they obviously and immediately announce to us a present demonstration in favour of virtue; they seem to indicate a preparation and progress towards a state of things, when, after that the moral education of the present life has been consummated, the great Ruler of men will manifest the eternal distinction which He puts between the good and the evil.

2. Now in these few simple sequences, however strongly and unequivocally they evince the character of a God already proved or already presupposed, we have not the same intense evidence for design, which is afforded by the distinct parts or the distinct principles of a very multifarious combination. Yet the constitution of man's moral nature is not defective in this evidence—though certainly neither so prolific nor so palpable in our mental, as in our anatomical system. Still, however, there is a mechanism in mind as well as body, with a diversity of principles, if not a diversity of parts, consisting of so many laws, grafted it may be on a simple and indivisible substance, yet yielding in the fact of their beneficial concurrence, no inconsiderable argument for the wisdom and goodness of Him who framed us. Nor does it

* Butler, in Part I. chap. 3, of his Analogy, makes the following admirable discrimination between actions themselves and that quality ascribed to them which we call virtuous or vicious.—“ An action by which any natural passion is gratified, or fortune acquired, procures delight or advantage, abstracted from all consideration of the morality of such action, consequently the pleasure or advantage in this case is gained by the action itself, not by the morality, the virtuousness, or viciousness of it, though it be, perhaps, virtuous or vicious. Thus, to say such an action or course of behaviour procured such pleasure or advantage, or brought on such inconvenience and pain, is quite a different thing from saying that such good or bad effect was owing to the virtue or vice of such action or behaviour. In one case, an action abstracted from all moral consideration produced its effect. In the other case—for it will appear that there are such cases—the morality of the action—the action under a moral consideration, *i. e.*, the virtuousness or viciousness of it, produced the effect.”

matter, as we have already said, whether these are all of them original, or some of them, as the analysts of mind have laboured to manifest, only derivative laws in the human constitution. If the former, we have an evidence grounded on the beneficial conjunction of a greater number of independent laws. If the latter, we are reduced to fewer independent laws—but these all the more prolific of useful applications, each of which applications is grounded on a beneficial adaptation of some peculiar circumstances, in the operation of which it is, that the primary is transmuted into a secondary law.* But whether the one or the other, they exhibit phases of humanity distinct from any that we have yet been employed in contemplating; a number of special affections, each characterized by its own name, and pointing to its own separate object, yet all of them performing an important subsidiary part, for the moral good both of the individual and of the species; and presenting us, therefore, with the materials of additional evidence for a moral and beneficent design in the formation of our race.

3. When we look to the beauty which overspreads the face of nature, and the exquisite gratification which it ministers to the senses of man, we cannot doubt, either the taste for beauty which resides in the primeval mind that emanated all this gracefulness, or the benevolence that endowed man with a kindred taste, and so fitted him for a kindred enjoyment. This conclusion, however, like any moral conclusion we have yet come to, respecting the perfections or the purposes of God, is founded on generalities—on the general amount of beauty in the world, and the delight wherewith men behold and admire it. Yet, beside this, we may draw a corroborative evidence for the same, from the machinery of certain special contrivances—as the construction of the calyx in plants, for the defence of the tender blossom previous to its expansion; and the apparatus for scattering seeds, whereby the earth is more fully invested with its mantle of rich and varied garniture. And notwithstanding the blight which has so obviously passed over the moral world, and defaced many of its original lineaments, while it has left the materialism of creation, the loveliness of its scenes and landscapes, in a great measure

* And besides this, would it not bespeak a more comprehensive wisdom on the part of a human artificer, that by means of one device, or by the application of one principle, he effected not a few, but many distinct and beneficial purposes; and does it not in like manner enhance the exhibition of Divine skill in the workmanship of nature, when a single law is found to subserve a vast and manifold variety of important uses?

untouched—still we possess very much the same materials for a Natural Theology, in reasoning on the element of virtue, as in reasoning on the element of beauty. We have first those generalities of argument which are already expounded by us at sufficient length; and we have also the evidence, now to be unfolded, of certain special provisions for the preservation and growth of the immortal plant, in the study of which we shall observe more of mechanism than we have yet contemplated; and more, therefore, of that peculiar argument for design, which lies in the adaptation of varied means, in the concurrence of distinct expedients, each helping the other onward to a certain beneficial consummation.

4. But we must here premise an observation extensively applicable in mental science. When recognising the obvious subserviency of some given feeling or principle in the mind to a beneficial result—we are apt to imagine that it was somehow or other, in the contemplation of this result, that the principle was generated; and that therefore, instead of a distinct and original part of the human constitution, it is but a derivative from an anterior process of thought or calculation on the part of man, in the act of reflecting on what was most for the good of himself, or the good of society. In this way man is conceived to be in some measure the creator of his own mental constitution; or, at least, there are certain parts of it regarded as secondary, and the formation of which is ascribed to the wisdom of man, which, if regarded as instinctive and primary, would have been directly ascribed to the wisdom of God. There are many writers, for example, on the origin and rights of property, who, instead of admitting what may be termed an instinct of appropriation, would hold the appropriating tendency to be the result of human intelligence, after experience had of the convenience and benefits of such an arrangement. Now on this subject, we may take a lesson from the physical constitution of man. It is indispensable to the preservation of our animal system, that food should be received at certain intervals into the stomach. Yet, notwithstanding all the strength which is ascribed to the principle of self-preservation, and all the veneration which is professed by the expounders of our nature for the wisdom and foresight of man—the Author of our frame has not left this important interest merely to our care, or our consideration. He has not so trusted us to ourselves; but has inserted among the other affections and principles wherewith He has endowed us, the appetite of hunger

—a strong and urgent and ever-recurring desire for food, which, it is most certain, stands wholly unconnected with any thought on our part, of its physical or posterior uses for the sustenance of the body; and from which it would appear, that we need to be not only reminded at proper intervals of this incumbent duty, but goaded on to it. Could the analysts of our nature have ascertained of hunger, that it was the product of man's reflection on the necessity of food, it might have been quoted as an instance of the care which man takes of himself. But it seems that he could not be thus confided, either with his own individual preservation, or with the preservation of his species; and so, for the security of both these objects, strong appetites had to be given him, which, incapable of being resolved into any higher principles, stand distinctly and unequivocally forth, as instances of the care that is taken of him by God.

5. Now this, though it does not prove, yet may prepare us to expect similar provisions in the constitution of our minds. Indeed, the operose and complicated system which the great Architect of nature hath devised for our bodies, carries in it a sort of warning to those who, enamoured of the simplifications of theory, would labour to reduce all our mental phenomena to one or two principles. There is no warrant for this in the examples which anatomy and physiology, those sciences that have to do with the animal economy of man, have placed before our eyes. Now, though we admit not this as evidence for the actual complexity of man's moral economy, it may at least school away those prepossessions of the fancy or of the taste that would lead us to resist or to dislike such evidence when offered. We hold it not unlikely that the same Being, who, to supplement the defects of human prudence, hath furnished us with distinct corporeal appetites that might prompt us to operations of the greatest subservient benefit both to the individual and the species, might also, to supplement the defects of human wisdom and principle, have furnished us with distinct mental affections or desires, both for our own particular good and the good of society. If man could not be left to his own guidance in matters which needed but the anticipation of a few hours; but to save him from the decay and the death which must have otherwise ensued, had so powerful a remembrancer and instigator given to him as the appetite of hunger—we ought not to marvel, should it be found that nature, in endowing him mentally, hath presumed on his incapacity either for wisely devising or for regularly acting, with

a view to distant consequences, and amid the complicated relations of human society. It may, on the one hand, have inserted forces, when the mere consideration of good effects would not have impelled; or, on the other hand, may have inserted checks, when the mere consideration of evil effects would not have arrested. Yet so it is, that, because of the good that is thereby secured and of the evil that is thereby shunned—we are apt to imagine of some of the most useful principles of our nature, that they are somehow the product of human manufacture; the results of human intelligence or of rapid processes of thought by man, sitting in judgment on the consequences of his actions, and wisely providing either for or against them. Now it is very true, that the anger, and the shame, and the emulation, and the parental affection, and the compassion, and the love of reputation, and the sense of property, and the conscience or moral sense—are so many forces of a mechanism, which if not thus furnished, and that, too, within certain proportions, would run into a disorder that might have proved destructive both of the individual and of the species. For reasons already hinted at, we hold it immaterial to the cause of natural theism, whether these constitutional propensities of the human mind are its original or its secondary laws; but at all events, it is enough for any argument of ours, that they are not so generated by the wisdom of man as to supersede the inference which we draw from them, in favour both of the wisdom and goodness of God.

6. The common definition given of anger is an instance of the tendency on the part of philosophers, if not to derive, at least to connect, the emotions of which we have been made susceptible with certain anterior or higher principles of our nature. Dr. Reid tells us that the proper object of resentment is an injury; and that as “no man can have the notion of injustice without having the notion of justice,” then, “if resentment be natural to man, the notion of justice must be no less natural.”* And Dr. Brown defines anger to be “that emotion of instant displeasure, which arises from the feeling of injury done or the discovery of injury intended, or in many cases, from the discovery of the mere

* In glaring contradiction to this, is Dr Reid's own affirmation regarding the brutes. He says, that “conscience is peculiar to man: we see no vestige of it in the brute animals. It is one of those prerogatives by which we are raised above them.” But animals are most abundantly capable of anger—even of that which, by a very general definition, is said to be the emotion that is awakened by a sense of injury, which sense of injury must imply in it the sense of its opposite, even of justice, and so land us in the conclusion that brutes are capable of moral conception, or that they have a conscience.

omission of good offices to which we conceived ourselves entitled, though this very omission may of itself be regarded as a species of injury." Now the sense of injury implies a sense of its opposite—a sense of justice, therefore, or the conception of a moral standard from which the injury that has awakened the resentment is felt to be a deviation. But as nothing ought to form part of a definition, which is not indispensable to the thing defined, it would appear, as if in the judgment of both these philosophers, all who were capable of anger must also have, to a certain degree, a capacity of moral judgment or moral feeling. The property of resenting a hurt inflicted upon ourselves, would, at this rate, argue, in all cases, a perception of what the moral and equitable adjustment would be between ourselves and others. Now, that these workings of a moral nature are essential to the feeling of anger is an idea which admits of most obvious and decisive refutation—it being an emotion to which not only infants are competent, anterior to the first dawns of their moral nature; but even idiots with whom this nature is obliterated, or still more the inferior animals, who want it altogether. There must be a sense of annoyance to originate the feeling; but a sense of injury, implying as it does a power of moral judgment or sensibility, can be in no way indispensable to an emotion, exemplified in its utmost force and intensity by sentient creatures, in whom there cannot be detected even the first rudiments of a moral nature. Two dogs, when fighting for a bone, make as distinct and declared an exhibition of their anger, as two human beings when disputing about the boundary of their contiguous fields. The emotion flashes as unequivocally from any of the inferior, as it does from the only rational and moral species on the face of our globe; as in the vindictive glare of an infuriated bull, or of a lioness robbed of her whelps, and who as if making proclamation of her wrongs, gives forth her deep and reiterated cry to the echoes of the wilderness. It is an emotion, in fact, which seems coextensive, not only with moral, but with physical sensation. And if any faith can be placed in the physiognomy, or the natural signs, by which irrational creatures represent what passes within them; this passion announces itself as vividly and discernibly in the outcries of mutual resentment which ring throughout the amplitudes of savage and solitary nature, as in the contests of civilized man.

7. The truth, then, seems to be, that the office of the moral faculty is, not to originate, but rather to confine, and qualify,

and regulate this emotion. Anger, if we but study its history and actual exhibitions, will be found the primary and the natural response to a hurt, or harm, or annoyance of any sort inflicted on us by others; and, as such, may be quite expansive, and unrestrained, and open to excitation from all points of the compass—anterior to and apart from any consideration of its justice, or whether in the being who called it forth, there have been the purpose or not of violating our rights. Infants are fully capable of the feeling, long before they have a notion of equity, or of what is rightfully their own and rightfully another's. The anger of animals, too, is, in like manner, destitute of that moral ingredient, which the definitions we have quoted suppose indispensable to the formation of it. And yet their emitted sounds have the very expression of fierceness, that we meet with so often among the fellows of our own species. The provocation, the resentment, the kindling glance of hostility, the gradual heightening of the wrath, its discharge in acts of mutual violence, and lastly, its gluttoned satisfaction in the flight and even the death of the adversary—these are all indicative of kindred workings within, that have their outward vent in a common and kindred physiognomy, between him who is styled the lord of the creation, and those beneath his feet, who are conceived to stand at a distance that scarcely admits of comparison in the phenomena of their nature. Even man, in the full growth of his rational and moral nature, will often experience the out-breakings of an anger merely physical; as, to state one instance out of the many, may be witnessed in the anger wreaked by him on the inferior animals, when, all unconscious of injury to him, they enter upon his fields, or damage the fruit of his labours. The object of a just resentment towards others, is the proposed injustice of others towards us; and, so far from purposing the injustice, animals have not even the faculty of conceiving it. The moral consideration, then, does not enter as a constituent part into all resentment. It is rather a superadded quality which designates a species of it. It is not the epithet which characterizes all anger, but is limited to a certain kind of it. It may be as proper to say of one anger that it is just, and of another that justice or morality has had nothing to do with it—as it is to say of one blow by the hand that it has been rightfully awarded, and of another blow that such a moral characteristic is wholly inapplicable. Morality may at times characterize both the mental feeling and the muscular performance;

but it should be as little identified with the one as with the other. And however much analysts may have succeeded, on other occasions, in reducing to sameness what appeared to be separate constituents of our nature, certain it is, that anger cannot thus be regarded as a resulting manufacture from any of its higher principles. It forms a distinct and original part of our constitution, of which morality, whenever it exists and has the predominance, might take the direction without being at all essential to the presence or operation of it. So far from this, it is nowhere exhibited in greater vivacity and distinctness than by those creatures who possess but an animal, without so much as the germ, or the rudest elements of a moral nature.

8. Anger, then, is an emotion that may rage and tumultuate in a bosom into which one moral conception has never entered. For its excitement nothing more seems necessary than to thwart any desire however unreasonable, or to disappoint any one object which the heart may chance to be set upon. So far from a sense of justice being needful to originate this emotion—it is the man who, utterly devoid of justice, would monopolize to himself all that lies within the visible horizon, who is most exposed to its visitations. He is the most vulnerable to wrath from every point of the vast circumference around him—who, conceiving the Universe to be made for himself alone, is most insensible to the rights and interests of other men. It is in fact because he is so unfurnished with the ideas of justice, that he is so unbridled in resentment. Justice views the world and all its interests as already partitioned among the various members of the human population, each occupying his own little domain; and, instead of permitting anger to expatiate at random over the universal face of things, justice would curb and overrule its ebullitions in the bosom of every individual, till a trespass was made within the limits of that territory which is properly and peculiarly his own. In other words, it is the office of this virtue, not to inspire anger, but to draw landmarks and limitations around it; and, so far from a high moral principle originating this propensity, it is but an animal propensity, restrained and kept within check and confinement at the bidding of principle.

9. The distinction between reflective and unreflective anger did not escape the notice of the sagacious Butler, as may be seen in the following passages of a sermon upon resentment.—“Resentment is of two kinds—hasty and sudden, or settled and deliberate. The former is called anger and often passion, which,

though a general word, is frequently appropriated and confined to the particular feeling, sudden anger, as distinct from deliberate resentment malice and revenge." "Sudden anger upon certain occasions is mere instinct, as merely so, as the disposition to close our eyes upon the apprehension of something falling into them, and no more necessarily implies any degree of reason. I say necessarily, for, to be sure, hasty as well as deliberate anger, may be occasioned by injury or contempt, in which cases reason suggests to our thoughts the injury and contempt which is the occasion of the emotion. But I am speaking of the former, only in so far as it is to be distinguished from the latter. The only way in which our reason and understanding can raise anger, is by representing to our mind an injustice or injury of some kind or other. Now momentary anger is frequently raised, not only without any rule, but without any reason—that is, without any appearance of injury as distinct from hurt or pain. It cannot, I suppose, be thought that this passion in infants and the lower species of animals, and which is often seen in man towards them—it cannot, I say, be imagined that these instances of this emotion are the effect of reason: no, they are occasioned by mere sensation and feeling. It is opposition, sudden hurt, violence, which naturally excites this passion; and the real demerit or fault of him who offers that violence, or is the cause of that opposition or hurt, does not in many cases so much as come into thought." "The reason and end for which man was made thus liable to this emotion, is that he might be better qualified to prevent, and likewise, or perhaps chiefly, to resist and defeat sudden force, violence, and opposition, considered merely as such, and without regard to the fault or demerit of him who is the author of them; yet since violence may be considered in this other and further view, as implying fault, and since injury as distinct from harm may raise sudden anger, sudden anger may likewise accidentally serve to prevent or remedy such fault and injury. But considered as distinct from settled anger, it stands in our nature for self-defence, and not for the administration of justice. There are plainly cases, and in the uncultivated parts of the world, and where regular governments are not formed they frequently happen, in which there is no time for considering, and yet to be passive is certain destruction, in which sudden resistance is the only security." It is an exceeding good instance that Bishop Butler gives of the distinction between instinctive and what may be called rational anger, when he

specifies the anger that we often feel towards the inferior animals. There is properly no injury done, where there is no injury intended. And he who is incapable of conceiving what an injury is, is not a rightful object for at least any moral resentment. But that there is what may be called a physical as well as a moral resentment, is quite palpable from the positive wrath which is felt when anything untoward or hurtful is done to us even by the irrational creatures. The men who use them as instruments of service often discharge the most outrageous wrath upon them—acting the part of ferocious tyrants towards these wretched victims of their cruelty. When a combat takes place between man and one of the inferior animals, there is a resentment felt by the former just as keen and persevering, as if it were between two human combatants. This makes it quite obvious that there may be anger without any sense of designed injury on the part of him who is the object of it. Even children, idiots, lunatics, might all be the objects of such a resentment.

10. The final cause of this emotion in the inferior animals is abundantly obvious. It stimulates and insures resistance to that violence, which, if not resisted, would often terminate in the destruction of its object. And it probably much oftener serves the purpose of prevention than of defence. The first demonstration of a violence to be offered on the one hand, when met by the preparation and the counter-menace of an incipient resentment on the other, not only repels the aggression after it has begun, but still more frequently, we believe, through the reaction and restraint of fear on the otherwise attacking party, prevents the aggression from being made. The stout and formidable antagonists eye each other with a sort of natural respect; and, as if by a common though tacit consent, wisely abstain on either side from molestation, and pass onward without a quarrel. It is thus that many a fierce contest is forborne, which, but for the operation of anger on the one side, and fear upon the other, would most certainly have been entered upon. And so by a system, or machinery of reciprocal checks and counteractives, and where the mental affections, too, perform the part of essential forces, there is not that incessant warfare of extermination which might have depopulated the world. And here we might observe, that, in studying that balance of powers and of preserving influences, which obtains even in a commonwealth of brutes, the uses of a mental are just as palpable as

those of a material collocation. The anger which prompts to the resistance of aggression is as obviously inserted by the hand of a contriver, as are the horns or the bristles or any other defensive weapons wherewith the body of the animal is furnished. The fear which wings the flight of a pursued animal is as obviously intended for its safety, as is its muscular conformation or capacity for speed. The affection of a mother for her young, points as intelligibly to a designer's care for the preservation of the species, as does that apparatus of nourishment wherewith nature hath endowed her. The mother's fondness supplies as distinct and powerful an argument as the mother's milk; or, in other words, a mental constitution might, as well as a physical constitution, be pregnant with the indications of a God.

11. But to return to the special affection of anger, with a reference more particularly to its workings in our own species, where we have the advantage of nearer and distincter observation. We must be abundantly sensible of the pain which there is, not merely in the feeling of resentment, when it burns and festers within our own hearts, but also in being the objects of another's resentment. They are not the effects only of his anger that we are afraid of; we are afraid of the anger itself, of but the looks and the words of angry violence, though we should be perfectly secure from all the deeds of violence. The simple displeasure of another is formidable, though no chastisement whatever shall follow upon it. We are so constituted, that we tremble before the frown of an offended countenance, and perhaps as readily as we would under the menace of an uplifted arm; and would often make as great a sacrifice to shun the moral discomfort of another's wrath, as to shun the physical infliction which his wrath might impel him to lay upon us. It is thus that where there is no strength for any physical infliction, still there may be a power of correction that amply makes up for it, in the rebuke of an indignant eye or an indignant voice. This goes far to repair the inequalities of muscular force among men, and forms, indeed, a most important mound of defence against the effervescence and the outbreakings of brute violence in society. It is incalculable how much we owe to this influence for the peace and courteousness that obtain in every neighbourhood. The more patent view of anger is, that it is an instrument of defence against the aggressions of violence or injustice, and by which they are kept in check, from desolating, as they otherwise would, the face of society. But it not only operates

as a corrective against the outrages that are actually made. It has a preventive operation also; and we are wholly unable to say, in how far the dread of its forth-breaking serves to soften and to subdue human intercourse into those many thousand deencies of mutual forbearance and complaisance, by which it is gladdened and adorned. There is a recoil from anger in the heart of every man, when directed against himself; and many who would disdain to make one sacrifice by which to appease it, after it had thrown down the gauntlet of hostility, will, in fact, make one continued sacrifice of their tone and manner and habit, that it may not be awakened out of its slumbers. It were difficult to compute how much we are indebted, for the blandness and the amenity of human companionships, to the consciousness of so many sleeping fires, in readiness to blaze forth at the touch, or on the moment of any provocation being offered. We doubt not, that in military and fashionable, and indeed in all society, it acts as a powerful restraint on everything that is offensive. The domineering insolence of those who, with the instrument of anger, too, would hold society in bondage, is most effectually arrested, when met by an anger which throws back the fear upon themselves, and so quiets and composes all their violence. It is thus that a balance is maintained, without which human society might go into utter derangement, and without which, too, even the animal creation might lose its stability and disappear. And there is a kind of moral power in the anger itself, that is separate from the animal or the physical strength which it puts into operation, and which invests with command, or at least provides with defensive armour those who would otherwise be the most helpless of our species—so that decrepid age or feeble womanhood has, by the mere rebuke of an angry countenance, made the stoutest heart to tremble before them. It is a moral force, by which the inequalities of muscular force are repaired; and, while itself a firebrand and a destroyer, yet, by the very terror of its ravages, which it diffuses among all, were it to stalk abroad and at large over the world, does it contribute to uphold the pacific virtues among men.

12. When the anger of one individual in a household is the terror of the rest, then that individual may become the little despot of the establishment; and thus it is that often the feeblest of them all in muscular strength, may wield a domestic tyranny by which the stoutest is overpowered. But when the anger of this one is fortunately met by the spirit and resolution of another,

then, kept at bay with its own weapon, it is neutralized into a state of innocence. It is not necessary, for the production of this effect, that the parties ever should have come to the extremity of an open and declared violence. If there be only a mutual consciousness of each other's energy of passion and of purpose, then a mutual awe and mutual forbearance may be the result of it. And thus it is, that by the operation of these reciprocal checks in a family, the peace and order of it may be securely upholden. We have witnessed how much a wayward and outrageous temper has been sweetened, by the very presence in the same mansion of one who could speak again, and would not succumb to any unreasonable violence. The violence is abated. And we cannot compute how much it is that the blandness and the mutual complaisance which obtain in society, are due to the secret dread in which men stand of each other's irritation; or, in other words, little do we know to what extent the smile and the courteousness and the urbanity of civilized life, that are in semblance so many expressions of human benevolence, may really and substantially be owing to the fears of human selfishness. Were this speculation pursued, it might lead to a very humiliating estimate indeed of the virtue of individuals—though we cannot but admire the wisdom of that economy by which, even without virtue, individuals may be made, through the mutual action and reaction of their emotions, to form the materials of a society that can stand. Anger does in private life what the terrors of the penal code do in the community at large. It acts with salutary influence in a vast multiplicity of cases which no law could possibly provide for; and where the chastisements of law, whether in their corrective or preventive influence, cannot reach. The good of a penal discipline in society extends far and wide beyond the degree in which it is actually inflicted; and many are the pacific habits of a neighbourhood that might be ascribed, not to the pacific virtues of the men who compose it, but to the terror of those consequences which all men know would ensue upon their violation. And it is just so of anger, in the more frequent and retired intercourse of private life. The good which it does by the fear of its ebullitions is greater far than all which is done by the actual ebullitions themselves. But we cannot fail to perceive that the amount of service which is done *in this way* to the species at large, must all be regarded as a deduction from the amount of credit which is due to the individuals who belong to it. We

have already remarked on the propensity of moralists to accredit the wisdom of man with effects, which—as being provided for, not by any care or reflection of ours, but by the operation of constitutional instincts—are more properly and immediately to be ascribed to the wisdom of God. And in like manner, there is a propensity in moralists to accredit the wisdom of man with effects, which—as being provided for, not by any consciousness or exercise of principle on our part, but by the operation still of constitutional instincts—are more properly and immediately to be ascribed to the goodness of God.*

13. There is another special affection which we feel more particularly induced to notice, from its palpable effect in restraining the excess of one of nature's strongest appetites. Its position in the mental system reminds one of the very obvious adaptation to each other of the antagonist muscles in anatomy. We allude to the operation of shame between the sexes, considered as a check or counteractive to the indulgence of passion between the sexes. The former is as clear an instance of moral, as the latter is of physical adaptation. And in their adjustment the one to the other, we observe that sort of exquisite balancing which, perhaps more than anything else, indicates the wisdom and the hand of a master—as if when, in the execution of some very nice and difficult task, he is managing between contrary

* The following extract from Brown tends well to illustrate one of the final causes for the implantation of this principle in our constitution:—"What human wants required, that all-foreseeing Power, who is the guardian of our infirmities, has supplied to human weakness. There is a principle in our mind, which is to us like a constant protector, which may slumber, indeed, but which slumbers only at seasons when its vigilance would be useless, which awakes, therefore, at the first appearance of unjust intention, and which becomes more watchful and more vigorous in proportion to the violence of the attack which it has to dread. What should we think of the providence of nature, if, when aggression was threatened against the weak and unarmed at a distance from the aid of others, there were instantly and uniformly, by the intervention of some wonder-working power, to rush into the hand of the defenceless a sword, or other weapon of defence? And yet this would be but a feeble assistance, if compared with that which we receive from the simple emotions which Heaven has caused to rush, as it were, into our mind for repelling every attack. What would be a sword in the trembling hand of the infirm, of the aged, of him whose pusillanimous spirit shrinks at the very appearance, not of danger merely, but even of the arms by the use of which danger might be averted, and to whom, consequently, the very sword, which he scarcely knew how to grasp, would be an additional cause of terror, not an instrument of defence and safety? The instant anger which arises does more than many such weapons. It gives the spirit, which knows how to make a weapon of everything, or which of itself does, without a weapon, what even a thunderbolt would be powerless to do in the shuddering grasp of the coward. When anger arises, fear is gone; there is no coward, for all are brave. Even bodily infirmity seems to yield to it, like the very infirmities of the mind. The old are, for the moment, young again; the weakest, vigorous."—Lecture lxiii.

extremes, or is devising in just proportion for contrary interests. We might better comprehend the design of this strikingly peculiar mechanism, by imagining of the two opposite instincts, that either of them was in excess, or either of them in defect. Did the constitutional modesty prevail to a certain conceivable extent, it might depopulate the world. Did the animal propensity preponderate, on the other hand, it might land the world in an anarchy of unblushing and universal licentiousness—to the entire breaking up of our present blissful economy, by which society is partitioned into separate families, and, with the interests of domestic life to provide for, and its affections continually to recreate the heart in the midst of anxieties and labours, mankind are kept in a state both of most useful activity and of greatest enjoyment. We cannot conceive a more skilful, we had almost said a more delicate or dexterous adjustment, than the one actually fixed upon—by which, in the first instance, through an appetency sufficiently strong, the species is upholden; and, in the second instance, through the same appetency sufficiently restrained, those hallowed decencies of life are kept inviolate, which are so indispensable to all order and to all moral gracefulness among men. We have only to conceive the frightful aspect which society would put on, did unbridled licentiousness stalk at large as a destroyer, and rifle every home of those virtues which at once guard and adorn it. The actual and the beautiful result, when viewed in connexion with that moral force, by the insertion of which in our nature it is accomplished, strongly bespeaks a presiding intellect—which, in framing the mechanism of the human mind, had respect to what was most beneficent and best for the mechanism of human society.

14. It is well that man is so much the creature of a constitution which is anterior to his own wisdom and his own will, and of circumstances which are also anterior to his wisdom and his will. It would have needed a far more comprehensive view than we are equal to, both of what was best for men in a community and for man as an individual, to have left a creature so short-sighted or of such brief and narrow survey, with the fixing either of his own principles of action or of his relation with the external world. That constitutional shame, that quick and trembling delicacy, a prompt and ever-present guardian, appearing as it does in very early childhood, is most assuredly not a result from any anticipation by us, either of future or distant consequences. Even the moral sense within us, does not speak

so loudly or so distinctly the evil of this transgression, as it does of falsehood, or of injurious freedom with the property of a neighbour, or of personal violence. Other forces than those of human prudence or human principle seem to have been necessary, for resisting a most powerful and destructive fascination, which never is indulged without deterioration to the whole structure of the moral character and constitution; and which, when once permitted to lord it over the habits, so often terminates in the cruel disruption of families, and the irretrievable ruin and disgrace of the offender. It is not by any prospective calculation of ours, that this natural modesty, acting as a strong precautionary check against evils which however tremendous, we are too heedless to reflect upon, has been established within us. It is directly implanted by One who sees the end from the beginning; and so forms altogether a most palpable instance, in which we have reason to congratulate ourselves, that the wellbeing of man, instead of being abandoned to himself, has been placed so immediately under the management of better and higher hands.

15. There are many other special affections in our nature—the principal of which will fall to be noticed in succeeding chapters; and the interests to which they are respectively subservient form a natural ground of division, in our treatment of them. Certain of these affections stand related to the civil, and certain of them to the economic wellbeing of society; and each of these subserviencies will form the subject of a separate argument.

CHAPTER III.

ON THOSE SPECIAL AFFECTIONS WHICH CONDUCE TO THE CIVIL AND POLITICAL WELLBEING OF SOCIETY.

1. THE first step towards the aggregation of men into a community, or the first departure from a state of perfect isolation, could that state ever have subsisted for a single day, is the patriarchal arrangement. No sooner indeed is the infant creature ushered into being, than it is met by the cares and the caresses of those who are around it, and who have either attended or welcomed its entry on this scene of existence—as if, in very proportion to the extremity of its utter helplessness, was the strength of that security which nature hath provided, in the

workings of the human constitution, for the protection of its weakness and the supply of all its little wants. That there should be hands to receive and to manage this tender visitant, is not more obviously a benevolent adaptation, than that there should be hearts to sympathize with its cries of impotency or distress. The maternal affection is as express an instance of this as the maternal nourishment—nor is the inference at all weakened, by the attempts, even though they should be successful, of those who would demonstrate of this universal fondness of mothers, that, instead of an original instinct, it is but a derived or secondary law of our nature. Were that analysis as distinct and satisfactory as it is doubtful and obscure, which would resolve all mental phenomena into the single principle of association—still the argument would stand. A secondary law, if not the evidence of a distinct principle, requires at least distinct and peculiar circumstances for its development; and the right ordering of these for a beneficial result, is just as decisively the proof and the characteristic of a plan, as are the collocations of Anatomy. It might not have been necessary to endow matter with any new property for the preparation of a child's aliment in the breast of its mother—yet the framework of that very peculiar apparatus by which the milk is secreted, and the suckling's mouth provided with a duct of conveyance for the abstraction of it, is, in the many fitnesses of time, and place, and complicated arrangement, pregnant with the evidence of a designer's contrivance and a designer's care. And in like manner, though it should be established, that the affection of a mother for her young from the moment of their birth, instead of an independent principle in her nature, was the dependent product of remembrances and feelings which had accumulated during the period of gestation, and were at length fixed, amidst the agonies of parturition, into the strongest of all her earthly regards—the argument for design is just as entire, though, instead of connecting it with the peculiarity of an original law, we connect it with the peculiarity of those circumstances which favour the development of this maternal feeling, in the form of a secondary law. There is an infinity of conceivable methods, by which the successive generations of men might have risen into being; and our argument is entire, if, out of these, that method has been selected, whereof the result is an intense affection on the part of mothers for their offspring. It matters not whether this universal propensity of theirs be a primary instinct of nature, or but a result-

ing habit which can be traced to the process which they have been actually made to undergo, or the circumstances in which they have actually been placed. The ordination of this process, the mandate for the assemblage and collocation of these circumstances, gives as distinct and decisive indication of an ordaining mind, as would the establishment of any peculiar law. Let it suffice once for all to have said this—for if, in the prosecution of our inquiry, we stopped at every turn to entertain the question, whether each beneficial tendency on which we reasoned, were an original or only a secondary principle in nature—we should be constantly rushing uncalled into the mists of obscurity; and fastening upon our cause an element of doubt and weakness, which in no wise belongs to it.

2. The other affections which enter into the composition, or rather form the cement of a family, are more obviously of a derivative, and less obviously of an instinctive character, than is that strong maternal affinity which meets so opportunely with the extreme helplessness of its objects, that but for the succour and sympathy of those whose delight it is to cherish and sustain them, would perish in the infancy of their being. However questionable the analysis might be, which would resolve the universal fondness of mothers for their young into something anterior—the paternal, and brotherly, and filial affections seem, on surer grounds, and which are accessible to observation, not to be original but originated feelings. Inquirers, according to their respective tastes and tendencies, have deviated on both sides of the evidence—that is, either to an excessive and hypothetical simplification of nature, or to an undue multiplication of her first principles. And certain it is, that when told of the mystic ties which bind together into a domestic community, as if by a sort of certain peculiar attraction, all of the same kindred and the same blood—we are reminded of those occult qualities, which, in the physics both of matter and of mind, afforded so much of entertainment to the scholastics of a former age. But with the adjustment of this philosophy we properly have no concern. It matters not to our argument whether the result in question be due to the force of instincts or to the force of circumstances,—any more than whether, in the physical system, a certain beneficial result may be ascribed to apt and peculiar laws, or to apt and peculiar collocations. In virtue of one or other, or both of these causes, we behold the individuals of the species grouped together—or, as it may be otherwise expressed,

the aggregate mass of the species broken asunder into distinct families, and generally living by themselves, each family under one common roof, but apart from all the rest in distinct habitations; while the members of every little commonwealth are so linked by certain affections, or by certain feelings of reciprocal obligation, that each member feels almost as intensely for the wants and sufferings of the rest as he would for his own, or labours as strenuously for the sustenance of all as he would for his own individual sustenance. There is very generally a union of hearts, and still oftener a union of hands, for the common interests and provision of the household.

3. The benefits of such an arrangement are too obvious to be enumerated. Even though the law of self-preservation had sufficed in those cases where the individual has adequate wisdom to devise, and adequate strength to provide for his own maintenance—of itself, it could not have availed, when this strength and this wisdom are wanting. It is in the bosom of families, and under the touch and impulse of family affections, that helpless infancy is nurtured into manhood, and helpless disease or age have the kindest and most effective succour afforded to them. Even when the strength for labour, instead of being confined to one, is shared among several of the household, there is often an incalculable benefit, in the very concert of their forces and community of their gains—so long, for example, as a brotherhood, yet advancing towards maturity, continue to live under the same roof, and to live under the direction of one authority, or by the movement of one will. We shall not expatiate, either on the enjoyment that might be had under such an economy, while it lasts, in the sweets of mutual affection; or minutely explain how, after the economy is dissolved, and the separate members betake themselves each to his own way in the world—the duties and the friendships of domestic life are not annihilated by this dispersion; but, under the powerful influence of a felt and acknowledged relationship, the affinities of kindred spread and multiply beyond their original precincts, to the vast increase of mutual sympathy and aid and good offices in general society. It will not, we suppose, be questioned, that a vastly greater amount of good is done by the instrumentality of others, and that the instrumentality itself is greatly more available, under the family system, to which we are prompted by the strong affections of nature, than if that system were dissolved. But the remarkable thing is, that these affections had to be provided, as

so many impellent forces—guiding men onward to an arrangement the most prolific of advantage for the whole, but which no care or consideration of the general good would have led them to form. This provision for the wants of the social economy is analogous to that, which we have already observed, for the wants of the animal economy. Neither of these interests was confided to any cold generality, whether of principle or prudence. In the one, the strong appetite of hunger supplements the deficiency of the rational principle of self-preservation. In the other, the strong family affections supplement the deficiency of the moral principle of general benevolence. Without the first, the requisite measures would not have been taken for the regular sustenance of the individual. Without the other, the requisite measures would not have been taken for the diffused sustenance of the community at large.

4. Such is the mechanism of human society, as it comes direct from the hand of nature or of nature's God. But many have been the attempts of human wisdom to mend and to meddle with it. Cosmopolitanism, in particular, has endeavoured to substitute a sort of universal citizenship, in place of the family affections—regarding these as so many disturbing forces; because, operating only as incentives to a partial or particular benevolence, they divert the aim from that which should, it is contended, be the object of every enlightened philanthropist, the general and greatest good of the whole. It is thus that certain transcendental speculatists would cut asunder all the special affinities of our nature, in order that men, set at large from the ties and the duties of the domestic relationship, might be at liberty to prosecute a more magnificent and godlike career of virtue; and, in every single action, have respect, not to the wellbeing of the individual, but to the wellbeing of the species. And thus also, friendship and patriotism have been stigmatized, along with the family affections, as so many narrow-minded virtues, which, by their distracting influence, seduce men from that all comprehensive virtue, whose constant study being the good of the world—a happy and regenerated world, it is the fond imagination of some, would be the result of its universal prevalence among men.

5. Fortunately, nature is too strong for this speculation, which, therefore, has only its full being, in the reveries or the pages of those who, in authorship, may well be termed the philosophical novelists of our race. But, beside the actual strength of those special propensities in the heart of man, which no generalization

can overrule, there is an utter impotency in human means or human expedients, for carrying this hollow, this heartless generalization into effect. It is easy to erect into a moral axiom the principle of greatest happiness; and then, on the strength of it, to denounce all the special affections, and propose the substitution of a universal affection in their place. But, in prosecuting the object of this last affection, what specific and intelligible thing are they to do? How shall they go about it? What conventional scheme shall men fall upon next for obtaining the maximum of utility, after they have broken loose, each from his own little home, and have been emancipated from those intense regards, which worked so effectively and with such force of concentration there? It has never been clearly shown, how the glorious simplifications of these cosmopolites admit of being practically realized—whether by a combination, of which the chance is that all men might not agree upon it; or by each, issuing quixotically forth of his own habitation, and labouring the best he may to realize the splendid conception by which he is fired and actuated. And it does not occur to those who would thus labour to extirpate the special affections from our nature, that it is in the indulgence of them that all conceivable happiness lies; and that, in being bereft of them, we should be in truth bereft of all the means and materials of enjoyment. And there is the utmost difference in point of effect, as well as in point of feeling, between the strong love wherewith nature hath endued us for a few particular men, and the general love wherewith philosophers would inspire us for man in the abstract—the former philanthropy leading to a devoted and sustained habit of well-directed exertion, for supplying the wants and multiplying the enjoyments of every separate household; the latter philanthropy, at once indefinite in its aim and intangible in its objects, overlooking every man just because charging itself with the oversight of all men. It is by a summation of particular utilities which each man, under the impulse of his own particular affections, contributes to the general good, that nature provides for the happiness of the world. But ambitious and aspiring man would take the charge of this happiness upon himself; and his first step would be to rid the heart of all its special affections—or, in other words, to unsettle the moral dynamics which nature hath established there, without any other moral dynamics, either of precise direction or of operative force, to establish in their room. After having paralyzed all the ordi-

nary principles of action, he would, in his newly-modelled system of humanity, be able to set up no principle of action whatever. His wisdom, when thus opposed to the wisdom of nature, is utterly powerless to direct, however much, in those seasons of delusion when the merest nonentities and names find a temporary sway, it may be powerful to destroy.

6. Now there is nothing which so sets off the superior skill of one artist, as the utter failure of every other artist in his attempts to improve upon it. And so the failure of every philanthropic or political experiment which proceeds on the distrust of nature's strong and urgent and general affections, may be regarded as an impressive while experimental demonstration for the matchless wisdom of nature's God. The abortive enterprises of wild yet benevolent Utopianism; the impotent and hurtful schemes of artificial charity which so teem throughout the cities and parishes of our land; the pernicious legislation, which mars instead of medicating, whenever it intermeddles with the operations of a previous and better mechanism than its own—have all of them misgiven only because, instead of conforming to nature, they have tried to divert her from her courses, or have thwarted and traversed the strongest of her implanted tendencies. It is thus that every attempt for taking to pieces, whether totally or partially, the actual framework of society, and reconstructing it in a new way or on new principles, is altogether fruitless of good; and often fruitful of sorest evil both to the happiness and virtue of the commonwealth. That economy by which the family system would have been entirely broken up; and associated men, living together in planned and regulated villages, would have laboured for the common good, and given up their children wholly undomesticated to a common education—could not have been carried into effect without overbearing the parental affection, and other strong propensities of nature besides; and so it was stifled in embryo by the instant revolt of nature against it. That legislation which, instead of overbearing, would but seduce nature from her principles, may subsist for generations—yet not without such distemper to society, as may at length amount to utter disorganization. And this is precisely the mischief which the pauperism of England hath inflicted on the habits of English families. It hath, by the most pernicious of all bribery, relaxed the ties and obligations of mutual relationship—exonerating parents on the one hand from the care and maintenance of their own offspring; and tempting children, on the other, to cast off

the parents who gave them birth, and, instead of an asylum gladdened by the associations and sympathies of home, consigning them for the last closing years of weakness and decrepitude to the dreary imprisonment of a poor-house. Had the beautiful arrangements of nature not been disturbed, the relative affections which she herself has implanted would have been found strong enough, as in other countries, to have secured, through the means of a domestic economy alone, a provision both for young and old, in far greater unison with both the comfort and the virtue of families. The corrupt and demoralizing system of England might well serve as a lesson to philanthropists and statesmen, of the hazard, nay, of the positive and undoubted mischief, to which the best interests of humanity are exposed—when they traverse the processes of a better mechanism instituted by the wisdom of God, through the operation of another mechanism devised by a wisdom of their own.

7. And those family relations in which all men necessarily find themselves at the outset of life, serve to strengthen, if they do not originate, certain other subsequent affections of wider operation, and which bear with most important effect on the state and security of a commonwealth. Each man's house may be regarded as a preparatory school, where he acquires in boyhood those habits of subordination, and dependence, and reverence for superiors, by which he all the more readily conforms in after-life to the useful gradations of rank and authority and wealth which obtain in the order of general society. We are aware of a cosmopolitanism that would unsettle those principles which bind together the larger commonwealth of a state; and that too with still greater force and frequency, than it would unsettle those affections which bind together the little commonwealth of a family. It is easier to undermine in the hearts of subjects their reverence for rank and station, than it is to dissolve the ties of parentage and brotherhood, or to denaturalize the hearts of children. Accordingly, we may remember those seasons when, in the form of what may be termed a moral epidemic, a certain spirit of lawlessness went abroad upon the land; and the minds of men were set at large from the habit of that homage and respect, which in more pacific times, they, without pusillanimity and in spite of themselves, do render to family or fortune or office in society. We know that in specific instances an adequate cause is too often given why men should cast off that veneration for rank by which they are naturally and habitually actuated—as, individually, when the

prince or the noble, however elevated, may have disgraced himself by his tyranny or his vices; or generally, when the patrician orders of the state may have entered into some guilty combination of force and fraud against the liberties of mankind, and outraged nature is called forth to a generous and wholesome reaction against the oppressors of their species. This is the revolt of one natural principle against the abuse of another. But the case is very different, when, instead of a hostility resting on practical grounds and justified by the abuses of a principle, there is a sort of theoretical yet withal virulent and inflamed hostility abroad in the land against the principle itself—when wealth and rank, without having abused their privileges, are made *per se* the objects of a jealous and resentful malignity—when the people all reckless and agog, because the dupes of designing and industrious agitators, have been led to regard every man of affluence or station as their natural enemy—and when, with the bulk of the community in this attitude of stout and sullen defiance, authority is weakened and all the natural influences of rank and wealth are suspended. Now nature never gives more effectual demonstration of her wisdom, than by the mischief which ensues on the abjuration of her own principles; and never is the lesson thus held forth more palpable and convincing than when respect for station and respect for office cease to be operating principles in society. We are abundantly sensible that both mighty possessions and the honours of an illustrious ancestry may be disjoined from individual talent and character—nay, that they may meet in the person of one so utterly weak or worthless, as that our reverence because of the adventitious circumstances in which he is placed, may be completely overborne by our contempt either for the imbecility or the moral turpitude by which he is deformed. But this is only the example of a contest between two principles, and of a victory by the superior over the inferior one. We are not, however, because of the inferiority of a principle, to lose sight of its existence, or to betray such an imperfect discernment and analysis of the human mind as to deny the reality of any one principle, because liable to be modified, or kept in check, or even for the time rendered altogether powerless, by the interposition and the conflict of another principle. If, on the one hand, rank may be so disjoined from righteousness as to forfeit all its claims to respect—on the other hand, to be convinced that these claims are the objects of a natural and universal acknowledgment, and have therefore a foundation in the actual constitution of human

nature, let us only consider the effect, when pre-eminent rank and pre-eminent or even but fair and ordinary righteousness, meet together in the person of the same individual. The effect of such a composition upon human feelings may well persuade us that, while a respect for righteousness admitted by all enters as one ingredient, a respect for rank has its distinct and substantive being also as another ingredient. We have the former ingredient by itself in a state of separation, and are therefore most sensible of its presence, when the object of contemplation is a virtuous man. But we are distinctly sensible to the superaddition of the latter ingredient, when, instead of a virtuous man, the object of contemplation is a virtuous monarch—though it becomes more palpable still, when it too is made to exist in a state of separation, which it does, when the monarch is neither hateful for his vices nor very estimable for his virtues, but stands forth in the average possession of those moralities and of that intellect which belong to common and every-day humanity. Even such a monarch has only to appear among his subjects; and in all ordinary times he will be received with the greetings of an honest and heartfelt loyalty, when any unwonted progress through his dominions is sure to be met all over the land by the acclamations of a generous enthusiasm. Even the sturdiest demagogue, if he come within the sphere of the royal presence, cannot resist the infection of that common sentiment by which all are actuated; but, as if struck with a moral impotency, he also, carried away by the fascination, is constrained to feel and to acknowledge its influence. Some there are who might affect to despise human nature for such an exhibition, and indignantly exclaim that men are born to be slaves. But the truth is, that there is nothing prostrate, nothing pusillanimous, in the emotion at all. Instead of this, it is a lofty chivalrous emotion, of which the most exalted spirits are the most susceptible, and which all might indulge without any forfeiture of their native or becoming dignity. We do not affirm of this respect either for the sovereignty of an empire, or for the chieftainship of a province—that it forms an original or constituent part of our nature. It is enough for our argument, if it be a universal result of the circumstances in every land, where such gradations of power and property are established. In a word, it is the doing of nature, and not of man; and if man, in the proud and presumptuous exercise of his own wisdom, shall lift his rebel hand against the wisdom of nature, and try to uproot this principle from human hearts—he will

find that it cannot be accomplished without tearing asunder one of the strongest of those ligaments which bind together the component parts of human society into a harmonious and well-adjusted mechanism. And it is then that the wisdom which made nature, will demonstrate its vast superiority over the wisdom which would mend it—when the desperate experiment of the latter has been tried and found wanting. There are certain restraining forces (and reverence for rank and station is one of them) which never so convincingly announce their own importance to the peace and stability of the commonwealth, as in those seasons of popular frenzy, when, for a time, they are slackened or suspended. For it is then that the vessel of the state, as if slipped from her moorings, drifts headlong among the surges of insurrectionary violence, till, as the effect of this great national effervescence, the land mourns over its ravaged fields and desolated families; when, after the sweeping anarchy has blown over it, and the sore chastisement has been undergone, the now schooled and humbled people seek refuge anew in those very principles which they had before traduced and discarded: And it will be fortunate if, when again settled down in the quietude of their much needed and much longed-for repose, there be not too vigorous a reaction of those conservative influences which, in the moment of their wantonness, they had flung so recklessly away—in virtue of which the whips may become scorpions, and the mild and well-balanced monarchy may become a grinding despotism.

8. Next to the wisdom which nature discovers in her implantation or development of those affections, by which society is parcelled down into separate families; is the wisdom which she discovers in those other affections, by which the territory of a nation, and all upon it that admits of such a distribution, is likewise parcelled and broken off into separate properties. Both among the analysts of the human mind, and among metaphysical jurists and politicians, there is to be found much obscure and unsatisfactory speculation respecting those principles, whether elementary or complex, by which property is originated and by which property is upholden. We are not called to enter upon any subtle analysis for the purpose of ascertaining either what that is which gives birth to the possessory feeling on the part of an owner, or what that is which leads to such a universal recognition and respect for his rights in general society. It will be enough if we can evince that neither of these is a factitious product, devised by the wisdom or engendered by the authority

of patriots and legislators, deliberating on what was best for the good and order of a community ; but that both of them are the results of a prior wisdom, employed, not in framing a constitution for a State, but in framing a constitution for human nature. It will suffice to demonstrate this, if we can show, that, in very early childhood, there are germinated both a sense of property and a respect for the property of others ; and that, long before the children have been made the subjects of any artificial training on the thing in question, or are at all capable of any anticipation or even wish, respecting the public and collective well-being of the country at large. Just as the affection of a mother is altogether special, and terminates upon the infant, without any calculation as to the superiority of the family system over the speculative systems of the cosmopolites ; and just as the appetite of hunger impels to the use of food, without the least regard, for the time being, to the support or preservation of the animal economy—so, most assuredly, do the desires or notions of property, and even the principles by which it is limited, spring up in the breasts of children, without the slightest apprehension, on their part, of its vast importance to the social economy of the world. It is the provision, not of man, but of God.

9. That is my property, to the use and enjoyment of which I, without the permission of others, am free, in a manner that no other is ; and it is mine and mine only, in as far as this use and enjoyment are limited to myself—and others, apart from any grant or permission by me, are restrained from the like use and the like enjoyment. Now the first tendency of a child, instead of regarding only certain things, as those to the use and enjoyment of which it alone is free, is to regard itself as alike free to the use and enjoyment of all things. We should say that it regards the whole of external nature as a vast common, but for this difference—that, instead of regarding nature as free to all, it rather regards it as free to itself alone. When others intermeddle with any one thing, in a way that suits not its fancy or pleasure, it resents and storms and exclaims like one bereft of its rights—so that, instead of regarding the universe as a common, it were more accurate to say, that it regarded the whole as its own property, or itself as the universal proprietor of all on which it may have cast a pleased or a wishful eye. Whatever it grasps, it feels to be as much its own as it does the fingers which grasp it. And not only do its claims extend to all within its reach, but to all within the field of its vision—insomuch,

that it will even stretch forth its hands to the moon in the firmament; and wreak its displeasure on the nurse, for not bringing the splendid bauble within its grasp. Instead, then, of saying, that, at this particular stage, it knows not how to appropriate anything, it were more accurate to say that, a universal tyrant and monopolist, it would claim and appropriate all things—exactng from the whole of nature a subserviency to its caprices; and, the little despot of its establishment, giving forth its intimations and its mandates with the expectation, and often with the real power and authority of instant obedience. We before said that its anger was coextensive with the capacity of sensation; and we now say that, whatever its rectified notion of property may be, it has the original notion of an unlimited range over which itself at least may expatiate without let or contradiction—the self-constituted proprietor of a domain, wide as its desires, and on which none may interfere against its will, without awakening in its bosom somewhat like the sense and feeling of an injurious molestation.*

10. And it is instructive to observe the process by which this original notion of property is at length rectified into the subsequent notion which obtains in general society. For this purpose we must inquire what the circumstances are which limit and determine that sense of property, which was quite general and unrestricted before, to certain special things, of which the child learns to feel that they are peculiarly its own—and that, too, in a manner which distinguishes them from all other things, which are not so felt to be its own. The child was blind to any such distinction before—its first habit being to arrogate and monopolize all things; and the question is, what those circumstances are which serve to signalize some things, to which its feelings of property, now withdrawn from wide and boundless generality, are exclusively and specifically directed. It will make conclusively for our argument, if it shall appear, that this sense of property, even in its posterior and rectified form, is the work

* From what has been already said of resentment, it would appear that the instinctive feeling of property, and instinctive anger, are in a state of co-relation with each other. It is by offence being rendered to the former, that the latter is called forth. Anterior to a sense of justice, our disposition is to arrogate everything—and it is then that we are vulnerable to anger from all points of the compass. Let another meddle, to our annoyance, with anything whatever at this early stage, and we shall feel the very emotion of anger, which, in a higher stage of moral and mental cultivation, is only called forth by his meddling with that which really and rightfully belongs to us. The sense of justice, instead of originating either the emotion of anger, or a sense of property, has the effect to limit and restrain both.

of nature operating on the hearts of children ; and not the work of man, devising, in the maturity of his political wisdom, such a regulated system of things, as might be best for the order and wellbeing of society.

11. This matter, then, might be illustrated by the contests of very young children, and by the manner in which these are adjusted to the acquiescence and satisfaction of them all. We might gather a lesson even from the quarrel which sometimes arises among them, about a matter so small as their right to the particular chairs of a room. If one, for example, have just sat on a chair, though only for a few minutes, and then left it for a moment—it will feel itself injured, if, on returning, it shall find the chair in the possession of another occupier. The brief occupation which it has already had, gives it the feeling of a right to the continued occupation of it—insomuch that, when kept out by an intruder, it has the sense of having been wrongously dispossessed. The particular chair of which it was for some time the occupier, is the object of a special possessory affection or feeling, which it attaches to no other chair ; and by which it stands invested in its own imagination, as being, for the time, the only rightful occupier. This, then, may be regarded as a very early indication of that possessory feeling, which is afterwards of such extensive influence in the economy of social life—a feeling so strong, as often of itself to constitute a plea not only sufficient in the apprehension of the claimant, but sufficient in the general sense of the community, for substantiating the right of many a proprietor.

12. But there is still another primitive ingredient which enters into this feeling of property ; and we call it primitive, because anterior to the sanctions or the application of law. Let the child, in addition to the plea that it had been the recent occupier of the chair in question, be able further to advance in argument for its right—that, with its own hands, it had just placed it beside the fire, and thereby given additional value to the occupation of it. This reason is both felt by the child itself, and will be admitted by other children even of a very tender age, as a strengthener of its claim. It exemplifies the second great principle on which the natural right of property rests—even that every man is proprietor of the fruit of his own labour ; and that to whatever extent he may have impressed additional value on any given thing by the work of his own hands, to that extent at least, he should be held the owner of it.

13. This, then, seems the way in which the sense of his right to any given thing arises in the heart of the claimant; but something more must be said to account for the manner in which this right is deferred to by his companions. It accounts for the manner in which the possessory feeling arises in the hearts of one and all of them, when similarly circumstanced; but it does not account for the manner in which this possessory feeling, in the heart of each, is respected by all his fellows—so that he is suffered to remain in the secure and unmolested possession of that which he rightfully claims. The circumstances which originate the sense of property, serve to explain this one fact—the existence of a possessory feeling in the heart of every individual who is actuated thereby. But the deference rendered to this feeling by any other individuals, is another and a distinct fact: and we must refer to a distinct principle from that of the mere sense of property for the explanation of it. This new or distinct principle is a sense of equity—or that which prompts to likeness or equality between the treatment which I should claim of others and my treatment of them; and in virtue of which, I should hold it unrighteous and unfair, if I disregarded or inflicted violence on the claim of another, which, in the same circumstances with him, I am conscious that I should have felt, and would have advanced for myself. Had I been the occupier of that chair, in like manner with the little claimant who is now insisting on the possession of it, I should have felt and claimed precisely as he is doing. Still more, had I like him placed it beside the fire, I should have felt what he is now expressing—a still more distinct and decided right to it. If conscious of an identity of feeling between me and another in the same circumstances, then let my moral nature be so far evolved as to feel the force of this consideration; and, under the operation of a sense of equity, I shall defer to the very claim, which I should myself have urged, had I been similarly placed. And it is marvellous how soon the hearts of children discover a sensibility to this consideration, and how soon they are capable of becoming obedient to the power of it. It is, in fact, the principle on which a thousand contests of the nursery are settled, and many thousand more are prevented; what else would be an incessant scramble of rival and ravenous cupidity, being mitigated and reduced to a very great, though unknown and undefinable, extent by the sense of justice coming into play. It is altogether worthy of remark, however, that the sense of property is anterior

to the sense of justice, and comes from an anterior and distinct source in our nature. It is not justice which originates the proprietary feeling in the heart of any individual. It only arbitrates between the proprietary claims and feelings of different individuals—after these had previously arisen by the operation of other principles in the human constitution. Those writers on jurisprudence are sadly and inextricably puzzled, who imagine that justice presided over the first ordinations of property—utterly at a loss, as they must be, to find out the principle that could guide her initial movements. Justice did not create property: but found it already created—her only office being to decide between the antecedent claims of one man and another: And, in the discharge of this office, she but compares the rights which each of them can allege, as founded either on the length of undisputed and undisposed of possession, or on the value they had impressed on the thing at issue by labour of their own. In other words, she bears respect to those two great primitive ingredients by which property is constituted, before that she had ever bestowed any attention, or given any award whatever regarding it. The matter may be illustrated by the peculiar relation in which each man stands to his own body, as being, in a certain view, the same with the peculiar relation in which each man stands to his own property. His sensitive feelings are hurt by the infliction of a neighbour's violence upon the one; and his proprietary feelings are hurt by the encroachment of a neighbour's violence upon the other. But justice no more originated the proprietary than it did the sensitive feelings—no more gave me the peculiar affection which I feel for the property I now occupy as my own, than it gave me my peculiar affection for the person which I now occupy as my own. Justice pronounces on the iniquity of any hurtful infliction by us on the person of another—seeing that such an infliction upon our own person, to which we stand similarly related, would be resented by ourselves. And justice, in like manner, pronounces on the inequality or iniquity of any hurtful encroachment by us on the property of another—also seeing that such an encroachment upon our own property, to which we stand similarly related, would be felt and resented by ourselves. Man feels one kind of pain, when the hand which belongs to him is struck by another; and he feels another kind of pain, when some article which it holds, and which he conceives to belong to him, is wrested by another from its grasp. But it was not justice which

instituted either the animal economy in the one case, or the proprietary economy in the other. Justice found them both already instituted. Property is not the creation of justice ; but is in truth a prior creation. Justice did not form this material, or command it into being ; but in the course of misunderstanding or controversy between man and man, property, a material pre-existent or already made, forms the subject of many of those questions which are put into her hands.

14. But, recurring to the juvenile controversy which we have already imagined for the purpose of illustration, there is still a third way in which we may conceive it to be conclusively and definitively settled. The parents may interpose their authority, and assign his own particular chair to each member of the household. The instant effect of such a decree, in fixing and distinguishing the respective properties in all time coming, has led, we believe, to a misconception regarding the real origin of property—in consequence of a certain obscure analogy between this act of parents or legislators over the family of a household, and a supposed act of rulers or legislators over the great family of a nation. Now, not only have the parents this advantage over the magistrates—that the property which they thus distribute is previously their own ; but there is both a power of enforcement and a disposition to acquiescence within the limits of a home, which exist in an immeasurably weaker degree within the limits of a kingdom. Still, with all this superiority on the part of the household legislators, it would even be their wisdom to conform their decree as much as possible to those natural principles and feelings of property which had been in previous exercise among their children—to have respect, in fact, when making distribution of the chairs, both to their habits of previous occupation, and to the additional value which any of them may have impressed upon their favourite seats, by such little arts of upholstery or mechanics as they are competent to practise. A wise domestic legislator would not thwart, but rather defer to the claims and expectations which nature had previously founded. And still more a national legislator, or statesman, would evince his best wisdom by, instead of traversing the constitution of property which nature had previously established, greatly deferring to that sense of a possessory right which long and unquestioned occupation so universally gives ; and greatly deferring to the principle that, whatever the fruit of each man's labour may be, it rightfully, and therefore should legally, belong to him. A government could, and, at the

termination of a revolutionary storm, often does, traverse these principles; but not without the excitement of a thousand heart-burnings, and so the establishment of a strong counteraction to its own authority in the heart of its dominions. It is the dictate of sound policy—that the natural, on the one hand, and the legal or political on the other, should quadrate as much as possible. And thus, instead of saying with Dr. Paley that property derived its constitution and being from the law of the land—we should say that law never exhibits a better understanding of her own place and functions, than when, founding on materials already provided, she feels that her wisest part is but to act as an auxiliary, and to ratify that prior constitution which nature had put into her hands.

15. In this exposition which we have now attempted of the origin and rights of property, we are not insensible to the mighty use of law. By its power of enforcement, it perpetuates or defends from violation that existent order of things which itself had established, or, rather, which itself had ratified. Even though at its first ordinations it had contravened those natural principles which enter into the foundation of property, these very principles will, in time, re-appear in favour of the new system, and yield to it a firmer and a stronger support with every day of its continuance. Whatever fraud or force may have been concerned at the historical commencement of the present and actual distribution of property—the then new possessors have at length become old; and, under the canopy and protection of law, the natural rights have been superadded to the factitious or the political. Law has guaranteed to each proprietor a long-continued occupation, till a strong and inveterate possessory feeling has taken root and arisen in every heart. And secure of this occupation, each may, in the course of years, have mixed up to an indefinite amount, the improvements of his own skill and labour with those estates—which, as the fruit whether of anarchy or of victorious invasion, had fallen into his hands. So that these first and second principles of natural jurisprudence, whatever violence may have been done to them at the overthrow of a former regime, are again fostered into all their original efficacy and strength during the continuance of a present one. Inasmuch, that if, at the end of half a century, those outcasts of a great revolutionary hurricane, the descendants of a confiscated noblesse, were to rally and combine for the recovery of their ancient domains, they would be met in the encounter, not by the

force of the existing government only, but by the outraged and resentful feelings of the existing proprietors, whose possessory and prescriptive rights, now nurtured into full and firm establishment, would, in addition to the sense of interest, enlist even the sense of justice upon their side. Apart from the physical, did we but compute the moral forces which enter into such a conflict, it will often be found that the superiority is in favour of the actual occupiers. Those feelings, on the one hand, which are associated with the recollection of a now departed ancestry and their violated rights, are found to be inoperative and feeble, when brought into comparison or collision with that strength which nature has annexed to the feelings of actual possession. Regarded as but a contest of sentiment alone, the disposition to recover is not so strong as the disposition to retain. The recollection that these were once my parental acres, though wrested from the hand of remote ancestors by anarchists and marauders, would not enlist so great or so practical a moral force on the aggressive side of a new warfare, as the reflection that these are now my possessed acres, which, though left but by immediate ancestors, I have been accustomed from infancy to call my own, would enlist on the side of the defensive. In the course of generations, those sedative influences which tend to the preservation of the existing order wax stronger and stronger; and those disturbing influences which tend to the restoration of the ancient order, wax weaker and weaker—till man at last ceases to charge himself with a task so infinitely above his strength, as the adjustment of the quarrels and the accumulated wrongs of the centuries which have gone by. In other words, the constitution of law in regard to property, which is the work of man, may be so framed as to sanction, and, therefore, to encourage the enormities which have been perpetrated by the force of arms—while the constitution of the mind in regard to property, which is the work of nature, is so framed, as, with conservative virtue, to be altogether on the side of perpetuity and peace.

16. Had a legislator of supreme wisdom and armed with despotic power been free to establish the best scheme for augmenting the wealth and the comforts of human society, he could have devised nothing more effectual than that existing constitution of property which obtains so generally throughout the world; and by which each man, secure within the limits of his own special and recognised possession, might claim as being rightly and originally his, the fruit of all the labour which he

may choose to expend upon it. But this was not left to the discovery of man, or to any ordinations of his consequent upon that discovery. He was not led to this arrangement by the experience of its consequences; but prompted to it by certain feelings, as much prior to that experience, as the appetite of hunger is prior to our experience of the use of food. In this matter, too, the wisdom of nature has anticipated the wisdom of man, by providing him with original principles of her own. Man was not left to find out the direction in which his benevolence might be most productive of enjoyment to others; but he has been irresistibly, and, as far as he is concerned, blindly impelled thereto by means of a family affection—which, concentrating his efforts on a certain few, has made them a hundred times more prolific of benefit to mankind than if all had been left to provide the best they may for the whole, without a precise or determinate impulse to any. And, in like manner, man was not left to find out the direction in which his industry might be made most productive of the materials of enjoyment; but, with the efforts of each concentrated by means of a special possessory affection on a certain portion of the territory, the universal produce is incalculably greater than under a medley system of indifference, with every field alike open to all, and, therefore, alike unreclaimed from the wilderness—unless one man shall consent to labour in seed-time, although another should reap the fruit of his labour in harvest. It is good that man was not trusted with the whole disentanglement of this chaos—but that a natural jurisprudence, founded on the constitution of the human mind, so far advances and facilitates the task of that artificial jurisprudence which frames the various codes or constitutions of human law. It is well that nature has connected with the past and actual possession of anything, so strong a sense of right to its continued possession; and that she has so powerfully backed this principle by means of another as strongly and universally felt as the former, even that each man has a right to possess the fruit of his own industry. The human legislator has little more to do than to confirm, or rather to promulgate and make known his determination to abide by principles already felt and recognised by all men. Wanting these, he could have fixed nothing, he could have perpetuated nothing. The legal constitution of every state, in its last and finished form, comes from the hand of man. But the great and natural principles, which secure for these constitutions the acceptance of whole communities—implanted in man

from his birth, or at least evincing their presence and power in very early childhood—these are what bespeak the immediate hand of God.

17. But these principles, strongly conservative though they be on the side of existing property, do not at all times prevent a revolution—which is much more frequently, however, a revolution of power than of property. But when such is the degree of violence abroad in society that even the latter is effected, this, most assuredly, does not arise from any decay or intermission of the possessory feelings that we have just been expounding, but from the force and fermentation of other causes which prevail in opposition to these, and in spite of them. And, after that such revolution has done its work, and ejected the old dynasty of proprietors, the mischief to them may be as irrecoverable as if their estates had been wrested from them by an irruption from the waters of the ocean, by earthquake, or the sweeping resistless visitation of any other great physical calamity. The moral world has its epochs and its transitions as well as the natural, during which the ordinary laws are not suspended, but only for the time overborne; but this does not hinder the recurrence and full reinstatement of these laws during the long eras of intermediate repose. And it is marvellous with what certainty and speed the conservative influences, of which we have treated, gather around a new system of things, with whatever violence, and even injustice, it may have been ushered into the world—insomuch that, under the guardianship of the powers which be, those links of a natural jurisprudence, now irretrievably torn from the former, are at length transferred in all their wonted tenacity to the existing proprietors, riveting each of them to his own several property, and altogether establishing a present order of as great firmness and strength as ever belonged to the order which went before it, but which is now superseded and forgotten. It is well that nature hath annexed so potent a charm to actual possession; and a charm which strengthens with every year and day of its continuance. This may not efface the historical infamy of many ancient usurpations. But the world cannot be kept in a state of perpetual effervescence; and now that the many thousand wrongs of years gone by, as well as the dead on whom they have been inflicted, are fading into deep oblivion, it is well for the repose of its living generations, that, in virtue of the strong possessory feelings which nature causes to arise in the hearts of existing proprietors, and

to be sympathized with by all other men, the possessors *de facto* have at length the homage done to them of possessors *de jure*—strong in their own consciousness of right, and strong in the recognition thereof by all their contemporaries.

18. But ere we have completed our views upon this subject, we must shortly dwell on a principle of very extensive application in morals, and which itself forms a striking example of a most beautiful and beneficent adaptation in the constitution of the human mind to the needs and the wellbeing of human society. It may be thus announced, briefly and generally: However strong the special affections of our nature may be, yet, if along with them there be but a principle of equity in the mind, then, these affections, so far from concentrating our selfish regards upon their several objects to the disregard and injury of others, will but enhance our respect and our sympathy for the like affections in other men.

19. This may be illustrated, in the first instance, by the equity observed between man and man in respect to the bodies which they wear—endowed, as we may suppose them to be, with equal, at least with like capacities of pain and suffering from external violence. To inflict that very pain upon another which I should resent, or shrink from in agony, if inflicted upon myself—this, to all sense of justice, appears a very palpable iniquity. Let us now conceive, then, that the sentient framework of each of the parties was made twice more sensitive, or twice more alive to pain and pungency of feeling than it actually is. In one view, it may be said that each would become twice more selfish than before. Each would feel a double interest in warding off external violence from himself, and so be doubly more anxious for his own protection and safety. But, with the very same moral nature as ever, each, now aware of the increased sensibility, not merely in himself but in his fellows, would feel doubly restrained from putting forth upon him a hand of violence. So, grant him to have but a sense of equity—and, exactly in proportion as he became tender of himself, would he become tender of another also. If the now superior exquisiteness of his own frame afforded him a topic on which what may be called his selfishness would feel more intensely than before, the now superior exquisiteness of another's frame would, in like manner, afford a topic on which his sense of justice would feel more intensely than before. It is even as when men of very acute sensibilities company together—each has, on that very

account, a more delicate and refined consideration for the feelings of all the rest; and it is only among men of tougher pellicle and rigid fibre where coarseness and freedom prevail, because there coarseness and freedom are not felt to be offensive. Grant but a sense of equity, and the very fineness of my sensations, which weds me so much more to the care and the defence of my own person, would also, on the imagination of a similar fineness in a fellow-man, restrain me so much more from the putting forth of any violence upon his person. If I had any compassion at all, or any horror at the injustice of inflicting upon another that which I should feel to be a cruelty if inflicted upon myself, I would experience a greater recoil of sympathy from the blow that was directed to the surface of a recent wound upon another, precisely as I would feel a severer agony in a similar infliction upon myself. So, there is nothing in the quickness of my physical sensibilities, and by which I am rendered more alive to the care and the guardianship of my own person—there is nothing in this to blunt, far less to extinguish my sensibilities for other men. Nay, it may give a quicker moral delicacy to all the sympathies which I before felt for them. And especially, the more sensitive I am to the hurts and the annoyances which others bring upon my own person, the more scrupulous may I be of being in any way instrumental to the hurt or the annoyance of others.

20. The same holds true between man and man, not merely of the bodies which they wear, but of the families which belong to them. Each man, by nature, hath a strong affection for his own offspring—the young whom he hath reared, and with whom the daily habit of converse under the same roof hath strengthened all the original affinities that subsisted between them. But one man a parent knows that another man, also a parent, is actuated by the very same appropriate sensibilities towards his offspring; and nought remains but to graft on these separate and special affections in each, a sympathy between one neighbour and another; that there might be a mutual respect for each other's family affections. After the matter is advanced thus far, we can be at no loss to perceive, that, in proportion to the strength of the parental affection with each, will be the strength of the fellow-feeling that each has with the affection of the other—insomuch that he who bears in his heart the greatest tenderness for his own offspring, would feel the greatest revolt against an act of severity towards the offspring of his friend. Now it is altogether so with the separate and original sense of property in each

of two neighbours, and a sense of justice grafted thereupon—even as a mutual neighbourlike sympathy may be grafted on the separate family affections. One man a proprietor, linked by many ties with that which he hath possessed and been in the habitual use and management of for years, is perfectly conscious of the very same kind of affinity between another man a proprietor, and that which belongs to him. It is not the justice which so links him to his own property, any more than it is the sympathy with his neighbour which has linked him to his own children. But the justice hath given him a respectful feeling for his neighbour's rights, even as the sympathy would give him a tenderness for his neighbour's offspring. And so far from there being aught in the strength of the appropriating principle that relaxes this deference to the rights of his neighbour, the second principle may in fact grow with the growth and strengthen with the strength of the first one.

21. For the purpose of maintaining an equitable regard, or an equitable conduct to others—it is no more necessary that we should reduce or extirpate the special affections of our nature, than that, in order to make room for the love of another, we should discharge from the bosom all love of ourselves. So far from this, the affection we have for ourselves, or for those various objects which by the constitution of our nature we are formed to seek after and to delight in—is the measure of that dutious regard which we owe to others, and of that dutious respect which we owe to all their rights and all their interests. The very highest behest of social morality, while at the same time the most comprehensive of its rules, is that we should love our neighbour as we do ourselves. Love to our neighbour is the thing which this rule measures off—and love to ourselves is the thing which it measures by. These two, then, the social and the selfish affections, instead of being as they too often are inversely, might, under a virtuous regimen, be directly proportional to each other. At all events, the way to advance or magnify the one, is not surely to weaken or abridge the other. The strength of certain prior affections which by nature we do have, is the standard of certain posterior affections which morality tells that we ought to have. Morality neither plants these prior affections, nor does she enjoin us to extirpate them. They were inserted by the hand of nature for the most useful purposes; and morality, instead of demolishing her work, applies the rule and compass to it for the construction of her own.

22. It was not justice which presided over the original distribution of property. It was not she who assigned to each man his separate field, any more than it was she who assigned to each man his separate family. It was nature that did both, by investing with such power those anterior circumstances of habit and possession, which gave rise—first, to the special love that each man bears to his own children, and, secondly, to the special love that each man bears to his own acres. Had there been no such processes beforehand for thus isolating the parental regards of each on that certain household group which nature placed under his roof, and the proprietary regards of each on that certain local territory which history casts into his possession; or, had each man been so constituted, that, instead of certain children whom he felt to be his own, he was alike loose to them or susceptible of a like random and indiscriminate affection for any children; or, instead of certain lands which he felt to be his own, he was alike loose to them or susceptible of a like tenacious adherence to any lands—had such been the rudimental chaos which nature put into the hands of man for the exercise of his matured faculties, neither his morality nor his wisdom would have enabled him to unravel it. But nature prepared for man an easier task; and when justice arose to her work, she found a territory so far already partitioned, and each proprietor linked by a strong and separate tie of peculiar force to that part which he himself did occupy. She found this to be the land which one man went to possess and cultivate, and that to be the land which another man went to possess and cultivate—the destination, not originally, of justice, but of accident, which her office nevertheless is not to reverse, but to confirm. We hold it a beautiful part of our constitution, that, the firmer the tenacity wherewith the first man adheres to his own, once that justice takes her place among the other principles of his nature, the prompter will be his recognition of the second man's right to his own. If each man sat more loosely to his own portion, each would have viewed more loosely the right of his neighbour to the other portion. The sense of property, anterior to justice, exists in the hearts of all; and the principle of justice, subsequent to property, does not extirpate these special affections, but only arbitrates between them. In proportion to the felt strength of the proprietary affection in the hearts of each, will be the strength of that deference which each, in so far as justice has the mastery over him, renders to the rights and the property of his neighbour. These are the

principles of the *histoire raisonnée*, that has been more or less exemplified in all the countries of the world ; and which might still be exemplified in the appropriation of a desert island. If we had not had the prior and special determinations of nature, justice would have felt the work of appropriation to be an inextricable problem. If we had not had justice, with each man obeying only the impulse of his own affections and unobservant of the like affection of others, we should have been kept in a state of constant and interminable war. Under the guidance of nature and justice together, the whole earth might have been parcelled out, without conflict and without interference.

23. If a strong self-interest in one's person may not only be consistent with, but, by the aid of the moral sense, may be conducive to a proportionally strong principle of forbearance from all injury to the persons of other men—why may not the very same law be at work in regard to property as to person? The fondness wherewith one nourisheth and cherisheth his own flesh, might, we have seen, enhance his sympathy and his sense of justice for that of other men ; and so, we affirm, might it be of the fondness wherewith one nourishes and cherishes his own field. The relation in which each man stands to his own body, was anterior to the first dawns of his moral nature ; and his instinctive sensibilities of pain and suffering, when any violence is inflicted, were also anterior. But as his moral perceptions expand, and he considers others beside himself who are similarly related to their bodies—these very susceptibilities not only lead him to recoil from the violence that is offered to himself ; but they lead him to refrain from the offering of violence to other men. They may have an air of selfishness at the first ; yet so far from being obstacles in the way of justice, they are indispensable helps to it. And so may each man stand related to a property as well as to a person ; and by ties that bind him to it, ere he thought of his neighbour's property at all—by instinctive affections, which operated previously to a sense of justice in his bosom ; and yet which, so far from acting as a thwart upon his justice to others, give additional impulse to all his observations of it. He feels what has passed within his own bosom, in reference to the field that he has possessed and has laboured, and that has for a time been respected by society as his ; and he is aware of the very same feeling in the breast of a neighbour in relation to another field ; and in very proportion to the strength of his own feeling, does he defer to that of his fellow-men. It is

at this point that the sense of justice begins to operate—not for the purpose of leading him to appropriate his own, for this he has already done ; but for the purpose of leading him to respect the property of others. It was not justice which gave to either of them at the first that feeling of property which each has in his own separate domain ; any more than it was justice which gave to either of them that feeling of affection which each has for his own children. It is after, and not before these feelings are formed, that justice steps in with her golden rule, of not doing to others as we would not others to do unto us ; and, all conscious as we are of the dislike and resentment we should feel on the invasion of our property, it teaches to defer to a similar dislike and a similar resentment in other men. And, so far from this original and instinctive regard for this property which is my own, serving at all to impair, when once the moral sense comes into play, it enhances my equitable regard for the property of others. It is just with me the proprietor, as it is with me the parent. My affection for my own family does not prompt me to appropriate the family of another ; but it strengthens my sympathetic consideration for the tenderness and feeling of their own parent towards them. My affection for my own field does not incline me to seize upon that of another man ; but it strengthens my equitable consideration for all the attachments and the claims which its proprietor has upon it. In proportion to the strength of that instinct which binds me to my own offspring, is the sympathy I feel with the tenderness of other parents. In proportion to the strength of that instinct which binds me to my own property, is the sense of equity I feel towards the rights of all other proprietors. It was not justice which gave either the one instinct or the other ; but justice teaches each man to bear respect to that instinct in another, which he feels to be of powerful operation in his own bosom.

24. It is in virtue of my sentient nature that I am so painfully alive to the violence done upon my own body, as to recoil from the infliction of it upon myself. And it is in virtue of my moral nature, that, alive to the pain of other bodies than my own, I refrain from the infliction of it upon them. It is not justice which gives the sensations ; but justice pronounces on the equal respect that is due to the sensations of all. Neither does justice give the sensations of property, but it finds them ; and pronounces on the respect which each owes to the sensations of all the rest. It was not justice which gave the personal feel-

ing ; neither is it justice which gives the possessory feeling. Justice has nothing to do with the process by which this body came to be my own ; and although now, perhaps, there is not a property, at least in the civilized world, which may not have passed into the hand of their actual possessors by a series of purchases, over which justice had the direction—yet there was a time when it might have been said, that justice has had nothing to do with the process by which this garden came to be my own ; and yet, then as well as now, it would have been the utterance of a true feeling, that he who touches this garden touches the apple of mine eye. And it is as much the dictate of justice, that we shall respect the one sensation as the other. He, indeed, who has the greatest sensitiveness, whether about his own person or his own property, will, with an equal principle of justice in his constitution, have the greatest sympathy, both for the personal and the proprietary rights of others. This view of it saves all the impracticable mysticism that has gathered around the speculations of those who conceive of justice as presiding over the first distributions of property ; and so have fallen into the very common mistake of trying to account for that which had been provided for by the wisdom of nature, as if it had been provided by the wisdom and the principle of man. At the first allocations of property, justice may have had no hand in them. They were altogether fortuitous. One man set himself down, perhaps on a better soil than his neighbour, and chalked out for himself a larger territory, at a time when there was none who interfered or who offered to share it with him ; and so he came to as firm a possessory feeling in reference to his wider domain, as the other has in reference to his smaller. Our metaphysical jurists are sadly puzzled to account for the original inequalities of property, and for the practical acquiescence of all men in the actual and very unequal distribution of it—having recourse to an original social compact, and to other fictions alike visionary. But if there be truth in our theory, it is just as easy to explain, why the humble proprietor would no more think of laying claim to certain acres of his rich neighbour's estate because it was larger than his own, than he would think of laying claim to certain children of his neighbour's family because it was larger—or even of laying claim to certain parts of his neighbour's person because it was larger. He is sufficiently acquainted with his own nature to be aware, that, were the circumstances changed, he should feel precisely as his afflu-

ent neighbour does; and he respects the feeling accordingly. He knows that, if himself at the head of a larger property, he would have the same affection for all its fields that the actual proprietor has; and that, if at the head of a larger family, he would have the same affection with the actual parent for all its children. It is by making justice come in at the right place—that is, not prior to these strong affections of nature, but posterior to them, that the perplexities of this inquiry are done away. The principle on which it arbitrates, is, not the comparative magnitude of the properties, but the relative feelings of each actual possessor towards each actual property; and if it find these in every instance to be the very feelings which all men would have in the circumstances belonging to that instance—it attempts no new distribution, but gives its full sanction to the distribution which is already before it. This is the real origin and upholder of that conservative influence which binds together the rich and the poor in society; and thus it is that property is respected throughout all its gradations.

25. It is from the treatment of an original as if it were a derived affection, that the whole obscurity on this topic has arisen. It is quite as impossible to educe the possessory feeling from an anterior sense of justice, or from a respect for law—as it is to educe the parental feeling from a previous and comprehensive regard for the interests of humanity. There is no doubt that the general good is best promoted by the play of special family affections; but this is the work of nature, and not the work of man. And there is no doubt that the wealth and comfort of society are inconceivably augmented by those influences, which bind each individual nearly as much to his own property as he is bound to his own offspring. But in the one case as well as the other, there were certain instinctive regards that came first, and the office of justice is altogether a subsequent one; not to put these regards into the breast of any, but to award the equal deference that is due to the regards of all—insomuch that the vast domain of one individual, perhaps transmitted to him from generation to generation, throughout the lengthened series of an ancestry, whose feet are now upon the earth, but whose top reaches the clouds and is there lost in distant and obscure antiquity—is, to the last inch of its margin, under a guardianship of justice as inviolable as that which assures protection and ownership to the humble possessor of one solitary acre. The right of property is not the less deferred to, either because its

divisions are unequal, or because its origin is unknown. And even when history tells us that it is founded on some deed of iniquitous usurpation, there is a charm in the continued occupation, that prevails and has the mastery over our most indignant remembrance of the villany of other days. It says much for the strength of the possessory feeling, that, even in less than half a century, it will, if legal claims are meanwhile forborne, cast into obliteration all the deeds, and even all the delinquencies, which attach to the commencement of a property. At length the prescriptive right bears everything before it, as by the consuetude of English, by the use and wont of Scottish law. And therefore, once more, instead of saying with Dr. Paley, that it is the law of the land which constitutes the basis of property—the law exhibits her best wisdom, when she founds on the materials of that basis which nature and the common sense of mankind have laid before her.

26. Dr. Thomas Brown, we hold to have been partly right and partly wrong upon this subject. He evinces a true discernment of what may be termed the pedigree of our feelings in regard to property, when he says, and says admirably well—that “justice is not what constitutes property; it is a virtue which presupposes property and respects it however constituted.” And further, that “justice, as a moral virtue, is not the creation of property, but the conformity of our actions to those views of property, which vary in the various states of society.”* But it is not as he would affirm, it is not because obedience to a system of law, of which the evident tendency is to the public good, is the object of our moral regard—it is not this which moralizes, if we may be allowed such an application of the term, or rather which constitutes the virtuousness of our respect to another man’s property. This is the common mistake of those moralists who would ascribe every useful direction, or habitude of man, to some previous and comprehensive view taken by himself of what is best for the good of the individual or the good of society; instead of regarding such habitude as the fruit of a special tendency, impressed direct by the hand of nature, on a previous and comprehensive view taken by its author, and therefore bearing on it a palpable indication both of the goodness and the wisdom of nature’s God—even as hunger is the involuntary result of man’s physical constitution, and not of any care or consideration by man on the uses of food. The truth is—when,

* Lecture lxxxiii.

deferring to another's right of property, we do not think of the public good in the matter at all. But we are glad, in the first instance, each to possess, and to use, and to improve all that we are able to do without molestation, whether that freedom from molestation has been secured to us by law or by the mere circumstances of our state, and, in virtue of principles not resulting from any anticipations of wisdom or any views of general philanthropy (because developed in early childhood, and long before we are capable of being either philanthropists or legislators), we feel a strong link of ownership with that which we have thus possessed and used, and on which we have bestowed our improvements; and we are aware that another man, in similar relation with another property, will feel towards it in like manner; and a sense of justice, or its still more significant and instructive name of equity, suggests this equality between me and him—that, in the same manner as I would regard his encroachment on myself as injurious, so it were alike injurious in me to make a similar encroachment upon my neighbour.

27. We have expatiated thus long on the origin and rights of property—because of all subjects, it is the one regarding which our writers on jurisprudence have sent forth the greatest amount of doubtful and unsatisfactory metaphysics. They labour and are in great perplexity to explain even the rise of the feeling or desire that is in the mind regarding it. They reason, as if the very conception of property was that, which could not have entered into the heart of man without a previous sense of justice. In this we hold them to have antedated matters wrong. The conception of property is aboriginal; and the office of justice is not to put it into any man's head; but to arbitrate among the rival feelings of cupidity, or the arrogant and overpassing claims that are apt to get into all men's heads—not to initiate man into the notion of property; but, in fact, to limit and restrain his notion of it—not to teach the creatures who at first conceive themselves to have nothing, what that is which they might call their own; but to teach the creatures whose first and earliest tendency is to call everything their own, what that is which they must refrain from and concede to others. When justice rises to authority among men, her office is, not to wed each individual by the link of property to that which he formerly thought it was not competent for him to use or to possess; but it is to divorce each individual from that which it is not rightly competent for him to use or to possess—and thus restrict each

to his own rightful portion. Its office, in fact, is restrictive, not dispensatory. The use of it is, not to give the first notion of property to those who were destitute of it, but to limit and restrain the notion with those among whom it is apt to exist in a state of overflow. The use of law, in short, the great expounder and enforcer of property, is not to instruct the men who but for her lessons would appropriate none; but it is to restrain the men who but for her checks and prohibitions would monopolize all.

28. Such, then, seems to have been the purpose of nature in so framing our mental constitution, that we not only appropriate from the first, but feel each such a power in those circumstances, which serve to limit the appropriations of every one man, and to distinguish them from those of others—that all, as if with common and practical consent, sit side by side together, without conflict and without interference, on their own respective portions, however unequal, of the territory in which they are placed. On the uses, the indispensable uses of such an arrangement, we need not expatiate.* The hundred-fold superiority, in the amount of produce for the subsistence of human beings, which an appropriated country has over an equal extent of a like fertile but unappropriated, and, therefore, unreclaimed wilderness, is too obvious to be explained. It may be stated, however; and when an economy so beneficial, without which even a few stragglers of our race could not be supported in comfort; and a large human family, though many times inferior to that which now peoples our globe, could not be supported at all—when the effect of this economy, in multiplying to a degree inconceivable the aliment of human bodies, is viewed in connexion with those prior tendencies of the human mind which gave it birth, we cannot but regard the whole as an instance, and one of the strongest which it is possible to allege, of the adaptation of external nature to that mental constitution wherewith the Author of nature hath endowed us.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THOSE SPECIAL AFFECTIONS WHICH CONDUCE TO THE ECONOMIC WELLBEING OF SOCIETY.

1. WE now proceed to consider the economic, in contradistinction to the civil and political wellbeing of society, to the

* This we have done at greater length in our work on Political Economy.

extent that this is dependent on certain mental tendencies—whether these can be demonstrated by analysis to be only secondary results, or in themselves to be simple elements of the human constitution. We may be said, indeed, to have already bordered on this part of our argument—when considering the origin and the rights of property; or the manner in which certain possessory affections, that appear even in the infancy of the mind, and anticipate by many years the exercise of human wisdom, lead to a better distribution, both of the earth and of all the valuables which are upon it, than human wisdom could possibly have devised, or at least than human power, without the help of these special affections, could have carried into effect. For there might be a useful economy sanctioned by law, yet which law could not have securely established, unless it had had a foundation in nature. For in this respect, there is a limit to the force even of the mightiest despotism—insomuch that the most absolute monarch on the face of the earth must so far conform himself to the indelible human nature of the subjects over whom he proudly bears the sway; else, in the reaction of their outraged principles and feelings, they would hurl him from his throne. And thus it is well that, so very generally in the different countries of the world, law, both in her respect for the possessory and acquired rights of property, and in her enforcement of them, has, instead of chalking out an arbitrary path for herself, only followed where nature beforehand had pointed the way. It is far better that, rather than devise a jurisprudence made up of her own capricious inventions, she should, to so great an extent, have but ratified a prior jurisprudence, founded on the original, or at least the universal affections of humanity. We know few things more instructive than a study of the mischievous effects which attend a deviation from this course—of which we, at present, shall state two remarkable instances. The evils which ensue when law traverses any of those principles that lie deeply seated in the very make and constitution of the mind, bring out into more striking exhibition the superior wisdom of that nature from which she has departed—even as the original perfection of a mechanism is never more fully demonstrated, than by the contrast of those repeated failures, which shows of every change or attempted improvement, that it but deranges or deteriorates the operations of the instrument in question. And thus too it is, that a lesson of sound theology may be gathered, from the errors with their accompanying evils

of unsound legislation—on those occasions when the wisdom of man comes into conflict and collision with the wisdom of God.

2. Of the two instances that we are now to produce in which law hath made a deviation from nature, and done in consequence a tremendous quantity of evil, the first is the tithe system of England. We do not think that the provision of her established clergy is in any way too liberal—but very much the reverse. Still we hold it signally unfortunate that it should have been levied so, as to do most unnecessary violence to the possessory feeling, both of the owners and occupiers of land all over the country. Had the tithe, like some other of the public burdens, been commuted into a pecuniary and yearly tax on the proprietors—the possessory feeling would not have been so painfully or so directly thwarted by it. But it is the constant intromission of the tithe agents or proctors with the fields, and the *ipsa corpora* that are within the limits of the property—which exposes this strong natural affection to an annoyance that is felt to be intolerable. But far the best method of adjusting the state of the law to those principles of ownership which are anterior to law, and which all its authority would be unable to quench—would be a commutation into land. Let the church property in each parish be dissevered in this way from its main territory; and then, both for the lay and the ecclesiastical domain, there would be an accordance of the legal with the possessory right. It is because these are in such painful dissonance under the existing state of things that there is so much exasperation in England connected with the support and maintenance of her clergy. No doubt law can enforce her own arrangements, however arbitrary and unnatural they might be; but it is a striking exhibition, we have always thought, of the triumph of the possessory over the legal, that, in the contests between the two parties, the clergy have constantly been losing ground. And in resistance to all the opprobrium which has been thrown upon them, do we affirm that, with a disinterestedness which is almost heroic, they have, in deed and in practice, forborne to the average extent of at least one-half the assertion of their claims. The truth is, that the felt odium which attaches to the system ought never to have fallen upon them. It is an inseparable consequence of the arrangement itself, by which law hath traversed nature, so as to be constantly rubbing, as it were, against that possessory feeling, which may be regarded as one of the strongest of her instincts. There are few reformations that

would do more to sweeten the breath of English society than the removal of this sore annoyance—the brooding fountain of so many heartburnings and so many festerments by which the elements of an unappeasable warfare are ever at work between the landed interest of the country, and far the most important class of its public functionaries; and what is the saddest perversity of all, those whose office it is, by the mild persuasions of Christianity, to train the population of our land in the lessons of love, and peace, and righteousness—they are forced by the necessities of a system which many of them deplore, into the attitude of extortioners; and placed in that very current, along which a people's hatred and a people's obloquy are wholly unavoidable.* Even under the theocracy of the Jews, the system of tithes was with difficulty upholden; and many are the remonstrances which the gifted seers of Israel held with its people, for having brought of the lame and the diseased as offerings. Such, in fact, is the violence done by this system to the possessory feelings, that a conscientious submission to its exactions may be regarded as a most decisive test of religious obedience—such an obedience, indeed, as was but ill maintained, even in the days of the Hebrew polity, although it had the force of temporal sanctions, with the miracles and manifestations of a presiding Deity to sustain it. Unless by the express appointment of Heaven, this yoke of Judaism, accompanied as it now is by the peculiar and preternatural enforcements of that dispensation, ought never to have been perpetuated in the days of Christianity. There are distinct, and, we hold, valid reasons, for the national maintenance of an order of men in the capacity of religious instructors to the people. But maintenance in a way so obnoxious to nature is alike adverse to a sound civil, and a sound Christian policy. Both the cause of religion and the cause of loyalty have suffered by it. The alienation of the church's wealth were a deadly blow to the best and highest interests of England; but there are few things which would conduce more to the strength and peace of our nation than a fair and right commutation of it.

3. Our next very flagrant example of a mischievous collision

* There is often the utmost injustice in that professional odium which is laid upon a whole order, and none have suffered more under it than the clergy of England have, from the sweeping and indiscriminate charges which have been preferred against them by the demagogues of our land. We believe that nothing has given more of edge and currency to these invectives than the very unfortunate way in which their maintenance has been provided for; and many are the amiable and accomplished individuals among themselves to whom it is a matter of downright agony.

between the legal and the possessory, is the English system of poor-laws. By law, each man who can make good his plea of necessity, has a claim for the relief of it from the owners or occupiers of the soil, or from the owners and occupiers of houses; and never, till the end of time, will all the authority and all the enactments of the statute-book, be able to divest them of the feeling that their property is invaded. Law never can so counterwork the strong possessory feeling, as to reconcile the proprietors of England to this legalized enormity, or rid them of the sensation of a perpetual violence. It is this maladjustment between the voice that nature gives forth on the right of property, and the voice that arbitrary law gives forth upon it—it is this which begets something more than a painful insecurity as to the stability of their possessions. There is, besides, a positive, and what we should call a most natural irritation. That strong possessory feeling, by which each is wedded to his own domain in the relation of its rightful proprietor, and which they can no more help—because as much a part of their original constitution—than the parental feeling by which each is wedded to his own family in the relation of its natural protector,—this strong possessory feeling, we say, is, under their existing economy, subject all over England to a perpetual and most painful annoyance. And, accordingly, we do find the utmost acerbity of tone and temper among the upper classes of England in reference to their poor. We are not sure, indeed, if there be any great difference, with many of them, between the feeling which they have towards the poor and the feeling which they have towards poachers. It is true that the law is on the side of the one, and against the other. Yet it goes most strikingly to prove, how impossible it is for law to carry the acquiescence of the heart, when it contravenes the primary and urgent affections of nature—that paupers are in any degree assimilated to poachers in the public imagination, and that the inroads of both upon property should be resented, as if both alike were a sort of trespass or invasion.

4. And it is further interesting to observe the effect of this unnatural state of things on the paupers themselves. Even in their deportment, we might read an unconscious homage to the possessory right. And whereas it has been argued in behalf of a poor-rate, that, so far from degrading, it sustains an independence of spirit among the peasantry, by turning that which would have been a matter of beggary into a matter of rightful

and manly assertion—there is none who has attended the meetings of a parish vestry, that will not readily admit the total dissimilarity which obtains between the assertion to a right of maintenance there, and the assertion of any other right whatever, whether on the field of war or of patriotism. There may be much of the insolence of beggary; but along with this there is a most discernible mixture of its mean, and crouching, and ignoble sordidness. There is no common quality whatever between the clamorous onset of this worthless and dissipated crew, and the generous battle-cry *pro aris et focis*, in which the humblest of our population will join, when paternal acres, or the rights of any actually holden property are invaded. In the mind of the pauper, with all his challenging and all his boisterousness, there is still the latent impression, that, after all, there is a certain want of firmness about his plea. He is not altogether sure of the ground upon which he is standing; and, in spite of all that law has done to pervert his imagination, the possessory right of those against whom he prefers his demand stares him in the face, and disturbs him not a little out of that confidence wherewith a man represents and urges the demands of unquestionable justice. In spite of himself, he cannot avoid having somewhat the look and the consciousness of a poacher. And so, the effect of England's most unfortunate blunder has been, to alienate, on the one hand, her rich from her poor, and on the other, to debase into the very spirit and sordidness of beggary a large and ever-increasing mass of her population. There is but one way, we can never cease to affirm, by which this grievous distemper of the body politic can be removed. And that is, by causing the law of property to harmonize with the strong and universal instincts of nature in regard to it; by making the possessory right to be at least as inviolable as the common sense of mankind would make it: and as to the poor, by utterly recalling the blunder that England made, when she turned into a matter of legal constraint that which should ever be a matter of love and liberty, and when she aggravated tenfold the dependence and misery of the lower classes, by divorcing the cause of humanity from the willing generousities—the spontaneous and unforced sympathies of our nature.

5. But this brings into view another of our special affections—our compassion for the distress, including, as one of its most prominent and frequently recurring objects, our compassion for the destitution of others. We have already seen how nature

hath provided, by one of its implanted affections, for the establishment of property ; and for the respect in which, amid all its inequalities, it is held by society. But helpless destitution forms one extreme of this inequality, which a mere system of property appears to leave out ; and which, if not otherwise provided for by the wisdom of nature in the constitution of the human mind, would perhaps justify an attempt by the wisdom of man to provide for it in the constitution of human law. We do not instance at present certain other securities which have been instituted by the hand of nature, and which, if not traversed and enfeebled by a legislation wholly uncalled for, would of themselves prevent the extensive prevalence of want in society. These are the urgent law of self-preservation, prompting to industry on the one hand, and to economy on the other ; and the strong law of relative affection—which laws, if not tampered with and undermined in their force and efficacy by the law of pauperism, would not have relieved, but, greatly better, would have prevented the vast majority of those cases which fill the workhouses, and swarm around the vestries of England. Still these, however, would not have prevented all poverty. A few instances, like those which are so quietly and manageably, but withal effectually met in the country parishes of Scotland, would still occur in every little community, however virtuous or well regulated. And in regard to these, there is another law of the mental constitution, by which nature hath made special provision for them—even the beautiful law of compassion, in virtue of which the sight of another in agony (and most of all perhaps in the agony of pining hunger), would, if unrelieved, create a sensation of discomfort in the heart of the observer, scarcely inferior to what he should have felt, had the suffering and the agony been his own.

6. But in England, the state, regardless of all the indices which nature had planted in the human constitution, hath taken the regulation of this matter into its own hands. By its law of pauperism, it hath, in the first instance, ordained for the poor a legal property in the soil ; and thereby running counter to the strong possessory affection, it hath done violence to the natural and original distribution of the land, and loosened the secure hold of each separate owner, on the portion which belongs to him. And in the second instance, distrustful of the efficacy of compassion, it, by way of helping forward its languid energies, hath applied the strong hand of power to it. Now it so happens,

that nothing more effectually stifles compassion, or puts it to flight, than to be thus meddled with. The spirit of kindness utterly refuses the constraints of authority; and law in England, by taking the business of charity upon itself, instead of supplementing, hath well nigh destroyed the anterior provision made for it by nature—thus leaving it to be chiefly provided for by methods and by a machinery of its own. The proper function of law is to enforce the rights of justice, or to defend against the violation of them; and never does it make a more flagrant or a more hurtful invasion beyond the confines of its own legitimate territory, than when, confounding humanity with justice, it would apply the same enforcements to the one virtue as to the other. It should have taken a lesson from the strong and evident distinction which nature hath made between these two virtues, in her construction of our moral system; and should have observed a corresponding distinction in its own treatment of them—resenting the violation of the one, but leaving the other to the free interchanges of good-will on the side of the dispenser, and of gratitude on the side of the recipient. When law, distrustful of the compassion that is in all hearts, enacted a system of compulsory relief, lest, in our neglect of others, the indigent should starve; it did incomparably worse, than if, distrustful of the appetite of hunger, it had enacted for the use of food a certain regimen of times and quantities, lest, neglectful of ourselves, our bodies might have perished. Nature has made a better provision than this for both these interests; but law has done more mischief by interference with the one, than it could ever have done by interference with the other. It could not have quelled the appetite of hunger, which still, in spite of all the law's officiousness, would have remained the great practical impellent to the use of food, for the wellbeing of our physical economy. But it has done much to quell and to overbear the affection of compassion—that never-failing impellent, in a free and natural state of things, to deeds of charity, for the wellbeing of the social economy. The evils which have ensued are of too potent and pressing a character to require description. They have placed England in a grievous dilemma, from which she can only be extricated by the new-modelling of this part of her statute-book, and a nearer conformity of its provisions to the principles of natural jurisprudence. Meanwhile they afford an emphatic demonstration for the superior wisdom of nature, which is never so decisively or so triumphantly attested as by the mischief that is

done, when her processes are contravened or her principles are violated.*

7. We are aware of a certain ethical system that would obliterate the distinction between justice and humanity, by running or resolving the one into the other—affirming of the former more particularly, that all its virtue is founded on its utility; and that therefore justice, to which may be added truth, is no further a virtue than as it is instrumental of good to men—thus making both truth and justice mere species or modifications of benevolence. Now, as we have already stated, it is not with the theory of morals, but with the moral constitution of man that we have properly to do; and most certain it is that man does feel the moral rightness both of justice and truth, irrespective altogether of their consequences—or, at least, apart from any such view to these consequences at the time as the mind is at all conscious of. There is an appetite of our sentient nature which terminates in food, and that is irrespective of all its subsequent utilities to the animal economy; and there is an appetite for doing what is right, which terminates in virtue, and which bears as little respect to its utilities—whether for the good of self or for the good of society. The man whom some temptation to what is dishonourable would put into a state of recoil and restlessness, has no other aim, in the resistance he makes to it, than simply to make full acquittal of his integrity. This is his landing-place; and he looks no further. There may be a thousand dependent blessings to humanity from the observation of moral rectitude. But the pure and simple appetency for rectitude rests upon this as its object, without any onward reference to the consequences which shall flow from it. This consideration alone is sufficient to dispose of the system of utility, as being metaphysically incorrect in point of conception, and incorrect in the expression of it. If a man can do virtuously, when not aiming at the useful, and not so much as thinking of it—then to design and execute what is useful, may be and is a virtue; but it is not all virtue.†

* Without contending for the language of our older moralists, the distinction which they mean to express by virtues of perfect and imperfect obligation, has a foundation in reality and in the nature of things—as between justice where the obligation on one side implies a counterpart right upon the other, and benevolence to which, whatever the obligation may be on the part of the dispenser, there is no corresponding right on the part of the recipient. The proper office of law is to enforce the former virtues. When it attempts to enforce the latter, it makes a mischievous extension of itself beyond its own legitimate boundaries.

† If our moral judgment tell that some particular thing is right, without our adverting to its utility—then though all that we hold to be morally right should be proved by observa-

8. There is one way in which a theorist may take refuge from this conclusion. It is quite palpable that a man often feels himself to be doing virtuously, when, to all sense, he is not thinking of the utilities which follow in its train. But then it may be affirmed, that he really is so thinking, although he is not sensible of it. There can be little doubt of such being the actual economy of the world, such the existing arrangement of its laws and its sequences—that virtue and happiness are very closely associated; and that no less in those instances where the resulting happiness is not at all thought of, than in those where happiness is the direct and declared object of the virtue. Who can doubt that truth and justice bear as manifold and as important a subserviency to the good of the species as beneficence does?—and yet it is only with the latter that this good is the object of our immediate contemplation. But then it is affirmed that, when two terms are constantly associated in nature, there must be as constant an association of them in the mind of the observer of nature—an association at length so habitual, and therefore so rapid, that we become utterly unconscious of it. Of this we have examples in the most frequent and familiar operations of human life. In the act of reading, every alphabetical letter must have been present to the mind—yet how many thousands of them, in the course of a single hour, must have past in fleeting succession, without so much as one moment's sense of their presence, which the mind has any recollection of. And it is the same in listening to an acquaintance, when we receive the whole meaning and effect of his discourse, without the distinct consciousness of very many of those individual words which still were indispensable to the meaning. Nay, there are other and yet more inscrutable mysteries in the human constitution; and which relate not to the thoughts that we conceive without being sensible of them, but even to the volitions that we put forth, and to very many of which we are alike insensible. We have only to reflect on the number and complexity of those muscles which are put into action in the mere processes of writing or walking, or even of so balancing ourselves as to maintain a pos-

tion to yield the maximum of utility, utility is not on that account the mind's criterion for the rightness of this particular thing. God hath given us the sense of what is right; and He hath, besides, so ordained the system of things, that what is right is generally that which is most useful—yet, in many instances, it is not the perceived usefulness which makes us recognise it to be right. We agree, too, with Bishop Butler, in not venturing to assume that God's sole end in creation was the production of the greatest happiness.

ture of stability. It is understood to be at the bidding of the will, that each of our muscles performs its distinct office; and yet, out of the countless volitions which had their part and their play in these complicated and yet withal most familiar and easily practicable operations—how many there are which wholly escape the eye of consciousness! And thus, too, recourse may be had to the imagination of certain associating processes, too hidden for being the objects of sense at the time, and too fugitive for being the objects of remembrance afterwards. And on the strength of these, it may be asked—how are we to know that the utility of truth and justice is not present to the mind of man, when he discharges the obligation of these virtues; and how are we to know that it is not the undiscoverable thought of this utility, which forms the impellent principle of that undiscoverable volition by which man is urged to the performance of them?

9. Now we are precluded from replying to this question in any other way, than that the theory which requires such an argument for its support, may be said to fetch all its materials from the region of conjecture. It ventures on the affirmation of what is going on in a terra incognita; and we have not the means within our reach for meeting it in the terms of a positive contradiction. But we can at least say, that a mere *argumentum ab ignorantia* is not a sufficient basis on which to ground a philosophic theory; and that thus to fetch a hypothesis from among the inscrutabilities of the mind, to speak of processes going on there, so quick and so evanescent that the eye of consciousness cannot discover them—is to rear a superstructure, not upon the facts which lie within the limit of separation between the known and the unknown, but upon the fancies which lie without this limit. A great deal more is necessary for the establishment of an assertion, than that an adversary cannot disprove it. A thousand possibilities may be affirmed which are susceptible neither of proof nor of disproof; and surely it were the worst of logic to accept as proof the mere circumstance that they are beyond the reach of disproof. They, in fact, lie alike beyond the reach of both; in which case they should be ranked among the figments of mere imagination, and not among the findings of experience. How are we to know but that, in the bosom of our great planetary amplitude, there do not float, and in elliptic orbits round the sun, pieces of matter vastly too diminutive for our telescopes; and that thus the large interme-

diate spaces between the known bodies of the system, instead of so many desolate blanks, are, in fact, peopled with little worlds—all of them teeming, like our own, with busy and cheerful animation? Now, in the powerlessness of our existing telescopes, we do not know but it may be so. But we will not believe that it is so, till a telescope of power enough be invented for disclosing this scene of wonders to our observation. And it is the same of the moral theory that now engages us. It rests not upon what it finds among the arcana of the human spirit, but upon what it fancies to be there; and they are fancies too which we cannot deny, but which we will not admit, till, by some improved power of internal observation, they are turned into findings. We are quite sensible of the virtuousness of truth; but we have not yet been made sensible, that we always recognise this virtuousness, because of a glance we have had of the utility of truth—though only perhaps for a moment of time too minute and microscopical for being noticed by the naked eye of consciousness. We can go no further upon this question than the light of evidence will carry us. And, while we both feel in our own bosoms and observe in the testimony of those around us, the moral deference which is due to truth and justice—we have not yet detected this to be the same with that deference which we render to the virtue of benevolence. Or, in other words, we do venerate and regard these as virtues—while, *for aught we know*, the utility of them is not in all our thoughts. We agree with Dugald Stewart in thinking, that “considerations of utility do not seem to us the only ground of the approbation we bestow on this disposition.” He further observes, that “abstracting from all regard to consequences, there is something pleasing and amiable in sincerity, openness, and truth; something disagreeable and disgusting in duplicity, equivocation, and falsehood. Dr. Hutchison himself, the great patron of that theory which resolves all moral qualities into benevolence, confesses this—for he speaks of a *sense* which leads us to approve of veracity distinct from the sense which approves of qualities useful to mankind.”*

10. However difficult it may be to resolve the objective question which respects the constitution of virtue in itself—in the subjective question, which respects the constitution of the mind, we cannot but acknowledge the broad and palpable distinction which the Author of our moral frame hath made, between justice

* Stewart's "Outlines of Moral Philosophy," Art. *Veracity*.

and truth on the one hand, and beneficence on the other. And it had been well, if lawgivers had discriminated, as nature has done, between justice and humanity—although the mischief of their unfortunate deviation serves, all the more strikingly, to prove the adaptation of our moral constitution to the exigencies of human society. The law of pauperism hath assimilated beneficence to justice, by enacting the former in the very way that it does the latter, and enforcing what it has thus enacted by penalties. Beneficence loses altogether its proper and original character, when, instead of moving on the impulse of a spontaneous kindness that operates from within, it moves on the impulse of a legal obligation from without. Should law specify the yearly sum that must pass from my hands to the destitute around me, then it is not beneficence which has to do with the matter. What I have to surrender, law hath already ordained to be the property of another; and I, in giving it up, am doing an act of justice, and not an act of liberality. To exercise the virtue of beneficence, I must go beyond the sum that is specified by law; and thus law, in her attempts to seize upon beneficence, and to bring her under rule, hath only forced her to retire within a narrower territory, on which alone it is that she can put forth the free and native characteristics which belong to her. Law, in fact, cannot, with any possible ingenuity, obtain an imperative hold on beneficence at all; for her very touch transforms this virtue into another. Should law go forth on the enterprise of arresting beneficence upon her own domain, and there laying upon her its authoritative dictates, it would find that beneficence had eluded its pursuit; and that all which it could possibly do, was to wrest from her that part of the domain of which it had taken occupation, and bring it under the authority of justice. When it thought to enact for beneficence, it only, in truth, enacted a new division of property; and in so doing, it contravenes the possessory, one of nature's special affections—while, by its attempts to force what should have been left to the free exercise of compassion, it has done much to supersede or to extinguish another of these affections. It hath so pushed forward the line of demarcation, as to widen the space which justice might call her own, and to contract the space which beneficence might call her own. But never will law be able to make a captive of beneficence, or to lay personal arrest upon her. It might lessen and limit her means, or even starve her into utter annihilation. But never can it make a living captive of her. It is altogether

a vain and hopeless undertaking to legislate on the duties of beneficence; for the very nature of this virtue is to do good freely and willingly with its own. But on the moment that law interposes to any given extent with one's property, to that extent it ceases to be his own, and any good that is done by it is not done freely. The force of law and the freeness of love cannot amalgamate the one with the other. Like water and oil, they are immiscible. We cannot translate beneficence into the statute-book of law, without expunging it from the statute-book of the heart; and to whatever extent we make it the object of compulsion, to that extent we must destroy it.

11. And in the proportion that beneficence is put to flight, is gratitude put to flight along with it. The proper object of this emotion is another's good-will. But I do not hold as from the good-will of another, that which law hath enabled me to plea as my own right—nay, to demand, with a front of hardy and resolute assertion. It is this which makes it the most delicate and dangerous of all ground—when law offers to prescribe rules for the exercise of beneficence, or to lay its compulsory hand on a virtue, the very freedom of which is indispensable to its existence. And it not only extinguishes the virtue, but it puts an end to all those responses of glad and grateful emotion, which its presence and its smile, and the generosity of its free-will offerings, awaken in society. It is laying an arrest on all the music of living intercourse, thus to forbid those beautiful and delicious echoes, which are reflected, on every visit of unconstrained mercy, from those families that are gladdened by her footsteps. And what is worse, it is substituting in their place the hoarse and jarring discords of the challenge, and the conflict, and the angry litigation. We may thus see, that there is a province in human affairs on which law should make no entrance—a certain department of human virtue wherein the moralities should be left to their own unfettered play, else they shall be frozen into utter apathy—a field, sacred to liberty and good-will, that should ever be kept beyond the reach of jurisprudence; or on which, if she once obtain a footing, she will spoil it of all those unbought and unbidden graces that natively adorn it. So that, while to law we would commit the defence of society from all the aggressions of violence, and confide the strict and the stern guardianship of the interests of justice, we should tremble for humanity, lest it withered and expired under the grasp of so rough a protector—and lest, before a countenance

grave as that of a judge, and grim as that of a messenger-at-arms, this frail but loveliest of the virtues should be turned, as if by the head of Medusa, into stone.

12. But there are other moral ills in this unfortunate perversion, beside the extinction of good-will in the hearts of the affluent and of gratitude in the hearts of the poor—though it be no slight mischief to any community, that the tie of kindness between these two orders should have been broken; and that the business of charity, which when left spontaneous is so fertile in all the amenities of life, should be transformed into a fierce warfare of rights, from its very nature incapable of adjustment, and, whether they be the encroached upon or the repelled, subjecting both parties to the sense of a perpetual violence. But over and above this, there are other distempers, wherewith it hath smitten the social economy of England, and of which experience will supply the English observer with many a vivid recollection. The reckless but withal most natural improvidence of those whom the State has undertaken to provide for, seeing that law hath proclaimed in their favour a discharge from the cares and the duties of self-preservation—the headlong dissipation in consequence—the dissolution of family ties, for the same public and proclaimed charity which absolves a man from attention to himself will absolve him also from attention to his relatives—the decay and interruption of sympathy in all the little vicinities of town and country, for each man under this system of an assured and universal provision feels himself absolved too from attention to his neighbours—These distempers, both social and economic, have a common origin; and the excess of them, above what taketh place in a natural state of things, may all be traced to the unfortunate aberration, which in this instance the constitution of human law hath made from the constitution of human nature.

13. In our attempts to trace the rise of the possessory affection and of a sense of property, we have not been able to discover any foundation in nature, for a sentiment that we often hear impetuously urged by the advocates of the system of pauperism—that every man has a *right* to the means of subsistence. Nature does not connect this right with existence; but with continued occupation, and with another principle to which it also gives the sanction of its voice—that each man is legitimate owner of the fruits of his own industry. These are the principles on which nature hath drawn her landmarks over every territory.

that is peopled and cultivated by human beings. And the actual distribution of property is the fruit, partly of man's own direct aim and acquisition, and partly of circumstances over which he had no control. The right of man to the means of existence, on the sole ground that he exists, has been loudly and vehemently asserted; yet is a factitious sentiment notwithstanding—tending to efface the distinctness of nature's landmarks, and to traverse those arrangements by which she hath provided far better for the peace and comfort of society, nay, for the more sure and liberal support of all its members. It is true that nature, in fixing the principles on which man has a right to the fruits of the earth, to the materials of his subsistence, has left out certain individuals of the human family—some outcast stragglers, who, on neither of nature's principles, will be found possessed of any right or of any property. It is for their sake that human law hath interposed in some countries of the world; and, by creating or ordaining a right for them, has endeavoured to make good the deficiency of nature. But if justice alone could have insured a right distribution for the supply of want, and if it must be through the medium of a right that the destitute shall obtain their maintenance—then would there have been no need for another principle which stands out most noticeably in our nature; and compassion would have been a superfluous part of the human constitution. It is by means of this additional principle that nature provides for the unprovided—not by unsettling the limits which her previous education had established in all minds—not by the extension of a right to every man; but by establishing in behalf of those some men, whom accident or the necessity of circumstances or even their own misconduct had left without a right, a compassionate interest in the bosom of their fellows. They have no advocate to plead for them at the bar of justice; and therefore nature hath furnished them with a gentler and more persuasive advocate, who might solicit for them at the bar of mercy; and, for their express benefit, hath given to most men an ear for pity, to many a hand open as day for melting charity. But it is not to any rare or romantic generosity that she hath confided the relief of their wants. She hath made compassion one of the strongest, and, in spite of all the depravations to which humanity is exposed, one of the steadiest of our universal instincts. It were an intolerable spectacle even to the inmates of a felon's cell, did they behold one of their fellows in the agonies of hunger; and rather than endure it,

would they share their own scanty meal with them.* It were still more intolerable to the householders of any neighbourhood—insomuch that, where law had not attempted to supersede nature, every instance of distress or destitution would, whether in town or country, give rise to an internal operation of charity throughout every little vicinity of the land. The mischief which law hath done, by trying to mend the better mechanism which nature had instituted, is itself a most impressive testimony to the wisdom of nature. The perfection of her arrangements is never more strikingly exhibited than by those evils which the disturbance of them brings upon society—as when her law in the heart has been overborne by England's wretched law of pauperism; and this violation of the natural order has been followed up in consequence by a tenfold increase both of poverty and crime.

14. It is interesting to pursue the outgoings of such a system; and to ascertain whether nature hath vindicated her wisdom, by the evil consequences of a departure from her guidance on the part of man—for if so, it will supply another proof, or furnish us with another sight of the exquisite adaptation which she hath established between the moral and the physical, or between the two worlds of mind and matter. Certain, then, of the parishes of England have afforded a very near exemplification of the ultimate state to which one and all of them are tending—a state which is consummated, when the poor-rates form so large a deduction from the rents of the land, that it shall at length cease to be an object to keep them in cultivation.† It is thus that some tracts of country are on the eve of being actually vacated

* The certainty of this operation is beautifully exemplified in a passage of Mr. Buxton's interesting book on prisons—from which it appears that there is no allowance of food to the debtors, and a very inferior allowance of food to the criminals who are confined in the jail at Bristol. The former live on their own means, or the casual charity of the benevolent. Instances have occurred when both of these resources failed them—and starvation would have ensued, had not the criminals, rather than endure the neighbourhood of such a suffering, shared their own scanty pittance along with them—thus affording an *argumentum a fortiore* for a like strength of compassion throughout the land—seeing that it had survived the depraving process which leads to the malefactor's cell.

† The following is an extract from the Report of a select committee on the poor-law, printed in 1817. “The consequences which are likely to result from this state of things, are clearly set forth in the petition from the parish of Wombridge in Salop, which is fast approaching to this state. The petitioners state ‘that the annual value of lands, mines, and houses in this parish, is not sufficient to maintain the numerous and increasing poor, even if the same were set free of rent; and that these circumstances will inevitably compel the occupiers of lands and mines to relinquish them; and the poor will be without relief, or any known mode of obtaining it, unless some assistance be speedily afforded to them.’ And your

by their proprietors ; and as their place of superintendence cannot be vacated by others, who have no right of superintendence—the result might be, that whole estates shall be as effectually lost to the wealth and resources of the country, as if buried by an earthquake under water, or, as if some blight of nature had gone over them and bereft them of their powers of vegetation. Now we know not, if the whole history of the world furnishes a more striking demonstration than this, of the mischief that may be done, by attempting to carry into practice a theoretical speculation, which, under the guise and even with the real purpose of benevolence, has for its plausible object, to equalize among the children of one common humanity, the blessings and the fruits of one common inheritance. The truth is, that we have not been conducted to the present state of our rights and arrangements respecting property, by any artificial process of legislation at all. The state of property in which we find ourselves actually landed, is the result of a natural process, under which, all that a man earns by his industry is acknowledged to be his own—or, when the original mode of acquisition is lost sight of, all that a man retains by long and undisturbed possession is felt and acknowledged to be his own also. Legislation ought to do no more than barely recognise these principles, and defend its subjects against the violation of them. And when it attempts more than this—when it offers to tamper with the great arrangements of nature, by placing the rights and the securities of property on a footing different from that of nature—when, as in the case of the English poor-laws, it does so, under the pretence and doubtless too with the honest design of establishing, between the rich and the poor a nearer equality of enjoyment ; we know not in what way violated nature could have inflicted on the enterprise a more signal and instructive chastisement, than when the whole territory of this plausible but presumptuous experiment is made to droop and to wither under it as if struck by a judgment from heaven—till at length that earth out of which the rich draw all their wealth and the poor all their subsistence, refuses to nourish the children who have abandoned her ; and both parties are involved in the wreck of one common and overwhelming visitation.

committee apprehend, from the petition before them, that this is one of many parishes that are fast approaching to a state of dereliction."

The inquiries of the present Poor-Law Commission have led to a still more aggravated and confirmed view of the evils of the system.

15. But we read the same lesson in all the laws and movements of political economy. The superior wisdom of nature is demonstrated in the mischief which is done by any aberration therefrom—when her processes are disturbed or intermeddled with by the wisdom of man. The philosophy of free trade is grounded on the principle, that society is most enriched or best served, when commerce is left to its own spontaneous evolutions; and is neither fostered by the artificial encouragements, nor fettered by the artificial restraints of human policy. The greatest economic good is rendered to the community, by each man being left to consult and to labour for his own particular good—or, in other words, a more prosperous result is obtained by the spontaneous play and busy competition of many thousand wills, each bent on the prosecution of its own selfishness, than by the anxious superintendence of a government, vainly attempting to medicate the fancied imperfections of nature, or to improve on the arrangements of her previous and better mechanism. It is when each man is left to seek, with concentrated and exclusive aim, his own individual benefit—it is then that markets are best supplied; that commodities are furnished for general use, of best quality, and in greatest cheapness and abundance; that the comforts of life are most multiplied; and the most free and rapid augmentation takes place in the riches and resources of the commonwealth. Such a result, which at the same time not a single agent in this vast and complicated system of trade contemplates or cares for—each caring only for himself—strongly bespeaks a higher agent, by whose transcendental wisdom it is, that all is made to conspire so harmoniously and to terminate so beneficially. We are apt to recognise no higher wisdom than that of man, in those mighty concerts of human agency—a battle, or a revolution, or the accomplishment of some prosperous and pacific scheme of universal education; where each who shares in the undertaking is aware of its object, or acts in obedience to some master-mind who may have devised and who actuates the whole. But it is widely different, when, as in political economy, some great and beneficent end both unlooked and unlaboured for, is the result, not of any concert or general purpose among the thousands who are engaged in it—but is the compound effect, nevertheless, of each looking severally, and in the strenuous pursuit of individual advantage, to some distinct object of his own. When we behold the working of a complex inanimate machine, and the usefulness of its products—we infer, from the uncon-

sciousness of all its parts, that there must have been a planning and a presiding wisdom in the construction of it. The conclusion is not the less obvious, we think it emphatically more so, when, instead of this, we behold in one of the animate machines of human society, the busy world of trade, a beneficent result, an optimism of public and economical advantage, wrought out by the free movements of a vast multitude of men, not one of whom had the advantage of the public in all his thoughts. When good is effected by a combination of unconscious agents incapable of all aim, we ascribe the combination to an intellect that devised and gave it birth. When good is effected by a combination of conscious agents capable of aim, but that an aim wholly different with each from the compound and general result of their united operations—this bespeaks a higher will and a higher wisdom than any by which the individuals, taken separately, are actuated. When we look at each striving to better his own condition, we see nothing in this but the selfishness of man. When we look at the effect of this universal principle, in cheapening and multiplying to the uttermost all the articles of human enjoyment, and establishing a thousand reciprocities of mutual interest in the world—we see in this the benevolence and comprehensive wisdom of God.*

16. When any given object is anxiously cared for by a legislature, and all its wisdom is put forth in devising measures for securing or extending it—it forms a pleasing discovery to find, that what may have hitherto been the laborious aim and effort of human policy, has already been provided for, with all perfection and entireness, in the spontaneous workings of human nature; and that therefore, in this instance, the wisdom of the state has been anticipated by a higher wisdom—or the wisdom which presides over the ordinations of a human government has been anticipated by the wisdom which ordained the laws of the human constitution. Of this there are manifold examples in political economy—as in the object of population, for the keeping up and increase of which there was at one time a misplaced anxiety on the part of rulers; and the object of capital, for the preservation and growth of which there is a like misplaced anxiety, and for the decay and disappearance of which there is an equally misplaced alarm. Both, in fact, are what may be termed self-regulating interests—or, in other words, interests which result with so much

* See further upon this subject, *Observations* by Dr. Whately, Archbishop of Dublin, in his volume on Political Economy.

certainty from the checks and the principles that nature hath already instituted, as to supersede all public or patriotic regulation in regard to either of them. This has now been long understood on the subject of population; but it holds equally true on the subject of capital. There is, on the one hand, throughout society, enough of the appetite for enjoyment to secure us against its needless excess; and on the other, enough of the appetite for gain to secure us against its hurtful deficiency. And by a law of oscillation as beautiful as that which obtains in the planetary system, and by which, amid all disturbances and errors, it is upheld in its mean state indestructible and inviolate—does capital, in like manner, constantly tend to a condition of optimism, and is never far from it, amid all the variations, whether of defect or redundancy, to which it is exposed. When in defect, by the operation of high prices, it almost instantly recovers itself—when in excess, it, by the operation of low profits, or rather of losing speculations, almost instantly collapses into a right mediocrity. In the first case, the inducement is to trade rather than to spend; and there is a speedy accumulation of capital. In the second case, the inducement is to spend rather than to trade; and there is a speedy reduction of capital. It is thus that capital ever suits itself in the way that is best possible to the circumstances of the country—so as to leave uncalled for any economic regulation by the wisdom of man; and that precisely because of a previous moral and mental regulation by the wisdom of God.

17. But if anything can demonstrate the hand of a righteous Deity in the nature and workings of what may well be termed a mechanism, the very peculiar mechanism of trade, it is the healthful impulse given to all its movements, wherever there is a reigning principle of sobriety and virtue in the land—so as to insure an inseparable connexion between the moral worth and the economic comfort of a people. Of this we should meet with innumerable verifications in political economy, did we make a study of the science, with the express design of fixing and ascertaining them. There is one very beautiful instance in the effect, which the frugality and foresight of workmen would have, to control and equalize the fluctuations of commerce—acting with the power of a fly in mechanics; and so as to save, or at least indefinitely to shorten, those dreary intervals of suspended work or miserable wages, which now occur so often, and with almost periodic regularity in the trading world. What constitutes a sore aggravation to the wretchedness of such a season, is the

necessity of overworking—so as, if possible, to compensate by the amount of labour for the deficiency of its remuneration; and yet the inverse effect of this in augmenting and perpetuating that glut, or over-production, which is the real origin of this whole calamity. It would not happen in the hands of a people elevated and exempted above the urgencies of immediate want; and nothing will so elevate and exempt them but their own accumulated wealth—the produce of a resolute economy and good management in prosperous times. Would they only save during high wages what they might spend during low wages—so as when the depression comes, to slacken, instead of adding to their work, or even cease from it altogether—could they only afford to live, through the months of such a visitation, on their well-husbanded means, the commodities of the overladen market would soon clear away; when, with the return of a brisk demand on empty warehouses, a few weeks instead of months would restore them to importance and prosperity in the commonwealth. This is but a single specimen from many others, of that enlargement which awaits the labouring classes, after that, by their own intelligence and virtue, they have won their way to it. With but wisdom and goodness among the common people, the whole of this economic machinery would work most beneficently for them—a moral ordination, containing in it most direct evidence for the wisdom and goodness of that Being by whose hands it is that the machinery has been framed and constituted; and who, the Preserver and Governor, as well as the Creator of His works, sits with presiding authority over all its evolutions.

18. But this is only one specimen out of the many—the particular instance of a quality that is universal, and which may be detected in almost all the phenomena and principles of the science; for throughout, political economy is but one grand exemplification of the alliance, which a God of righteousness hath established, between prudence and moral principle on the one hand, and physical comfort on the other. However obnoxious the modern doctrine of population, as expounded by Mr. Malthus, may have been, and still is, to weak and limited sentimentalists, it is the truth which of all others sheds the greatest brightness over the earthly prospects of humanity—and this in spite of the hideous, the yet sustained outcry which has risen against it. This is a pure case of adaptation, between the external nature of the world in which we live, and the moral nature of man, its chief occupier. There is a demonstrable inadequacy in all the

material resources which the globe can furnish, for the increasing wants of a recklessly increasing species. But over and against this, man is gifted with a moral and a mental power by which the inadequacy might be fully countervailed; and the species, in virtue of their restrained and regulated numbers, be upholden on the face of our world, in circumstances of large and stable sufficiency, even to the most distant ages. The first origin of this blissful consummation is in the virtue of the people; but carried into sure and lasting effect by the laws of political economy, through the indissoluble connexion which obtains between the wages and the supply of labour—so that in every given state of commerce and civilisation, the amount of the produce of industry and of the produce of the soil, which shall fall to the share of the workman, is virtually at the determination of the workmen themselves, who, by dint of resolute prudence and resolute principle together, may rise to an indefinitely higher status than they now occupy, of comfort and independence in the commonwealth. This opens up a cheering prospect to the lovers of our race; and not the less so, that it is seen through the medium of popular intelligence and virtue—the only medium through which it can ever be realized. And it sheds a revelation, not only on the hopeful destinies of man, but on the character of God—in having instituted this palpable alliance between the moral and the physical; and so assorted the economy of outward nature to the economy of human principles and passions. The lights of modern science have made us apprehend more clearly, by what steps the condition and the character of the common people rise and fall with each other—insomuch that, while on the one hand their general destitution is the inevitable result of their general worthlessness, they, on the other, by dint of wisdom and moral strength, can augment indefinitely, not the produce of the earth, nor the produce of human industry, but that proportion of both which falls to their own share. Their economic is sure to follow by successive advances in the career of their moral elevation; nor do we hold it impossible, or even unlikely—that gaining, every generation, on the distance which now separates them from the upper classes of society, they shall, in respect both of decent sufficiency and dignified leisure, make perpetual approximations to the fellowships and the enjoyments of cultivated life.

CHAPTER V.

ADAPTATIONS OF THE MATERIAL WORLD TO THE MORAL AND INTELLECTUAL
CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

1. IF by External Nature be meant all that is external to mind, then the proper subject of the argument, in this Fourth Book, should be the adaptation of the Material to the Mental World. But if by External Nature be meant all that is external to one individual mind, then is the subject very greatly extended; for, beside the reciprocal influence between that individual mind and all sensible and material things, we should consider the reciprocal influence between it and all other minds. By this contraction of the idea from the mental world to but one individual member of it; and this proportional extension in the idea of external nature from the material creation to the whole of that living, as well as inanimate creation, by which any single man is surrounded—we are introduced not merely to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and matter; but, which is far more prolific of evidence for a Deity, to the action and reaction which obtain between mind and mind. It is thus that we have proceeded hitherto in the argument of this work, and have consequently found access to a much larger territory which should otherwise have been left unexplored—and so have had the opportunity of tracing the marks of a Divine intelligence in the mechanism of human society, and in the framework of the social and economical systems to which men are conducted, when they adhere to that light, and follow the impulse of those affections which God has bestowed on them.

2. But over and above these adaptations of the external mental world, we have also adaptations of the external material world to the moral and intellectual constitution of man; and these will chiefly engross our attention in the present chapter—though, if only to repair an omission on the subject of the relative sympathies between man and man, we might previously advert to that law of affection by which its intensity or strength is proportioned to the helplessness of its object. It takes a direction downwards; descending, for example, with much greater force from parents

to children, than ascending from children to parents back again—save when they lapse again into second infancy, and the duteous devoted attendance by the helpful daughters of a family, throughout the protracted ailments and infirmity of their declining years, instead of an exception, is in truth a confirmation of the law—as much so as the stronger attraction of a mother's heart towards the youngest of the family; or, more impressive still, her more special and concentrated regard towards her sickly or decrepit or even idiot boy. It is impossible not to recognise in this beautiful determination of nature the benevolence of nature's God.

3. We hasten to instances of another kind, which we all the more gladly seize upon, as being cases of purest and strictest adaptation, not of the external mental, but of the external material world, to the moral constitution of man.

4. The power of speech is precisely such an adaptation. Whether we regard the organs of utterance and hearing in man, or the aerial medium by which sounds are conveyed—do we behold a pure subserviency of the material to the mental system of our world. It is true that the great object subserved by it is the action and reaction between mind and mind—nor can we estimate this object too highly, when we think of the mighty influence of language, both on the moral and intellectual condition of our species. Still it is by means of an elaborate material construction that this pathway has been formed, from one heart and from one understanding to another. And therefore it is, that the faculty of communication by words, with all the power and flexibility which belong to it, by which the countless benefits of human intercourse are secured, and all the stores of sentiment and thought are turned into a common property for the good of mankind, may well be ranked among the highest of the examples that we are now in quest of—it being indeed as illustrious an adaptation as can be named of external and material nature to the moral and intellectual constitution of man. Of the converse of disembodied spirits we know nothing. But to man cased in materialism, certain material passages or ducts of conveyance, for the interchange of thought and feeling between one mind and another, seem indispensable. The exquisite provision which has been made for these, both in the powers of articulation and hearing, as also in that intermediate element, by the pulsations of which ideas are borne forward, as on so many winged messengers from one intellect to another—bespeaks, and perhaps more im-

pressively than any other phenomena in nature, the contrivance of a supreme artificer, the device and finger of a Deity.*

6. But articulate and arbitrary sound is not the only vehicle, either of meaning or sentiment. There is a natural as well as artificial language, consisting chiefly of expressive tones—though greatly reinforced both by expressive looks and expressive gestures. The voice, by its intonations alone, is a powerful instrument for the propagation of sympathy between man and man; and there is similarity enough between us and the inferior animals in the natural signs of various of the emotions, as anger and fear and grief and cheerfulness, for the sympathy being extended beyond the limits of our own species, and over a great part of the sentient creation. We learn by experience and association the significancy of the merely vocal apart from vocables; for almost each shade of meaning, at least each distinct sensibility has its own appropriate intonation—so that, without catching one syllable of the utterance, we can, from its melody alone, often tell what are the workings of the heart, and even what are the workings of the intellect. It is thus that music, even though altogether apart from words, is so powerfully fitted, both to represent and to awaken the mental processes—insomuch that, without the aid of spoken characters, many a story of deepest interest is most impressively told, many a noble or tender sentiment is most emphatically conveyed by it. It says much for the native and original predominance of virtue—it may be deemed another assertion of its designed pre-eminence in the world, that our best and highest music is that which is charged with loftiest principle, whether it breathes in orisons of sacredness, or is employed to kindle the purposes and to animate the struggles of resolved patriotism; and that never does it fall with more exquisite cadence on the ear of the delighted listener, than when, attuned to the home sympathies of nature, it tells, in accents of love or pity, of its woes and its wishes for all humanity. The power and expressiveness of music may well be regarded as a most beautiful adaptation of external and material nature to the moral constitution of man—for what can be more adapted to his

* It will at once be seen that the same observations may be extended to written language, and to the fitness of those materials which subserve through its means the wide and rapid communication of human thoughts. We in truth could have multiplied indefinitely such instances of adaptation as we are now giving—but we judged it better to have confined ourselves to matters of a more rudimental and general character—leaving the manifold detail and fuller developments of the argument to future labourers in the field.

moral constitution, than that which is so helpful as music eminently is, to his moral culture? Its sweetest sounds are those of kind affection. Its sublimest sounds are those most expressive of moral heroism; or most fitted to solemnize the devotions of the heart, and prompt the aspirations and resolves of exalted piety.

6. A philosophy of taste has been founded on this contemplation; and some have contended that both the beauty and the sublimity of sounds are derived from their association with moral qualities alone. Without affirming that association is the only or the universal cause, it must at least be admitted to have a very extensive influence over this class of our emotions. If each of the mental affections have its own appropriate intonation, and there be the same or similar intonations given forth, either by the inanimate creation or by the creatures having life which are inferior to man—then, frequent and familiar on every side of him must be many of those sounds by which human passions are suggested, and the memory of things awakened which are fitted to affect and interest the heart. And thus it is, that, to the ear of a poet, all nature is vocal with sentiment; and he can fancy a genius, or residing spirit, in the ocean, or in the tempest, or in the rushing waterfall, or in the stream, whose softer murmurs would lull him to repose,—or in the mighty forest, when he hears the general sigh emitted by its innumerable leaves as they rustle in the wind, and from whose fitful changes he seems to catch the import of some deep and mysterious soliloquy. But the imagination will be still more readily excited by the notes and the cries of animals, as when the peopled grove awakens to harmony; or when it is figured, that, amid the amplitudes of savage and solitary nature, the lioness, robbed of her whelps, calls forth the echoes of the wilderness, making it to ring with the proclamation of her wrongs. But, without conceiving any such rare or extreme sensibility as this, there is a common, an every-day enjoyment which all have in the sounds of nature; and, as far as sympathy with human emotions is awakened by them, and this forms an ingredient of the pleasure, it affords another fine example of an adaptation in the external world to the mental constitution of its occupiers.

7. But the same philosophy has been extended to sights as well as sounds. The interchange of mind with mind is not restricted to language. There is an interchange by looks also; and the ever-varying hues of the mind are represented, not by the complexion of the face alone, or the composition of its fea-

tures, but by the attitude and gestures of the body.* It is thus that human sentiment or passion may come to be expressed by the colour and form, and even the motion of visible things; by a kindred physiognomy for all the like emotions on the part of the inferior animals—nay, by a certain countenance or shape in the objects of mute and unconscious nature. It is thus that a moral investment sits on the aspects of the purely material world; and we accordingly speak of the modesty of the violet, the innocence of the lily, the commanding mountain, the smiling landscape. Each material object has its character, as is amply set forth in the beautiful illustrations of Mr. Alison; and so, to the poet's eye, the whole panorama of nature is one grand personification, lighted up throughout by consciousness and feeling. This is the reason why, in all languages, material images and moral characteristics are so blended and identified. It is the law of association which thus connects the two worlds of sense and of sentiment. Sublimity in the one is the counterpart to moral greatness in the other; and beauty in the one is the counterpart to moral delicacy in the other. Both the graceful and the grand of human character are as effectually embodied in the objects and scenery of nature, as in those immortal forms which have been transmitted by the hand of sculptors to the admiration of distant ages. It is a noble testimony to the righteousness of God, that the moral and the external loveliness are thus harmonized—as well as to the wisdom which has so adapted the moral and the material system to each other, that supreme virtue and supreme beauty are at one.

“Mind, mind alone—bear witness, earth and heaven!—
 The living fountain, in itself contains
 Of beauteous and sublime.
 There hand in hand sit paramount the graces;
 There enthroned, celestial Venus with divinest airs
 Invites the soul to never-fading joy.”

AKENSIDE.

8. And we may here remark a certain neglect of external things and external influences, which, however enlightened or transcendently rational it may seem, is at variance with truth

* We may here state, that as the air is the medium by which sounds are conveyed, so light may be regarded as standing in the same relation to those natural signs—whether of colour, gesture, or attitude—which are addressed to the eye. Much could be said respecting the adaptation of light to the moral constitution of man—arising from the power which the very observation of our fellow-men has in repressing, so long as we are under it, indecency or crime. The works of iniquity are called works of darkness.

of principle and sound philosophy. We would instance the undervaluing of the natural signs in eloquence, although their effect makes all the difference in point of impression and power between spoken and written language—seeing that, superadded to articulate utterance, the eye, and the intonations, and the gestures, also serve as so many signals of conveyance for the transmission of sentiment from one mind to another. It is thus that indifference to manner, or even to dress, may be as grievous a dereliction against the real philosophy of social intercourse, as indifference to the attitude and the drapery of figures would be against the philosophy of the fine arts. Both proceed on the forgetfulness of that adaptation, in virtue of which materialism is throughout instinct with principle, and, both in its colouring and forms, gives forth the most significant expressions of it. On this ground, too, we would affirm, both of state ceremonial and professional costume, that neither of them is insignificant; and that he who in the spirit of rash and restless innovation would upset them, as if they were the relics of a gross and barbaric age, may be doing violence not only to the usages of venerable antiquity, but to the still older and more venerable constitution of human nature—weakening, in truth, the bonds of social union, by dispensing with certain of those influences which the great Author of our constitution designed for the consolidation and good order of society. This is not accordant with the philosophy of Butler, who wrote on the “use of externals in matters of religion,” nor with the philosophy of those who prefer the findings of experience, however irreducible to system they may be, to all the subtleties or simplifications of unsupported theory.*

9. Before quitting this subject, we remark, that it is no proof against the theory which makes taste a derivative from morality, that our emotions of taste may be vivid and powerful, while our principles of morality are so weak as to have no ascendant or governing influence over the conduct. This is no unusual phenomenon of our mysterious nature. There is a general homage rendered to virtue in the world; but it is the homage, more of a dilettanti than of an obedient and practical devotee. This is not more surprising, than that the man of profligate habits should have a tasteful admiration of sacred pictures and sacred melodies; or that, with the heart of a coward, he should nevertheless catch

* The perusal of those works which treat scientifically of the fine arts, as Sir Joshua Reynolds' Discourses, is well adapted to rebuke and rectify the light estimation in which all sensible accompaniments are apt to be held by us.

the glow of at least a momentary inspiration from the music of war and patriotism. It seems the effect and evidence of some great moral derangement, that there should be such an incongruity in subjective man between his taste and his principles; and the evidence is not lessened but confirmed, when we observe a like incongruity in the objective nature by which he is surrounded—we mean, between the external mental and the external material world. We have only to open our eyes and see how wide, in point of loveliness, the contrast or dissimilarity is, between the moral and the material of our actual contemplation—the one coming immediately from the hand of God; the other tainted and transformed by the spirit of man. We believe, with Alison and others, that, to at least a very great extent, much of the beauty of visible things lies in association; that it is this which gives its reigning expression to every tree, and lake, and waterfall, and which may be said to have impregnated with character the whole of the surrounding landscape. How comes it then, that, in the midst of living society, where we might expect to meet with the originals of all this fascination, we find scarcely any other thing than a tame and uninteresting level of the flat, and the sordid, and the ordinary—whereas, in that inanimate scenery, which yields but the faint and secondary reflection of moral qualities, there is, on every line and on every feature, so vivid an impress of loveliness and glory? One cannot go forth of the crowded city to the fresh and the fair of rural nature, without the experience that, while in the moral scene, there is so much to thwart, and to revolt, and to irritate—in the natural scene, all is gracefulness and harmony. It reminds us of the contrast which is sometimes exhibited between the soft and flowery lawn of a cultivated domain, and the dark or angry spirit of its owner—of whom we might almost imagine that he scowls from the battlements of his castle on the intrusion of every unlicensed visitor. And again the question may be put, Whence is it that the moral picturesque in our world of sense, as it beams upon us from its woods and its eminences, and its sweet recesses of crystal stream or of grassy sunshine, should yield a delight so unqualified—while the primary moral characteristics, of which these are but the imagery or the visible representation, should, in our world of human spirits, be so wholly obliterated, or at least so wofully deformed? Does it not look as if a blight had come over the face of our terrestrial creation, which hath left its materialism in a great measure untouched, while it hath inflicted on man a sore

and withering leprosy? Do not the very openness and benignity which sit on the aspect of nature reproach him, for the cold and narrow and creeping jealousies that be at work in his own selfish and suspicious bosom; and most impressively tell the difference between what man is, and what he ought to be?

10. There are certain other adaptations; but on which we forbear to expatiate. The relation between food and hunger, between the object and the appetite, is an instance of the adaptation between external nature and man's physical constitution—yet the periodical recurrence of the appetite itself, with its imperious demand to be satisfied, viewed as an impellent to labour even the most irksome and severe, has an important effect both on the moral constitution of the individual and on the state of society. The superficies of the human body, in having been made so exquisitely alive at every pore to the sensations of pain, may be regarded as nature's defensive covering against those exposures from without, which else might injure or destroy it. This is purely a physical adaptation, but it involves a moral adaptation also; for this shrinking and sensitive avoidance, at the first approaches of pain, affords a similar protection against certain hazards from within—as self-mutilation in the moment of the spirit's wantonness, or even self-destruction in the moment of its despair.

11. But we now proceed to specify the chief instances of this adaptation of External Nature to the Intellectual Constitution of Man.

12. (1.) The law of most extensive influence over the phenomena and processes of the mind is the law of association, or, as denominated by Dr. Thomas Brown, the law of suggestion. If two objects have been seen in conjunction, or in immediate succession, at any one time—then the sight or thought of one of them afterwards is apt to suggest the thought of the other also; and the same is true of the objects of all the senses. The same smells or sounds or tastes which have occurred formerly, when they occur again, will often recall the objects from which they then proceeded, the occasions or other objects with which they were then associated. When one meets with a fragrance of a particular sort, it may often instantly suggest a fragrance of the same kind experienced months or years ago; the rose-bush from which it came; the garden where it grew; the friend with whom we then walked; his features, his conversation, his relatives, his history. When two ideas have been once in juxtaposition,

they are apt to present themselves in juxtaposition over again—an aptitude which ever increases, the oftener that the conjunction has taken place, till, as if by an invincible necessity, the antecedent thought is sure to bring its usual consequent along with it; and not only single sequences, but lengthened trains or progressions of thought, may in this manner be explained.

13. And such are the great speed and facility of these successions, that many of the intermediate terms, though all of them undoubtedly present to the mind, flit so quickly and evanescently, as to pass unnoticed. This will the more certainly happen, if the antecedents are of no further use than to introduce the consequents; in which case, the consequents remain as the sole objects of attention, and the antecedents are forgotten. In the act of reading, the ultimate object is to obtain possession of the author's sentiments or meaning; and all memory of the words, still more of the component letters, though each of them must have been present to the mind, pass irrecoverably away from it. In like manner, the anterior steps of many a mental process may actually be described, yet without consciousness—the attention resting, not on the fugitive means, but on the important end in which they terminate. It is thus that we seem to judge, on the instant, of distances, as if under a guidance that was immediate and instinctive, and not by the result of a derivative process—because insensible to the rapid train of inference which led to it. The mind is too much occupied with the information itself, for looking back on the light and shadowy footsteps of the messenger who brought it, which it would find difficult if not impossible to trace—and besides, having no practical call upon it for making such a retrospect. It is thus that, when looking intently on some beautiful object in Nature, we are so much occupied with the resulting enjoyment, as to overlook the intermediate train of unbidden associations, which connects the sight of that which is before us, with the resulting and exquisite pleasure that we feel in the act of beholding it. The principle has been much resorted to, in expounding that process by which the education of the senses is carried forward; and, more especially, the way in which the intimations of sight and touch are made to correct and to modify each other. It has also been employed with good effect, in the attempt to establish a philosophy of taste. But these rapid and fugitive associations, while they form a real, form also an unseen process; and we are not therefore to wonder, if, along with many solid explanations, they

should have been so applied in the investigation of mental phenomena, as occasionally to have given rise to subtle and fantastic theories.

14. But our proper business at present is with results, rather than with processes; and instead of entering on the more recon-dite inquiries of the science, however interesting and however beautiful or even satisfactory the conclusions may be to which they lead—it is our task to point out those palpable benefits and subserviencies of our intellectual constitution, which demonstrate, without obscurity, the benevolent designs of Him who framed us. There are some of our mental philosophers, indeed, who have theorized and simplified beyond the evidence of those facts which lie before us; and our argument should be kept clear of, for in reality it does not partake in, the uncertainty or error of their speculations. The law of association, for example, has been of late reasoned upon, as if it were the sole parent and predecessor of all the mental phenomena. Yet it does not explain, however largely it may influence the phenomena of memory. When by means of one idea, anyhow awakened in the mind, the whole of some past transaction or scene is brought to recollection, it is association which recalls to our thoughts this portion of our former history. But association cannot explain our recognition of its actual and historical truth—or what it is, which, beside an act of conception, makes it also an act of remembrance. By means of this law we may understand how it is, that certain ideas, suggested by certain others which came before it, are now present to the mind. But superadded to the mere presence of these ideas, there is such a perception of the reality of their archetypes, as distinguishes a case of remembrance from a case of imagination—inasmuch that over and above the conception of certain objects, there is also a conviction of their substantive being at the time which we connect with the thought of them; and this is what the law of association cannot by itself account for. It cannot account for our reliance upon memory—not as a conjurer of visions into the chamber of imagery, but as an informer of stable and objective truths which had place and fulfilment in the actual world of experience.

15. And the same is true of our believing anticipations of the future, which we have now affirmed to be true of our believing retrospects of the past. The confidence wherewith we count on the same sequences in future, that we have observed in the course of our past experience, has been resolved by some philo-

sophers, into the principle of association alone. Now when we have seen a certain antecedent followed up by a certain consequent, the law of association does of itself afford a sufficient reason, why the idea of that antecedent should be followed up by the idea of its consequent ; but it contains within it no reason, why, on the actual occurrence again of the antecedent, we should believe that the consequent will occur also. That the thought of the antecedent should suggest the thought of the consequent, is one mental phenomenon. That the knowledge of the antecedent having anew taken place, should induce the certainty, that the consequent must have taken place also, is another mental phenomenon. We cannot confound these two, without being involved in the idealism of Hume or Berkeley. Were the mere thought of the consequent all that was to be accounted for, we need not go farther than to the law of association. But when, to the existence of this thought, there is superadded a belief in the reality of its archetype, a distinct mental phenomenon comes into view, which the law of association does not explain ; and which, for aught that the analysts of the mind have yet been able to trace or to discover, is an ultimate principle of the human understanding. This belief, then, is one thing. But ere we can make out an adaptation, we must be able to allege at least two things. And they are ready to our hands—for, in addition to the belief in the subjective mind, there is a correspondent and counterpart reality in objective nature. If we have formerly observed that a given antecedent is followed by a certain consequent, then, not only does the idea of the antecedent suggest the idea of the consequent ; but there is a belief, that, on the actual occurrence of the same antecedent, the same consequent will follow over again. And the consequent does follow ; or, in other words, this our instinctive faith meets with its unexpected fulfilment, in the actual course and constancy of nature. The law of association does of itself, and without going further, secure this general convenience—that the courses of the mind are thereby conformed, or are made to quadrate and harmonize with the courses of the outer world. It is the best possible construction for the best and most useful guidance of the mind, as in the exercise of memory for example, that thought should be made to follow thought, according to the order in which the objects and events of nature are related to each other. But a belief in the certainty and uniformity of this order, with the counterpart verification of this belief in the actual history of

things, is that which we now are especially regarding. It forms our first instance, perhaps the most striking and marvellous of all, of the adaptation of external nature to the intellectual constitution of man.

16. This disposition to count on the uniformity of nature, or even to anticipate the same consequents from the same antecedents, is not the fruit of experience, but anterior to it; or at least anterior to the very earliest of those of her lessons, which can be traced backward in the history of an infant mind. Indeed, it has been well observed by Dr. Thomas Brown, that the future constancy of nature is a lesson which no observation of its past constancy, or no experience could have taught us. Because we have observed A a thousand times to be followed in immediate succession by B, there is no greater logical connexion between this proposition and the proposition that A will always be followed by B, than there is between the propositions that we have seen A followed once by B, and therefore A will always be followed by B. At whatever stage of the experience the inference may be made, whether longer or shorter, whether oftener or seldomer repeated, the conversion of the past into the future seems to require a distinct and independent principle of belief; and it is a principle which to all appearance is as vigorous in childhood, as in the full maturity of the human understanding. The child who strikes the table with a spoon for the first time, and is regaled by the noise, will strike again with as confident an expectation of the same result, as if the succession had been familiar to it for years. There is the expectation before the experience of nature's constancy; and still the topic of our wonder and gratitude is, that this instinctive and universal faith in the heart should be responded to by objective nature, in one wide and universal fulfilment.

17. The proper office of experience in this matter, is very generally misapprehended; and this has mystified the real principle and philosophy of the subject. Her office is not to tell, or to reassure us of the constancy of nature, but to tell what the terms of her unalterable progressions actually are. The human mind, from its first outset, and in virtue of a constitutional bias coeval with the earliest dawn of the understanding, is prepared, and that before experience has begun her lessons, to count on the constancy of nature's sequences. But at that time, it is profoundly ignorant of the sequences in themselves. It is the proper business of experience to give this information; but it

may require many lessons before that her disciples be made to understand what be the distinct terms even of but one sequence. Nature presents us with her phenomena in complex assemblages; and it is often difficult, in the work of disentangling her trains from each other, to single out the proper and causal antecedent with its resulting consequent, from among the crowd of accessory or accidental circumstances by which they are surrounded. There is never any uncertainty as to the invariableness of nature's successions. The only uncertainty is as to the steps of each succession; and the distinct achievement of experience is to ascertain these steps. And many mistakes are committed in this course of education, from our disposition to confound the similarities with the samenesses of nature. We never misgive in our general confidence that the same antecedent will be followed by the same consequent; but we often mistake the semblance for the reality, and are as often disappointed in the expectations that we form. This is the real account of that growing confidence wherewith we anticipate the same results in the same apparent circumstances, the oftener that that result has in these circumstances been observed by us—as of a high-water about twice every day, or of a sunrise every morning. It is not that we need to be more assured than we are already of the constancy of nature, in the sense that every result must always be the sure effect of its strict and causal antecedent. But we need to be assured of the real presence of this antecedent, in that mass of contemporaneous things under which the result has taken place hitherto; and of this we are more and more satisfied with every new occurrence of the same event in the same apparent circumstances. This too is our real object in the repetition of experiments. Not that we suspect that nature will ever vacillate from her constancy—for if by one decisive experiment we should fix the real terms of any succession, this experiment were to us as good as a thousand. But each succession in nature is so liable to be obscured and complicated by other influences, that we must be quite sure, ere we can proclaim our discovery of some new sequence, that we have properly disentangled her separate trains from each other. For this purpose, we have often to question nature in many different ways; we have to combine and apply her elements variously; we have sometimes to detach one ingredient, or to add another, or to alter the proportions of a third—and all in order, not to ascertain the invariableness of nature, for of this we have had instinctive cer-

tainty from the beginning ; but, in order to ascertain what the actual footsteps of her progressions are, so as to connect each effect in the history of nature's changes with its strict and proper cause. Meanwhile, amid all the suspense and the frequent disappointments which attend this search into the processes of nature, our confidence in the rigid and inviolable uniformity of these processes remains unshaken—a confidence not learned from experience, but amply confirmed and accorded to by experience. For this instinctive expectation is never once refuted in the whole course of our subsequent researches. Nature, though stretched on a rack, or put to the torture by the inquisitors of science, never falters from her immutability ; but persists, un-seduced and unwearied, in the same response to the same question ; or gives forth, by a spark, or an explosion, or an effervescence, or some other definite phenomenon, the same result to the same circumstances or combination of data. The anticipations of infancy meet with their glorious verification in all the findings of manhood ; and a truth, which would seem to require Omniscience for its grasp, as coextensive with all nature and all history, is deposited by the hand of God in the little cell of a nursling's cogitations.

18. Yet the immutability of Nature has ministered to the atheism of some spirits, as impressing on the universe a character of blind necessity, instead of that spontaneity which might mark the intervention of a willing and a living God. To refute this notion of an unintelligent fate, as being the alone presiding Divinity, the common appeal is to the infinity and exquisite skill of nature's adaptations. But to attack this infidelity in its fortress, and dislodge it thence, the more appropriate argument would be the very, the individual adaptation on which we have now insisted—the immutability of Nature, in conjunction with the universal sense and expectation, even from earliest childhood, that all men have of it ; being itself one of the most marvellous and strikingly beneficial of these adaptations. When viewed aright, it leads to a wiser and sounder conclusion than that of the fatalists. In the instinctive, the universal faith of Nature's constancy, we behold a promise. In the actual constancy of Nature, we behold its fulfilment. When the two are viewed in connexion, then, to be told that Nature never recedes from her constancy, is to be told that the God of Nature never recedes from His faithfulness. If not by a whisper from His voice, at least by the impress of His hand, He hath deposited a

silent expectation in every heart ; and He makes all Nature and all History conspire to realize it. He hath not only enabled man to retain in his memory a faithful transcript of the past ; but by means of this constitutional tendency, this instinct of the understanding as it has been termed, to look with prophetic eye upon the future. It is the link by which we connect experience with anticipation—a power or exercise of the mind coeval with the first dawns of consciousness or observation, because obviously that to which we owe the confidence so early acquired and so firmly established, in the information of our senses.* This disposition to presume on the constancy of nature, commences with the faculty of thought, and keeps by it through life, and enables the mind to convert its stores of memory into the treasures of science and wisdom ; and so to elicit from the recollections of the past, both the doctrines of a general philosophy, and the lessons of daily and familiar conduct—and that, by means of prognostics, not one of which can fail, for, in respect of her steadfast uniformity, Nature never disappoints, or, which is equivalent to this, the Author of Nature never deceives us. The generality of Nature's laws is indispensable, both to the formation of any system of truth for the understanding, and to the guidance of our actions. But ere we can make such use of it, the sense and the confident expectation of this generality must be previously in our minds ; and the concurrence, the con-

* It is from our tactual sensations that we obtain our first original perceptions of distance and magnitude ; and it is only because of the invariable connexion which subsists between the same tactual and the same visual sensations, that by means of the latter we obtain secondary or acquired perceptions of distance and magnitude. It is obvious that without a faith in the uniformity of nature, this rudimental education could not have taken effect ; and from the confidence wherewith we proceed in very early childhood on the intimations of the eye, we may infer how strongly this principle must have been at work throughout the anterior stage of our still earlier infancy. The lucid and satisfactory demonstration upon this subject in that delightful little work, the "Theory of Vision," by Bishop Berkeley, has not been superseded, because it has not been improved upon by the lucubrations of any subsequent author. The theology which he would found on the beautiful process which he has unfolded so well, is somewhat tinged with the mysticism of that doctrine which represents our seeing all things in God. Certain it is, however, that the process could not have been advanced or consummated, without an aboriginal faith on the part of the infant mind in the uniformity of nature's sequences, a disposition to expect the same consequents from the same antecedents—and hence, an inference which, whenever these same antecedents present themselves, is at length made, and that in very early childhood, with such rapidity as well as confidence, that it leads all men to confound their acquired with their original perceptions ; and it requires a subtle analysis to disentangle the two from each other. Without partaking in the metaphysics of Berkeley, we fully concur in the strength and certainty of those theistical conclusions which are expressed by him in the following sentences :—"Something there is of Divine and admirable in this language addressed to our

tingent harmony of these two elements; the exquisite adaptation of the objective to the subjective, with the manifest utilities to which it is subservient; the palpable and perfect meetness which subsists between this intellectual propensity in man, and all the processes of the outward universe—while they afford incontestable evidence to the existence and unity of that design, which must have adjusted the mental and the material formations to each other, speak most decisively in our estimation both for the truth and the wisdom of God.

19. We have long felt this close and unexcepted, while at the same time, contingent harmony, between the actual constancy of nature and man's faith in that constancy, to be an effectual preservative against that scepticism which would represent the whole system of our thoughts and perceptions to be founded on an illusion. Certain it is, that beside an indefinite number of truths received by the understanding as the conclusions of a proof more or less lengthened, there are truths recognised without proof by an instant act of intuition—not the results of a reasoning process, but themselves the first principles of all reasoning. At every step in the train of argumentation we affirm one thing to be true, because of its logical connexion with another thing known to be true; but as this process of derivation is not eternal, it is obvious that, at the commencement of at least some of these trains, there must be truths, which, instead of borrowing their evidence from others, announce themselves immediately to the mind in an original and independent evidence

eyes, that may well awaken the mind, and deserve its utmost attention; it is learned with so little pains, it expresses the difference of things so clearly and aptly, it instructs with such facility and despatch, by one glance of the eye conveying a greater variety of advices, and a more distinct knowledge of things, than could be got by a discourse of several hours: and, while it informs, it amuses and entertains the mind with such singular pleasure and delight; it is of such excellent use in giving a stability and permanency to human discourse, in recording sounds and bestowing life on dead languages, enabling us to converse with men of remote ages and countries; and it answers so opposite to the uses and necessities of mankind, informing us more distinctly of those objects, whose nearness or magnitude qualify them to be of greatest detriment or benefit to our bodies, and less exactly in proportion as their littleness or distance makes them of less concern to us. But these things are not strange, they are familiar, and that makes them to be overlooked. Things which rarely happen strike; whereas frequency lessens the admiration of things, though in themselves ever so admirable. Hence a common man who is not used to think and make reflections, would probably be more convinced of the being of a God by one single sentence heard once in his life from the sky, than by all the experience he has had of this visual language, contrived with such exquisite skill, so constantly addressed to his eyes, and so plainly declaring the nearness, wisdom, and providence of Him with whom we have to do.—“Minute Philosopher,” Dialogue IV., Art. XV.

of their own. Now they are these primary convictions of the understanding, these cases of a belief without reason which minister to the philosophical infidelity of those, who, professing to have no dependence on an instinctive faith, do in fact alike discard all truth, whether demonstrated or undemonstrated—seeing that underived or unreasoned truth must necessarily form the basis, as well as the continuous cement of all reasoning. They challenge us to account for these native and original convictions of the mind; and affirm that they may be as much due to an arbitrary organization of the percipient faculty, as to the objective trueness of the things which are perceived. And we cannot dispute the possibility of this. We can neither establish by reasoning those truths whose situation is, not anywhere in the stream, but at the fountain of ratiocination; nor can we deny that beings might have been so differently constituted, as that, with reverse intuitions to our own, they might have recognised as truths what we instantly recoil from as falsehoods, or felt to be absurdities our first and foremost principles of truth. And when this suspicion is once admitted, so as to shake our confidence in the judgments of the intellect, it were but consistent that it should be extended to the departments both of morality and taste. Our impressions of what is virtuous or of what is fair, may be regarded as alike accidental and arbitrary with our impressions of what is true—being referable to the structure of the mind, and not to any objective reality in the things which are contemplated. It is thus that the absolutely true, or good, or beautiful, may be conceived of as having no stable or substantive being in nature; and the mind, adrift from all fixed principle, may thus lose itself in universal pyrrhonism.

20. Nature is fortunately too strong for this speculation; but still there is a comfort in being enabled to vindicate the confidence which she has inspired—as in those cases where some original principle of hers admits of being clearly and decisively tested. And it is so of our faith in the constancy of nature, met and responded to throughout all her dominions by nature's actual constancy—the one being the expectation, the other its rigid and invariable fulfilment. This perhaps is the most palpable instance which can be quoted of a belief anterior to experience, yet of which experience affords a wide and unexpected verification. It proves at least of one of our implanted instincts that it is unerring; and that, over against a subjective tendency in the mind, there is a great objective reality in circumambient nature to

which it corresponds. This may well convince us that we live, not in a world of imaginations, but in a world of realities. It is a noble example of the harmony which obtains between the original make and constitution of the human spirit upon the one hand, and the constitution of external things upon the other; and nobly accredits the faithfulness of Him, who, as the Creator of both, ordained this happy and wondrous adaptation. The monstrous suspicion of the sceptics is, that we are in the hands of a God, who, by the insertion of falsities into the human system, sports himself with a laborious deception on the creatures whom He has made. The invariable order of nature, in conjunction with the apprehension of this invariableness existing in all hearts—the universal expectation with its universal fulfilment, is a triumphant refutation of this degrading mockery—evincing that it is not a phantasmagoria in which we dwell, but a world peopled with realities. That we are never misled in our instinctive belief of nature's uniformity, demonstrates the perfect safety wherewith we may commit ourselves to the guidance of our original principles, whether intellectual or moral—assured that, instead of occupying a land of shadows, a region of universal doubt and derision, they are the stabilities, both of an everlasting truth and an everlasting righteousness with which we have to do.

21. This lesson obtains a distinct and additional confirmation from every particular instance of adaptation, which can be found of external nature, either to the moral or intellectual constitution of man.

22. (2.) To understand our second adaptation, we must advert to the difference that obtains between those truths, which are so distinct and independent that each can only be ascertained by a separate act of observation, and those truths which are either logically or mathematically involved in each other.*

* See this distinction admirably expounded in Whately's Logic—a work of profound judgment, and which effectually vindicates the honours of a science that, since the days of Bacon, or rather (which is more recent) since the days of his extravagant because exclusive authority, it has been too much the fashion to depreciate. The author, if I might use the expression without irreverence, has given to Bacon the things which are Bacon's, and to Aristotle the things which are Aristotle's. He has strengthened the pretensions of logic by narrowing them—that is, instead of placing all the intellectual processes under its direction, by assigning to it as its proper subject the art of deduction alone. He has made most correct distinction between the inductive and the logical; and it is by attending to the respective provinces of each, that we come to perceive the incompetency of mere logic for the purpose of discovery, strictly so called. The whole chapter on discovery is particularly valuable—leading us clearly to discriminate between that which logic can, and that which

For example, there is no such dependence between the colour of a flower and its smell, as that the one can be reasoned from the other; and in every different specimen, therefore, we, to ascertain the two facts of the colour and the smell, must have recourse to two observations. On the other hand, there is such a dependence between the proposition that self-preservation is the strongest and most general law of our nature, and the proposition that no man will starve if able and in circumstances to work for his own maintenance, that the one proposition can be deduced by inference from the other, as the conclusion from the premises of an argument. And still more, there is such a dependence between the proposition that the planet moves in an elliptical orbit round the sun, having its focus in the centre of that luminary, and a thousand other propositions—so that, without a separate observation for each of the latter, they can be reasoned from the former; just as an infinity of truths and properties can, without observation, be satisfactorily demonstrated of many a curve from the simple definition of it. We do not affirm that, in any case, we can establish a dogma, or make a discovery independently of all observation, any more than in a syllogism we are independent of observation for the truth of the premises—both the major and the minor propositions being generally verified in this way; while the connexion between these and the conclusion, is all, in the syllogism, wherewith the art of logic has properly to do. In none of the sciences is the logic of itself available for the purposes of discovery; and it can only contribute to this object when furnished with sound data, the accuracy of which is determined by observation alone. This holds particularly true of the mixed mathematics, where the conclusions are sound only in as far as the first premises are sound—which premises, in like manner, are not reasoned truths, but observed truths. Even in the pure mathematics, some obscurely initial or rudimental process of observation may have been necessary, ere the mind could arrive at its first conceptions either of quantity or number. Certain it is, however, that, in all the sciences, however dependent on observation for the original data, we can, by reasoning on the data, establish an indefinite number of distinct and

it cannot achieve. It is an instrument, not for the discovery of truth properly new, but for the discovery of truths which are enveloped or virtually contained in propositions already known. It instructs, but does not inform; and has nought to do in syllogism with the truth of the premises, but only with the truth of the connexion between the premises and the conclusion.

important and useful propositions—which, if soundly made out, observation will afterwards verify; but which, anterior to the application of this test, the mind, by its own excogitations, may have made the objects of its most legitimate conviction. It is thus that, on the one hand, we, by the inferences of a sound logic, can, on an infinity of subjects, discover what should for ever have remained unknown, had it been left to the findings of direct observation; and that, on the other hand, though observation could not have made the discovery, it never fails to attest it. Visionaries, on the one hand, may spurn at the ignoble patience and drudgery of observers; and ignorant practitioners, whether in the walks of business or legislation, may, on the other, raise their senseless and indiscriminate outcry against the reasoners—but he who knows to distinguish between a hypothesis based on imagination and a theory based on experience, and perceives how helpless either reason or observation is when not assisted by the other, will know how to assign the parts, and to estimate the prerogatives of both.

23. When the mind has retired from direct converse with the external world, and brought to its own inner chamber of thought the materials which it has collected there, it then delivers itself up to its own processes—first ascending analytically from observed phenomena to principles, and then descending synthetically from principles to yet unobserved phenomena. We cannot but recognise it as an exquisite adaptation between the subjective and the objective, between the mental and the material systems—that the results of the abstract intellectual process and the realities of external nature should so strikingly harmonize.* It is exemplified in all the sciences—in the economical, and the mental, and the physical, and, most of all, in the physico-mathematical: as when Newton, on the calculations and profound musings of his solitude, predicted the oblate spheroidal

* There are some fine remarks by Sir John Herschell, in his preliminary discourse on the study of Natural Philosophy, on this adaptation of the abstract ideas to the concrete realities, of the discoveries made in the region of pure thought to the facts and phenomena of actual nature—as when the properties of conic sections, demonstrated by a laborious analysis, remained inapplicable till they came to be embodied in the real masses and movements of astronomy.

“These marvellous computations might almost seem to have been devised on purpose to show how closely the extremes of speculative refinement and practical utility can be brought to approximate.”—Herschell's Discourse, p. 28.

“They show how large a part pure reason has to perform in the examination of nature, and how implicit our reliance ought to be on that powerful and methodical system of rules

figure of the earth, and the prediction was confirmed by the mensurations of the academicians, both in the polar and equatorial regions; or as, when abandoning himself to the devices and the diagrams of his own construction, he thence scanned the cycles of the firmament, and elicited from the scroll of enigmatical characters, which himself had framed, the secrets of a sublime astronomy, that high field so replete with wonders, yet surpassed by this greatest wonder of all—the intellectual mastery which man has over it. That such a feeble creature should have made this conquest; that a light struck out in the little cell of his own cogitations should have led to a disclosure so magnificent; that, by a calculus of his own formation, as with the power of a talisman, the heavens, with their stupendous masses and untrodden distances, should have thus been opened to his gaze—can only be explained by the intervention of a Being having supremacy over all, and who has adjusted the laws of matter and the properties of mind to each other. It is only thus we can be made to understand how man, by the mere workings of his spirit, should have penetrated so far into the workmanship of Nature; or that, restricted though he be to a spot of earth, he should nevertheless tell of the suns and the systems that be afar—as if he had travelled with the line and plummet in his hand to the outskirts of creation, or carried the torch of discovery round the universe.

24. (3.) Our next adaptation is most notably exemplified in those cases, when some isolated phenomenon, remote and having at first no conceivable relation to human affairs, is nevertheless converted by the plastic and productive intellect of man, into some application of mighty and important effect on the interests of the world. One example of this is the use that has been made of the occultations and emersions of Jupiter's satellites, in the computation of longitudes, and so the perfecting of navigation. When one contemplates a subserviency of this sort fetched to us from afar, it is difficult not to imagine of it as being the end and processes, which constitute the modern mathematical analysis, in all the more difficult applications of exact calculation to her phenomena.—P. 33.

“Almost all the great combinations of modern mechanism, and many of its refinements and nicer improvements, are creations of pure intellect, grounding its exertion upon a very moderate number of elementary propositions in theoretical mechanics and geometry.”—P. 63.

The discovery of the principle of the achromatic telescope is termed by Sir John “a memorable case in science, though not a singular one, where the speculative geometer in his chamber, apart from the world, and existing among abstractions, has originated views of the noblest practical application.”—P. 255.

fruit of some special adjustment, that came within the purpose of Him, who, in constructing the vast mechanism of Nature, overlooked not the humblest of its parts—but incorporated the good of our species, with the wider generalities and laws of a universal system.* The conclusion is rather enhanced than otherwise by the seemingly incidental way in which the telescope was discovered. The observation of the polarity of the magnet is an example of the same kind—and with the same result in multiplying by an enlarged commerce the enjoyments of life, and speeding onward the science and civilisation of the globe. There cannot a purer instance be given of adaptation between external nature and the mind of man—than when some material, that would have remained for ever useless in the hands of

* The author of the *Natural History of Enthusiasm*, in his edition of Edwards' *Treatise on the Will*, presents us with the following energetic sentences on this subject.

“Every branch of modern science abounds with instances of remote correspondences between the great system of the world, and the artificial (*the truly natural*) condition to which knowledge raises him. If these correspondences were single or rare, they might be deemed merely fortuitous; like the drifting of a plank athwart the track of one who is swimming from a wreck. But when they meet us on all sides and invariably, we must be resolute in atheism not to confess that they are emanations from one and the same centre of wisdom and goodness. Is it nothing more than a lucky accommodation which makes the polarity of the needle to subserve the purposes of the mariner? or may it not safely be affirmed, both that the magnetic influence (whatever its primary intention may be) had reference to the business of navigation—a reference incalculably important to the spread and improvement of the human race; and that the discovery and the application of this influence arrived at the destined moment in the revolution of human affairs, when in combination with other events, it would produce the greatest effect? Nor should we scruple to affirm that the relation between the inclination of the earth's axis and the conspicuous star which, without a near rival, attracts even the eye of the vulgar, and shows the north to the wanderer on the wilderness or on the ocean, is in like manner a beneficent arrangement. Those who would spurn the supposition that the celestial locality of a sun immeasurably remote from our system should have reference to the accommodation of the inhabitants of a planet so inconsiderable as our own, forget the style of the Divine Works, which is, to serve some great or principal end, compatibly with ten thousand lesser and remote interests. Man, if he would secure the greater, must neglect or sacrifice the less; not so the Omnipotent Contriver. It is a fact full of meaning, that those astronomical phenomena (and so others) which offer themselves as available for the purposes of art, as, for instance, of navigation or geography, do not fully or effectively yield the end they promise, until after long and elaborate processes of calculation have disentangled them from variations, disturbing forces, and apparent irregularities. To the rude fact, if so we might designate it, a mass of recondite science must be appended, before it can be brought to bear with precision upon the arts of life. Thus the polarity of the needle or the eclipses of Jupiter's moons are as nothing to the mariner or the geographer, without the voluminous commentary furnished by the mathematics of astronomy. The fact of the expansive force of steam must employ the intelligence and energy of the mechanicians of an empire, during a century, before the whole of its beneficial powers can be put in activity. Chemical, medical, and botanical science is filled with parallel instances; and they all affirm, in an articulate manner, the twofold purpose of the Creator—to benefit man and to educate him.”

the unintelligent and unthoughtful, is converted by the fertility and power of the human understanding into an instrument for the further extension of our knowledge or our means of gratification. The prolongation of their eyesight to the aged by means of convex lenses, made from a substance at once transparent and colourless—the force of steam with the manifold and ever-growing applications which are made of it—the discovery of platina, which, by its resistance to the fiercest heats, is so available in prosecuting the ulterior researches of chemistry*—even the very abundance and portability of those materials by which written characters can be multiplied, and, through the impulse thus given to the quick and copious circulation of human thoughts, mind acts with rapid diffusion upon mind though at the distance of a hemisphere from each other, conceptions and informations and reasonings—these products of the intellect alone being made to travel over the world by the intervention of material substances—these, while but themselves only a few taken at random from the multitude of strictly appropriate specimens which could be alleged of an adaptation between the systems of mind and matter, are sufficient to mark an obvious contrivance and forthputting of skill in the adjustment of the systems to each other. Enough has been already done to prove of mind, with its various powers, that it is the fittest agent which could have been employed for working upon matter; and of matter, with its various properties and combinations, that it is the fittest instrument which could have been placed under the disposal of mind. Every new triumph achieved by the human intellect over external nature, whether in the way of discovery or of art, serves to make the proof more illustrious. In the indefinite progress of science and invention, the mastery of man over the elements which surround him is every year becoming more conspicuous—the pure result of adaptation, or of the way in which mind and matter have been conformed to each other;

* "This, among many such lessons, will teach us that the most important uses of natural objects are not those which offer themselves to us most obviously. The chief use of the moon for man's immediate purposes remained unknown to him for five thousand years from his creation. And since it cannot but be that innumerable and most important uses remain to be discovered among the materials and objects already known to us, as well as among those which the progress of science must hereafter disclose, we may here conceive a well-grounded expectation, not only of constant increase in the physical resources of mankind, and the consequent improvement of their condition, but of continual accessions to our power of penetrating into the arcana of nature, and becoming acquainted with her highest laws."—Sir John Herschell's Discourse, pp. 308, 309.

the first endowed by the Creator with those powers which qualify it to command; the second no less evidently endowed with those corresponding susceptibilities which cause it to obey.

25. (4.) To prepare for our next instance, there is one especial adaptation that we shall now bring forward, and all the more willingly that, beside being highly important in itself, it forms an instance of adaptation in the pure and limited sense of the term—even the influence of a circumstance strictly material on the state of the moral world in all the civilized, and indeed in all the appropriated countries on the face of the earth. We advert to the actual fertility of the land, and to the circumstances purely physical by which the degree or measure of that fertility is determined. It has been well stated by some of the expounders of geological science, that, while the vegetable mould on the earth's surface is subject to perpetual waste, from the action both of the winds and of the waters, either blowing it away in dust, or washing it down in rivers to the ocean—the loss thus sustained, is nevertheless perpetually repaired by the operation of the same material agents on the uplands of the territory—whence the dust and the debris, produced by a disintegration that is constantly going on even in the hardest rocks, is either strewed by the atmosphere, or carried down in an enriching sediment by mountain streams to the lands which are beneath them. It has been rightly argued, as the evidence and example of a benevolent design, that the opposite causes of consumption and of supply are so adjusted to each other, as to have insured the perpetuity of our soils.* But even though these counteracting forces had been somewhat differently balanced;

* “It is highly interesting to trace up, in this manner, the action of causes with which we are familiar to the production of effects, which at first seem to require the introduction of unknown and extraordinary powers; and it is no less interesting to observe, how skilfully nature has balanced the action of all the minute causes of waste, and rendered them conducive to the general good. Of this we have a most remarkable instance in the provision made for preserving the soil, or the coat of vegetable mould spread out over the surface of the earth. This coat, as it consists of loose materials, is easily washed away by the rains, and is continually carried down by the rivers into the sea. This effect is visible to every one; the earth is removed not only in the form of sand and gravel, but its finer particles, suspended in the waters, tinge those of some rivers continually, and those of all occasionally—that is, when they are flooded or swollen with rains. The quantity of earth thus carried down, varies according to circumstances; it has been computed in some instances, that the water of a river in a flood contains earthy matter suspended in it, amounting to more than the two hundred and fiftieth part of its own bulk. The soil, therefore, is continually diminished, its parts being delivered from higher to lower levels, and finally delivered into the sea. But it is a fact, that the soil notwithstanding remains the same in quantity, or at least nearly the same, and must have done so ever since the earth was the receptacle of animal or

though the wasting operation had remained as active and as powerful, while a more difficult pulverization of the rocks had made the restorative operation slower and feebler than before—still we might have had our permanent or stationary soils, but only all of less fertility than that in which we now find them. A somewhat different constitution of the rocks; or a somewhat altered proportion in the forces of that machinery which is brought to bear upon them—in the cohesion that withstands, or in the impulse and the atmospherical depositions and the grinding frosts and the undermining torrents that separate and carry off the materials—a slight change in one or all of these causes might have let down each of the various soils on the face of the world to a lower point in the scale of productiveness than at present belongs to them. And when we think of the mighty bearing which the determination of this single element has on the state and interests of human society, we cannot resist the conclusion that, depending as it does on so many influences, there has, in the assortment of these, been a studied adaptation of the material and the mental worlds to each other. For only let us consider the effect, had the fertility been brought so low, as that on the best of soils, the produce extracted by the most strenuous efforts of human toil, could no more than repay the cultivation bestowed on them—or that the food, thus laboriously raised, would barely suffice for the maintenance of the labourers. It is obvious that a fertility beneath this point would have kept the whole earth in a state of perpetual barrenness and desolation—when, though performing as now its astronomical circuit in the heavens, it would have been a planet bereft of life, or at least unfit for the abode and sustenance of the rational generations by whom it is at present occupied. But even with a fertility at this point, although a race of men might have been upholden, the tenure by which each man held his existence behoved to have been a life of unremitting drudgery; and we should have beheld the whole species engaged in a constant

vegetable life. The soil, therefore, is augmented from other causes, just as much at an average as it is diminished by those now mentioned; and this augmentation evidently can proceed from nothing but the constant and slow disintegration of the rocks. In the permanence, therefore, of a coat of vegetable mould on the surface of the earth, we have a demonstrative proof of the continual destruction of the rocks; and cannot but admire the skill with which the powers of the many chemical and mechanical agents employed in this complicated work, are so adjusted as to make the supply and the waste of the soil exactly equal to one another.”—Playfair’s “Illustrations of the Huttonian Theory.” Sect. iii. art. 13.

struggle of penury and pain for the supply of their animal necessities. And it is because of a fertility above this point, the actual fertility of vast portions of land in most countries of the earth, that many and extensive are the soils which yield a large surplus produce, over and above the maintenance of all who are engaged, whether directly or indirectly, in the work of their cultivation. The strength of the possessory feelings on the one hand, giving rise to possessory rights recognised and acquiesced in by all men; these rights investing a single individual with the ownership of lands, that yield on the other hand a surplus produce, over which he has the uncontrolled disposal—make up together such a constitution of the moral, combined with such a constitution of the material system, as demonstrates that the gradation of wealth in human society has its deep and its lasting foundation in the nature of things.

26. (5.) The way is now prepared for our next adaptation, which hinges upon this—that the highest efforts of intellectual power, and to which few men are competent, the most difficult intellectual processes, requiring the utmost abstraction and leisure for their development, are often indispensable to discoveries, which, when once made, are found capable of those useful applications, the value of which is felt and recognised by all men. The most arduous mathematics had to be put into requisition for the establishment of the lunar theory—without which our present lunar observations could have been of no use for the determination of the longitude. This dependence of the popular and the practical on an anterior profound science runs through much of the business of life, in the mechanics and chemistry of manufactures as well as in navigation; and indeed is more or less exemplified so widely, or rather universally, throughout the various departments of human industry and art, that it most essentially contributes to the ascendancy of mind over muscular force in society—besides securing for mental qualities the willing and reverential homage of the multitude. This peculiar influence stands complicated with other arrangements, requiring a multifarious combination, that speaks all the more emphatically for a presiding intellect, which must have devised and calculated the whole. We have already stated by what peculiarity in the soil it was that a certain number of the species was exempted from the necessity of labour; and without which, in fact, all science and civilisation would have been impossible. We have also expounded in some degree the principle which both originated the

existing arrangements of property, and led men to acquiesce in them. But still it is a precarious acquiescence, and liable to be disturbed by many operating causes of distress and discontent in society. If there be influences on the side of the established order of things, there are also counteractive influences on the opposite side, of revolt and irritation against it; and by which the natural reverence of men for rank and station may at length be overborne. In the progress of want and demoralization among the people; in the pressure of their increasing numbers, by which they at once outgrow the means of instruction, and bear more heavily on the resources of the land than before; in the felt straitness of their condition, and the proportionate vehemence of their aspirations after enlargement—nothing is easier than to give them a factitious sense of their wrongs, and to inspire them with the rankling imagination of a heartless and haughty indifference on the part of their lordly superiors towards them, whose very occupation of wealth they may be taught to regard as a monopoly, the breaking down of which were an act of generous patriotism. Against these brooding elements of revolution in the popular mind, the most effectual preservative certainly, were the virtue of the upper classes—or that our great men should be good men. But a mighty help to this, and next to it in importance, were, that to the power which lies in wealth they should superadd the power which lies in knowledge—or that the vulgar superiority of mere affluence and station should be strengthened in a way that would command the willing homage of all spirits, that is, by the mental superiority which their opportunities of lengthened and laborious education enable them to acquire. By a wise ordination of nature, the possessors of rank and fortune, simply as such, have a certain ascendant power over their fellows; and, by the same ordination, the possessors of learning have an ascendancy also—and it would mightily conduce to the strength and stability of the commonwealth, if these influences were conjoined; or, in other words, if the scale of wealth and the scale of intelligence, in as far as that was dependent on literary culture, could be made to harmonize. The constitution of science, or the adaptation which obtains between the objects of knowledge and the knowing faculties, is singularly favourable to the alliance for which we now plead—insomuch that, to sound the depths of philosophy, time and independence and exemption from the cares and labours of ordinary life seem indispensable; and, on the other hand, profound discoveries, or a profound ac-

quaintance with them, are sure to command a ready deference even from the multitude, whether on account of the natural respect which all men feel for pre-eminent understanding, or on account of the palpable utilities to which, in a system of things so connected as ours, even the loftiest and most recondite science is found to be subservient. On the same principle that, in a ship, the skilful navigation of its captain will secure for him the prompt obedience of the crew to all his directions;* or that, in an army, the consummate generalship of its commander will subordinate all the movements of the immense host to the power of one controlling and actuating will—so, in general society, did wealth, by means of a thorough scholarship on the part of the higher classes, but maintain an intimate fellowship with wisdom and sound philosophy—then, with the same conservative influence as in these other examples, would the intellectual ascendancy thus acquired be found of mighty effect to consolidate and maintain all the gradations of the commonwealth.

* “We have before us an anecdote communicated to us by a naval officer (Captain Basil Hall) distinguished for the extent and variety of his attainments, which shows how impressive such results may become in practice. He sailed from San Blas on the west coast of Mexico, and, after a voyage of 8000 miles, occupying eighty-nine days, arrived off Rio Janeiro, having in this interval passed through the Pacific Ocean, rounded Cape Horn, and crossed the South Atlantic, without making land, or even seeing a single sail, with the exception of an American whaler off Cape Horn. Arrived within a week's sail of Rio, he set seriously about determining, by lunar observations, the precise line of the ship's course, and its situation in it at a determinate moment, and having ascertained this within from five to ten miles, ran the rest of the way by those more ready and compendious methods known to navigators, which can be safely employed for short trips between one known point and another, but which cannot be trusted in long voyages, where the moon is their only guide. The rest of the tale we are enabled by his kindness to state in his own words:—' We steered towards Rio Janeiro for some days after taking the lunars above described, and having arrived within fifteen or twenty miles of the coast, I hove-to till four in the morning, when the day should break, and then bore up; for although it was very hazy, we could see before us a couple of miles or so. About eight o'clock it became so foggy that I did not like to stand in farther, and was just bringing the ship to the wind again before sending the people to breakfast, when it suddenly cleared off, and I had the satisfaction of seeing the great sugar-loaf peak, which stands on one side of the harbour's mouth, so nearly right ahead that we had not to alter our course above a point, in order to hit the entrance of Rio. This was the first land we had seen for three months, after crossing so many seas, and being set backwards and forwards by innumerable currents and foul winds.' The effect on all on board might well be conceived to have been electric; and it is needless to remark how essentially the authority of a commanding officer over his crew may be strengthened by the occurrence of such incidents, indicative of a degree of knowledge and consequent power beyond their reach.”—Herschell's Discourse, pp. 28, 29.

It is an extreme instance of the connexion between mental power and civil or political ascendancy, though often verified in the history of the world—that military science has often led to the establishment of a military despotism.

27. It is thus that a vain and frivolous aristocracy, averse to severe intellectual discipline, and beset with the narrow prejudices of an order, let themselves down from that high vantage-ground on which fortune hath placed them—where, by a right use of the capabilities belonging to the state in which they were born, they might have kept their firm footing to the latest generations. Did all truth lie at the surface of observation, and was it alike accessible to all men, they could not with such an adaptation of external nature to man's intellectual constitution, have realized the peculiar advantage on which we are now insisting. But it is because there is so much of important and applicable truth, which lies deep and hidden under the surface, and which can only be appropriated by men who combine unbounded leisure with the habit or determination of strenuous mental effort—it is only because of such an adaptation, that they who are gifted with property are, as a class, gifted with the means, if they would use it, of a great intellectual superiority over the rest of the species. There is a strong natural veneration for wealth, and also a strong natural veneration for wisdom. It is by the union of the two that the horrors of revolutionary violence might for ever be averted from the land. Did our highborn children of affluence, for every ten among them, the mere loungers of effeminacy and fashion, or the mere lovers of sport and sensuality and splendour—did they, for every ten of such, furnish but one enamoured of higher gymnastics, the gymnastics of the mind; and who accomplished himself for the work and warfare of the senate, by his deep and comprehensive views in all the proper sciences of a statesman, the science of government, and politics, and commerce, and economics, and history, and human nature—by a few gigantic men among them, thus girded for the services of patriotism, a nation might be saved—because arrested on that headlong descent, which, at the impulse of the popular will, it might else have made, from one measure of fair but treacherous promise, from one ruinous plausibility to another. The thing most to be dreaded, is that hasty and superficial legislation into which a government may be hurried by the successive onsets of public impatience, and under the impulse of a popular and prevailing cry. Now the thing most needed, as a counteractive to this evil, is a thoroughly intellectual parliament, where shall predominate that masculine sense which has been trained for act and application by masculine studies; and where the silly watch-

word of theory shall not be employed as heretofore to overbear the lessons of soundly generalized truth—because, instead of being discerned at a glance, they are fetched from the depths of philosophic observation, or shone upon by lights from afar, in the accumulated experience of ages. We have infinitely more to apprehend from the demagogues than from the *doctrinaires* of our present crisis; and it will require a far profounder attention to the principles of every question than many deem to be necessary, or than almost any are found to bestow, to save us from the crudities of a blindfold legislation.

28. And it augurs portentously for the coming destinies of our land, that, in the present rage for economy, such an indiscriminate havoc should have been made—so that pensions and endowments for the reward or encouragement of science, should have had the same sentence of extinction passed upon them as the most worthless sinecures. The difficulties of our most sublime, and often too our most useful knowledge, make it inaccessible to all but to those who are exempt from the care of their own maintenance—so that unless a certain, though truly insignificant portion of the country's wealth, be expended in this way, all high and transcendental philosophy, however conducive as it often is to the strength as well as glory of a nation, must vanish from the land. When the original possessors of wealth neglect individually this application of it; and, whether from indolence or the love of pleasure, fall short of that superiority in mental culture of which the means have been put into their hands—we can only reproach their ignoble preference, and lament the ascendant force of sordid and merely animal propensities, over the principles of their better and higher nature. But when that which individuals do in slavish compliance with their indolence and passions, the State is also found to do in the exercise of its deliberate wisdom, and on the maxims of a settled policy—when, instead of ordaining any new destination of wealth in favour of science, it would divorce and break asunder the goodly alliance by a remorseless attack on the destinations of wiser and better days—such a gothic spoliation as this, not a deed of lawless cupidity, but the mandate of a senate-house, were a still more direct and glaring contravention to the wisdom of Nature, and to the laws of that economy which Nature hath instituted. The adaptation of which we now speak, between the external system of the universe and the intellectual system of man, were grossly violated by such an outrage; and it is a violence which

nature would resent by one of those signal chastisements, the examples of which are so frequent in history. The truth is, that, viewed as a manifestation of the popular will, which tumultuates against all that wont to command the respect and admiration of society, and is strong enough to enforce its dictations—it may well be regarded as one of the deadliest symptoms of a nation ripening for anarchy, that dread consummation by which, however, the social state, relieved of its distempers, is at length renovated like the atmosphere by a storm, after throwing off from it the dregs and the degeneracy of an iron age.*

29. (6.) We shall do little more than state two other adaptations, although more might be noticed, and all do admit of a much fuller elucidation than we can bestow upon them. And first, there is a countless diversity of sciences, and, correspondent to this, a like diversity in the tastes and talents of men, presenting, therefore, a most beneficial adaptation between the objects of human knowledge and the powers of human knowledge. Even in one science there are often many subdivisions, each requiring a separate mental fitness, on the part of those who might select it as their own favourite walk, which they most love, and in which they are best qualified to excel. In most of the physical sciences, how distinct the business of the observation is from that of the philosophy; and how important to their progress, that, for each appropriate work, there should be men of appropriate faculties or habits, who, in the execution of their respective tasks, do exceedingly multiply and enlarge the products of the mind—even as the grosser products of human industry are multiplied by the subdivision of employment!† It is well, that, for that infinite variety of intellectual pursuits, necessary to explore all the recesses of a various and complicated external nature, there should be a like variety of intellectual predilections and powers scattered over the species—a congruity between the world of mind and the world of matter, of the utmost importance, both to the perfecting of art, and to the progress and perfecting of science. Yet it is marvellous of these respective labourers, though in effect they work simultaneously and to each other's hands, how little respect or sympathy or sense of importance, they have for any

* The same effect is still more likely to ensue from the spoliation and secularization of ecclesiastical property.

† “There is no accounting for the difference of minds or inclinations, which leads one man to observe with interest the development of phenomena, another to speculate on their causes; but were it not for this happy disagreement, it may be doubted whether the higher sciences could ever have attained even their present degree of perfection.”—Herschell's Discourse, p. 131.

department of the general field, for any section in the wide encyclopædia of human learning, but that on which their own faculties are concentrated and absorbed. We cannot imagine aught more dissimilar and uncongenial, than the intentness of a mathematician on his demonstrations and diagrams, and the equal intentness, nay delight, of a collector or antiquarian on the faded manuscripts and uncial characters of other days. Yet, in the compound result of all these multiform labours, there is a goodly and sustained harmony, between the practitioners and the theorists of science, between the pioneers and the monarchs of literature—even as in the various offices of a well-arranged household, although there should be no mutual intelligence between the subordinates who fill them, there is a supreme and connecting wisdom, which presides over and animates the whole. The goodly system of philosophy, when viewed as the product of innumerable contributions, by minds of all possible variety and men of all ages—bears like evidence to the universe being a spacious household, under the one and consistent direction of Him who is at once the Parent and the Master of a universal family.*

30. And here it is not out of place to remark, that it is the very perfection of the Divine workmanship, which leads every inquirer to imagine a surpassing worth and grace and dignity in his own special department of it. The fact is altogether notorious, that, in order to attain a high sense of the importance of any science, and of the worth and beauty of the objects which it embraces—nothing more is necessary than the intent and persevering study of them. Whatever the walk of philosophy may be on which man shall enter, that is the walk which of all others he conceives to be most enriched, by all that is fitted to entertain the intellect, or arrest the admiration of the enamoured scholar. The astronomer who can unravel the mechanism of the heavens, or the chemist who can trace the atomic processes of matter upon earth, or the metaphysician who can assign the laws of human thought, or the grammarian who can discriminate the niceties of language, or the naturalist who can classify the flowers and the birds and the shells and the minerals and the insects which so teem and multiply in this world of wonders—each of these respective inquirers is apt to become the worshipper of his own theme, and to look with a sort of indifference, border-

* The benefit of subdivision in science should lead to the multiplication of professorships in our literary institutes, and at all events should prevent the parsimonious suppression of them, or the parsimonious amalgamation of the duties of two or more into one.

ing on contempt, towards what he imagines the far less interesting track of his fellow-labourers. Now each is right in the admiration he renders to the grace and grandeur of that field which himself has explored ; but all are wrong in the distaste they feel, or rather in the disregard they cast on the other fields which they have never entered. We should take the testimony of each to the worth of that which he does know, and reject the testimony of each to the comparative worthlessness of that which he does not know ; and then the unavoidable inference is, that that must be indeed a replete and a gorgeous universe in which we dwell—and still more glorious the Eternal Mind from whose conception it arose, and whose prolific fiat gave birth to it, in all its vastness and variety. And instead of the temple of science having been reared, it were more proper to say, that the temple of nature had been evolved. The archetype of science is the universe ; and it is in the disclosure of its successive parts that science advances from step to step—not properly raising any new architecture of its own, but rather unveiling by degrees an architecture that is old as the creation. The labourers in philosophy create nothing ; but only bring out into exhibition that which was before created. And there is a resulting harmony in their labours, however widely apart from each other they may have been prosecuted—not because they have adjusted one part to another, but because the adjustment has been already made to their hands. There comes forth, it is true, of their labours, a most magnificent harmony, yet not a harmony which they have made, but a pre-existent harmony which they have only made visible—so that when tempted to idolize philosophy, let us transfer the homage to Him who both formed the philosopher's mind, and furnished his philosophy with all its materials.

31. (7.) The next adaptation that we shall instance is one for the introduction of which at this place we ought to apologize—it being rather one of mind to mind, and depending on a previous adaptation in each mind of the mental faculties to one another. For the right working of the mind, it is not enough that each of its separate powers shall be provided with adequate strength—they must be mixed in a certain proportion—for the greatest inconvenience might be felt, not in the defect merely, but in the excess of some of them. We have heard of too great a sensibility in the organ of hearing giving rise to an excess in the faculty, which amounted to disease, by exposing the patient to the pain and disturbance of too many sounds, even of those so

faint and low as to be inaudible to the generality of men. In like manner, we can imagine the excess of a property purely mental, of memory for example, amounting to a malady of the intellect, by exposing the victim of it to the presence and the perplexity of too many ideas, even of those which are so insignificant, that it would lighten and relieve the mind if they had no place there at all.* Certain it is that the more full and circumstantial is the memory, the more is given for the judgment to do—its proper work of selecting and comparing becoming the more oppressive, with the number and distraction of irrelevant materials. It would have been better that these had found no original admittance within the chamber of recollection; or that only things of real and sufficient importance had left an enduring impression upon its tablet. In other words, it would have been better that the memory had been less susceptible or less retentive than it is; and this may enable us to perceive the exquisite balancing that must have been requisite in the construction of the mind, when the very defect of one faculty is thus made to aid and to anticipate the operations of another. He who alone knoweth the secrets of the spirits, formed them with a wisdom to us unsearchable.

32. Certain it is, however, that variety in the proportion of their faculties is one chief cause of the difference between the minds of men. And whatever the one faculty may be, in any individual, which predominates greatly beyond the average of the rest—that faculty is selected as the characteristic by which to distinguish him; and thus he may be designed as a man of judgment, or information, or fancy, or wit, or oratory. It is this variety in their respective gifts which originates so beautiful a dependence and reciprocity of mutual services among men; and more especially when any united movement or united counsel is requisite that calls forth the co-operation of numbers. No man combines all the ingredients of mental power; and no man is wanting in all of them—so that, while none is wholly independent of others, each possesses some share of importance in the commonwealth. The defects, even of the highest minds, may thus need to be supplemented by the counterpart excellencies of

* It has been said of Sir James Mackintosh, that the excess of his memory was felt by him as an incumbrance in the writing of history—adding as it did to the difficulty of selection. It is on the same principle that the very multitude of one's ideas and words may form an obstacle to extemporaneous speaking, as has been illustrated by Dean Swift under the comparison of a thin church emptying faster than a crowded one.

minds greatly inferior to their own—and in this way the pride of exclusive superiority is mitigated; and the respect which is due to our common humanity is more largely diffused throughout society, and shared more equally among all the members of it. Nature hath so distributed her gifts among her children as to promote a mutual helpfulness, and, what perhaps is still more precious, a mutual humility among men.

33. In almost all the instances of mental superiority, it will be found that it is a superiority above the average level of the species, in but one thing—or that arises from the predominance of one faculty above all the rest. So much is this the case, that when the example does occur of an individual so richly gifted as to excel in two of the general or leading powers of the mind, his reputation for the one will impede the establishment of his reputation for the other. There occurs to us one very remarkable case of the injustice done by the men who have but one faculty, to the men who are under the misfortune of having two. In the writings of Edmund Burke there has at length been discovered a rich mine of profound and strikingly just reflection on the philosophy of public affairs. But he felt as well as thought, and saw the greatness and beauty of things, as well as their relations; and so he could at once penetrate the depths, and irradiate the surface of any object that he contemplated. The light which he flung from him entered the very innermost shrines and recesses of his subject; but then it was light tinged with the hues of his own brilliant imagination, and many gazing at the splendour, recognised not the weight and the wisdom underneath. They thought him superficial, but just because themselves arrested at the surface; and either because, with the capacity of emotion but without that of judgment, or because with the capacity of judgment but without that of emotion—they, from the very meagreness and mutilation of their own faculties, were incapable of that complex homage due to a complex object which had both beauty and truth for its ingredients. Thus it was that the very exuberance of his genius injured the man, in the estimation of the pigmies around him; and the splendour of his imagination detracted from the credit of his wisdom. Fox had the sagacity to see this; and posterity now see it. Now that, instead of a passing meteor, he is fixed by authorship in the literary hemisphere, men can make a study of him; and be at once regaled by the poetry, and instructed by the profoundness of his wondrous lucubrations.

34. (8.) Before quitting this department of the subject, we may advert, not to an individual peculiarity, but to the respective characters by which two classes of intellect are distinguished, and to the effect of their mutual action and reaction on the progress of opinion in the world.

35. The first of these intellectual tendencies may be seen in those who are distinguished by their fond and tenacious adherence to the existing philosophy, and by their indisposition to any changes of it. They feel it painful to relinquish their wonted and established habits of thought—as if the mind were to suffer violence by having to quit its ancient courses, and to unlearn the opinions of other days. We have no doubt that the love of repose, the aversion to that mental labour which is requisite even for the understanding of a new system, or at least for the full comprehension and estimate of its proofs—enters largely into this dislike for all novelties of speculation, into this determined preference for the doctrines in which they have been educated—although the associations too of taste and reverence share largely in the result. It is thus that the old are more disinclined to changes; and there is a peculiar reason why schools and corporations of learning should make the sturdiest resistance to them. It is a formidable thing to make head against that majority within the walls of every venerable institute, which each new opinion has to encounter at the outset; and more especially, if it tend to derange the methods of a university, or unsettle the long-established practice of its masters. This will explain that inveteracy of long possession, which, operating both in many individual minds and in the bosom of colleges, gives formation and strength to what may be termed the conservative party in science or in the literary commonwealth—that party which maintains the largest and most resolute contest with all new opinions, and will not give way till overpowered by the weight of demonstration and energy of the public voice in their favour.

36. Opposed to this array of strength on the side of existing principles, we have the incessant operations of what may be termed the movement party in science or in the literary commonwealth—some of whom are urged onward by the mere love of novelty and change; others by the love of truth; and very many by a sort of ardent and indefinite imagination of yet un-reached heights in philosophy, and of the new triumphs which await the human mind in its interminable progress from one brilliant or commanding discovery to another. We have often

thought that a resulting optimism is the actual effect of the play or collision that is constantly kept up between these two rival parties in the world of letters. On the one hand, it is well that philosophy should not be a fixture, but should at length give way to the accumulating force of evidence. But, on the other hand, it is well that it should require a certain, and that a very considerable force of evidence, ere it shall quit its present holds, or resign the position which it now occupies. We had rather that it looked with an air of forbidden authority on the mere likelihoods of speculation, than that, lightly set agog by every specious plausibility, it should open its schools to a restless and rapid succession of yet undigested theories. It is possible to hold out too obstinately and too long; but yet it is well, that a certain balance should obtain between the adhesive and the aggressive forces in the world of speculation; and that the general mind of society should have at least enough of the sedative in its composition to protect it from aught like violent disturbance, or the incursion of any rash adventurer in the field of originality. And for this purpose it is well, that each novelty, kept at bay for a time, and made to undergo a sufficient probation, should be compelled thoroughly to substantiate its claims ere it be admitted to take a place beside the philosophy which is recognised by all the authorities, and received into all the institutes of the land.

37. And they are the very same principles which, when rightly blended, operate so beneficially, not in philosophy alone, but in politics. There is no spirit which requires more to be kept in check than that of the mere wantonness of legislation; and so far from being annoyed by that indisposition to change, which is rather the characteristic of all established authorities, we should regard it in the light of a wholesome counteractive, by which to stay the excesses of wild and wayward innovators. There is a great purpose served in society by that law of nature, in virtue of which it is that great bodies move slowly. It would not answer if a government were to veer and to vacillate with every breath of speculation—if easily liable to be diverted from the steadfastness of their course by every lure or by every likelihood which sanguine adventurers held out to them. It is well that in the ruling corporation there should be a certain strength of resistance, against which all splendid imaginations, and all unsound and hollow plausibilities, might spend their force and be dissipated; and, so far from complaining of it as an impracti-

cable engine which is so hard and difficult of impulse, we should look upon its very unwieldiness in the light of a safeguard, without which we should be driven to and fro by every wind of doctrine on a troubled sea that never rests. On these accounts we feel inclined that, in the vessel of the body politic, there should be a preponderance of ballast over sail; and that it really is so, we might put to the account of that optimism which, with certain reservations, obtains to a very great degree in the framework and throughout the whole mechanism of human society.

38. But this property in the machine of a government to which we now advert, does not preclude that steady and sober-minded improvement which is all that is desirable. It only restrains the advocates of improvement from driving too rapidly. It does not stop, it only retards their course, by a certain number of defeats and disappointments, which, if their course be indeed a good one, are but the stepping-stones to their ultimate triumph. Ere that the victory is gotten, they must run the gauntlet of many reverses and many mortifications; and they are not to expect that by one, but by several and successive blows of the catapulta, inveterate abuses and long-established practices can possibly be overthrown. It is thus, in fact, that every weak cause is thrown back into the nonentity whence it sprung, and that every cause of inherent goodness or worth is ultimately carried—rejected, like the former, at its first and earliest overtures; but, unlike the former, coming back every time with a fresh weight of public feeling and public demonstration in its favour, till, like the abolition of the slave-trade, or that of commercial restrictions,—causes which had the arduous struggle of many long years to undergo, it at length obtains the conclusive seal upon it of the highest authority in the land, and a seal by which the merits of the cause are far better authenticated than if the legislature were apt to fluctuate at the sound of every new and seemly proposal. We have therefore no quarrel with a certain *vis inertiae* in a legislature. Only let it not be an absolute fixture; and there is the hope, with perseverance, of all that is really important or desirable in reformation. The sluggishness that has been ascribed to great corporations is, in the present instance, a good and desirable property—as being the means of separating the chaff from the wheat of all those overtures that pour in upon representatives from every quarter of the land; and, so far from any feeling of annoyance at the retardation to which the best of them is subjected, it should be

most patiently and cheerfully acquiesced in, as being in fact the process, by which it brightens into prosperity, and at length its worth and its excellence are fully manifested.

39. It is not the necessary effect of this peculiar mechanism, it is but the grievous perversion of it, when the corrupt inveteracy has withstood improvement so long, that ere it could be carried, the assailing force had to gather into the momentum of an energy that might afterwards prove mischievous, when the obstacle which provoked it into action had at length been cleared away. It is then that the vessel of the state, which might have been borne safely and prosperously onward in the course of ages, by a steady breeze and with a sufficiency of ballast, as if slipped from her moorings, is drifted uncontrollably along, and precipitated from change to change with the violence of a hurricane.

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE CAPACITIES OF THE WORLD FOR MAKING A VIRTUOUS SPECIES HAPPY ;
AND THE ARGUMENT DEDUCIBLE FROM THIS, BOTH FOR THE CHARACTER OF
GOD AND THE IMMORTALITY OF MAN.

1. WE shall now attempt to unfold the most general and comprehensive of all our adaptations ; and which we at the same time think the most decisive of any in establishing the righteousness of the Divine character.

2. We have already stated the distinction between the theology of those who would make the Divine goodness consist of all moral excellence ; and of those who would make it consist of benevolence alone. Attempts have been made to simplify the science of morals, by the reduction of its various duties or obligations into one element—as when it is alleged that the virtuousness of every separate morality is reducible into benevolence, which is regarded as the central, or as the great master and generic virtue that is comprehensive of them all. There is a theoretic beauty in this imagination—yet it cannot be satisfactorily established by all our powers of moral or mental analysis. We cannot rid ourselves of the obstinate impression, that there is a distinct and native virtuousness, both in truth and in justice, apart from their subserviency to the good of men ; and accordingly, in the ethical systems of all our most orthodox expounders,

they are done separate homage to—as virtues standing forth in their own independent character, and having their own independent claims both on the reverence and observation of mankind. Now, akin with this attempt to generalize the whole of virtue into one single morality, is the attempt to generalize the character of God into one single moral perfection. Truth and justice have been exposed to the same treatment in the one contemplation as in the other—that is, regarded more as derivatives from the higher characteristic of benevolence, than as distinct and primary characteristics themselves. The love of philosophic simplicity may have led to this in the abstract or moral question; but something more has operated in the theological question. It falls in with a still more urgent affection than the taste of man; it falls in with his hope and his sense of personal interest, that the truth and justice of the Divinity should be removed as it were to the background of his perspective. And accordingly, this inclination to soften, if not to suppress, the sterner perfections of righteousness and holiness, appears not merely in the pleasing and poetic effusions of the sentimental, but also in the didactic expositions of the academic theism. It is thus that Paley, so full and effective and able in his demonstration of the natural, is yet so meagre in his demonstration of the moral attributes. It is, in truth, the general defect not of natural theology in itself, but of natural theology as set forth at the termination of ethical courses, or as expounded in the schools. In this respect the natural theology of the heart is at variance with the natural theology of our popular and prevailing literature. The one takes its lesson direct from conscience, which depones to the authority of truth and justice as distinct from benevolence; and carries this lesson upwards from that tablet of virtue which it reads on the nature of man below, to that higher tablet upon which it reads the character of God above. The other again, of more lax and adventurous speculation, would fain amalgamate all the qualities of the Godhead into one; and would make that one the beautiful and undistinguishing quality of tenderness. It would sink the venerable or the awful into the lovely; and to this it is prompted not merely for the sake of theoretic simplicity, but in order to quell the alarms of nature, the dread and the disturbance which sinners feel, when they look to their Sovereign in heaven as a God of judgment and of unspotted holiness. Nevertheless, the same conscience which tells what is sound in ethics, is ever and anon

suggesting what is sound in theology—that we have to do with a God of truth, that we have to do with a God of righteousness; and this lesson is never perhaps obliterated in any breast by the imagery, however pleasing, of a universal parent, throned in soft and smiling radiance, and whose supreme delight is to scatter beatitudes innumerable through a universal family. We cannot forget, although we would, that justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne; and that His dwelling-place is not a mere blissful elysium or paradise of sweets, but an august and inviolable sanctuary. It is an elysium, but only to the spirits of the holy; and this sacredness, we repeat, is immediately forced upon the consciousness of every bosom by the moral sense which is within it, however fearful a topic it may be of recoil to the sinner, and of *reticence* in the demonstrations of philosophy. The sense of heaven's sacredness is not a superstitious fear. It is the instant suggestion of our moral nature. What conscience apprehends virtue to be in itself, that also it will apprehend virtue to be in the Author of conscience; and if truth and justice be constituent elements in the one, these it will regard as constituent elements in the other also. It is by learning direct of God from the phenomena of human conscience; or taking what it tells us to be virtues in themselves, for the very virtues of the Godhead realized in actual and living exemplification upon His character—it is thus that we escape from the illusion of poetical religionists, who, in the incense which they offer to the benign virtues of the parent, are so apt to overlook the virtues of the Lawgiver and Judge.

3. When we take this fuller view of God's moral nature—when we make account of the righteousness as well as the benevolence—when we yield to the suggestion of our own hearts, that to Him belongs the sovereign state, and, if needful, the severity of the lawgiver, as well as the fond affection of the parent—when we assign to Him the character which, instead of but one virtue, is comprehensive of them all—we are then on firmer vantage-ground for the establishment of a natural theology in harmony both with the lessons of conscience and with the phenomena of the external world. Many of our academic theists have greatly crippled their argument by confining themselves to but one feature in the character of the Divinity—as if His only wish in reference to the creatures that He had made was a wish for their happiness; or as if, instead of the subjects of a righteous and moral government, they were but the nurslings of His ten-

derness. They have exiled and put forth everything like jurisprudence from the relation in which God stands to man; and by giving the foremost place in their demonstrations to the mere beneficence of the Deity, they have made the difficulties of the subject far more perplexing and unresolvable than they needed to have been. For with benevolence alone we cannot even extenuate and much less extricate ourselves from the puzzling difficulty of those physical sufferings to which the sentient creation, as far as our acquaintance extends with it, is universally liable. It is only by admitting the sanctities along with what may be termed the humanities of the Divine character, that this enigma can be at all alleviated. Whereas if, apart from the equities of a moral government, we look to God in no other light than mere tasteful and sentimental religionists do, or as but a benign and indulgent Father whose sole delight is the happiness of His family—there are certain stubborn anomalies which stand in the way of this frail imagination, and would render the whole subject a hopeless and utterly intractable mystery.

4. A specimen of the weakness which attaches to the system of natural theology, when the infinite benevolence of the Deity is the only element which it will admit into its explanations and its reasonings, is the manner in which its advocates labour to dispose of the numerous ills wherewith the world is invested. They have recourse to arithmetic—balancing the phenomena on each side of the question as they would the columns of a ledger. They institute respective summations of the good and the evil; and by the preponderance of the former over the latter, hold the difficulty to be resolved. The computation is neither a sure nor an easy one; but even under the admission of its justness, it remains an impracticable puzzle—why, under a Being of infinite power and infinite benevolence, there should be suffering at all. This is an enigma which the single attribute of benevolence cannot unriddle, or rather the very enigma which it has created—nor shall we even approximate to the solution of it, without the aid of other attributes to help the explanation.

5. It is under the pressure of these difficulties that refuge is taken in the imagination of a future state—where it is assumed that all the disorders of the present scene are to be repaired, and full compensation made for the sufferings of our earthly existence. It is affirmed that, although the body dies, the soul is unperishable; and, after it hath burst its unfettered way from the prison-house of its earthly tabernacle, that it will expatiate for ever in

the full buoyancy and delight of its then emancipated energies—that, even as from the lacerated shell of the inert chrysalis the winged insect rises in all the pride of its now expanded beauty among the fields of light and ether which are above it, so the human spirit finds its way through the opening made by death upon its corporeal framework among the glories of the upper Elysium. It is this immortality which is supposed to unriddle all the difficulties that attach to our present condition; which converts the evil that is in the world into the instrument of a greatly over-passing good; and affords a scene for the imagination to rest upon, where all the anomalies which now exercise us shall be rectified, and where, from the larger prospects we shall then have of the whole march and destiny of man, the ways of God to His creatures shall appear in all the lustre of their full and noble vindication.

6. But as the superiority of the happiness over the misery of the world, affords insufficient premises on which to conclude the benevolence of God, *so long as God is conceived of under the partial view of possessing but this as His alone moral attribute*—when that benevolence is employed as the argument for some ulterior doctrine in Natural Theology, it must impart to this latter the same inconclusiveness by which itself is characterized. The proof and the thing proved must be alike strong or alike weak. If the excess of enjoyment over suffering in the life that now is be a matter of far too doubtful calculation on which to rest a confident inference in favour of the Divine benevolence; then let this benevolence have no other prop to lean upon, and in its turn, it is far too doubtful a premise on which to infer a coming immortality. Accordingly, to help out the argument, many of our slender and sentimental theists, who will admit of no other moral attribute for the Divinity than the paternal attribute of kind affection for the creatures who have sprung from Him, do, in fact, assume the thing to be proved, and reason in a circle. The mere balance of the pleasures and pains of the present life is greatly too uncertain for what may be called an initial footing to this argument. But let a future life be assumed, in which all the defects and disorders of the present are to be repaired; and this may reconcile the doctrine of the benevolence of God with the otherwise stumbling fact of the great actual wretchedness that is now in the world. Out of the observed phenomena of life and an assumed immortality together, a tolerable argument may be raised for this most pleasing and amiable of

all the moral characteristics ; but it is obvious that the doctrine of immortality enters into the premises of this first argument. But how is the immortality itself proved ? not by the phenomena of life alone, but by these phenomena taken in conjunction with the Divine benevolence—which benevolence, therefore, enters into the premise of the second argument. In the one argument, the doctrine of immortality is required to prove the benevolence of God. In the other, this benevolence is required to prove the immortality. Each is used as an assumption for the establishment of the other ; and this nullifies the reasoning for both. Either of these terms—that is, the Divine benevolence, or a future state of compensation for the evils and inequalities of the present one—either of them, if admitted, may be held a very sufficient, or, at least, likely consideration on which to rest the other. But it makes very bad reasoning to vibrate between both—first to go forth with the assumption that God is benevolent, and therefore it is impossible that a scene so dark and disordered as that immediately before us can offer to our contemplation the full and final development of all His designs for the human family ; and then, feeling that this scene does not afford a sufficient basis on which to rest the demonstration of this attribute, to strengthen the basis and make it broader by the assertion, that it is not from a part of His ways, but from their complete and comprehensive whole, as made up both of time and eternity, that we draw the inference of a benevolent Deity. There is no march of argument. We swing as it were between two assumptions. It is like one of those cases in geometry, which remains indeterminate for the want of data. And the only effectual method of being extricated from such an ambiguity, would be the satisfactory assurance either of a benevolence independent of all considerations of immortality, or of an immortality independent of all considerations of the benevolence.

7. But then it should be recollected that it is the partiality of our contemplation, and it alone, which incapacitates this whole argument. There is a sickly religion of taste which clings exclusively to the parental benevolence of God ; and will not, cannot, brave the contemplation of His righteousness. It is this which makes the reasoning as feeble as the sentiment is flimsy. It, in fact, leaves the system of natural theology without a groundwork—first to argue for immortality on the doubtful assumption of a supreme benevolence, and then to argue this immortality in proof of the benevolence. The whole fabric, bereft

of argument and strength, is ready to sink under the weight of unresolved difficulties. The mere benevolence of the Deity is not so obviously or decisively the lesson of surrounding phenomena, as, of itself, to be the foundation of a solid inference regarding either the character of God or the prospects of man. If we would receive the full lesson—if we would learn all which these phenomena, when rightly and attentively regarded, are capable of teaching—if, along with the present indications of a benevolence, we take the present indications of a righteousness in God—out of these blended characteristics, we should have materials for an argument of firmer texture. It is to the leaving out of certain data, even though placed within the reach of observation, that the infirmity of the argument is owing—whereas, did we employ aright all the data in our possession, we might incorporate them together into the solid groundwork of a solid reasoning. It is by our sensitive avoidance of certain parts in this contemplation, that we enfeeble the cause. We should find a stable basis in existing appearances, did we give them a fair and full interpretation—as indicating not only the benevolence of God, but, both by the course of nature, and the laws of man's moral economy, indicating His love of righteousness and hatred of iniquity. It might not resolve, but it would alleviate the mystery of things, could we, within the sphere of actual observation, collect notices, not merely of a God who rejoiced in the physical happiness of His creatures, but of a God who had respect unto their virtue. Now the great evidence for this latter characteristic of the Divinity lies near at hand—even among the intimacies of our own felt and familiar nature. It is not fetched by imagination from a distance, for every man has it within himself. The supremacy of conscience is a fact or phenomenon of man's moral constitution; and from this law of the heart we pass, by direct and legitimate inference, to the character of Him who established it there. In a law, we read the character of the lawgiver; and this, whether it be a felt or a written law. We learn from the phenomena of conscience that, however God may will the happiness of His creatures, His paramount and peremptory demand is for their virtue. He is the moral governor of a kingdom, as well as the father of a family; and it is a partial view that we take of Him, unless, along with the kindness which belongs to Him as a parent, we have respect unto that authority which belongs to Him as a sovereign and a judge. We have direct intimation of this in our own bosoms,

in the constant assertion which is made there on the side of virtue, in the discomfort and remorse which attend its violation.

8. But though conscience be our original and chief instructor in the righteousness of God, the same lesson may be learned in another way. It may be gathered from the phenomena of human life, even those very phenomena which so perplex the mind, so long as—in quest of but one attribute, and refusing to admit the evidence or even entertain the notion of any other—it cherishes a partial and prejudiced view of the Deity. Those theists who, in this spirit, have attempted to strike a balance between the pleasures and the pains of sentient nature, and to ground thereupon the very doubtful inference of the Divine benevolence—seldom or never think of connecting these pleasures and pains with the moral causes which, whether proximately or remotely, go before them. Without adverting to these, they rest their conclusion on the affirmed superiority, however ill or uncertainly made out, of the physical enjoyments over the physical sufferings of life. Now, we hold it of capital importance in this argument, that, in our own species at least, both these enjoyments and these sufferings are mainly resolvable into moral causes—insomuch that, in the vast majority of cases, the deviation from happiness can be traced to an anterior deviation from virtue; and that, apart from death, and accident, and unavoidable disease, the wretchedness of humanity is due to a vicious and ill-regulated *morale*. When we thus look to the ills of life in their immediate origin, though it may not altogether dissipate, it goes far to reduce, and even to explain, the mystery of their existence. Those evils which vex and agitate man, emanate, in the great amount of them, from the fountain of his own heart; and come forth, not of a distempered material, but of a distempered moral economy. Were each separate infelicity referred to its distinct source, we should, generally speaking, arrive at some moral perversity, whether of the affections or of the temper—so that but for the one, the other would not have been realized. It is true that, perhaps in every instance, some external cause may be assigned for any felt annoyance to which our nature is liable; but, then, it is a cause without, operating on a sensibility within. So that in all computations, whether of suffering or of enjoyment, the state of the subjective or recipient mind must be taken into account, as well as the influences which play upon it from the surrounding world; and what we affirm is, that, to a rightly-conditioned mind, the misery would be reduced

and the happiness augmented tenfold. When disappointment agonizes the heart, or a very slight, perhaps unintentional neglect, lights up in many a soul the fierceness of resentment, or coldness, and disdain, and the mutual glances of contempt and hatred, circulate a prodigious mass of infelicity through the world—these are to be ascribed, not to the untowardness of outward circumstances, but to the untowardness of man's own constitution, and are the fruits of a disordered spiritual system. And the same may be said of the poverty which springs from indolence or dissipation; of the disgrace which comes on the back of misconduct; of the pain or uneasiness which festers in every heart that is the prey, whether of licentious or malignant passions: in short, of the general restlessness and unhingement of every spirit, which, thrown adrift from the restraints of principle, has no wellspring of satisfaction in itself, but precariously vacillates, in regard to happiness, with the hazard and the casual fluctuation of outward things. There are, it is true, sufferings purely physical, which belong to the sentient and not to the moral nature—as the maladies of infant disease, and the accidental inflictions wherewith the material frame is sometimes agonized. Still it will be found, that the vast amount of human wretchedness, can be directly referred to the waywardness and morbid state of the human will—to the character of man, and not to the condition which he occupies.

9. Now, what is the legitimate argument for the character of God—not from the mere existence of misery, but from the existence of misery thus originated? Wretchedness, of itself, were fitted to cast an uncertainty, even a suspicion, on the benevolence of God. But wretchedness, as the result of wickedness, may not indicate the negation of this one attribute. It may only indicate the reality or the presence of another. Suffering, without a cause and without an object, may be the infliction of a malignant being. But suffering in alliance with sin, should lead to a very different conclusion. When thus related, it may cast no impeachment on the benevolence, and only bespeak the righteousness of God. It tells us that however much He may love the happiness of his creatures, He loves their virtue more. So that, instead of extinguishing the evidence of one perfection, it may leave this evidence entire, and bring out into open manifestation another perfection of the Godhead.

10. In attempting to form our estimate of the Divine character from the existing phenomena, the fair proceeding would be, not

to find it on the actual miseries which abound in the world, peopled with a depraved species—but on the fitnesses which abound in the world to make a virtuous species happy. We should try to figure its result on human life, were perfect virtue to revisit earth, and take up its abode in every family. The question is, Are we so constructed and so accommodated, that, in the vast majority of cases we, if morally right, should be physically happy? What, we should ask, is the real tendency of nature's laws—whether to minister enjoyment to the good or the evil? It were a very strong, almost an unequivocal testimony to the righteousness of Him, who framed the system of things and all its adaptations—if, while it secured a general harmony between the virtue of mankind and their happiness or peace, it as constantly impeded either the prosperity or the heart's ease of the profligate and the lawless. Now, of this we might be informed by an actual survey of human life. We can justly imagine the consequences upon human society, were perfect uprightness and sympathy and good-will to obtain universally; were every man to look to his fellow with a brother's eye; were a universal courteousness to reign in our streets, and our houses, and our market-places, and this to be the spontaneous emanation of a universal cordiality; were each man's interest and reputation as safe in the custody of another, as he now strives to make them by a jealous guardianship of his own; were, on the one hand, a prompt and eager benevolence on the part of the rich, ever on the watch to meet—nay, to overpass all the wants of humanity, and, on the other hand, an honest moderation and independence on the part of the poor, to be a full defence for their superiors against the encroachments of deceit and rapacity; were liberality to walk diffusively abroad among men, and love to settle pure and unruffled in the bosom of families; were that moral sunshine to arise in every heart which purity, and innocence, and kind affection are ever sure to kindle there; and, even when some visitation from without was in painful dissonance with the harmony within, were a thousand sweets ready to be poured into the cup of tribulation from the feeling and the friendship of all the good who were around us. On this single transition from vice to virtue among men, does there not hinge the alternative between a pandemonium and a paradise? If the moral elements were in full play and operation amongst us, should we still continue to fester and be unhappy from the want of the physical? Or, is it not rather true, that all nature smiles in beauty, or wantons

in bounteousness for our enjoyment—were but the disease of our spirits medicated, were there but moral soundness in the heart of man?

11. And what must be the character of the Being who formed such a world, where the moral and the physical economies are so adjusted to each other, that virtue, if universal, would bring ten thousand blessings and beatitudes in its train, and turn our earth into an elysium—whereas nothing so distempers the human spirit, and so multiplies distress in society, as the vice and the violence and the varieties of moral turpitude wherewith it is infested. Would a God who loved iniquity and who hated righteousness have created such a world? Would He have so attuned the organism of the human spirit, that the consciousness of worth should be felt through all its recesses, like the oil of gladness? Or would He have so constructed the mechanism of human society, that it should never work prosperously for the general good of the species, but by means of truth and philanthropy and uprightiness? Would the friend and patron of falsehood have let such a world out of his hands? Or would an unholy being have so fashioned the heart of man—that, wayward and irresolute as he is, he never feels so ennobled, as by the high resolve that would spurn every base allurements of sensuality away from him; and never breathes so ethereally, as when he maintains that chastity of spirit which would recoil even from one unhalloved imagination; and never rises to such a sense of grandeur and godlike elevation, as when principle hath taken the direction, and is vested with full ascendancy over the restrained and regulated passions? What other inference can be drawn from such sequences as these, but that our moral architect loves the virtue He thus follows up with the delights of a high and generous complacency; and execrates the vice He thus follows up with disgust and degradation? If we look but to misery unconnected and alone, we may well doubt the benevolence of the Deity. But should it not modify the conclusion, to have ascertained—that, in proportion as virtue made entrance upon the world, misery would retire from it? There is nothing to spoil Him of this perfection, in a misery so originated; but, leaving this perfection untouched, it attaches to Him another, and we infer, that He is not merely benevolent, but benevolent and holy. After that the moral cause has been discovered for the unhappiness of man, we feel Him to be a God of benevolence still; that He wills the happiness of His creatures, but with this reservation, that the

only sound and sincere happiness He awards to them, is happiness through the medium of virtue ; that still He is willing to be the dispenser of joy substantial and unfading, but of no such joy apart from moral excellence ; that He loves the gratification of His children, but He loves their righteousness more ; that dear to Him is the happiness of all His offspring, but dearer still their worth ; and that therefore He, the moral governor, will so conduct the affairs of His empire, as that virtue and happiness, or that vice and misery, shall be associated.

12. We have already said, that, by inspecting a mechanism, we can infer both the original design of him who framed it, and the derangement it has subsequently undergone—even as by the inspection of a watch, we can infer, from the place of command which its regulator occupies, that it was made for the purpose of moving regularly, and that notwithstanding the state of disrepair and aberration into which it may have fallen. And so, from the obvious place of rightful supremacy which is occupied by the conscience of man in his moral system, we can infer that virtue was the proper and primary design of his creation, and that notwithstanding the actual prevalence of obviously inferior principles over the habits and history of his life. Connect this with the grand and general adaptation of External Nature for which we have now been contending—even the capacity of that world in which we are placed for making a virtuous species happy ; and it were surely far juster, in arguing for the Divine character, that we founded our interpretation on the happiness which man's original constitution is fitted to secure for him, than on the misery which he suffers by that constitution having been in some way perverted. It is from the native and proper tendency of aught which is made, that we conclude as to the mind and disposition of the maker ; and not from the actual effect, when that tendency has been rendered abortive, by the extrinsic operation of some disturbing force on an else goodly and well-going mechanism. The original design of the Creator may be read in the natural, the universal tendency of things ; and surely, it speaks strongly both for His benevolence and His righteousness that nothing is so fitted to insure the general happiness of society as the general virtue of them who compose it. And if, instead of this, we behold a world, ill at ease, with its many heartburnings and many disquietudes—the fair conclusion is, that the beneficial tendencies which have been established therein, and which are therefore due to the benevolence of God, have all

been thwarted by the moral perversity of man. The compound lesson to be gathered from such a contemplation is, that God is the friend of human happiness, but the enemy of human vice—seeing He hath set up an economy in which the former would have grown up and prospered universally, had not the latter stepped in and overborne it.

13. We are now on a groundwork of more firm texture, for an argument in behalf of man's immortality. But it is only by a more comprehensive view both of the character of God and the actual state of the world, that we obtain as much evidence both for His benevolence and His righteousness, as might furnish logical premises for the logical inference of a future state.

14. We have already stated that the miseries of life, in their great and general amount, are resolvable into moral causes; and did each man suffer here, accurately in proportion to his own sins, there might be less reason for the anticipation of another state hereafter. But this proportion is, in no individual instance perhaps, ever realized on this side of death. The miseries of the good are still due to a moral perversity—though but to the moral perversity of others, not of his own. He suffers from the injustice, and calumny, and violence, and evil tempers of those who are around him. On the large and open theatre of the world, the cause of oppression is often the triumphant one; and in the bosom of families, the most meek and innocent of the household are frequently the victims for life, of a harsh and injurious though unseen tyranny. It is this inequality of fortune, or rather of enjoyment, between the good and the evil, which forms the most popular, and enters as a constituent part at least into the most powerful argument which nature furnishes for the immortality of the soul. We cannot imagine of a God of righteousness that He will leave any question of justice unsettled; and there is nothing which more powerfully suggests to the human conscience the apprehension of a life to come, than that in this life there should be so many unsettled questions of justice—first between man and man, secondly, between man and his Maker.

15. The strength of the former consideration lies in the multiplicity, and often the fearful aggravation, of the unredressed wrongs inflicted every day by man upon his fellows. The history of human society teems with these; and the unappeased cry, whether for vengeance or reparation, rises to heaven because of them. We might here expatiate on the monstrous, the whole-

sale atrocities, perpetrated on the defenceless by the strong; and which custom has almost legalized—having stood their ground against the indignation of the upright and the good for many ages. Perhaps for the most gigantic example of this, in the dark annals of our guilty world, we should turn our eyes upon injured Africa—that devoted region, where the lust of gain has made the fiercest and fellest exhibition of its hardihood; and whose weeping families are broken up in thousands every year, that the families of Europe might the more delicately and luxuriously regale themselves. It is a picturesque, and seems a powerful argument for some future day of retribution, when we look, on the one hand, to the prosperity of the lordly oppressor, wrung from the sufferings of a captive and subjugated people; and look, on the other, to the tears and the untold agony of the hundreds beneath him, whose lives of dreariness and hard labour are tenfold imbittered, by the imagery of that dear and distant land from which they have been irrecoverably torn. But even within the confines of civilized society, there do exist materials for our argument. There are cruelties and wrongs innumerable in the conduct of business; there are even cruelties and wrongs in the bosom of families. There are the triumphs of injustice; the success of deep-laid and malignant policy on the one side; on the other, the ruin and the overthrow of unprotected weakness. Apart from the violence of the midnight assault, or the violence of the highway—there is, even under the forms of law, and amid the blandness of social courtesies, a moral violence that carries as grievous and substantial iniquity in its train, by which friendless and confiding simplicity may at once be bereft of its rights, and the artful oppressor be enriched by the spoliation. Have we never seen the bankrupt rise again with undiminished splendour from amid the desolation and despair of the families that have been ruined by him? Or more secret though not less severe, have we not seen the inmates of a wretched home doomed to a hopeless and unhappy existence, under the sullen brow of the tyrant who lorded over them? There are sufferings from which there is no redress or rectification upon earth; inequalities between man and man, of which there is no adjustment here—but because of that very reason, there is the utmost desire, and we might add expectancy of our nature, that there shall be an adjustment hereafter. In the unsated appetency of our hearts for justice, there is all the force of an appeal to the Being who planted the appetite within us; and we feel that if Death is to

make sudden disruption in the midst of all these unfinished questions, and so to leave them eternally—we feel a violence done both to our own moral constitution, and to the high jurisprudence of Him who framed us.

16. But there are, furthermore, in this life, unfinished questions between man and his Maker. The same conscience which asserts its own supremacy within the breast, suggests the God and the Moral Governor who placed it there. It is thus that man not only takes cognizance of his own delinquencies ; but he connects them with the thought of a lawgiver to whom he is accountable. He passes by one step, and with rapid inference, from the feeling of a judge who is within, to the fear of a Judge who sits in high authority over him. With the sense of a reigning principle in his own constitution, there stands associated the sense of a reigning power in the universe—the one challenging the prerogatives of a moral law, the other avenging the violation of them. Even the hardest in guilt are not insensible to the force of this sentiment. They feel it, as did Catiline and the worst of Roman emperors, in the horrors of remorse. There is, in spite of themselves, the impression of an avenging God—not the less founded upon reasoning, that it is the reasoning of but one truth or rather of but one transition, from a thing intimately known to a thing immediately concluded—from the reckoning of a felt and a present conscience within, to the more awful reckoning of a God who is the author of conscience and who knoweth all things. Now, it is thus that men are led irresistibly to the anticipation of a future state—not by their hopes, we think, but by their fears ; not by a sense of unfulfilled promises, but by the sense and the terror of unfulfilled penalties ; by their sense of a judgment not yet executed, of a wrath not yet discharged upon them. Hence the impression of a futurity upon all spirits, whither are carried forward the issues of a jurisprudence, which bears no marks, but the contrary, of a full and final consummation on this side of death. The prosperity of many wicked who spend their days in resolute and contemptuous irreligion ; the practical defiance of their lives to the bidding of conscience, and yet a voice of remonstrance and of warning from this said conscience which they are unable wholly to quell ; the many emphatic denunciations, not uttered in audible thunder from above, but uttered in secret and impressive whispers from within—these all point to accounts between God and His creatures that are yet unfinished. If there be no future state, the great moral question

between heaven and earth, broken off at the middle, is frittered into a degrading mockery. There is violence done to the continuity of things. The moral constitution of man is stript of its significancy, and the Author of that constitution is stript of His wisdom and authority and honour. That consistent march which we behold in all the cycles and progressive movements of the natural economy, is, in the moral economy, brought to sudden arrest and disruption—if death annihilate the man, instead of only transforming him. And it is only the doctrine of his immortality, by which all can be adjusted and harmonized.*

17. And there is one proof for the immortality of the soul distinct from the one that we have now set forth—yet founded on adaptation. For every desire or every faculty, whether in man or in the inferior animals, there seems a counterpart object in external nature. Let it be either an appetite or a power; and let it reside either in the sentient or in the intellectual or in the moral economy—still there exists a something without that is altogether suited to it, and which seems to be expressly provided for its gratification. There is light for the eye; there is air for the lungs; there is food for the ever-recurring appetite of hunger; there is water for the appetite of thirst; there is society for the love, whether of fame or of fellowship; there is a boundless field in all the objects of all the sciences for the exercise of curiosity—in a word, there seems not one affection in the living creature, which is not met by a counterpart and a congenial object in the surrounding creation. It is this, in fact, which forms an important class of those adaptations, on which the argument for a Deity is founded. The adaptation of the parts to each other within the organic structure, is distinct from the adaptation of the whole to the things of circumambient nature; and is well unfolded in a separate chapter by Paley, on the Relation of Inanimate Bodies to Animated Nature. But there is another chapter, on Prospective Contrivances, in which he unfolds to us other adaptations, that approximate still more nearly to our argument. They consist of embryo arrangements or parts, not of immediate use, but to be of use eventually—preparations going on in the animal economy, whereof the full benefit is not to be realized, till some future and often considerably distant

It is well said by Mr. Davison, in his profound and original work on Prophecy—that “Conscience and the *present* constitution of things are not corresponding terms. The one is not the object of perception to the other. It is conscience and the issue of things which go together.”

development shall have taken place; such as the teeth buried in their sockets, that would be inconvenient during the first months of infancy, but come forth when it is sufficiently advanced for another and a new sort of nourishment; such as the manifold preparations, anterior to the birth, that are of no use to the fœtus, but are afterwards to be of indispensable use in a larger and freer state of existence; such as the instinctive tendencies to action that appear before even the instruments of action are provided, as in the calf of a day old to butt with its head before it has been furnished with horns. Nature abounds, not merely in present expedients for an immediate use, but in providential expedients for a future one; and, as far as we can observe, we have no reason to believe, that, either in the first or second sort of expedients, there has ever aught been noticed, which either bears on no object now, or lands in no result afterwards. We may perceive in this, the glimpse of an argument for the soul's immortality. We may enter into the analogy, as stated by Dr. Ferguson, when he says—"Whoever considers the anatomy of the fœtus, will find, in the strength of bones and muscles, in the organs of respiration and digestion, sufficient indications of a design to remove his being into a different state. The observant and the intelligent may perhaps find in the mind of man parallel signs of his future destination."*

* Dr. Ferguson's reasoning upon this subject is worthy of being extracted more largely than we have room for in the text—"If the human fœtus," he observes, "were qualified to reason of his prospects in the womb of his parent, as he may afterwards do in his range on this terrestrial globe, he might no doubt apprehend, in the breach of his umbilical cord, and in his separation from the womb, a total extinction of life, for how could he conceive it to continue after his only supply of nourishment from the vital stock of his parent had ceased? He might indeed observe many parts of his organization and frame which should seem to have no relation to his state in the womb. For what purpose, he might say, this duct which leads from the mouth to the intestines? Why these bones that each apart become hard and stiff, while they are separated from one another by so many flexures or joints? Why these joints, in particular, made to move upon hinges, and these germs of teeth, which are pushing to be felt above the surface of the gums? Why the stomach, through which nothing is made to pass? And these spongy lungs, so well fitted to drink up the fluids, but into which the blood, that passes everywhere else, is scarcely permitted to enter?"

"To these queries, which the fœtus was neither qualified to make nor to answer, we are now well apprised the proper answer would be—The life which you now enjoy is but temporary; and those particulars which now seem to you so preposterous, are a provision which nature has made for a future course of life which you have to run, and in which their use and propriety will appear sufficiently evident.

"Such are the prognostics of a future destination that might be collected from the state of the fœtus; and similar prognostics of a destination still future might be collected from present appearances in the life and condition of man."

18. Now what inference shall we draw from this remarkable law in nature, that there is nothing waste and nothing meaningless in the feelings and faculties wherewith living creatures are endowed? For each desire there is a counterpart object, for each faculty there is room and opportunity of exercise, either in the present or in the coming futurity. Now, but for the doctrine of immortality, man would be an exception to this law. He would stand forth as an anomaly in nature, with aspirations in his heart for which the universe had no antitype to offer, with capacities of understanding and thought, that never were to be followed by objects of corresponding greatness, through the whole history of his being. It were a violence to the harmony of things whereof no other example can be given; and in as far as an argument can be founded on this harmony for the wisdom of Him who made all things, it were a reflection on one of the conceived, if not one of the ascertained, attributes of the Godhead. To feel the force of this argument, we have only to look to the obvious adaptations of his powers to a larger and more enduring theatre—to the dormant faculties which are in him for the mastery and acquisition of all the sciences, and yet the partial ignorance of all, and the profound or total ignorance of many, in which he spends the short-lived years of his present existence—to the boundless, but here the unopened capabilities which lie up in him for the comprehension of truths that never once draw his attention on this side of death, for the contemplative enjoyment both of moral and intellectual beauties which have never here revealed themselves to his gaze. The whole labour of this mortal life would not suffice, for traversing in full extent any one of the sciences; and yet there may lie undeveloped in his bosom a taste and talent for them all—none of which he can even singly overtake; for each science, though definite in its commencement, has its out-goings in the infinite and the eternal. There is in man a restlessness of ambition; an interminable longing after nobler and higher things, which nought but immortality and the greatness of immortality can satiate; a dissatisfaction with the present which never is appeased by all that the world has to offer; an impatience and distaste with the felt littleness of all that he finds, and an unsated appetency for something larger and better, which he fancies in the perspective before him—to all which there is nothing like among any of the inferior animals, with whom there is a certain squareness of adjustment, if we may so term it, between each

desire and its correspondent gratification. The one is evenly met by the other; and there is a fulness and definiteness of enjoyment up to the capacity of enjoyment. Not so with man, who, both from the vastness of his propensities and the vastness of his powers, feels himself straitened and beset in a field too narrow for him. He alone labours under the discomfort of an incongruity between his circumstances and his powers; and unless there be new circumstances awaiting him in a more advanced state of being, he, the noblest of nature's products here below, would turn out to be the greatest of her failures.

19. We are unwilling to quit this department of proof without adverting to one subject pregnant with adaptations, which is furnished by the history of moral science; and is replete, we have long thought, with the materials of a very strong and comprehensive argument.

20. We have already adverted to the objective nature of virtue, and the subjective nature of man, as forming two wholly distinct objects of contemplation. It is the latter and not the former which indicates the moral character of God. The mere system of ethical doctrine is no more fitted to supply an argument for this character, than would the system of geometry. It is not geometry in the abstract, but geometry as embodied in the heavens, or in the exquisite structures of the terrestrial physics—which bespeaks the skill of the Artificer who framed them. In like manner, it is not moral science in the abstract, but the moral constitution of beings so circumstanced and so made, that virtue is the only element in which their permanent individual or social happiness can be realized—which bespeaks the great Parent of the human family to be Himself the lover and the exemplar of righteousness. In a word, it is not from an abstraction, but from the facts of a creation that our lesson respecting the Divine character, itself a fact, is to be learned, and it is by keeping this distinction in view, that we obtain one important help for drawing from the very conflict and diversity of moral theories, on the nature of virtue, a clear, nay, a cumulative argument for the virtuous nature of the Godhead.

21. The painful suspicion is apt to intrude upon us, that virtue may not be a thing of any substance or stability at all, when we witness the confusion and the controversy into which moralists have fallen on the subject of its elementary principles. But, to allay this feeling, it should be observed, in the first place, that, with all the perplexity which obtains on the question of what

virtue, in the abstract or in its own essential and constituting quality, is—there is a pretty general agreement among moralists, as to what the separate and specific virtues of the human character are. According to the selfish system, temperance may be a virtue because of its subservience to the good of the individual; while by the system of utility it is a virtue, because, through its observation, our powers and services are kept entire for the good of society. But again, beside this controversy which relates to the nature of virtue in itself, and which may be termed the objective question in morals, there is a subjective or an organic question which relates not to the existence, but to the origin and formation of the notion or feeling of virtue in the human mind. The question, for example, whether virtue be a thing of opinion or a thing of sentiment, belongs to this class. Now, in regard to all those questions which respect the origin or the pedigree of our moral judgments, it should not be forgotten that, while the controvertists are at issue upon this, they are nearly unanimous, as to morality itself being felt by the mind as a matter of supreme obligation. They dispute about the moral sense in man, or about the origin and constitution of the court of conscience; but they have no dispute about the supreme authority of conscience—even as, in questions of civil polity and legislation, there may be no dispute about the rightful authority of some certain court, while there may be antiquarian doubts and differences on the subject of its origin and formation. Dr. Smith, for example, while he has his own peculiar views on the origin of our moral principles, never questions their authority. He differs from others in regard to the rationale, or the anterior steps of that process, which at length terminates in a decision of the mind, on the merit or demerit of a particular action. The rightness and the supremacy of that decision are not in the least doubted by him. There may be a metaphysical controversy about the mode of arriving at our moral judgment, and at the same time a perfect concurrence in it as the guide and the regulator of human conduct—just as there may be an anatomical controversy about the structure of the eye or the terminations of the optic nerve, and a perfect confidence with all parties in the correctness of those intimations which the eye gives of the position of external objects and their visible properties. By attending to this, we obtain a second important help for eliciting from the diversity of theories on the nature of virtue a cumulative argument for the virtuous nature of the Godhead.

22. When the conflict, then, of its opposing theories, would seem to bring fearful insecurity on moral science, let it not be forgotten, that the very multitude of props and securities, by which virtue is upholden, is that which has given rise to the conflict. There is little or no scepticism in regard to the worth or substantive being of morality, but chiefly in regard to its sustaining principle; and it is because of so much to sustain it, or of the many distinct and firm props which it rests upon, that there has been such an amount of ethical controversy in the world. There has been many a combat, and many a combatant—not because of the baselessness of morality, but because it rests on a basis of so many goodly pillars, and because of such a varied convenience and beauty in the elevation of the noble fabric. The reason of so much controversy is, that each puny controversialist, wedded to his own exclusive view of an edifice too mighty and majestic for his grasp, has either selected but one of the upholding props, and affirmed it to be the only support of the architecture; or attended to but one of its graces and utilities, and affirmed it to be the alone purpose of the magnificent building. The argument of each, whether on the foundation of virtue or on its nature, when beheld aright, will be found a distinct trophy to its worth—for each can plead some undoubted excellence or good effect of virtue in behalf of his own theory. Each may have so magnified the property which himself had selected—as that those properties of virtue which others had selected were thrown into the shade, or at most but admitted as humble attendants in the retinue of his own great principle. And so the controversy is not, whether morality be a solidly-constituted fabric; but what that is which constitutes its solidity, and which should be singled out as the keystone of the fabric. Each of the champions in this warfare has fastened on a different keystone; and each pushes the triumph against his adversary by a demonstration of its firmness; or, in other words, virtue is compassed about with such a number of securities, and possesses such a superabundance of strength, as to have given room for the question that was raised about Samson of old—what that is wherein its great strength lies. It is like the controversy which sometimes arises about a building of perfect symmetry—when sides are taken, and counter-explanations are advanced and argued, about the one characteristic or constituting charm, which hath conferred upon it so much gracefulness. It is even so of morality. Each partisan hath advocated his own

system ; and each, in doing so, hath more fully exhibited some distinct property or perfection of moral rectitude. Morality is not neutralized by this conflict of testimonies ; but rises in statelier pride, and with augmented security, from the foam and the turbulence which play around its base. To her this conflict yields not a balance, but a summation of testimonies ; and, instead of an impaired, it is a cumulative argument, that may be reared out of the manifold controversies to which she has given rise. For when it is asserted by one party in the strife, that the foundation of all morality is the right of God to the obedience of His creatures—let God's absolute right be fully conceded to them. And when others reply, that, apart from such right, there is a native and essential rightness in morality, let this be conceded also. There is indeed such a rightness, which, anterior to law, hath had everlasting residence in the character of the Godhead ; and which prompted Him to a law, all whose enactments bear the impress of purest morality. And when the advocates of the selfish system affirm, that the good of self is the sole aim and principle of virtue ; while we refuse their theory, let us at least admit the fact to which all its plausibility is owing—that nought conduces more surely to happiness, than the strict observation of all the recognised moralities of human conduct. And when a fourth party affirms that nought but the useful is virtuous ; and, in support of their theory, can state the unvarying tendencies of virtue in the world towards the highest good of the human family—let it forthwith be granted, that the same God, who blends in His own person both the rightness of morality and the right of law, that He hath so devised the economy of things, and so directs its processes, as to make peace and prosperity follow in the train of righteousness. And when the position that virtue is its own reward, is cast as another dogma into the whirlpool of debate, let it be fondly allowed that the God who delights in moral excellence Himself, hath made it the direct minister of enjoyment to him, who, formed after His own image, delights in it also. And when others, expatiating on the beauty of virtue, would almost rank it among the objects of taste rather than of principle—let this be followed up by the kindred testimony, that, in all its exhibitions, there is indeed a supreme gracefulness ; and that God, rich and varied in all the attestations which He has given of His regard to it, hath so endowed His creatures, that, in moral worth, they have the beatitudes of taste as well as the beati-

tudes of conscience. And should there be philosophers who say of morality that it is wholly founded upon the emotions—let it at least be granted, that He whose hand did frame our internal mechanism, has attuned it in the most correct and delicate correspondency, with all the moralities of which human nature is capable. And should there be other philosophers who affirm that morality hath a real and substantive existence in the nature of things, so as to make it as much an object of judgment distinct from him who judges, as are the eternal and immutable truths of geometry—let it with gratitude be acknowledged that the mind is so constituted as to have the same firm hold of the moral which it has of the mathematical relations; and if this prove nothing else, it at least proves, that the Author of our constitution hath stamped there a clear and legible impress on the side of virtue. We should not exclude from this argument even the degrading systems of Hobbes and Mandeville; the former representing virtue as the creation of human policy, and the latter representing its sole principle to be the love of human praise—for even they tell thus much, the one that virtue is linked with the wellbeing of the community, the other that it has an echo in every bosom. We would not dissever all these testimonies; but bind them together into the sum and strength of a cumulative argument. The controversialists have lost themselves, but it is in a wilderness of sweets—out of which the materials might be gathered, of such an incense at the shrine of morality, as should be altogether overpowering. Each party hath selected but one of its claims; and in the anxiety to exalt it, would shed a comparative obscurity over all the rest. This is the contest between them—not whether morality be destitute of claims; but what, out of the number that she possesses, is the great and pre-eminent claim on which man should do her homage. Their controversy perhaps never may be settled; but to make the cause of virtue suffer on this account, would be to make it suffer from the very force and abundance of its recommendations.

23. But this contemplation is pregnant with another inference, beside the worth of virtue—even the righteous character of Him who, for the sake of upholding it hath brought such a number of contingencies together. When we look to the systems of utility and selfishness, let us look upwardly to Him through whose ordination alone it is that virtue hath such power to prosper the arrangements of life and of society. Or when told of the princi-

ple that virtue is its own reward, let us not forget Him who so constituted our moral nature as to give the feeling of an exquisite charm, both in the possession of virtue and in the contemplation of it. Or when the theory of a moral sense offers itself to our regards, let us bear regard along with it to that God who constructed this organ of the inner man, and endowed it with all its perceptions and all its feelings. In the utility wherewith He hath followed up the various observations of moral rectitude; in the exquisite relish which He hath infused into the rectitude itself; in the law of conformity thereto which He hath written on the hearts of all men; in the aspect of eternal and unchangeable fitness under which He hath made it manifest to every conscience—in these we behold the elements of many a controversy on the nature of virtue; but in these, when viewed aright, we also behold a glorious harmony of attestations to the nature of God. It is thus that the perplexities of the question, when virtue is looked to as but a thing of earthly residence, are all done away when we carry the speculation upward to heaven. They find solution there; and cast a radiance over the character of Him who hath not only established in righteousness His throne, but, by means of a rich and varied adaptation, hath profusely shed over the universe that He hath formed, the graces by which He would adorn, and the beatitudes by which He would reward it.*

* It must be obvious that we cannot exhaust the subject, but only *exemplify* it, by means of a few specimens. There is an adaptation which, had it occurred in time, might have been stated in the text—suggested by the celebrated question respecting the liberty of the human will. We cannot but admit how much it would have deteriorated the constitution of humanity, or rather destroyed one of its noblest and most essential parts, had it been so constructed, as that either man was not accountable for his own actions, or that these actions were free in the sense contended for by one of the parties in the controversy—that is, were so many random contingencies which had no parentage in any events or influences that went before them, or occupied no place in a train of causation. Of the reasoners on the opposite sides of this sorely-agitated question—the one contending for the moral liberty, and the other for the physical necessity of human actions—it is clear that there are many who hold the one to be destructive of the other. But what the wisdom of man cannot argumentatively harmonize in the world of speculation, the power and wisdom of God have executively harmonized in the world of realities—so that man, on the one hand, irresistibly feels himself to be an accountable creature; and yet, on the other, his doings are as much the subject of calculation and of a philosophy as many of those classes of phenomena in the material world, which, fixed and certain in themselves, are only uncertain to us, not because of their contingency, but because of their complication. We are not sure if the evolutions of the will are more beyond the reach of prediction than the evolutions of the weather. It is this union of the moral character with the historical certainty of our volitions, which has proved so puzzling to many of our controversialists; but in proportion to the difficulty felt by us in the adjustment of these two elements, should be our admiration of that profound and ex-

24. Although the establishment of a moral theory is not now our proper concern, we may nevertheless take the opportunity of expressing our dissent from the system of those who would resolve virtue, not into any native or independent rightness of its own, but into the will of Him who has a right to all our services. Without disparagement to the Supreme Being, it is not His law which constitutes virtue; but, far higher homage both to Him and to His law, the law derives all its authority and its being from a virtue of anterior residence in the character of the Divinity. It is not by the authority of any law over Him that truth and justice and goodness, and all the other perfections of supreme moral excellence, have, in His person, had their everlasting residence. He had a nature before that He uttered it forth into a law. Previous to creation, there existed in His mind all those conceptions of the great and the graceful, which He hath embodied into a gorgeous universe; and of which every rude sublimity of the wilderness, or every fair and smiling landscape, gives such vivid representation. And in like manner, previous to all government, there existed in His mind those principles of righteousness which afterwards, with the right of an absolute sovereign, He proclaimed into a law. Those virtues of which we now read on a tablet of jurisprudence were all transcribed and taken off from the previous tablet of the Divine character. The law is but a reflection of this character. In the fashioning of law, He pictured forth Himself; and we, in the act of observing His law, are only conforming ourselves to His likeness. It is there that we are to look for the primeval seat of moral goodness. Or, in other words, virtue has an inherent character of her own—apart from law, and anterior to all jurisdiction.

25. Yet the right of God to command, and the rightness of His commandments, are distinct elements of thought, and should not be merged into one another. We should not lose sight of the individuality of each, nor identify these two things—because, instead of antagonists, they do in fact stand side by side, and act together in friendly co-operation. Because two influences are conjoined in agency, that is no reason why they should be confounded in thought. Their union does not constitute their unity—and though, in the conscience of man, there be an approbation of all rectitude, and all rectitude be an obligation laid

quisite skill which has mastered the apparent incongruity—so that while every voluntary action of man is, in point of reckoning, the subject of a moral, it is, in point of result, no less the subject of a physical law.

upon the conduct of man by the Divine law—yet still the approbation of man's moral nature is one thing, and the obligation of God's authority is another.

26. That there is an approval of rectitude, apart from all legal sanctions and legal obligations, there is eternal and unchangeable demonstration in the character of God himself. He is under no law, and owns the authority of no superior. It is not by the force of sanctions, but by the force of sentiments, that the Divinity is moved. Morality with Him is not of prescription, but of spontaneous principle alone; and He acts virtuously, not because He is bidden, but because virtue hath its inherent and eternal residence in His own nature. Instead of deriving morality from law, we should derive law, even the law of God, from the primeval morality of His own character; and so far from looking upwardly to His law as the fountain of morality, do we hold it to be the emanation from a higher fountain that is seated in the depths of His unchangeable essence, and is eternal as the nature of the Godhead.

27. The moral hath antecedency over the juridical. God acts righteously, not because of jurisdiction by another, but because of a primary and independent justice in Himself. It was not law which originated the moralities of the Divine character; but these moralities are self-existent and eternal as is the being of the Godhead. The virtues had all their dwelling-place in the constitution of the Divinity, ere He stamped the impress of them on a tablet of jurisprudence. There was an inherent, before there was a preceptive morality; and righteousness, and goodness, and truth, which all are imperative enactments of law, were all prior characteristics in the underived and uncreated excellence of the Lawgiver.

BOOK V.

ON THE INSCRUTABILITY OF THE DIVINE COUNSELS AND WAYS; AND ON NATURAL THEOLOGY, VIEWED AS AN IMPERFECT SYSTEM, AND AS A PRECURSOR TO THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

CHAPTER I.

ON MAN'S PARTIAL AND LIMITED KNOWLEDGE OF DIVINE THINGS.

1. THE true modern philosophy never makes more characteristic exhibition of itself, than at the limit which separates the known from the unknown. It is there that we behold it in a twofold aspect—that of utmost deference and respect for all the findings of experience within this limit; that, on the other hand, of utmost disinclination and distrust for all those fancies of ingenious or plausible speculation which have their place in the ideal region beyond it. To call in the aid of a language which far surpasses our own in expressive brevity, its office is “indagare” rather than “divinare.” The products of this philosophy are copies and not creations. It may discover a system of nature, but not devise one. It proceeds first on the observation of individual facts—and if these facts are ever harmonized into a system, this is only in the exercise of a more extended observation. In the work of systematizing, it makes no excursion beyond the territory of actual nature—for they are the actual phenomena of nature which form the first materials of this philosophy—and they are the actual resemblances of these phenomena that form as it were the cementing principle to which the goodly fabrics of modern science owe all the solidity and all the endurance that belong to them. It is this chiefly which distinguishes the philosophy of the present day from that of bygone ages. The one was mainly an excogitative, the other mainly a descriptive process—a description however extending to the likenesses as well as to the peculiarities of things; and, by means of

these likenesses, these observed likenesses alone, often realizing a more glorious and magnificent harmony than was ever pictured forth by all the imaginations of all the theorists.

2. In the mental characteristics of this philosophy, the strength of a full-grown understanding is blended with the modesty of childhood. The ideal is sacrificed to the actual; and, however splendid or fondly cherished a hypothesis may be, yet if but one phenomenon in the real history of nature stand in the way, it is forthwith and conclusively abandoned. To some, the renunciation may be as painful as the cutting off of a right hand, or the plucking out of a right eye, yet, if true to the great principle of the Baconian school, it must be submitted to. With its hardy disciples, one valid proof outweighs a thousand plausibilities; and the resolute firmness wherewith they bid away the speculations of fancy, is only equalled by the childlike compliance wherewith they submit themselves to the lessons of experience.

3. It is thus that the same principle which guides to a just and a sound philosophy in all that lies within the circle of human discovery, leads also to a most unpresuming and unpronouncing modesty in reference to all that lies beyond it. And should some new light spring up on this exterior region, should the information of its before hidden mysteries break in upon us from some quarter that was before inaccessible, it will be at once perceived (on the supposition of its being a genuine and not an illusory light) that, of all other men, they are the followers of Bacon and Newton who should pay the most unqualified respect to all its revelations. In their case, it comes upon minds which are without prejudice, because, on that very principle which is most characteristic of our modern science, upon minds without preoccupation. For example, the informations brought home by any instrument of clearer or larger vision, have authority to rectify, or, it may be, to displace, all our previous imaginations of the region whose mysteries are disclosed by it. But in the mind of a true Baconian there exists no such imaginations, or at least none which would not give way to the force of evidence, even the smallest that is assignable. The strength of his confidence in all the ascertained facts of the *terra cognita*, is at one, or in perfect harmony, with the humility of his diffidence in regard to all the conceived plausibilities of the *terra incognita*. In reference to these last, his mind, free of all innate and all antecedent conceptions, has been often compared to a sheet of blank paper. It is in a state of passiveness, or at most in a state

of expectancy—ready to be graven upon by whatever characters may there be inscribed by the hand of a credible and competent informer. This habit of the understanding, of such value in all the sciences, is of inestimable value in theology. Compound in its application, but one and simple in the principle from which it emanates, this habit of decision in regard to all that is known, and of docility in regard to all that is unknown, would at once give steadfastness to our philosophy and soundness to our faith.

4. And let it further be remarked of the self-denial which is laid upon us by Bacon's philosophy, that, like all other self-denial in the cause of truth or virtue, it hath its reward. In giving ourselves up to its guidance, we have often to quit the fascinations of beautiful theory; but, in exchange for them, we are at length regaled by the higher and substantial beauties of actual nature. There is a stubbornness in facts, before which the specious imagination is compelled to give way; and perhaps the mind never suffers more painful laceration, than when, after having vainly attempted to force nature into a compliance with her own splendid generalizations, she, on the appearance of some rebellious and impracticable phenomenon, has to practise a force upon herself—when she thus finds the goodly speculation superseded by the homely and unwelcome experience. It seemed at the outset a cruel sacrifice, when the world of speculation, with all its manageable and engaging simplicities, had to be abandoned; and on becoming the pupils of observation, we, amid the varieties of the actual world around us, felt as if bewildered if not lost among the perplexities of a chaos. This was the period of greatest sufferance; but it has had a glorious termination. In return for the assiduity wherewith the study of nature hath been prosecuted, she hath made a more abundant revelation of her charms. Order hath arisen out of confusion; and, in the ascertained structure of the universe, there are now found to be a state and a sublimity beyond all that was ever pictured by the mind in the days of her adventurous and unfettered imagination. Even viewed in the light of a noble and engaging spectacle for the fancy to dwell upon, who would ever think of comparing with the system of Newton, either that celestial machinery of Descartes, which was impelled by whirlpools of ether, or that still more cumbrous planetarium of cycles and epicycles, which was the progeny of a remoter age? It is thus, that at the commencement of the observational process there is the abjuration of beauty. But it soon reappears in another form, and brightens

as we advance; and at length there arises, on solid foundation, a fairer and goodlier system than ever floated in airy romance before the eye of genius.* Nor is it difficult to perceive the reason of this. What we discover by observation is the product of the Divine imagination bodied forth by creative power into a stable and enduring reality. What we devise by our own ingenuity is but the product of human imagination. The one is the solid archetype of those conceptions which are in the mind of God. The other is the shadowy representation of those conceptions which are in the mind of man. It is just as with the labourer, who, by excavating the rubbish which hides and besets some noble architecture, does more for the gratification of our taste, than if, by his unpractised hand, he should attempt to regale us with plans and sketches of his own. And so the drudgery of experimental science, in exchange for that beauty whose fascinations it withstood at the outset of its career, has evolved a surpassing beauty from among the realities of truth and nature. The pain of the initial sacrifice is nobly compensated at the last. The views contemplated through the medium of observation are found not only to have a justness in them, but to have a grace and a grandeur in them far beyond all the visions which are contemplated through the medium of fancy—or which ever regaled the fondest enthusiast in the enchanted walks of speculation and poetry. But neither the grace nor the grandeur alone would, without evidence, have secured acceptance for any opinion. It must first be made to undergo, and without ceremony, the freest treatment from human eyes and human hands. It is at one time stretched on the rack of an experiment; at another, it has to pass through fiery trial in the bottom of a crucible. At another, it undergoes a long questionary process among the fumes, and the filtrations, and the intense heat of a laboratory—and not till it has been subjected to all this inquisitorial torture and survived it, is it preferred to a place in the temple of truth, or admitted among the laws and the lessons of a sound philosophy.

* In the "Essays of John Sheppard,"—a work very recently published, and alike characterized by the depth of its Christian intelligence and feeling, and the beauty of its thoughts—there occurs the following passage, founded on the manuscript notes, taken by the author, of Playfair's Lectures:—"It was impressively stated, in a preliminary lecture by a late eminent Scottish Professor of Natural Philosophy, that the actual physical wonders of creation far transcend the boldest and most hyperbolic imaginings of poetic minds,—that the reason of Newton and Galileo took a sublimer flight than the fancy of Milton and Ariosto. That this is quite true, I need only refer you to a few astronomical facts glanced at in subsequent pages of this volume in order to evince."—Sheppard's *Essays*, p. 69.

5. If there be one science to which the maxims of the Baconian Philosophy are more emphatically applicable than another, that science is Theology. For, not to speak at present of the Book of Revelation, let us but reflect how very small a portion of its contents in the book of Nature is accessible to man. As in the Christian Theology, we are charged against being wise above that which is written ; so, in the Natural Theology, it behoves us not to be confident or vainly conjectural above that which is at all clearly or distinctly legible to human eyes. There seems enough in the system of visible things to impress the conviction of design in the formation of it—and so the conviction of a Designer, of a reigning mind that has the intelligence to devise and the power to execute its purposes. But how little a way does the light of experience carry us, in our attempts to divine what these purposes mainly and ultimately are ! We can discern many a specific aim in nature. There is no mistaking, for example, the intention of the Creator in the position of the teeth of animals ; which have obviously been fixed where they are, instead of being protruded by a blind physical energy into useless excrescences on other parts of the body—with the express view of preparing the food for those ulterior processes which it undergoes, in the sustentation of an organic being. But though we see a specific meaning in this and a thousand other adaptations, there may yet be nothing which can lead us to comprehend the great and general meaning of the whole—what may be called the grand moving purpose of a creation, which so teems with innumerable births, and which plies its successive stages through the unvaried rounds of growth and decay, and dissolution and revival. We distinctly enough see the use of those expedients by which one generation of living creatures is carried forwards from infancy to death, and leaves another generation behind it to perform the same cycle of functions and enjoyments during the course of its ephemeral being. We might discern the most unequivocal signatures of mind in that system of expedients by which one such rotation is accomplished ; and yet to the eyes of nature there may be mystery ; most hopeless unfathomable mystery as to the originating principle which prompted the establishment of these rotations, or as to the ultimate design in which they are to terminate. We may clearly see a thousand special contrivances for as many special accommodations—and yet there be altogether unknown to us that grand comprehensive secret, which would explain what may be termed the policy of creation.

We are lost among the countless ingenuities of a mechanism of which we form a part, and each of them giving palpable indication of the wisdom in which they originated. But when we attempt, with no other resources than those of our own fancy, to guess at the drift of the whole mechanism, or to assign the mighty consummation for which its author did intend it—it is then that, baffled in the enterprise, we feel the force of that remarkable expression—"the mystery of God."

6. In the science of Theology beyond all the other sciences, it is the part of man to quit all gratuitous speculations of his own; and limit himself to the findings of information and experience. It is there, if anywhere, that the excursive spirit of man is arrested by a strong impassable barrier between the known and the unknown. There are two obvious reasons for this—First, the narrow sphere of his own observations, when compared with the amplitude of creation. Second, the ephemeral duration of his being, when compared with the eternity of the Creator. In either way he finds himself surrounded by a vast *terra incognita*, the depths and mysteries of a region to him inaccessible. His wisdom in these circumstances is not to fancy where he has not found, not to pronounce where he does not know—and, should any light break in upon him from this darkness, to submit to its guidance and be satisfied to learn. "It ought to be inculcated upon all men," says De Luc, "that, next to the positive knowledge of things which may be known, the most important science is to know how to be ignorant. 'I don't know' ought to be a frequent answer of all teachers to their pupils, to accustom them to make the same answer without feeling ashamed." The following appears to us a golden maxim, and of inestimable price in what might be called the General Logic or Metaphysics of Theology. "To know that we cannot know certain things is in itself positive knowledge, and a knowledge of the most safe and valuable nature; and to abide by that cautionary knowledge, is infinitely more conducive to our advancement in truth, than to exchange it for any quality of conjecture or speculation."* There are few services of greater value to the cause of knowledge, than the delineation of its boundaries. It saves all that fatigue and waste of effort which are incurred, by our stray excursions among the phantasmata of an unknown land. Above all, it puts out every false light by which the light of evidence might be overborne—and the labour of actual discovery is greatly lessened,

* Granville Penn.

when the search is narrowed by confinement within the limits of possible discovery. Man has learned much faster ever since Lord Bacon told him how little he could know—or, in other words, since, reclaimed from the territory of impracticable speculation, he has concentrated his efforts within that margin which skirts and terminates the whole field of attainable knowledge. This is a most valuable habit in all science. In the science of theology it is inestimable.

7. And, to recur for a moment to the two great reasons why that humility which is so philosophical in all the departments of human inquiry is most peculiarly so in our own—the first being that the field of man's certainty is of such littleness in space, the second that it is of such littleness in time. Each, in fact, is but an infinitesimal, when compared either with immensity on the one hand, or with eternity on the other. The enlargement of modern discovery has not abated the force of the first of these reasons, but has rather enhanced or given it greater meaning and emphasis than before. That telescope which has opened our way to suns and systems innumerable, leaves the moral administration connected with them in deepest secrecy. It has made known to us the bare existence of other worlds; but it would require another instrument of discovery ere we could understand their relation to ourselves, as products of the same Almighty hand, as parts or members of a family under the same paternal guardianship. This more extended survey of the material universe just tells us how little we know of the moral or spiritual universe. It reveals nothing to us of the worlds that roll in space but the bare elements of motion, and magnitude, and number—and so leaves us at a more hopeless distance from the secret of the Divine administration, than when we reasoned of the earth as the universe, of our species as the alone rational family of God that He had implicated with body, or placed in the midst of a corporeal system. The politics of a family bear a larger proportion to that of an empire, than what in reference to the jurisprudence of God may be called the politics of a single world to that of the universe. Our discovery of the extent of creation has just thrown a deeper obscurity over the counsels of the Creator. It has made the problem of His administration one of greater darkness and difficulty than before. In proportion to the vastness of His dominion, do we feel an inadequacy to comprehend the measures or the mysteries of His government. The question is now immeasurably widened,

because complicated with other, and, for aught we know, innumerable relationships. We might have hoped to conquer or resolve the mystery of one isolated world, but not when involved in a scheme that is comprehensive of all worlds. We know but in part; and every new revelation which Astronomy has made of the amplitudes around us, just tells us more emphatically than before of the insignificance of that part, or the littleness of all we know in relation to the mighty whole. It conveys a most impressive rebuke on man's presumptuous imaginations; and should teach him that, profoundly ignorant as he is of that high regime which embraces all and subordinates all, his true wisdom lies in giving up every gratuitous fancy of his own, and being the passive subject of the information that is offered to him.

8. It is of importance here to remark that the enlargement of our knowledge in all the natural sciences, so far from adding to our presumption, should only give a profounder sense of our natural incapacity and ignorance in reference to the science of Theology. It is just as if, in studying the policy of some earthly monarch, we had made the before unknown discovery of other empires and distant territories which belonged to him, whereof we knew nothing but the existence and the name. This might complicate the study without making the object of it at all more comprehensible. And so of every new wonder which philosophy might lay open to the gaze of inquirers. It might give us a larger perspective of the creation than before, yet, in fact, cast a deeper shade of obscurity over the counsels and ways of the Creator. We might at once obtain a deeper insight into the secrets of the workmanship—and yet feel, and legitimately feel, to be still more deeply out of reach, the secret purposes of Him who worketh all in all. Every discovery of an addition to the greatness of His works may bring with it an addition to the unsearchableness of His ways. This will explain how it is that with those philosophers who add soundness to talent—which, by the way, are very different things, even as judgment and genius are different—every accession to their knowledge brings with it an accession, not to their pride, but to their modesty. Each discovery they make in the volume of His works, instead of clearing, only serves to thicken as it were, the moral enigma of the Almighty's government—and so it leads them but to inquire all the more reverently at the volume of His word. This may let us somewhat into the secret of their unmoved, or rather confirmed and established Christianity, in such men as Newton and

Boyle—which stands forth in most beautiful and effective contrast with the arrogant infidelity of later and lesser men. We may here perceive the difference between a first and a second-rate philosophy, and how thoroughly at one the soundest philosophy is with the soundest faith.

9. And an argument equally impressive, and to the same effect, may be founded on the consideration of man's littleness in time—even though carried beyond the limits of his own individual being, and upward to the confines of remotest history. All that we know is, at greatest, but a temporary evolution in the schemes and processes of that Divinity who is from everlasting. We can look but a short way, and through an obscure medium, to the duration that is past; and a still shorter way, through a still profounder obscurity, to the duration that is before us. And were it not tremendous presumption to sit in judgment on the counsels of Him, who unites in His wondrous person and His wondrous plans both extremes of eternity? We have access to but one or two intermediate links of a progression that is endless—nor can we pronounce either on the wisdom and efficacy of existing means, or on the nature of the consummation in which all is to terminate. Even in the transitions which are before our eyes, there is nothing which, apart from experience, can lead us to anticipate from the first germ or embryo of things what shall be the coming development; and can we therefore, from the ephemeral observation of a few fleeting ages, confidently reason on the winding up of the universal drama, or the full and final development of all things? We see a beauteous expansion coming forth of the deathlike chrysalis; and a wide-spread efflorescence of glory over the whole landscape issuing afresh from a soil which owes its fertility to loathsome putrefaction; and the sublimest virtues in the moral world nurtured into maturity and strength by dark misfortune or the still darker vices wherewith it is contiguous—and just as of old a goodly world is said to have emerged from a chaos, we know not, among the births of this labouring creation, what beauty and blissfulness are afterwards to ensue from amid the warring elements which encompass us, and which look so inextricable. Man is but a learner among the mysteries which surround him; and his part is the docility of a learner. Whether we regard the littleness of his narrow sphere, or the littleness of his passing day—we see him closely hemmed on all sides by the limit which separates the known from the unknown. His true philosophy is a sense of his

own utter inability to penetrate the gloom that lies beyond it—and should the light of any manifestation arise in the midst of this darkness, its disclosures should be as much more precious in his eyes, as the stable realities of truth and nature are of surpassing worth to all self-willed or speculative imaginations.

10. And just as by thus keeping in the path of sober investigation, we have found a more graceful and magnificent philosophy than we ever could have feigned—there is reason to hope that by a like sacrifice we shall arrive at a like result in theology. Let us seek truth first—and all other things shall be added unto us. What we pioneer our way to through the toils of a thorny and laborious research, will have a beauty and a greatness that were never realized even in the most splendid conjectures of theory. In exchange for all those charms which we forego at the outset, and which would have lured us from the right walk, we shall at length reach a system of magnificence which man might discover, but which man could never have devised. The plastic and airy formations of his imaginative spirit will fall immeasurably short, even in the attributes of the sublime or the graceful, of that which bears upon it the actual impress of the Divinity—which is lighted by His all-comprehensive mind, or reveals to us, though in part, the counsels of an administration that extends to all worlds, and has its full and final development in the consummations of eternity. So that were it but to recreate his fancy by beauteous and noble spectacles, he should, in theology too, become an experimental inquirer. The labour of the spirit should go before—the luxury of the spirit will come afterwards. Let him first learn; and then let him luxuriate. It is the humble disciple, whether in theology or in science, who shall be exalted in due time. There may be no images of glory at the outset of this experimental path—but an imperishable glory shall be its rearward.

11. But the time for the most direct application of this principle is at our transition from the Natural to the Christian Theology; and when with but the humble and limited acquirements of the one, we enter on the larger manifestations of the other. We trust it will then become palpable, that the same sound philosophy which directs an entire and unqualified submission to the lessons of experience in studying the volume of Nature, directs the like entireness of submission to the lessons of criticism in studying the volume of Revelation; and that just as we should defer, though it be with the sacrifice of all our preconcep-

tions, to the actual phenomena of nature—so should we defer, though at the expense of as large a sacrifice, to the actual sayings of Scripture. We think it will then be easy to demonstrate the perfect identity of those mental habitudes in an inquirer—which lead in the one instance to a sound philosophy, and in the other instance to a sound faith—and that what experimental knowledge is in science, biblical knowledge is in Divinity. But meanwhile, and before we have finished our lucubrations on natural theism, we deem it right to have adverted thus far to a principle to the guidance of which we cannot betake ourselves too early; and the neglect of which, in fact, has carried the theology of nature, or rather the academic theology of our schools, greatly beyond the limits of truth and safety. In passing, as we do now, from the argument which respects the Being of a God, to the argument which respects His attributes and His ways, we cannot fail to notice a certain confidence of speculation, which, in our opinion, transgresses and transgresses greatly—the limit between the known and the unknown. We hold it of the utmost importance that this natural theism should be set forth in its actual dimensions—there being many, on the one hand, who ascribe to it a sufficiency and a strength, that would leave a Gospel uncalled for; and there being a few, upon the other, who regard it as little better than the baseless fabric of a vision. We think that it has a basement, and the fragments beside, of a certain humble superstructure, marred, misshapen, and ruinous. But we also think that its disciples are greatly too aspiring, and that they have raised its pretensions far beyond the measure of its powers.

12. As a specimen of the rashness to which we now advert, let us instance one of the current maxims of this Theology—that it is the characteristic of wisdom to accomplish its ends by the simplest of possible means. In the workmanship of God, then, possessed as He is of the most perfect wisdom, we should expect the greatest simplicity, and more especially the fewest possible causes, or that no more should be set in operation than were necessary, or at least expedient, for the production of a given effect. It is thus certainly that we form our estimate of human art; and should admire above all others the genius of the man who could simplify a machine by dispensing with some of its parts, while its powers remained in every way as effective as before. The greater the result, in fact, and the simpler the instrumental apparatus, the higher homage do we pay to the inventive

faculties of its author—and we might, therefore, expect the most striking exemplifications of this combined simplicity and power in the productions of that Supreme Artificer, who, beside the most consummate skill, has an infinity of resources at command. Now, though in certain departments of creation we are presented with noble specimens of this, yet, in far the greater number of instances, there seems what one might be led to regard as a useless complexity—not useless in reference to the actual constitution of things; but useless in reference to the powers of Him who ordained that constitution, and might, had it so pleased Him, have, by means of another constitution and a far simpler economy, wrought out, we are apt to imagine, the great end or ends of His creation. We must admit of astronomy that it offers the finest examples of this alliance between simplicity and greatness—more especially in that beautiful planetarium which, set a-going by one impulse, and animated by one simple force, contrasts so advantageously with the ethereal whirlpools, and the complicated cycles and epicycles of human imagination. We cannot afford to expatiate on the variety of great and good results that come forth of the one law of gravitation—else, beside the leading planetary movements, we might have noticed among other effects, the power of each planet to compel the attendance of secondaries—those lamps on the roof of night which afford so beautiful a supplement to the day's accommodation; and the power of those secondaries, on the other hand, not to enlighten only, but to produce wholesome agitation in the sea and atmosphere of planets, by means of tides in the air and tides in the ocean. Another splendid example of a mighty consequence emerging from a simple cause, is that the mere inclination of a line to a plane should give rise to the beneficent round of the seasons, that goodly procession in the heavens, at every footstep of which so many precious influences both in the way of delight and utility are shed upon our world. But, in descending from heaven to earth, we seem to lose sight of all this exquisite geometry—and, instead of one condition being the prolific germ of a thousand beneficial effects, we behold a thousand conditions indispensable to the production of one benefit. Take, for example, the organic structures, whether in the animal or vegetable physiology. What a complex system of means has been devised for the fulfilment of the end of their creation! When to the infinite wisdom we add the infinite power of God, we can have no doubt that He might, had it seemed to Him good, He

might have grafted the feeling, and the intelligence, and the mental powers, and the capacities of enjoyment which characterize a rational and accountable creature, on a simple elementary atom. But, instead of this, what a complex instrumentality that is which upholds the functions and faculties of a man—what a concurrence must there be of parts and of actions that he might be enabled to move, and to think, and to reason, and to perform the rounds for which his Maker hath designed him ! It seems a round-about way of arriving at the formation of this intelligent creature, that he should have to be provided with so complicated a framework for the evolution of his powers. One feels that the great purposes of his being might all have been secured with less expense, as it were, of contrivance and of operose workmanship. It looks as if the great Artificer had fallen in with an impracticable subject ; and had put forth His wisdom and power on the task of grafting upon this sluggish uncomplying matter, the life, and the feeling, and the intelligence which we now find, through the intervention of a most intricate mechanism, to be so curiously blended with it. This would represent the Deity as if in a state of necessity, and as if reduced to shifts or laborious expedients for the purpose of overcoming it—as if matter and its essential properties stood so far in the way of the Divine purposes—an imagination not certainly in keeping with the doctrine that He created this matter and endued it with these properties. It is some such conception as this which may have led to the Theory of an Eternal Uncreated matter, along with an Eternal Uncreated Mind—being an approximation towards the Manichean System of a Good and Evil Principle. Dr. Paley speaks somewhere in his “ Natural Theology ” of a problem having for its data the essential principles of matter, and for its object the production of life. It is announced in somewhat the usual form of, Given a substance having extent, and divisibility, and impenetrability, and passiveness, to graft vitality thereupon. But still the marvel is, that first God should, by His own spontaneous choice, have originated into being such a mass and power of resistance to a desirable effect, and then had recourse to such manifold and multiform devices for the purpose of overcoming it. It seems like going out of the way, or like a very indirect and circuitous method of arriving at a result. There is a marvellous display of skill and power in conquering the difficulty—but the surpassing marvel is that it should be a difficulty which Himself had created. The

expectation that, under a regime of infinite wisdom, the greatest ends are brought about by the simplest of means, is, to all appearance, violated in the case of every physiological structure. And the confident maxim, that such a simplicity best comports with the highest intelligence, would therefore appear to land us in a reflection against the attributes of the Deity.

13. There is nothing, however, in this train of reflection which can invalidate the argument for the existence of a God, possessed of inimitable skill and power, and who has put forth these attributes on the formation of the many exquisite structures which are before our eyes. All the efforts of human art cannot approximate, even by the most distant imitation, to the execution of such mechanism as we see diversified into many thousands of distinct specimens, both in the animal and vegetable kingdoms—and all of which attest, by their manifold collocations, that they had been designed in the counsels, and formed by the fingers of an Artificer, whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, and whose ways are not as our ways. It is a very profound enigma to us, why the actual matter of the world should require such peculiar treatment ere it can be vivified either into an animal or vegetable. Yet there is an unquestionable good in such a constitution of things. It yields to us a resistless inference as to the being of a God, however much it may darken the nature both of His person and policy. If, on the one hand, to accomplish a given result by the fewest possible means be an indication of high wisdom, it is no less an indication of the same to accomplish it, even though by a very cumbersome apparatus of means, if the workmanship had to be done on unlikely and unpromising materials. Still it remains a mystery why such should be the materials; and it is a mystery that we cannot unravel. The face of visible nature may be regarded as an impenetrable canvas, behind which its Author has withdrawn Himself from the view of mortals—yet not without imprinting such curious and high-wrought embroidery upon it, as bespeaks a great force of intelligence and power within the veil. We can offer no absolute solution of the question why it is that He should so hide Himself, or why it is that the matter which Himself has created should require a treatment so very operose ere it can subserve His own purposes. On whichever side we turn, we feel ourselves treading on the confines of darkness. We may walk in light or in twilight, through what in the Book of Job is called “parts of His ways.” But we soon come to a region

of deepest secrecy—an impassable limit, beyond which lie the depths and the mysteries that we cannot comprehend.

14. We have already said, that the enlargement of astronomical discovery, while it expanded our conceptions of the Divine greatness, had just the effect of making the Divine counsels more incomprehensible than ever; and we now say, that the complex adaptations, the number of contingencies which must meet together for the accomplishment of a desirable end, and on the absence or the failure of any one of which, the manifold adjustments both of place and of operation that enter into the products of physiology, and without any one of which neither an animal nor a vegetable could be sustained—these, while they give more intense demonstration to the reality of an intelligence that framed the whole of this exquisite mechanism, have the effect of casting over the designs and the processes of this intelligence a deeper mystery than before. They more clearly evince His being, but they have the effect of making His policy more inscrutable; and while they tell more emphatically than a simpler material system would that there is a God, they go to shroud the principle of His creation in profounder obscurity from our view, and to aggravate more hopelessly than ever the unsearchableness of His ways. It is thus that no conceivable extension of natural science would seem to supersede, but rather to enhance the necessity of revelation. None of her discoveries, however much they might afford more emphatic demonstration than we previously had of the being and intelligence of God, none of them can achieve—they do not even approximate—to the solution of the moral enigma involved in the question which relates to the principle or purpose of the Divine administration.

15. We mean to say, that if, under the present economy, ten independent circumstances must meet together for the production of a certain beneficial effect instead of six, there is all the more intense evidence thereby afforded, in the actual occurrence of such a combination, for the existence of God. But the very thing which gives a brighter revelation of His being, only darkens the mystery of His conduct; and the question is still unresolved, Why does the Almighty, who, we think, can accomplish all His purposes by the utterance of a word, why does He choose rather to effectuate them by methods so complex and circuitous? If it be alleged that it is just to evince more clearly and more convincingly that He is, another question remains,—why this has not been accomplished by immediate vision? why

that has been left to inference, which might have been made the object of a direct and instant manifestation? or, why the unseen God thus hides Himself beneath an impenetrable veil of materialism from the eye of His creatures? In short, we walk on a margin of incomprehensibles; and with all the light which we have for assuring us of His reality, there seems nought in nature which can help us to unravel the mystery of His counsels and His ways. And it is well we should know how soon it is that human reason gets beyond its soundings. The constant and aspiring tendency of man is to pass from the investigation of the *Quid* to the investigation of the *Quomodo*. It were well that we felt aright at what point the inquiry should cease; nor are we aware of aught more truly characteristic both of a sound theologian and of a sound philosopher, than to discriminate between the region of accessible knowledge, and the ulterior region of the alike unknowable and unknown. Theology, like every other science, has its competent and its incompetent questions. It were well that we at all times observed the difference between them, and made the distinction between those which we might legitimately entertain, and those to which our best possible answer is, that we cannot tell.

16. It is not to excite a spirit of adventurous speculation, but to repress it, that we have noticed one of those difficulties which belong to Theism—though, it must be admitted, that, instead of laying the restlessness of human inquiry, they have often acted as a provocative to minds of aspiring curiosity. It is to make evident how short the way of safety and certainty is, along which an excursive spirit can proceed on this high subject—and that, amid the multitude of unresolved and unresolvable questions regarding the methods of the Divine government, we should be satisfied in keeping within the limits of accessible knowledge, and exploring with all diligence the truth that one may reach, instead of idly straining at the truth which lies beyond it. At most, like Sir Isaac Newton in philosophy, if we do enter upon the exterior region of mystery at all, we should proceed no farther than to the margin—where, instead of propositions in the form of confident dicta, we should plant the confessions of our ignorance in the form of queries or in the form of humble unpretending desiderata. To a rightly-constituted spirit the ulterior darkness, instead of operating as a stimulus, will operate as a sedative—that is, will quell the appetencies of the mind after that which is hopeless and unattainable; and so leave its ener-

gies entire for all useful, for all discoverable truth. An unpre-
suming modesty of spirit in reference to the *terra incognita*
of the human understanding, is perfectly at one with the utmost
diligence and even daring of the spirit in thoroughly exploring
the domain, and, if possible, extending the limits of the *terra*
cognita. It was thus that in physics, he who was of all others
the most fearful in pronouncing on the inaccessible mysteries
beyond the veil, made the freest and most fearless inquisition
within the field of accessible knowledge, and signalized himself
the most of his species by the additions to science which he
made thereupon. And as in physic, so ought it to be in Theo-
logy—the utmost reserve in all that is transcendental, the utmost
research both into the world that is around, and into the world
that is nigh to us—the busiest examination of all that is within
the range of our faculties; but, along with this a quiescence of
spirit in the light that we have, and at most a humble expect-
ancy for more.*

* This mental habitude was beautifully exemplified by Robert Hall, and no less beau-
tifully expounded in the description of it by his friend John Foster. The following are a
few extracts from Foster's observations on Hall's character as a preacher:—

“Perhaps it would not have been expected from Mr. Hall's great capacity, that he should
be habitually indisposed to dwell or expatiate long near the borders of the remoter, darker
tracts of the regions of religious contemplation. Such, however, appears to have been the
fact.” “He was amply informed and warned, by his knowledge of the history of philo-
sophy and theology, of the mischiefs of a restless, presumptuous, interminable speculation,
a projection of thought beyond the limits of ascertainable truth.” “The speculative pro-
cess lost its interest with him if carried into a direction, or if exceeding the limit, where it
could no longer be subjected to the methods of proof; in other words, where it ceased to
comprehend and reason, and turned into conjecture, sentiment, and fancy. He seemed to
have no ambition to stretch out his intellectual domain to an extent which he could not
occupy and traverse, with some certainty of his movements and measurements. His sphere
was very wide, expanded to one circle beyond another, at each of which in succession he
left many other men behind him, arrested by their respective limits; but he was willing to
perceive, and even desirous to verify, his own ultimate boundary; and when he came to
the line where it was signified to him, ‘Thus far and no farther,’ he stopped, with ap-
parently much less of an impulse than might have been expected in so strong a spirit, to seek
an outlet, and attempt an irruption into the dubious territory beyond.

“With a mind so constituted and governed, he was less given than many other men of
genius have been to those visionary modes of thought; those musings exempt from all re-
gulation; that impatience of aspiration to reach the vast and remote; that fascination of
the mysterious, captivating by the very circumstance of eluding; that fearful adventuring
on the dark, the unknown, the awful; ‘those thoughts that wander through eternity,’ which
have often been at once the luxury and the pain of imaginative and highly-endowed spirits,
discontented with their assigned lot in this tenebrious world. No doubt, in his case, piety
would have interfered to restrain such impatience of curiosity, or audacity of ambitious
thinking, or indignant strife against the confines of our present allotment, as would have
risen to a spirit of insubordination to the Divine appointment. And possibly there were
times when this interference was required; but still the structure of his faculties, and the

17. We cannot explain why, under a God of infinite power, complex means should be resorted to for the attainment of a desirable end—and neither can we explain why a lengthened process in time should be necessary for the same attainment. He could, we might imagine, will the greatest possible good into instant accomplishment. Yet He does not. Even within our own little territory of observation, we can notice the progression of years ere things come to their state of greatest perfection ; and for aught we know, it might require the mighty progression of centuries, or of still loftier and more extended cycles, ere many of the existing and current plans in the universe shall reach their full consummation. Everything seems to be done by progressions. The full-grown tree is not made to arise in the complete garniture of its fruit or foliage by an instant act of creation ; but ere it reaches its present strength and altitude, has to weather a series of exposures and to undergo a very gradual process of nourishment and accretion. The man of full-grown faculties does not start into immediate being at the bidding of a voice, but reaches the maximum of his usefulness and vigour, through the delays and difficulties and dangers of a tedious passage from the outset of his existence, and by many successive stages. Not to speak of the collective progress that is made by mankind from one age to another along the great steps of a world's history, the species are not prepared for the joys and exercises of a complete society in heaven, but by the birth and the transit and the successive disappearance of many generations. With all the resources of Omnipotence, and a goodness so entire and unlimited that He has been designed a God of love—He might have willed, we fondly imagine, He might have willed instanter into being a full and finished paradise, where each rejoicing inhabitant, with a beatitude up to the measure of his capacity, might have expatiated from the first moment of his existence

manner of employing them to which it determined him, contributed much to exempt him from that passion to go beyond the mortal sphere which would irreligiously murmur at the limitation. His acquiescence did not seem at least to cost him a strong effort of repression.

“ This distinction of his intellectual character was obvious in his preaching. He was eminently successful on subjects of an elevated order, which he would expand and illustrate in a manner which sustained them to the high level of their dignity. This carried him near some point on the border of that awful darkness which encompasses, on all sides, our little glimmering field of knowledge ; and then it might be seen how aware he was of its approach, how cautiously, or shall I say instinctively, he was held aloof, how sure not to abandon the ground of evidence, by a hazardous incursion of conjecture or imagination into the unknown. He would indicate how near, and in what direction lay the shaded frontier ; but dared not, did not seem even tempted, to invade ‘ its majesty of darkness.’ ”

in happiness without a flaw, and that was to last for ever. But this too is reached by a progression of unknown length and magnitude; and meanwhile, we live among the imperfections of an embryo state, the struggles and the sighs and we may add the sinfulness of a creation that seems labouring in birth, and as if charged with the pains and the portents of a coming regeneration. Now we should be satisfied to know this as a fact or phenomenon, although we should not know the principle of the phenomenon. It is a great matter, when unable to ascertain *how* it is, to be satisfied with the assurance that *so* it is. The end is more valuable than its means, and one might think that the creative Power might have ordained the end without the stepping-stone of means. But it is not so ordered, for neither has it dispensed with a complex and extended instrumentality in space, nor with a lengthened procedure in time. The life of man is more valuable than the lungs, or the heart, or any other organ which has functions to perform, that, under our present constitution, are indispensable to vitality—And God could, we imagine, have willed this life into direct action and enjoyment, without the intervention of such an elaborate materialism. And in like manner—for there is an identity of principle in the two cases—the mature virtue and unsullied felicity of heaven are more valuable than the toils and sufferings of an earthly pilgrimage; and God, armed as He is with a force of execution which no obstacle can withstand, and a benevolence ample and unconfined as the wide possibility of things, might have willed the consummate happiness at once without the tardy preparation. Now, in defect of all our endeavours to comprehend the rationale, we should acquiesce like true disciples of the philosophy of observation in the facts, that, instead of being subtilized among the transcendental difficulties of the subject into an airy speculative theology, we might stop at that limit beyond which if we transgress, we will leave all that is sure and sound in theology behind us. In short, it should be studied not by the method of synthesis but by the method of analysis—not by going downward in the science, with our point of departure *a priori*, or from its assumed principles; but by going upward in the science, with our point of departure *a posteriori*, or from its observed phenomena—in this way treasuring up the ascertained facts, nor holding them less valuable because of the unascertained reasons which lie behind them—satisfied with that light of evidence which informs us of the what, however dim may be

that light of theory which informs us of the why—Let this be our habit, and we shall then learn to wait and to postpone our curiosity, in a multitude of questions to which our best and surest answer is, that we cannot tell.

18. Ere we enter on our brief exposition of the attributes of God as viewed in the light of Natural Theology—let us, in the spirit we are now recommending, propose a few considerations on the subject of certain difficulties which regard His character and ways. The object, we repeat, is not to encourage temerity of speculation but to repress it—that, abstaining from matters too high for us, we may keep on that humble track where there is both a steady light and a firm pathway.

19. The difficulties to which we refer stand all related to the imagination, that where there is a Creator of infinite power united with infinite goodness, there should be a creation of instant and universal blessedness. Now they are the exceptions to this which have ministered so much perplexity to the speculatists in theological science. They seem to impair the omnipotence or the benevolence of God; and it is in the attempt to reconcile existing appearances with the one or other of these attributes, that so many an adventurous flight has been taken into the region of transcendentals. Now, without any attempt at a positive reconciliation, we think that we can adduce so much as should lead us to keep the whole question in abeyance. Without offering to throw light upon the question, we shall do enough if we simply neutralize it. There is many a conceivable topic of human thought regarding which there is an utter want of evidence either on the one side or on the other—in which case if it do not help, neither should it hinder our conviction upon other topics that are shone upon by evidence, and which lie accessible to human inquiry. A thing may be far removed from us in ulterior darkness, like a body in the heavens beyond the range of our telescopes. In virtue of its situation we can attain to no positive knowledge of it. But it ought to be well remembered too, that, in virtue of this very situation, it stands disarmed of all power to disturb our conclusions respecting the things which are near us and within the confines of observation. The imagination of things beyond the telescope, can surely have no effect on the views or informations of other things which are given us by the telescope. And the same is true of many, of very many topics in Theology. They lie ulterior to our range—not merely beyond the outskirts of Natural Theology—a do-

main which may be said to comprehend all that can be seen by the naked eye of the mind—but also beyond the outskirts of the Christian Theology, that wider and larger domain, which has been opened up to our view by the mental or spiritual telescope of revelation. To attempt the comprehension of such a topic by the former light, were to enter on a task above the powers of nature. To attempt the comprehension of it by the latter light, were to attempt being wise above that which is written. But the very reconditeness which precludes a transcendental topic from being ever turned into an affirmative doctrine, also nullifies it as a disturbing force by which to weaken or to change our belief in other doctrines. This principle, if rightly applied, would prove a safeguard against many of the delusions of sophistry and scepticism. There may be a vast, an interminable number of questions started in Theology, of such an unresolvable character that all the friends of religion cannot make out of them an argument for any positive article in the creed—but neither, on the other hand, can the enemies of Religion make out of them an argument, by which to displace or in any way to deduct from the strength and authority of a single article that is there. We should count it enough if the origin of evil were reduced to this description of questions. We offer no positive solution of the problem. We should be satisfied, if it were simply put *hors de combat*—and if abiding unresolved for ever in this world, it left us but at liberty to appropriate the truth within our reach, and to walk in the light of the actual evidence that is around us.

20. Now for this purpose it is not needed that we should solve the question. It is enough that, in the meantime, we should suspend it or put it to sleep—and the most effectual method, we hold, of doing so, were to show cause why, with our present degree of light, it should yet be regarded as altogether a question too high for us.

21. There is nothing which more inclines ourselves to leave it upon such a footing, than the unwarrantable presumption both of the religionists and the irreligionists upon this question. When combatants are found to draw alike the matter of their speculation from a region of unfathomable mystery beyond them, there may be anything but light thrown upon their controversy—but still there is a great deal made out, if it can be shown that there are assumptions of equal hazard and uncertainty on both sides. In this way, they countervail each other—and their best

wisdom were a mutual retirement from the field, and with this principle, that a controversy which cannot be settled should just be let alone.

22. We hold it greatly better, on the one hand, for the religionists to attempt no positive or confident solution of the problem—and, on the other hand, there are three distinct considerations which might tend, we think, to nullify the argument by which the irreligionists have attempted through the means of this difficulty to subserve the cause of scepticism.

23. The first is, that when they assume the omnipotence of God as a reason for expecting no evil in the universe—seeing that God could have caused it to be otherwise if He would—they assume a principle which must be received with certain qualifications. It is no aspersion of His dignity but the opposite, when we affirm that there are certain things which God cannot do. We read in a Book, the authority of which we trust afterwards to demonstrate, that He cannot lie. This is one limit to the universality of their assertion, though no limit, but the contrary, on the perfections of God. It is not a physical but a moral necessity which makes His utterance of a falsehood impossible. It is not because He has not strength for the utterance; but it is the very strength of His character which restrains it, and puts it forth, as it were, beyond the domain of possible things. It is not because He is short of omnipotence that He cannot lie—for there is the force of omnipotence in His recoil from such a violence to His moral nature. He cannot because He will not—and if this be called impotency, it is an impotency which exalts the Deity, and thrones Him in character of more awful reverence.

24. But secondly, it is doing violence to the right or philosophical order of our conceptions—it is not viewing matters according to their actual precedency, when the Divine will is regarded as the first source of all things. God did not will Himself into existence—and neither did He will the character or constitution of the Godhead. We almost feel an oppression upon our spirit when we thus lift our regards to the primeval fountain-head of Being. Yet it is surely more logical to say that He wills according to His nature, than that He willed His nature. In other words, His nature is a higher fountain-head than His will. And is it for us to prove the secrecies of this underived, this uncreated nature—or to say whether there are not deep-laid necessities there, under which a God, even of

boundless perfection, may have seen reason to command into being such a universe as ours? Can we scale those mysterious altitudes along which we are conducted to the First Origin of Things; and thence foretell the direction or quality of the streams which should issue from these lofty recesses of the eternity that is past, and are to have their final consummation in the eternity that is before us?

25. But thirdly, there has much been said by certain of our speculatists in Theism on certain powers or virtues which are incommunicable—and which cannot therefore, in the nature of things, be realized upon any creature. We have no great taste, we must confess, for this style of speculation at all. But as a specimen, let us mention a few of the things which are represented as being necessarily beyond the exercise of the Creative Power. God cannot, it is said, realize upon any substantive being, aught that involves in it either a logical or a mathematical contradiction. He could not, for example, make a thing to be and not to be at the same time—or he could not make a circle whose circumference shall be precisely three times its diameter. And so along with this it is imagined, that there might be certain physical necessities, which even the force of omnipotence, restricted as it is within the domain of possibility, cannot violate. It seems clear enough that He cannot give certain of His own attributes to the creature, as His eternity, His self-existence, His independence—and hence do our Theorists proceed to the assertion that He cannot impart certain other of His perfections—not His ubiquity, not His omniscience, not His infinity of moral perfection, and so not His impossibility of sinning. We feel inclined to proceed no further with these desperate fetches into the arcana of a matter that is inscrutable—these guesses into the mystery of things. But we would put the question, if we really know as much of a creative process, and of the laws and the limitations by which it must be regulated, as to warrant the affirmation that the existence of evil is at variance with the existence of a Being possessing all moral and all natural perfection—and whether is it safer to incur the risk of tremendous presumption in meddling with this high speculation—or, walking in the light we have, to wait the disclosures of that day which has been emphatically called the “Day of the Manifestation of God”?

* There are some striking views on the Divine Omnipotence, in a recent volume of Essays

26. In opposition, then, to that unqualified imagination of the omnipotence of God, which would lead some to suspect that there should be no deficiency from perfect blessedness, and far more, that there should be no positive suffering in creation, let us plead the ignorance of man. The *argumentum ab ignorantia*, when rightly applied, is a preservative from an infinity of errors in all the branches of human speculation. There is a little clause very often employed by Butler in his reasonings—and, when opportunely brought in, it is of inestimable value, both in theology and in science—“for aught we know.” For aught we know, there may be expediciencies, or, if you will, necessities, which require both a complicated system of means and a lengthened procedure, ere the best and worthiest consummation of all things is arrived at. For aught we know, suffering, and even sin, may be the stepping-stones to a greater and nobler result than could have been otherwise accomplished. It is on this ground that we would adjourn the question of the origin of evil. We would attempt no positive solution of it. We cannot sympathize with Leibnitz and others in the confident deliverance which they have made upon the subject—yet, if viewed not as a peremptory solution but as a likely or even as a doubtful hypothesis, it may, though in this humbler capacity, be of service to the cause. It is enough for this purpose that it have sufficient plausibility to warrant, not the certainty that it is, but at least the conjecture that it may be true. If we can but say of the optimism of Leibnitz that for aught we know it may be true, this would at least neutralize the origin of evil as a topic of objection—and, though it may not satisfy the infidel, a great practical good is effected by it, should it put him to silence.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE USE OF HYPOTHESIS IN THEOLOGY.

LEIBNITZ'S THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

1. LEIBNITZ is rightly held to be the most philosophical defender of Christianity, in its more peculiar and evangelic form.

and Sermons by the Rev. Henry Woodward, of Ireland—a work replete with originality, and rich in the germs of high thought.

We should not say that he is the most effective defender of it—an honour which we should rather ascribe to Jonathan Edwards. There was, however, more of science and expansion in the former; and something to us inexpressibly pleasing in the union of his orthodoxy with the academic spirit and phraseology of a man who stood among the very highest of his day in the great literary republic, and even shared with Sir Isaac Newton in the glory of his immortal discoveries. He has a vast deal more of eloquence and sentiment and generalization than Edwards; but he is more of an adventurous speculatist, and therefore not so safe to be trusted, and more especially when he proposes as a *positive dictum* what at best is a hypothesis. But a hypothesis might subserve a great logical purpose in theology. And accordingly, the one framed by Leibnitz respecting the origin of evil, even though admitted to no higher rank than a mere unsupported imagination, may yet be of force to nullify all the objections wherewith this topic is conceived to be pregnant and so as to leave in their undiminished strength all those affirmative proofs on which the system of theology is based.

2. It may be right to state the leading conceptions which enter into Leibnitz's theory. He is an optimist, and conceives the actual universe to be such as it is—because, of all possible systems, it works off the greatest amount of good. He imagines God to be not the author of evil as evil. Evil is not the terminating object of His creation. That object was the production of the maximum of good—and evil has place in the existing economy of things, only because subservient to the perfectly benevolent and holy end which God had in view, and of which end alone He can be properly called the author.

3. He supposes all the possible forms of a universe to have been present to the Divine mind from eternity. There must be an infinity of such forms, yet all of them must have been present to the infinite understanding of God. Only one of them has been realized, or embodied into an actual production by an exercise of the creative power. Of this one God only is the author. He willed the actual universe into existence—but He did not will the other forms of universes into possibility. They were the objects of His understanding from all eternity, just as number and figure were—and He is no more the author of these than He is the author of His own understanding. He is the author only of that one universe which He selected out of all the possible varieties—and for this reason, that, by the production of it

rather than any other, He gave being to the maximum of good. It may so be, that, of all the possible forms, that which yields the greatest amount of good envelopes in it a certain amount of evil. It was not for the evil but for the good that the universe was called out of the region of possibles into the state of a reality—and God, in selecting it, notwithstanding the evil, did that which was wisest and best.

4. The following extract of a few sentences from his essay on the goodness of God, the liberty of man, and the origin of evil, may perhaps make this part of his system intelligible. "Evil comes rather from the abstract forms themselves, that is to say, from ideas which God has not produced by an act of His will, any more than numbers and figures, and any more, in short, than all possible essences, which should be reckoned eternal and necessary—for they are found in the ideal region of the possibles—that is to say, in the Divine understanding. God, then, is not the author of the essences so long as they are but possibilities—but there is nothing actual which He has not decreed and given existence to; and He has permitted evil because it is enveloped in the best plan which is found in the region of possibles, and that Divine wisdom could not fail to have chosen."—*Essay*, Art. 338.

5. Now, it were a hardy thing in a creature of such bounded observation and faculties as man, to deny, that, for aught he knows, this may be. We do not want to dogmatize any one into the theory of Leibnitz; and we think he advances it with a degree of positive confidence in its truth wherewith we cannot sympathize. We must regard it as an unproved, but still we hold it as available for a precious service in theology, if it be not a disproved hypothesis. We think that Leibnitz has undertaken more than man is able for, in undertaking the burden of its proof; but we also think that the antagonist of Leibnitz would undertake more than man is able for, were he to undertake the burden of its disproof. For the accomplishment either of the one or of the other, we must have a power of discovery remounting to the first origin of things in the eternity that is behind, and reaching to their final consummation in the eternity before us. In these circumstances, all we can say of the optimism of Leibnitz is, that we do not know. But this is tantamount to saying, that we do not know the evil in the universe to be inconsistent with the goodness and absolute perfection of its Author. Hypothesis as it is, it establishes no positive addition

to the truths of religion; yet, hypothesis though it be, it is all-triumphant in disarming those objections to religion which infidelity has fetched from this quarter of contemplation, and whereby it would charge the sin and the misery which abound in nature on the non-existence of nature's God.

6. At the conclusion of his Essay, there is a very fine and felicitous illustration of the system, strongly characteristic of Leibnitz, and exhibiting all the force and comprehension of his genius, replete with the phraseology, as well as the conceptions of lofty science. It is given in the form of a dialogue, in the progress of which the inquirer is at length referred to the goddess Minerva, for the solution of those doubts and mysteries by which his spirit had been agitated. The puzzle was, how to reconcile with the wisdom and goodness of Jupiter, the appearance of such a monster in our world as Sextus Tarquinius, the last of the Roman kings. He is introduced into a palace, where he is presented with the pictures, or rather admitted to a perusal of the history of all possible worlds—had these worlds been realized. He had previously been reasoned into the conviction that Tarquin was justly chargeable with the guilt of his own wickedness—notwithstanding the foreknowledge of Apollo, and the absolute pre-ordination of Jupiter and the Fates. And the object of the remaining argument is, to reconcile the existence of such enormous iniquities with the actual optimism of that world in which these iniquities had been perpetrated. At this point of the dialogue, Tarquin is conceived not yet to have entered on his guilty career, but to have consulted the oracle as to his future destiny, and to have been forewarned that, if he went back to Rome, he should be preferred to its sovereignty, and, along with this, precipitated into the most odious and disgraceful crimes—whereas, if he renounced Rome, the Fates would weave for him other destinies, and he become wise and happy. The actual Tarquin resisted not the temptation of a crown; but there were other ideal worlds, each having a Tarquin, with the same history up to the period of consulting the oracle, and a different history subsequent to that period. And the design is to show that the actual world is the best, notwithstanding the disfiguration which it suffered from the atrocities of the actual Tarquin. "You have learned geometry in your youth," said Minerva to Theodore, "like all other well-educated Greeks. You know, then, that when the conditions of a required point are not enough to determine it, this gives rise to an infinity of

points, all of which fall into what the geometers term a locus; and this locus, at least, which is often a line, will be determinate. It is thus that you might figure a regular series of worlds, all of them enveloping the case in question, but with circumstances and effects which vary in each different world. But if you suppose a world which differs from the actual one only in one definite thing and its consequences, there is a certain determinate world that will answer the supposition. These worlds are all here, at least in ideal representation. I will show you some, where you shall find not quite the same Sextus that you have seen (that is impossible, for he always carries with him that which is to make him what he should be), but approximate Sextuses, who should have all that you already know of the true Sextus, though not all which is already in him that you do not perceive, nor of course all that shall afterwards happen to him. You will find in one world a very happy and exalted Sextus; in another, a Sextus contented with a moderate fortune—Sextuses, in short, of every species, and in an infinity of fashions.

“Upon this, the goddess conducted Theodore into one of the apartments. When there, it was no longer an apartment, but a world—‘Solemque suum, sua sidera norat.’ By the order of Pallas Dodona, the place of the oracle was made to appear, with the temple of Jupiter, and Sextus coming forth of it professing that he would obey the god. He went thence to a city like Corinth, placed between two seas. He there bought a garden; in cultivating it he found a treasure, became rich, was loved and respected, and at length died at a great age, the idol of the whole city. Theodore saw his whole life, as if with the glance of an eye, and in theatrical representation. There was a volume of writings in this apartment. Theodore could not refrain from asking the contents of it. It is the history, replied the goddess, of the world that we are now visiting. It is the book of its destinies. You have seen a number on the forehead of Sextus. Search in that book for the place which is marked by it. Theodore searched, and found the history of Sextus in greater fulness than he had seen it in the panorama. Put your finger on whatever line you please, said Pallas, and you shall see represented effectually in all its detail what this line but describes in the gross. He obeyed, and there were made to appear all the particulars in that portion of the life of Sextus. They then passed into another apartment, and there saw another world, another

book, another Sextus, who, coming out of the apartment, and resolved to obey Jupiter, went into Thrace. He there espoused the daughter of the king, his only child, and succeeded him. He is adored by his subjects. They went into other chambers, and always saw new scenes.

“The apartments are so ranged as to form a pyramid. They become always finer towards the summit, and represented finer worlds. They came at last to the highest, which terminated the pyramid, and was the finest of all—for the pyramid had a commencement, but no end. It had a summit, but not a base—for it went downward to infinity. This was (as the goddess explained it) because in an infinity of worlds there is one the best of all—otherwise God would not have been determined to create any of them—and there is none below it which is not less perfect. Therefore it descends to infinity. Theodore, on entering this highest apartment, was thrown into ecstasy—he required succour from the goddess. A drop of divine liquor on his tongue restored him. He was transported with joy. We are now in the true and actual world (said the goddess) and you are at the acmé of happiness. See what Jupiter has prepared for you, if you continue faithful in his service. Behold Sextus such as he is, and such as he actually shall be. He sallies forth of the temple in a rage, despising the counsel of the gods. He goes to Rome, there puts all into disorder, violates the wife of his friend. See him banished with his father, beaten, miserable. Had Jupiter put in at this place, a happy Sextus at Corinth, or a king in Thrace, it would no longer have been this world. And meanwhile, he could not but have chosen this world, which surpasses in perfection all the rest, and forms the apex of the pyramid—else Jupiter would have renounced his wisdom, banished me, me who am his daughter. You see that my father has not made Sextus wicked—he was so from all eternity—and he was always so freely. He has done nothing but award him existence, what his wisdom could not refuse to that world in which he was comprehended. He has made him pass from the region of the possible to that of the actual being. The crime of Sextus subserves great events. It makes Rome free—there springs from it a great empire which will give great examples. But that is nothing to the total value of the world, of which you will admire the perfection, when, after a happy passage from this mortal state to a better, the gods should have rendered you capable of knowing it.”—*Essay*, Art. 414-417.

7. Leibnitz and others seem to think that they have effected a positive reconciliation. We are satisfied with their attempt, though we think that they have effected no more than a hypothetical reconciliation of the existence of evil with the system of optimism, or with the perfection of the character of God. According to his view, God is not properly the author of evil, any more than He is the author either of His own understanding, or of the necessary and eternal and immutable truths which have residence there and are for ever present to its contemplation. He did not will the properties of figure, or the relations of quantity and number—and in like manner, is it conceived that He did not will that countless infinity of objects which have no other being than in the region of possibilities. In this region there exist in idea all possible universes; and by an act of voluntary and creative power, it is affirmed that God made to exist in reality that one universe which is the best. There is evil, it is further imagined, essentially implicated even in this best form of a universe—but should this, for the sake of a fancied improvement, be done away or converted into an opposite good—it would throw us back to some other of the possible forms, some different economy under which less of good on the whole would be produced than in the actual system of things. This evidently supposes that, in addition to the logical and the mathematical and the moral necessities which it is impossible for God to annul, there are also physical necessities which it is alike impossible for Him to annul. He could not by this hypothesis expunge the evil that it is in our actual universe, but at the expense of a shortcoming from the maximum of good that is rendered by it. We cannot positively affirm this to be true—but we can at least say that, for aught we know, it may be true. If we cannot assert, neither can we, by any reason or by any knowledge of ours, overturn it. It seems to be one of those doctrines which lie equally beyond the reach of confident asseveration or confident denial. We cannot refute the dogma of certain uncontrollable necessities, in virtue of which, if one event shall occur, a less good on the whole must ensue, or a maximum of good be rendered impossible. But if so, neither can we refute the optimism of Leibnitz.

8. It will be perceived how it is, that the optimists may avail themselves of this theory, to soften all that is hard or obnoxious in those doctrines which seem to charge upon God that He is the author of evil. He did not will the infinite possible forms of universe into their state of possibility, any more than He

willed the properties of figure or quantity into their state of trueness. He only willed one of these forms into its state of actual existence—and He did it on the principle of its being that form of an economy for a universe, under which the greatest good could be rendered upon the whole. It was only in that creative exercise by which He called our present universe from the possible to the actual, that there was a forthgoing of will on the part of God—and He is not the author of the possible which exists only in idea, but the author only of the actual which He has made to exist in real and positive being. Now it is of prime importance to remark for the vindication of character, that, in choosing the best possible form of a universe, the evil enveloped in that form was not the thing chosen. The thing chosen was the maximum of good—the *summum bonum* of a creation, which, of all possible creations, was the best. This directs us to an object wholly distinct, nay, opposite to the evil that is in nature, as the proper and terminating object on which the will of the Almighty laid hold in the act of creation. Had He created our universe because of the evil that is in it, this would have fastened one character on the Maker of all things. But if He have created our universe because, in spite of the evil that is in it, it is the best of all the possible varieties that were in the view of His infinite understanding, this attaches to Him another and a contrary character. He is to be estimated, not by the evil that belongs to our universe, but by the maximum of good that belongs to it. The evil, in fact, may properly be said not to have sprung from His will at all. It exists actually only because it existed possibly—and it was translated from the state of possible to that of actual, not for its sake, but for the sake only of that *summum bonum* wherewith it lay implicated in the best possible form of a universe. At this rate, the evil, we should observe, may be viewed as not chargeable on God at all—but properly on the form which He translated from the possible to the actual, in the exercise of greatest goodness, because for the production of the greatest good. On the strength of this remark we may perhaps understand Leibnitz when he makes Minerva say that “my father has not made Sextus wicked—he was so from all eternity. He has done nothing but award him existence, which his wisdom could not refuse to that world in which he was comprehended.” He elsewhere makes a distinction between the permissive and the productive will of God. The object of the productive in this instance is the maximum of

good. The permissive has a reference to the evil. It is by the productive and not the permissive that the character of God is to be estimated. "And the proper object of the permissive will is not that which is permitted, but the permission itself"—a permission, not for the sake of the evil, but for the sake of its accompanying good. "Et permissivæ voluntatis objectum proprium non id est quod permittitur, sed permissio ipsa."—Leibnitz, *Causa Dei asserta*, &c., Art. 28.

9. Now all this is distinctly applicable to the vindication of the common theological system. The doctrine of that entire and universal sovereignty which is ascribed to God, would seem to make Him more expressly chargeable with the evil, both moral and physical, which abounds in the universe. But ere this can be sustained as conclusive, our antagonists must prove that this evil is not essentially implicated in a universe of the best possible form. We do not affirm this as a truth. But we state it as a probability that, even in this humble and unpretending capacity, is altogether of force enough to silence the objection, and so leave theology to its own proper evidence. But there is another conception involved in the theory of Leibnitz, which we consider as still more fitted to do away all that is harsh or revolting from the aspect of our theological creed. We do not need, any more than in the former case, to vouch in positive terms for the opinion. Enough, as we have already said, that it is beyond the reach of any positive refutation. In which case it will accomplish the only service that we require at its hand—even that not of supplying a dogma of its own, but of setting a difficulty which attaches to another dogma at rest.

10. This conception has its source in a fancy or invention of the schoolmen; and which has at least a very striking if not altogether satisfying illustration to recommend it. What we allude to is the privative character of evil—inasmuch as the formal cause of it is conceived to have no efficiency. Evil is supposed by them to consist in privation—and hence the schoolmen call the cause of evil "deficiente." Hence the quarter to which we should look for the origin of evil, is the essential defect of the creature—arising from the necessary limitation to which, as creatures, all of them are subject. In short, it is in morals what cold is in physics—a thing of negative quality altogether—that is, as cold, instead of being a positive agent of opposite properties to heat, is regarded as the absence or the negation of heat—so sin is regarded as but the negation of virtue or right-

eousness. "Everything," says Leibnitz, "that is purely positive or absolute is a perfection, and every imperfection proceeds from limitation—that is to say, is of a privative character." At this rate, God is regarded as the cause of all the perfections, and limitations or privations as resulting from an original imperfection in creatures, which bounds what is termed their receptivity. This is finely illustrated by the *vis inertiae* in matter, and its effects on a loaded vessel, which the river causes to go with more or less slowness, in proportion to the weight that it carries. Its velocity comes from the river; but the retardation, which bounds this velocity, comes from the cargo. And thus too it is imaged of the creature that it is the cause of sin, though but a deficient cause; and that its errors and wicked inclinations spring from privation. This agrees with the sentiment of Augustine, that God hardens, not by giving what is positively evil to the soul, but because the effect of His good impression is limited by the resistance of the soul, and by the circumstances which contribute to that resistance; so that He does not give it all the good which could surmount its evil. "Nec (he says) ab illo erogatur aliquid quo homo fit deterior, sed tantum quo fit melior non erogatur." But had God wished to do more, He behoved either to make creatures of another nature, or to work miracles for changing their nature—neither of which the actual plan of things, as being the best, admitted of. This would just be requiring that the current of a river should be made more rapid than its declivity admitted of, or that the vessels should be less laden that they might go forward with the greater velocity. The limitation, or the original imperfection of creatures, causes that even the best plan of a universe is not exempted from certain evils; but which will subserve a greater good. There are certain disorders in the parts which bring out into striking relief the beauty of the whole, even as certain dissonances in music, when put in rightly, render the harmony more exquisite.

11. We may now at least apprehend the theory of Leibnitz. We do not say that we ought to be convinced by it. There is a great accordance between it and the sentiments of Augustine, and others of the ancient Fathers. It is impossible not to be reminded, too, of these verses in St. James—"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and

cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Sin is thus made to proceed not from any positive quality imparted by the Creator, but from the defect which necessarily attaches to the creature, and which can only be supplied by the descent of good influences from above. At this rate, God is conceived to be no more the author of sin, than the sun in the firmament is of the cold in ice. This cold, too, is but a mere thing of privation—implying not the existence of any force in active opposition to caloric, not even the total absence of caloric, but only the deficient supply of it. So far from this coldness of the ice being due to the sun, it is to the sun it owes that it is not much colder—for from him it has derived all the caloric by which it is raised above the state of absolute zero; and from the same quarter alone can receive those further supplies by which its heart of stone may be taken out of it, and its present intractable nature be wholly done away. There is a precise analogy here with the view which we have just endeavoured to explain of moral evil in its relation to God.

12. At the conclusion of Leibnitz's "Essay on the Goodness of God and the Liberty of Man," &c., we have an admirable *précis* of his system, intituled, "Abrégé de la Controverse réduite à des Argumens en forme"—"Abridgment of the Controversy formally reduced into its Arguments."

13. Let us conclude the exposition of this theory with a short extract from another treatise of Leibnitz, written in Latin, and in which he has given to his system the advantage of all that laconic distinctness and force that are characteristic of the language. It is entitled, "Causa Dei asserta per justitiam ejus, cum ceteris ejus perfectionibus, cunctisque actionibus conciliatam"—"The Cause of God vindicated by the reconciliation of His justice with his other perfections, and with all His actions."

14. The following may be regarded as a succinct expression of his Theory on the origin of evil:—"Nimirum (ut facili exemplo utamur) cum flumen naves secum defert, velocitatem illis imprimit, sed ipsorum inertia limitatam ut quæ (cæteris paribus) oneratiores sunt, tardius feruntur. Ita fit ut celeritas sit a flumine, tarditas ab onere; positivum a virtute impellentis privativum ab inertia impulsu."

"Eodem plane modo Deum dicendum est creaturis perfectionem tribuere sed quæ receptivitate ipsarum limitatur; ita

bona erunt a Divino vigore, mala a topore creaturæ.”—*Causa Dei asserta*, Stat. 71, 72.

“Doubtless (that we may use an easy example), when a river carries ships along with it, it impresses a velocity upon them, but a velocity that is limited by their own inertia—so that (*cæteris paribus*) those which were laden are borne down more slowly. The thing is so, that the velocity cometh from the river, the slowness from the cargo—what is positive from the virtue of the impellent, what is privative from the inertia of the thing impelled.

“In the same manner, plainly, it is to be said, that God bestoweth perfection upon His creatures, but a perfection limited by their receptivity—so that what is good cometh from the strength of God, what is evil from the torpor of the creature.”

15. Such being the constitution of the creature, and for aught we can say to the contrary, his necessary constitution, as also for aught we can say to the contrary, the constitution the best adapted to the general good—God may have called it into being, not because He willed the imperfection which arose from it, but because He willed that best possible form of a universe in which it was enveloped. God chose the actual universe, not because of the evil that was in it, but because of the maximum of good which in spite of that evil was effected by its creation. The object of His choice, of what Leibnitz calls His *voluntas inclinatoria*, was the good the greatest good, and not the evil the collateral evil, that lay essentially implicated with that one universe, which, of all the possible ones that could have been conceived or might have been created, was alone capable of yielding the *summum bonum*, or the maximum of good which God could not but prefer without the forfeiture of His moral perfection. The *voluntas decretoria*, by which He determined to create such a universe as ours, may be in perfect harmony with the most serious abhorrence of evil, which in itself, he never could have desired, but only permitted in virtue of its connexion with that which, as a Being of supreme benevolence, He could not but desire—even the greatest possible amount of good. The *voluntas decretoria*, then, in virtue of which evil exists, is compatible with the *voluntas inclinatoria*—in virtue of which God desires that evil may be combated, may be overcome, may be destroyed; and that all the energies of moral nature may be aroused to the uttermost against it. Our business, whether as ministers or men, is not with the *voluntas decretoria*, but to carry into effect

the designs of the *voluntas inclinatoria*—or, in other words, to enter on a war of extermination with all evil, whether physical or moral, to allay suffering to the uttermost, and resist sin to the uttermost. Under the system of Leibnitz, which for aught we know may be true, there is room both for a *voluntas decretoria* that has originated or rather permitted the evil, and for an honest *voluntas inclinatoria* bent on the extinction of it. How honest in his opinion this last will is, Leibnitz expresses in the following sentence:—"Quam seria autem hæc voluntas sit Deus ipse declaravit cum tanta asseveratione dixit—nolle mortem peccatoris, velle omnes salvos, odisse peccatum"—"How sincere this will is, God himself hath declared, when He said with such asseveration that He willed not the death of sinners, that He willed all men to be saved, that He hated sin!" Our business, then, is to act as fellow-workers with God, in being the ministers of His *voluntas inclinatoria*; and to feel that we enlist in His cause when we enlist in opposition to moral evil. For this purpose we should bring all the moral forces within our reach to bear on the native apathy of the human spirit; and, knowing that it is only in virtue of a good and perfect influence from above that we can be aroused from our sluggishness, we should add to the earnestness of our endeavours the earnestness of our prayers. There is a plain path set before us which it is competent for humanity to walk in; and instruments put into our hand which it is competent for humanity to wield. It should neither mystify nor paralyze the task of a Christian, though told that without God he can do nothing—when furthermore told that with God working in him he is able to do all things. It only leads him to superadd devotion to diligence, to seek for light and strength from the upper sanctuary, and with the light and strength which are given to set forth on the walk of a bidden obedience. The obscurities of that transcendental speculation which now engages us, are somewhat like the clouds that overspread the firmament above—which, though they intercept the sight of the sun, still admit the light of day to circulate at large among our lowly dwelling-places. And so, while the Father of lights is Himself shrouded in mystery, there has enough of radiance descended from His throne to shed a visibility over all the doings and all the duties of our pilgrimage below—enough, not to reveal the secrets of Heaven, but enough to guide the footsteps of the humble wayfarer thitherward.

16. We do not bid any adopt this theory; but we ask, on the

other hand, if they are able to overturn it. It may not be accompanied by such evidences and marks of truth, as may entitle it to be received. But neither may it be accompanied by such marks of falsehood as should condemn it to be rejected. There is many a hypothesis in this intermediate situation—capable neither of proof nor of disproof—and yet logically, we think, of important use in theology.

17. We confess ourselves to have been charmed and impressed by this adventurous speculation. Yet it is against our whole philosophy of evidence, whether in theology or in any other subject, to sustain the beauty of a speculation as a substitute for its tried and ascertained truth. Our respect for the findings of experience so overpasses our relish for the fancies of human ingenuity—we are so impressed by the sacredness of that limit which divides the knowable from the unknowable—we feel so much how daring and illegitimate it is to pass beyond into that forbidden territory which, in the absence of observation or testimony, we can only people at best with specious imaginations of our own—that our best object in presenting these views of Leibnitz on a theme so transcendental as the origin of evil, would be to effect any positive conviction in their favour. It is for a different purpose from that of dogmatizing any into his opinion that we have now brought it forward. We do not want them so to estimate its proofs as to pronounce that it is true. It will be quite enough for us that we cannot so dispose of its plausibilities as to pronounce that it is false. Even in this ambiguous condition, it will be found to be not without its use—and though in itself but a specious hypothesis, yet be of substantial service to our cause.

18. A conjecture, then, a mere conjecture, at once unproved and unrefuted, and alike unsusceptible of both, may be of most effective influence in the business of argumentation. It may be of no force in the upholding of any position—and yet be all-powerful in neutralizing the objection to it of adversaries. The origin of evil is a topic that has been wielded by infidels in opposition to the cause of religion, as making against the justice or benevolence of God. The defenders of this cause may not be able to offer a positive solution of the difficulty—yet of the multitude, if there be but one likely solution, or even one that cannot be disproved, this is enough to relieve the cause of that discredit which antagonists would lay upon it. It may have nought but an assumption to rest upon, an assumption which we can allege no reason nor experience for—yet enough in all sound

logic for the purpose of defence, if we can allege no reason nor experience against it. A conjecture is made, which, if admitted to be true, would reconcile the existence of a certain phenomenon with the character of God. We may not be able to demonstrate that it is true. But as little may our opponents be able to demonstrate that it is false. In this state, we cannot say of the thing conjectured that we know it to be true—but we can say that for aught we know it may be true. This is not enough for the establishment of a dogma. But it is enough for the displacing of an objection. And thus a hypothesis of far less imposing semblance than that of Leibnitz, though not sufficient to warrant its own absolute deliverance on the origin of evil, may suffice to disarm this mysterious theme of all that hostile application wherewith it has been turned to the prejudice of the faith.

19. The truth is, that an affirmation from the mouth of an enemy, and the counter affirmation from the mouth of a friend wherewith it has been met, may both of them relate to a subject placed beyond the limit which separates our known from our unknown. The one nullifies the other. Both may be expunged; and, as in mathematics, when equals are taken from unequals the remainders may be unequal. In other words, after the termination of such a contest, the proper evidences of religion may remain in all their native superiority and force. A hostile argument had been conjured up by one party from the dim and shadowy region of invisibles; and had been laid by one in its own likeness, or by the defensive argument of another party raised from the same quarter and fashioned of the same materials. A hypothetical argument on the side of religion, though it should give birth to no positive conclusion, might at least match and so extinguish the hypothetical argument opposed to it. It is at best but an aerial contest on a *terra incognita*, which, after its settlement, leaves all the supports of our faith that are planted on the *terra firma* or *terra cognita*, in a state of as unshaken strength and solidity as before. Such is the nature and such the effect of the controversy on the origin of evil. It is altogether a spectral warfare, stirred by one airy element, and dispersed by another—after which the real and palpable evidences of religion may be seen in all the uninjured strength which originally and properly belongs to them—the natural reposing, as at the first, on the lucid indications of design which are in us and around us—the Christian, firmly seated on the testimony of our fellow-

men, or the still more familiar depositions of our own consciousness.

20. Therefore it is that conjectures, even mere conjectures, if only beyond the reach of positive refutation, are of use in theology. When their object is demonstrative, they may well be regarded as idle speculations. But when their object is defensive, they are worthy of being retained, though for no other service than to neutralize the idle speculations of infidelity. This is their proper function—and to the thorough discharge of it they are altogether adequate. Like meets with like; and the result of this contest between adverse but homogeneous elements, is that both at length are placed *hors de combat*. The ultimate fruit of the effervescence is to clear off the whole matter from theology, so as to disencumber the science of it altogether. What is sound or substantial remains; while the arguments on both sides of some mystic speculation which at one time exercised all spirits, and took universal possession of the schools, pass into oblivion among the evanescent shadows and impracticable subtleties of a bygone age.

21. We have not all the confidence of Leibnitz himself in his own solution of the darkest enigma that ever exercised the human faculties. We hold that in our present state it is unsolvable. But though we cannot pronounce his explanation to be perfect, yet we esteem it to be profitable—deferring, as we do, to the wisdom and soundness which lie in his following remarks: “We have explained enough, when we have shown that there are cases where some disorder in a part is necessary to the production of the greatest order on the whole. But M. Bayle, it appears, demands a little too much. He wishes that we should show him in detail how evil is linked with the best possible plan of a universe. This would be a perfect explanation of the phenomenon. But we undertake not to give it; and what is more, we are not obliged to give it—a thing impossible in our present state. It is enough for us to make the observation that nothing hinders but that a certain particular evil may be linked with that which, viewed in its totality, is the best. *This imperfect explanation, and which leaves something to be discovered in another life, is sufficient for a solution of objections, but not for a comprehension of the thing.*”

22. There is a striking illustration on this subject, which seems to be quite incidentally given by Leibnitz, as it is all contained within the limits of a parenthesis, or at most of a sen-

tence. He is speaking of our disadvantage for observation from our seeing but a part and not the whole universe—whereas, whenever admitted to see any individual piece of mechanism, not in separate parts but completely, we find a contrivance and a beauty which exceed imagination. There is experimental proof of this in organic bodies, as a bird, or a quadruped, or a vegetable. If restricted to the view of one small part or operation, such as a bone, or the pile of a feather, or a bit of membrane, or nail, or muscle, or tendon, or root, what a meaningless thing it would look; and how utterly devoid of all apparent utility or gracefulness! Yet what use and significancy do we behold in each of these parts, when we can comprehensively take in the whole, and see them all united together into one machine or piece of complex symmetry. And it is the same of the universe—that stupendous machine—whereof we only behold a minute and microscopic portion—lost alike in the immensity of its grasp, and in the infinite diversity of its objects and their relations. And when to the littleness of our observation in space, we superadd the littleness of our observation in time, what increased emphasis is given to the lesson! Let us but ascend from the revolution of the planets round the sun to the revolution of the planetary systems around a common centre, and it will appear that we live in the midst of most magnificent periods, to which the life of one individual, and indeed the whole known history of the species, is but a humble and evanescent fraction. We know not what the objects or the scenes in the mighty untravelled distances around us—we know not what the evolutions of the boundless futurity before us. We are beset with mystery and magnitude on every hand—infinitesimals in the midst of undefined vastness—walking in a territory that has no limits—and describing an interval of time that merges at each extreme into the darkness of eternity. There is apparent disorder and derangement in the universe—but this is only to us, with our partial or our ephemeral view of it. To the eye of Him who contains it in the hollow of His hand, and sees its end from its beginning, there may be no disorder. He views it in all its completeness; and He alone is the competent witness of all its harmony. It is surely an important experience on this question that every completed thing which we are permitted to observe, possesses within itself a complete harmony. Each part is in most perfect keeping with the whole; and nothing can be changed, for the purpose of being mended, without injury and

disturbance to a mechanism otherwise perfect and admirable. Is it not therefore our wisdom to suspend a problem which we so obviously are not in a condition to resolve—to wait with humble contentment and confidence for the final issue and development of all things, for that day of manifestation, when we shall see God as He is, and know even as we are known?

23. And, without waiting for the consummation of all things, we find, even in our brief experience, that evil is frequently the parent and the precursor of good—that, like as fatigue gives to repose its sweetness, so adversity gives to virtue its elevation—that prosperity yields a greater satisfaction because of the precedent ills and vicissitudes which often usher it into being—above all, that by painful conflict with the physical, the moral may be cradled into maturity, and both with nations and individuals obtain a lustre and a strength which no other discipline gives rise to. We have only to imagine the same law to have place and fulfilment in the general history of the universe, which we ourselves witness exemplified in so many of its details; and then should we look on the sufferings of the present state as but the throes and the portents of some great coming enlargement going before, and even working out a far more exceeding happiness and glory to those who are exercised thereby. We do not say, that upon any observation of ours, we can found such a hypothesis as shall give to nature the full and positive assurance of a surpassing compensation for evil in the present system of things: But it is at least such a hypothesis as should suspend, if it do not solve, the objections of the infidel—and leave to the proper evidences of religion, whether natural or revealed, all that inherent and native strength which originally belongs to them.

24. We cannot take leave of this subject without adverting for one moment to the writings of Leibnitz; and to a certain peculiar interest and charm which they possess in relation to Theology. There is, in some of his philosophic speculations, an extravagance which we very much regret, because of the general discredit which it has laid on him, and which extends even to his sounder and better views. It has been said of Thomson, that he looked at everything with the eye of a poet. We would say of Leibnitz that he looked at everything with the eye of a lofty academic—and in virtue of which he presents us, not with a substantially different orthodoxy from the Fathers of the Reformation—but he recommends it to minds of a certain cast, pre-

sented as it is by him in the complexion, and couched in the phraseology of general science. We know nothing more delightful than the respectful notices, made by this distinguished *savant*, of the Augsburg Confession, of Luther and Calvin and even our own Samuel Rutherford. There is a refreshing contrast here, with the whole tone and spirit of our more recent Philosophy; and in this age of little men, who look to our Theology as altogether an ignoble speculation, we feel an abundant recompense for their contempt, when we behold the homage that was rendered to it by the colossal intellects of other days.

CHAPTER III.

USE OF HYPOTHESIS IN THEOLOGY.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF A SPECIAL PROVIDENCE AND THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

1. THE use of a Hypothesis in Theology is not to establish any proposition, but, which is a very different service, to vindicate it. The proposition in question may be altogether sustained on appropriate evidences of its own; and the hypothesis which has been conjured up in its defence may add nothing affirmative to these evidences. But though it makes no accession either to their number or their strength, it does much if it but throw a shield of protection over them; and this it does when it displaces or neutralizes the hostile argument which has been devised for their overthrow.

2. This important function in the business of intellectual warfare can be discharged by a hypothesis, though in itself of no higher character than an unsupported imagination; and that, to a much greater extent in theology than is commonly imagined. We have already offered one specimen of its efficacy in repelling an objection that has been made against the theological system in general. We now proceed to another in which we hold it to be alike effectual for the vindication of a specific doctrine in theology—even the doctrine or rather doctrines of a special providence and the efficacy of prayer.

3. We select these doctrines all the more willingly, that, if we succeed in our proposed vindication of them, it will serve to counteract a tendency which is very prevalent, though incident chiefly to minds of a speculative and philosophical habitude, and

to rectify, in fact, the whole character of their theism. The tendency of which we speak is to regard the Deity as a principle, rather than as a person. They look to Him more in the light of a physical energy than of a living agent—of one whose pervading force moves and upholds and regulates the whole economy of nature throughout its countless diversities of operation; but not of one who thinks, and wills, and purposes, and is affected as our minds are by the impulse of emotions that vary with the objects which we contemplate. When we look upward to the Supreme and Eternal Spirit, we lose, in the thought of a great and comprehensive agency, those features which serve either to individualize the character or to liken the Divinity at all to ourselves. And certainly, long after we have been familiarized to the conception of the Divinity as a power, and even long after this conception has been fortified within us by the doctrines and the demonstrations of theism—still we may be utter strangers to the habit of viewing Him as a person. And so, with the full homage of our theoretical recognitions to the Godhead, may we be really and practically in a state of atheism.

4. There is one obvious effect of thus ranking Him, even though we should assign to Him the supreme rank among the great physical powers and principles of our universe. That which we hold to be the right and the rational proceeding in regard to any of these inferior powers, we shall hold to be the right and the rational proceeding in regard to the Deity. Take the power of gravitation for an example. We give the homage of our admiration to its universality. We look abroad with delight, and at the same time with a certain sense of loftiness in our spirit, on the wide and beneficent range of its influences in nature. It is with ecstasy, but an ecstasy altogether philosophic, that, emanating as it were from the fountain-head of this simple but sublime principle, we behold the goodly train of phenomena that result from it. We have given to it the name of a law; and feel somewhat of the deference that is rendered to a mighty jurisdiction, when we observe how it sends forth its mandates to the very outskirts of the universe—so that distant and innumerable worlds lie within the sweep of its ample operation. But while we thus behold it as if seated on a throne of ideal majesty, we should never think of addressing it as a conscious and a living agent. We should hold it to be idolatry, did we offer to it the worship of any adoration, and a more abject

superstition still, did we lift the voice of supplication at its shrine—did we ask it, for example, to modify any of its own processes, or to suspend for some caprice and convenience of ours a constancy which heretofore has been unexcepted and unalterable.

5. Now let us conceive this way of viewing the principle of gravitation to be transferred to the principle of a Deity. We might readily award to this last a power of the same force and the same unity—the same pervading agency, simple perhaps in its origin, but most munificent and most prolific in its beneficial results—the same mathematical certainty of guidance and direction over all the processes of nature—and the same unfailing necessity of movement, which it were utterly hopeless should ever at the forthputting of human desire be changed or arrested in its course. The two principles are viewed as alike in regard to their absolute control over all the subordinate phenomena, and alike both as to the sureness of these phenomena and the inflexibility of that moving force from which they have emanated. We may perceive how natural the transition is, then, by which God is regarded as a principle, and ceases to be regarded as a person. The admiration may be heightened into a sort of intellectual adoration. The delight wherewith one beholds the utilities of a law in nature, may, when we reflect on the Divinity as its supreme law, be mingled with a sort of still and contemplative gratitude. But it were deemed a monstrous violation of all philosophy to proceed any further—to think, for example, of looking for any interference in our own special behalf with a process that is deemed to be unchangeable, or of thwarting by the expression of human desire any one operation of that great mechanism which is animated throughout by an unchangeable Deity. And hence the wide imagination that it is the part of man in such a universe as this to submit to God but not to supplicate, to ponder but not to pray.

6. We may here perceive how the extreme of superstition stands contrasted with the extreme of philosophical impiety. The one would personify all nature, and treat with its various elements and powers as if they were so many distinct and living agents, and offer incense to the imagined spirits that reside in the air, and the ocean, and the thunder, and the luminaries of heaven; and fancy them as yielding to the entreaties of their worshippers, and with all the spontaneity of beings that had a will and could be prevailed over by the urgency of human solicitation, that they

would vacillate in their courses at the mere utterance of a desire on the part of those who had propitiated their favour. Now in this our enlightened day we stand at the distance of many centuries from such a grovelling imagination. Nature has been purged, as it were, of all those mythologies by which it was conceived to be peopled throughout its various departments. The torch of philosophy has put them like so many spectres to flight; and the disciples of our modern science, in proportion as they pursue their investigations into the processes of the universe, find more and more in them of unfaltering constancy. In regard to all the secondary causes, the study of which is the business of philosophy, they have unlearned the whole superstition of other days; but here lies their error, that in ascending from these to the first cause, they have unlearned the whole religion of other days. They may ascribe to this paramount and ruling power both an intellect and a will; but still in the main it is as a physical energy that they regard Him. They look on the Supreme Principle to be in every way as inflexible and sure as they have uniformly found of the subordinate principles; and that He is as unfit to be addressed by a petition or the expression of a wish, as any fancied spirit that may reside in a volcano or a storm, or in any other department of Nature's vast machinery—that the cries of urgency and distress are of no more avail when sent up to Him who wields the elements of the world, as if they were only lifted to the elements themselves—that the same unchangeableness which pervades all nature is also the characteristic of nature's God: And so they deem to be an aberration from sound philosophy, both the doctrine of a special providence and the observation of prayer.

7. Now this is regarding God as if He were a principle; but it is not treating or regarding Him as if he were a person. It might be well to think a little of the respective ways in which we make a principle and a person subservient to some object that our hearts are set upon. We can turn gravitation to the accomplishment of our purposes. We can avail ourselves of it as a moving force. We can put a piece of mechanism in its way, on which, without any such thing as a request on our part, it will act as an impellent. We can bring a wheel to a stream of flowing water; and then we do not bid the impulse, but the impulse takes place not in obedience to any voice of ours, but in obedience to the uniformity of Nature's secondary causes. Now we go differently to work, when, instead of employing a

principle, we employ a person to turn the wheel for us. There may in this case be the authority of a bidding, or there may be the earnestness of a request, or there may be the imploring cry of a humble petition, that we may prevail with him to render us some necessary service. We must see at once the distinction that there is between the two styles of proceeding—how it is in one way that man acts upon inanimate things, that he might bind them into subserviency; and in another that he acts upon his fellows in society—nor should we be any more at a loss to understand wherein it is that the difference lies between the mere regarding of God as a principle, and the regard with the corresponding treatment of Him as a person.

8. And it must be obvious, that we can in no way avail ourselves of God as a principle, in the manner that we can the secondary the subordinate principles which be around us. We cannot make use of Him as we do of the energy of gravitation. We cannot, if I may dare thus to express myself, we cannot manipulate with the powers and the processes of the Divinity. We cannot put forth our hand as we do on the surrounding materialism, and turn to mechanical account any of those physical energies of God, which are all that they who view Him as a principle merely are disposed to ascribe to Him. And if therefore we cannot take the other way of gaining Him over to any of our objects or desires; if we cannot bring a suasion or a power of supplication and entreaty to bear upon Him, as we do upon our fellows in society; if, beyond the reach as He is of any mechanical, He be alike beyond the reach of any moral application that we can possibly make to go forth upon the Deity—then does there lie a hopeless and impassable barrier between us and Him who is called the Father of our spirits; and, alike excluded from any use that we can desire to make of Him as a principle, and from any more direct service that we might seek to obtain from Him as a person, the Parent of the human family stands at a cheerless and impracticable distance from all His children—seeing that if viewed as a physical energy still they can turn Him to no account, or viewed as a living being still they can hold with Him no fellowship.

9. Nevertheless, let the antipathies of philosophy be what they may, we hold that there is no repugnance between the soundest principles of philosophy and the simple credence of humble and unlettered piety upon this question.

10. Prayer, and the answer of prayer—according to the po-

pular, and we shall even say the natural understanding—are simply the preferring of a request upon the one side, and compliance with that request upon the other. Man applies, God complies. Man asks a favour, God bestows it. These are conceived to be the two terms of a real interchange that takes place between the parties—the two terms of a sequence, in fact, whereof the antecedent is a prayer lifted up from earth, and the consequent is the fulfilment of that prayer in virtue of a mandate from heaven.

11. We must not disguise it, that this view of prayer is the object of a strong philosophical antipathy, as implying a perpetual invasion on those established and general laws of nature which are conceived to be unchangeable. It is painfully offensive to a mind habituated to the investigation of causes, to admit of any fitful or capricious deviation from the march and regularity of those magnificent progressions which in its view compose the history of our universe. It cannot bear that the certainties of nature and of science should be so intermeddled with; and grievously would it mar the luxury of many a philosophic contemplation, if, instead of a universe whose efficient principles gave birth to their respective trains of subordinate and strictly dependent phenomena, and whose phenomena could all be traced to the operation of fixed and invariable principles, the harmonies of so noble a mechanism were to be thwarted at every turn by the power which lay in the inclinations of man to call forth, through that efficacy which is ascribed to prayer, the special interventions of the Deity. There is no conception which so adheres to the mind of a philosopher as the unaltered, if not the unalterable constancy of nature—or, in other words, the invariableness of that order where, by a process sure as necessity itself, the same antecedents are followed up by the same consequents. He cannot give place in his creed to the efficacy of specific prayer, because he never has observed, and he scarcely can imagine, that the firm concatenation of nature's sequences is in any instance broken. He will acquiesce in the doctrine of a general providence, if by this be meant the primary institution of a great mundane system, left thenceforward to its own evolutions. He will even acquiesce in the significancy of prayer, if by this be meant the homage of our expressed dependence, or if uttered for the sake of a reflex influence on the mind of the petitioner, and not for the sake of a direct influence on the mind of the Divinity. But prayer, in the obvious sense of it, as

a thing of asking on the one side and of receiving upon the other—prayer, as invested with a controlling force over the processes of nature and history—prayer, as an engine by which to shift or to modify the succession of events,—this were disturbing, it is felt, the regularities of the visible creation; and it is a feeling which gives painful disturbance to the enamoured student of these regularities. It is resented as a sort of breach or violence on all that went to regale his imagination and intellect; and thus, amongst the disciples of modern science, amongst physical inquirers—and that whether into the physics of matter or the physics of the mind—it is in dissonance with all their habits of conception when told either of the doctrine of a special providence or of the efficacy of prayer.

12. Though but at the outset of our argument upon this subject, we may as well at once make it known, that our own understanding of prayer is in the plain or popular acceptance of the term. We hold that there is in it a real interchange between earth and heaven; and that for the requests of faith and piety which ascend from the habitations of men below, there do come down actual returns from the upper sanctuary. The asking upon the one side is met by a consent, and so a giving or a performance upon the other. Not all the visions of philosophy, however beauteous, could tempt us to such a freedom with the literalities of Scripture, as to rationalize and explain away prayer, so as to reduce it in fact to a thing of nought. But while in such a cause we should resist the seductions of philosophy, it is also our duty, as far as in us lies, to soften, and if possible do away its prejudices. This of itself is an important object. And what at present inclines us more especially to the prosecution of it is, that we expect in the course of our argument to unfold the harmony which obtains between the spirit of activity and the spirit of devotion—to show that neither of these two supersedes the other; but that while labour without prayer may be utterly abortive, prayer does not supersede but should rather stimulate labour.

13. But let us, as we are able, meet the prepossessions of philosophy upon this subject; and if it may be, reconcile its disciples to that which in fact is the most natural and characteristic expression of piety, and certainly the most powerful engine of religious cultivation.

14. Everything has its philosophy, which is neither more nor less than the *rationale*, or the true state of that thing. It may

perhaps be felt as rather an adventurous expression when we speak of the philosophy of prayer. Nevertheless it is a subject which, like every other possible object of contemplation, admits of academic treatment—the treatment which is proper for it when, on the principle of being all things to all men that we might gain some, the design is if possible to soften the antipathies of academic men.

15. First of all, then, let it be observed that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer but introduces a new sequence to the notice of the mind—whereas it seems to be quarrelled with by philosophy, on the ground that it disturbs and distempers the regularity of all sequences. It may add another law of nature to those which have been formerly observed—but this surely may be done without invasion on the constancy of nature. The general truth may be preserved, that the same result always follows in the same circumstances, although it should be discovered that prayer is one of those influential circumstances by which the result is liable to be modified. The law of magnetism does not repeal, it does not even interrupt the law of gravitation, although the loadstone should keep the iron weight that is suspended beneath it from falling to the ground. There is still a certain and invariable effect produced, in this instance, by the action of two forces, each of which is certain and invariable. There is nothing in this to disturb the actual mechanism of nature—but only to complicate it. Nature, after this discovery, may appear a more complex, but not a more capricious mechanism than before. It may disclose to observation a new train of sequences which must interfere occasionally with other trains—when it will modify, but in no way derange, the workings of a sure and regular economy. What then, if prayer and the fulfilment of prayer are but the two terms of a sequence—having the effect, like every other sequence, to complicate the processes of nature, but not to bring them under the misrule of a fitful and wayward contingency?—insomuch that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer may be no more in conflict than the doctrine of the composition of forces, with the steadfastness of nature and the regularities of a harmonious universe.

16. There is one species of prayer, whereof it may be said that we have daily experience of its efficacy—the request, or as it may be called the prayer, which man in the interchange of business and common life has so often occasion to make to his fellow-men. In urging with our opportunities any brother of

the species, we are not making infringement on the constancy of nature—we are, in fact, proceeding upon that constancy. We are but presuming that nature will persevere in her wonted order—when we are trying the effect of human entreaty upon human feelings. We are then availing ourselves of one of nature's most frequent sequences; and founding our expectations of the future on our recollections and experience of the past. When we make appliance to matter of any physical or mechanic forces, we make an experiment in Natural Philosophy. And when we make appliance to mind of those forces which lie in persuasion or prayer, we may be said to make an experiment in Moral Philosophy. The uniformity of nature is alike recognised in both these processes. The influence of one man's wish upon another man's will is but one law of that moral constitution which God hath ordained; and it is one on which very many of the reciprocities of life are made to turn. The fortune of individuals often hangs upon it; and, could we see into the arcana of courts and of cabinets, we should find that the link which connects the askings of one man with the compliances of another is that on which the greatest movements and evolutions of history are suspended. Yet history has her sure and steady march; and an actual philosophy has been framed out of her materials. The efficacy of prayer between man and man forms one of the component parts of that philosophy. It has its place among the other laws and processes of the moral system, and is as much established in the world of mind as the law of gravitation is in the world of matter. Man does no more violence to the immutabilities of nature, by putting forth with effect his urgent appeals to the pliant and susceptible spirit of a fellow-man, than he does by putting forth his hand with effect to the manifestations of chemistry.

17. Prayer and compliance with prayer form the two terms of a sequence in human society; and is assuredly not more fitted to introduce derangement and disorder into that economy than any other of its laws. It consists as much with the regularity and the sureness of this mechanism that the petition of one man should move the consent of another, as that the beneficence of the one should move the other to gratitude, or that his injustice should move to resentment, or that his wit should move to laughter, or that his virtue should move to esteem, or that his genius should move to admiration. These are so many laws of the human constitution; and that particular law by which it is

that one man's desire, preferred in the form of a request, should move another man to generosity or compassion—so far from invading the regularities of our mental system, is itself one of these regularities. It forms one of the vehicles on which the history of the human species is carried forward—a moving force in that vast and complicated mechanism, all whose evolutions nevertheless have as sure a dependence on the nature and principles of the mechanism, as the movements of the planetary system have on the few simple laws that belong to astronomy. When one man asks and another man bestows, it is in virtue of an established sequence, that still preserves the moral economy of creation in a certain and established order. And multiplied as these sequences are—countless though they be, both in diversity and in number, throughout all the walks of human society—largely mingling and partaking though they do with other laws and other sequences—yet altogether, we behold a progression that is steadfast, and a combination that is harmonious. And there is positively nought in this one succession between prayer as the antecedent, and a returning favour as the consequent, that more than any other of the numberless successions which take place, whether in the mental or the material creation, introduces anarchy or offers violence to the harmonies of nature.

18. Now, instead of looking to the prayers which reciprocate between man and man, and which move in perpetual circulation throughout the mass of society—let us consider those prayers which ascend by a direct path to the throne of Heaven—being addressed to the ear, and submitted to the immediate cognisance of Him who sitteth thereon. Is it unlikely that He who hath ordained a system of things under which the influence that we now speak of is in busy and constant operation among the creatures whom He hath made; and who yet, instead of disturbing therewith the constancy of nature, has in fact turned it into one of those laws by which the constancy is upholden—is it unlikely that He may cause that very influence to pass and repass between the Father who is above, and the family that are beneath Him, which finds its way in a thousand beneficent sympathies from one member of it to another? When men are the askers and men also are the givers, He can, amid all the caprices of human appetite and fancy, still uphold the regularities both of a moral and a natural economy. And will His wisdom so fail Him in that case, when Himself called upon to be the Giver, that in the immutability whether of His perfections or of His works, there

shall be a barrier which He cannot overpass between the importunities of His children and the generosity of His own nature? Will He not know how to dispose kindly and mercifully of those petitions which ascend to the pavilion of His residence, without introducing misrule and mismanagement into nature—or breaking in upon the well-arranged and orderly successions of that universe which He has formed?

19. We are aware of a difficulty here, related to the metaphysics of the Divine nature—a subject which in our present state, and with our present faculties, is wrapped in hopeless obscurity; and yet by which the attempt is often made to speculate away all those mental acts and exercises in reference to God, which constitute the very essence of religion. One ground, indeed, on which antipathy is felt to the obvious and ordinary conception of prayer, is that it implies the imagination of a certain state of mind in the Deity being the consequent, to a certain state of mind in the creature who addresses Him. Now on this yet inaccessible mystery we will not dogmatize. We will not venture to speak of the affections of the Deity as related to time or succession at all. But surely we may so speak of the palpable acts of the Deity; and we may also regard these acts as the expression of His mind and character. We will not dare to lift the curtain which hangs over the thoughts and processes of the Supreme Intelligence—but surely it is competent for us to observe and to reason on the visible forthgoings of the Divine power, and to regard them as indications of the Divine character. When He causes a certain consequent to follow in the train of a certain antecedent, He demonstrates how it is that He stands affected with regard to the antecedent. If prayer and the fulfilment of prayer be a general sequence in the Divine administration—this, without our diving among the arcana either of intelligence or feeling in the heart of the Deity, warrants the representation of God, as a God who acts at least in the very way He would have done had He at the moment yielded Himself to the entreaties of His children—such sequences, in fact, and such expressions founded upon them, are implied in the whole conception of a moral government. Is not the righteousness of one man said to call forth the love of the Divinity?—and the iniquity of another hatred? Does not the misery of a suffering creature call forth His compassion? Does not the stout and daring rebellion of an offending creature call forth His wrath and His purposes of vengeance? And what else is the

efficacy of prayer, but just a certain attitude of mind on the part of the creature, being followed up, if not by a certain respondent attitude of mind, at least by a certain respondent act, and one which in ourselves would be expressive of our complacency or pity, on the part of the Creator? Be a virtuous disciple and I will reward you—is just as much and as little an invasion on the simplicities of the universe, as Be a humble suppliant and I will bestow upon you. And the same observation may be extended to any sequence which it is possible to assign, whether in the moral or the natural economy. That a request on the part of man should be followed up by an accomplishment on the part of God, implies no greater descent or degradation of the Supreme Being, than that any one antecedent in creation should be followed by its consequent. It is wrong to represent it as a kind of subservient accommodation on the part of the Creator to the creature. It is simply the Creator carrying into effect His own established processes. Present the Deity with certain conditions—and He is always sure to act in a certain manner. But this is not because He is overruled by the conditions. It is because He rules over the conditions—and, being a God who changeth not, He rules over them in a certain manner. When heat acts upon a liquid, He follows it up with evaporation. When it acts upon a solid substance, He follows it up with liquefaction. When the kindness of one heart acts upon another, He follows it up with gratitude. When the imploring cry of a sufferer acts upon the sensibilities of a fellow of the species, He follows it up with the sympathy and compliance of him to whom it is addressed. And when this imploring cry is directly lifted to Himself, He, in virtue of a sequence as firmly established and as essentially implicated with the general system of the universe, as any other of the trains and sequences that enter into its vast machinery, follows it up with some wise and gracious ministration.

20. Thus it is that the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer just introduces another train of sequences into the universe, of as uniform a character as any other of the innumerable trains which enter into the history whether of the moral or of the material world. The whole system of things remains as much as before under the system of general laws—or rather under the conduct and guidance of a God who is unchangeable. The gorgeous spectacle, so pleasing to a philosophic eye, of a creation which, through all its amplitudes, maintains an unflinching constancy in the succession of its phenomena, or the unvarying recurrence

of the same consequents to the same antecedents, is upheld in all its entireness. This great religious tenet may thus be rendered, and without any unworthy compromise, less offensive to the taste of physical inquirers. But their more serious objection is that it does not accord with their experience. They allege that they never can discover any trace of the palpable and ordinary sequences in nature being at all modified by a superadded sequence connected with the influence of prayer. Grant that any newly-observed sequence should be implicated or enter into composition with those which had been already known, it must surely affect, in some way or other, the final result of any complex process, and make it different from what it would have been. Now the philosopher might aver that any alteration of nature's sequences, through the accession of another sequence brought on by the intervention of prayer, never once met his observation. He will admit that, in the case of prayer addressed from man to man, he may have repeatedly experienced it—as when he asked his companion to lift some weight from the earth, and the thing was done in counteraction to the law of gravitation; or to fetch back some light but valuable article that the wind was blowing away, and it was done in counteraction to the law of impulse; or to extinguish a flame, and it was done in counteraction to the law of combustion—and all this without exception to the generality of nature's laws, but only by the complication of one sequence with others formerly in operation. But never, may it be insisted by the close observers of nature and her phenomena—never did they once obtain the experimental view of any familiar sequences in nature having been thus thwarted, or having had an arrest laid upon them, by means of prayer to the unseen God. They have noticed this done a thousand times by the visible hands of men—but never once, they affirm, by the invisible hand of the Almighty. Not that they expected to see His hand—but grant the efficacy of prayer to Him—and they would expect to see the effect of its interposition. Instead of which all their experience proclaims a course and a constancy in visible nature from which, as far as their observations go, she never deviates—insomuch that never does the imploring cry of all the families arrest, by the reversal of one law, that loosened avalanche which buries the hamlet in its fall—and never is it found that the prayer of unhappy inmates will arrest the conflagration of a house by the reversal of another law, or stripping the fire of its wonted property and power—and never that mar-

iners are saved by the intermission of another law, either in the impulse of the wind upon the waves, or in the impulse of the waves upon a vessel too frail for the onset of the mighty tempest which has assailed it. In all these, and in every other instance, it is affirmed, there is no appearance whatever of any intromission with the processes of nature, as far at least as these processes are visible. She seems to move in her wonted order without deviation. By the most careful and searching experiments, there cannot be detected the vestige of any unseen power that has been at work with the sure and regular march of her sequences. In a word, all the successions both in mind and matter to the extent in which they have been perceived and classified are to all sense invariable, so as that the same consequents palpably come forth of the same antecedents. And how, in the face of all this observation, shall we expect to shift the order of events by our supplication, or how can we have confidence in the efficacy of prayer?

21. After all the generalities which have been hitherto advanced by us, this remains a palpable and obstinate phenomenon which would need, if possible, to be disposed of. Prayer with its fulfilment must be admitted as one of those innumerable sequences which obtain in nature, had we but the evidence for its reality. But if, indeed, an actual sequence, we should be able, it is thought, to discover the traces of it when it came to be complicated with, and so to modify or disturb the order of other sequences. It is quite conceivable that prayer and its fulfilment might be one of the many laws in nature, and yet nature *on the whole* maintain her constancy. But the stubborn fact, and a fact which stands in the way of this alleged efficacy of prayer, is, that notwithstanding the intervention of this supposed and additional law, *visible* nature maintains her constancy, and as far as appears, in the very way she would have done though there had been no such law. We see no evidence, it is affirmed, of the constancy of visible nature giving way to that invisible agency, the interposition of which it is the express purpose of prayer to obtain. The effect of such agency, did it ever come into operation, would be to overrule the other established processes that have place in the economy of the world; and the strength of the objection lies in this, that we never witness any such overruling of these processes.

22. In reply to this, let us endeavour to ascertain, if by any possible or hypothetical method, the answer to prayer may be

effectively given without any infringement on the known regularities of nature. These regularities consist in the invariableness of certain successions, each term of which is the consequent of the one that went before it, and the antecedent of the one that comes after it. Grant that the contiguous links of any one chain, as far upward as we are able to trace them, follow each other in precisely the same order, it should be recollected of the chief terrestrial processes which are going on around us, that the chain does not terminate at the point where our observation terminates—that, somewhere along the ascent of our investigation, the mechanism ceases to be palpable and begins to be obscure, till at length it is shrouded, as if by an impenetrable veil, from our notice altogether; and that although we can trace the steps of a causal progression a certain way back, it loses itself at the last among the recondite places of the mechanism. Now it signifies not to the final result, whether the answer to prayer be given by a responsive touch from the finger of the Almighty at a higher or a lower place in the progression; as a change upon any of the terms, wherever it may be situated, will have a controlling efficacy on all the succeeding ones. Let the change, then, be effected far enough back, and there will be the alteration of a sequence, no doubt, but without violence to any ascertained law—because a sequence beyond the reach of all our philosophy. Prayer may obtain its fulfilment without any visible reversal of the constancies of nature, provided that its first effect is upon some latent and interior spring of the mechanism, and not among its palpable evolutions. Let but the touch of communication between the Deity and His works, when He goes forth to meet the desire of any of His creatures, be behind or underneath that surface which marks and measures off the farthest verge of man's possible discovery; and then may there be many a special request which receives as special an accomplishment, yet without disturbance to those wonted successions which either the eye of man or his nicest instruments of observation shall enable him to ascertain. But it is not easy to make this matter perspicuous in the mere use of general terms; and we must, therefore, attempt the illustration of it by examples.

23. Let us, for our first example, make the supposition of prayer for a prosperous voyage. It does not appear why an answer to this prayer might not be given, and yet all the established sequences in our world be maintained in their wonted

order, as far back as philosophy can discover them. Instead of God dispensing with the secondary causes, when He meets and satisfies our prayers, they may be the very instruments by which He fulfils them. When he hearkens to our supplications for a prosperous voyage, this may be answered in two ways—either without the favourable wind or by means of it. If in the latter way, there has yet, in as far as the proximate sequence is concerned, been no miracle. He has not sent forth a miraculous impulse upon the vessel, but has caused the very wind to arise, which, by the laws of motion, should have borne her onward to the destined haven. But again, in the next higher sequence, there might still have been the observation of the regularities of nature. The wind might have been caused without the condensation of vapour, or by its condensation. If in the latter way, still there is no miracle. The wind has not been originated in contravention to any known law, but has sprung up from that previous condition of the air and the vapour, which, by the doctrine of pneumatics, should cause the very gale to blow that accomplishes the service. The same might be repeated on the next sequence of this ascending progression. The vapour could have been raised without the action of heat, or by that action. If without it, the prayer has been answered miraculously—if by it, there can yet be detected no change in the processes of nature; and the prosperous voyage is the result of that previous condition of the air, and the vapour, and the heat, which, by the combined laws of impulse and pneumatics and chemistry, ought to have caused it. Carry these retrogressive explanations as far as they can; and so far, that is, to the uttermost limits of science, to the full extent of her possible observations, all might appear to move, or rather, might actually move, in strictly undeviating order. But still, ulterior to this, and between the remotest confines of all which nature can see upon the one hand, and that throne whence the Author of Nature issues forth His mandates, upon the other—there is a hidden intermediate process which connects the purposes of the Divine mind, with the visible phenomena of that universe which He has created; and, not among the palpable things which lie exposed to view in the region of observation, but among the secret things which lie in the deep and the dark abyss that is between the furthest reach of man's discovery and the forthgoings of God's will—it is among these, where that responsive touch may be given by the finger of the Almighty, which shall guide the mechanism of the world; and

without thwarting any of its ascertained laws. The limit of our investigation is not the commencement of the series. It has anterior steps yet undiscovered, and perhaps undiscoverable by us, among the depths of meteorology. It may be there, and not among the patent regularities of nature, where the answer to prayer is germinated—so as to insure a prosperous voyage, yet without one change which philosophy, with all her instruments, can detect in the established successions of the universe. For this, He moves the springs which lie behind the curtain of sense and observation. But before that curtain, or in the eyes of us, the spectators of nature's phenomena—the air, and the vapour, and the heat, which are the ministers of God, fulfilling His word, might perform, in the exercise of their own proper and characteristic virtues, their respective evolutions, without any change whatever in the effects which they produce or in the properties which belong to them.

24. But for a second example—the prayer for a prosperous harvest may be effectually answered, and yet not be answered by miracle. The ripened harvest does not immediately start into being at the utterance of a word—neither is it made to rise to maturity in the midst of adverse weather and unfavourable seasons, or in the absence of all the genial and kindly influences by which it is usually fostered. The prayer may be answered, yet not by the vegetation being made to flourish in the midst of storms, where it never flourished before—but by the vegetation being made to flourish as it wont, under the smile of sunshine and in the midst of peaceful elements. The plenteous harvest is given, not without the usual antecedent of favourable weather—but with or rather by this antecedent. The responsive touch is applied as before to some anterior steps among the arcana of meteorology, whence the Almighty, at His bidding, can summon the requested weather, and conduct all the subsequent trains to their final issue in the blessings of abundance—without the reversal of any sequences that in the platform of visible things are open to human eyes. He can, by antedating his reply as it were, at a point sufficiently high in the train of causation, summon into being, not the first antecedents, *but the first antecedents which are perceivable by us*—after which, the whole succession may proceed in perfect harmony with the laws of nature and the lessons of experience. By an interposing touch, at hidden depths in the laboratory of nature, a favourable concurrence of the elements might be made to bear on the agriculture from without—

or, by the same interposition among the inaccessible laws of the vegetable physiology, a healthier or more prolific crop might be made to arise. Yet in neither department need there be any shift in the *known* successions of the phenomena of nature; and while nought but the most steadfast uniformity can be observed on the panorama of our contemplation, yet, by an operation underneath, may the all-working God, without violence to the regularities of nature, insure effective fulfilment to the prayers of His dependent family.

25. We hope that more illustration is superfluous—yet we cannot refrain from adverting to the instance of prayer for the continuance or the recovery of health. We appeal to those who are most conversant with the diagnostics or the prognostics of disease—for how short a way back, among the processes of the animal physiology, the investigations of their science can carry them. To answer such a prayer, then, God does not need to intromit with the constancies of visible nature—for the primary fountainhead of that influence, which either medicates or distempers the human frame, is placed in a region of profoundest mystery. Here, if anywhere, He may work in secret, and direct the processes of the machine, without disturbance to any of its known and wonted sequences. The hand of God may have been stretched forth to heal or to destroy—yet the eye of man, to the uttermost stretch of his observation, may have seen nothing but nature walking in her established courses, and never once appearing to falter from the regularity of her march. As far as the cognizance of the physician extends, it may be altogether a system of general laws, or of successions which are invariable—from the remotest antecedent which he has been able to trace, down to that ultimate or actual consequent which is immediately before his view. But beyond that antecedent there are recesses which he never has explored—and there, may the unseen and presiding agency of God be originating all those processes, of which the philosopher sees nothing but the uniformity of the closing footsteps. It is thence He may answer prayer; and, however proud science shall despise the affirmation, there is nought in all the laws and sequences that she has ever ascertained, by which she can disprove it.

26. But the most interesting application of this whole argument, is to the laws and sequences of the mental world. There is not perhaps a prayer which ascends more frequently to heaven, than that which has for its object a right and desirable

state of mind—whether the state prayed for be an intellectual or a moral or a religious one. Beside being the natural effusion of a mind in earnest for the good of its eternity, there are many scriptural examples of such prayer—as of this for a right intellectual state, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wondrous things contained in thy law.”—Or of this for a right moral state, “Uphold my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”—Or of this for a right spiritual state, “Create a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me.” Meanwhile mind as well as matter has its laws, its regular succession of antecedents and consequents, its trains of phenomena dependent the one upon the other by the relation of invariableness. There is room and subject for a philosophy in this department as well as in others—but without a resemblance in the objects and a constancy in the order of events, there could be no philosophy. And accordingly on this field of investigation, too, we have our principles and laws—the laws of suggestion—the laws of emotion—the reciprocal influences which, by means of the faculty of attention, obtain between the understanding and the will—and many other processes whether of feeling or of thought, which, in virtue of their uniformity alone admit of classification; or, in other words, admit of being philosophized. Now, what we affirm of this example, and perhaps with greater confidence than in any of the former ones, is the perfect consistency which obtains between the rigid uniformity of these various successions and the efficacy of prayer. A few steps anterior to the final result we can trace, and may find that they follow each other in their accustomed order, without anomaly and without variation. But one step higher; and we come to the antecedent within the veil—which, invisible itself, may be overruled by an immediate hand, and yet overrule the whole of that visible succession which emerges from it without one law of the mental philosophy being violated. The response is given at a place beyond the cognizance of philosophy—at a place whence may issue forth to their accomplishment the mandates of Divine power, yet without infringement on the certainties of human experience. If a miracle imply the violation of a known sequence in nature, then, what have been called the miracles of grace, may in effect be achieved, and yet not have been achieved miraculously.

27. We may observe that if prayer be of any effect at all in the obvious and natural meaning of it—that is, if a special and

definite request ever obtain a special and definite fulfilment, there is a high expediency concerned in the fulfilment being so made good, as that the regularities of nature shall not be infringed upon. We, in this way, secure the greatest practical advantage that lies in a system of general laws. Without such a system, we should have no benefit from the lessons of experience. It is just because of the constancy which obtains among nature's sequences, that when certain antecedents are presented to observation, we anticipate with confidence that certain consequents, and no others, shall follow. It is thus and thus alone, in fact, that our recollections of the past become available for the guidance of the future; or that science and wisdom come to be founded on the informations of experience. But for this purpose, it is enough that there shall be no intromission with nature's *visible* sequences—or that the constancy of these shall be kept inviolate, not only as far as the eye of unwary and superficial observation can extend, but also as far as the searching eye of philosophy can penetrate. It is not indispensable, then, to the stability of our experience, that all interpositions shall be banished from the economy of creation. It is only required that these interpositions shall be made among the inscrutable recesses which are behind the curtain, and not among the palpable events or evolutions which are before it. We, in this way, make good a harmony between the voice of experience when it proclaims the regularity of visible nature, and the voice of revelation when it proclaims the efficacy of prayer. We reconcile dependence on the constancy of nature, with dependence on the kindness and the help of nature's God. It is a precious blessing that, in the antecedents that are actually before our eyes, we can read the indications of futurity. But it is a blessing still more precious, that, by means of other antecedents, the Deity can direct or modify or overrule the former ones, and that He is a Deity accessible to our prayers. And so philosophy may be made to meet and be at one with piety. Each of these schools has its distinct but not its discordant lessons. The same man may be a learner at both; and the fruit of his proficiency may be, that he blends the anticipations of experience with the hopes and the exercises of religion. He lives as if under the canopy of a special providence, even on that platform of sensible things where all the trains and successions are invariable. He feels, at one and the same time, that he is under the care of a presiding God and among the regularities of a harmonious universe.

28. But while we thus argue, that by an operation behind the scenes prayer may be responded to without infringement on the visible sequences of nature, we will not affirm what the specific operation actually is. We may clearly see that there are several ways by which this can be brought about, and yet we may not be able to pronounce upon the one way. One might conceive it to be done by the ministry of angels. Another may imagine that the effect of prayer on some hidden term of that progression which has led to the wished-for result may itself be, as much as any other, one of the regular sequences of nature; and certainly, prior to experience, is not more mysterious or unlikely than the effect which a particle of matter has on the most distant matter of our universe. Another may contend for the direct intervention of a fiat from the court of heaven's sovereignty, whose first influence is on some occult antecedent in the upper places of the train, and whose subsequent influences descend in regular order, perhaps through many visible steps, to the final accomplishment. And lastly, the taste of some may incline them to a pre-established harmony—as if the same God who foresaw every prayer, included every answer to these prayers in His primary adjustment of the great mundane system.* We do not affirm our preference for any of these suppositions, and we are not called upon to do so. We are engaged with one objection to the efficacy of prayer grounded on the constancy of nature's successions, as far as they are visible. We hold this to

* The author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," in his chapter on the enthusiastic abuses of the doctrine of a particular providence, advances a hypothesis distinct from all these, and which certainly has peculiar recommendations of its own. His conception is, that the history of nature and of society is made up of innumerable progressions, in lines which perpetually cross each other, and which at their point of intersection receive a new direction, in virtue of the lateral impulse that has come upon them. When an individual receives an answer to his prayer, the interposition might be made not in the line which he himself is describing, but in one of those which are to meet him on his path—and at a point, therefore, where, even though the visible constancy of nature should have been violated, yet, as being at the time beyond the sphere of his observation, it is a violation not visible to him. In one respect, this hypothesis has an advantage over the one which we have ventured to propose. In ours, the interposition, as being made at an anterior place in the scale of causation, might require at times to be made, not in answer to the prayer, but in the anticipation of it. By the other, the interposition, if made at however little a way from the point of junction, might be made both after the prayer and beyond the direct cognizance of the supplicant. This tallies better with our actual experience of those fulfillments, by which relief is often made to come to us from an unexpected quarter—and also with such declarations of Holy Writ as God being "a *very present* help in time of trouble." By either hypothesis the answer might be effectually made, but without any infringement on the constancy of nature noticeable by us; and so, therefore, as to leave inviolate all the benefits of experience and the obligations of man to conform himself to its lessons.

be effectually met by the consideration of there being one or two, or any indefinite number of methods, whereby a reconciliation may be made between this doctrine of faith and the phenomena of experience. This, in all good logic, is enough for the question between us and our adversaries. A thousand possibilities do not warrant a specific or positive assertion on our side. But one possibility is of equivalent power to displace and nullify the objection on their side. We could not, without the transgression of sound philosophy, select the one which is certain out of the many which are conceivable. But it were a transgression greatly more violent, to affirm of the eternal and inscrutable Spirit, who operates unseen through the mazes of His own workmanship, that He could not, in the infinity of his resources, devise a method by which both to uphold the visible uniformities of nature, and yet to meet and satisfy our prayers.

29. We regret the length of this argument, but for the argument itself we make no apology. An ardent disciple, warm from the schools of philosophy, and habituated to the investigation of nature's laws, acquires both a taste and an experience which would incline him to regard them as unalterable. Any intromission with the uniformity of these is most offensive to all his predilections, or perhaps is derided by him as a superstitious imagination. It has been arrogated as the glory of science to have banished spectres from the universe; and, in a certain unqualified homage to the supremacy and unchangeableness of nature, the visions of the old mythology and the pieties of the Gospel of Jesus Christ have alike been put to scorn. Man figures himself as if beset with the necessities of an unconscious mechanism, instead of walking through life under the observation and the care of a living Governor. God may continue to be recognised, but more as a principle than as a person; and while His name is in our mouths, our hearts may be virtually in a state of atheism. He may still rank in our imaginations as the Supreme Power of the universe—the cause of causes, differing from them as the original does from its secondaries, but assimilated to them in being a physical rather than a moral agent, and as being alike insensible to our prayers and our offerings. It is thus that philosophy may sometimes act with the power of a malignant genius, in withering from our souls the very essence and spirit of religion; and it is therefore of the more importance to assign the respective provinces of both. The one, or philosophy, has for its domain the region of all the

visible sequences in nature ; and, save in the case of miracles—these events of exceeding rarity, which we shall afterwards investigate—we most willingly concede, that within the limits of this domain accessible to human eyes and human instruments, nature walks in a course that is inflexible. The other, or religion, has for its province a transcendental region which lies beyond this, where there is room for all those influences which most effectually control the processes of nature, and yet never once cause that discoverable nature shall vacillate from her constancy. It is to the unseen power who presides over these supernal and unseen influences that man lifts up his prayer. He trenches not on the domain of philosophy, but leaving her to observe and to classify all the sequences that are within her reach, he addresses himself to that Being, who turns at His own pleasure the first term of every progression which science can investigate. By converse with his God, he moves that which moves the universe.

30. There is a passage in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where it is said of God that “he maketh his angels spirits and his ministers a flame of fire ;” or, as better translated by Campbell, that “he maketh the winds his messengers and the flaming fire his ministers.” What He could have done without the messenger and without the minister, He chooses to do by them ; so that at that point, at least where the wind stands connected with its immediate consequent of a storm or a shipwreck, there is no miracle. Go back one step farther in this series of causation. The wind could have been raised without the instrumentality of the vapour, or by it. But we further read of God that He causeth vapours to ascend from the ends of the earth ; and if done in this latter way, there has yet been no miracle. The vapour, again, may have been raised without the agency of heat, or by it ; and if in this process He have made the heat His servant, even as He maketh the flaming fire His servant, still, in the intermediate chain between the last result and the bidding of the Almighty, we can detect no departure of visible nature from her wonted constancy, and still there has been no miracle. We have only to imagine of all the secondary causes visible to us, and intermediate between us and God, that in no instance does He act without them, but by them ; and then might there be many a special fulfilment to many a special request, yet without violence done to any of the observed regularities of nature. Let philosophy give all her strength to the investigation of these

causes, let her succeed in tracing the progression upward along the ascending series by as many steps as the light of observation can carry her—she may widen thereby the domain of intellect, but she will still leave beyond it a domain wide enough for all the hopes and aspirations of piety. It is enough for this that there remains an unknown interval between the last cause which philosophy has discovered, and the mysterious forthgoing of Him who has been termed the cause of causes—that everything He does which is visible to human eyes shall be by the means of visible instruments—that the Creator shall act by creatures, each retaining the powers and properties which belong to it—so that every succession which went to obtain between the observed antecedent and the observed consequent, shall still be upheld in the very order which philosophy has investigated, though every moment under the controlling hand of Him who, as He gave birth, also gives movement and continuance to all things.

31. There is something more than a mere speculative adjustment concerned in this discussion; there is, besides, a lesson which pervades the whole business of religion, and which is more especially applicable to the guidance of all who are in earnest to be right. After having reconciled the special agency of God with the generality of all nature's observable laws, they will feel less difficulty in reconciling the utmost devotion in their hearts with the utmost diligence in their habits and in their history. They will perhaps now see how it is that performance the most strenuous does not supersede prayer, and that prayer the most confident or the most earnest does not supersede performance—that, in fact, we should do as laboriously as if the wished-for result depended wholly on ourselves, and should pray as humbly and as helplessly as if it depended wholly upon God. We should, on the one hand, regard Him as the efficacious sovereign at whose bidding each event springs into existence—for, ushered in though it be by a train of secondary causes, these causes are in His hand and the instruments of His pleasure; and therefore, observant of the lessons of piety, it is our part to pray. But we should, on the other hand, regulate our conduct on the constancy wherewith the secondary causes, after that they are put forth, proceed in wonted order from the first of them which is visible onward to the final result; and therefore, observant of the lessons of experience, it is our part to act. There is no opposition between faith in the supremacy of God, and faith in the uniformity of visible nature. It is in the exercise of the one

that we pray to Him who can order any fulfilment, along with the causes and circumstances by which it wont to be preceded. It is in the exercise of the other that we are led how to act under the existing causes, and in the actual circumstances by which we are surrounded. When we pray for a safe and successful voyage, we may look for a right eventual breeze; but we regulate the guidance and seamanship of the vessel by the actual breezes. When we pray for an abundant harvest, we may look for the favourable weather; but the whole work and management of the husbandry proceed upon the actual weather. When we pray for the recovery of health, we may look for symptoms of greater promise; but we submit to the treatment of the physician who prescribes to us on his experience of the actual symptoms. And when we pray, whether for the light of Christianity in our minds or for the love of Christianity in our hearts, we may look for the wished-for fulfilment; but we are not to look for it in contravention to the known sequences of the mental philosophy. When the right faith is wrought in us, the wonted relation between evidence and belief is not dissolved; and we come to the faith not without evidence, but by means of evidence—or in the act of seeking for it, of attending to it. When the right charity is wrought in us, the wonted relation between the object and its appropriate emotion is not dissolved; so that the emotion is felt in the act of looking to the object. When God shows us that which is good, this does not supersede the exercise on our part of proving all things, and then holding fast that which is good after that we have thus discovered it. In short, all the mental processes, as far as we are able to trace them, might go on as usual, and without infringement on any of the known laws or sequences of human thought—though, at the head, as it were, of these sequences, there might be the application of a purifying and power-giving virtue, by which the intellect is put into its best mood, and along with a greater clearness of mental vision, there might be imparted a greater susceptibility of the heart. This quickening touch might have place behind the ordinary processes, and which processes, therefore, are not to be dispensed with. They are intermediate, in fact, between the answer of the prayer and the final result or object of the prayer; so that the whole business of investigation is conducted as before. Power may have been given, and yet not a power that works the effect without the ordinary procedure of the understanding and the heart, but works the effect by or through

the ordinary procedure—making it valid now, when before it was impotent, towards the production of a right belief, or a right sensibility, or a right purpose.

32. The conclusion which we have now come to, is in perfect harmony with the respective functions of the Spirit and of the Word. The one reveals truth to the mind—but it is only that truth, and no other, which is enveloped in the Bible. He opens the understanding—but it is to understand the Scriptures. The interposition of the Holy Spirit between a man and his Bible, no more makes palpable to him any other truths or characters than those which be literally graven there—than the interposition of the telescope between him and some distant shore, makes palpable other objects or other characters of scenery than those which be actually graven upon the landscape. And just as the telescope does not supersede the intense observations by the eye which looks through it over a field of nature—nay, would not supersede the ordinary mathematics by which you might become acquainted with the positions and the bearings of its various objects; so neither does the light that cometh from the upper sanctuary over the field of revelation supersede the earnest direction of the mental eye towards it, or the busiest use of all those scientific expedients by which we obtain a more critical or a more systematic knowledge of its contents. It were an important speculation that we saw; but better still, it were the highest practical wisdom that we proceeded on the consistency of these things. We might thus combine the wisdom of the letter with the wisdom of the Spirit. For the one, we must enter upon the study with the busy engagement of all our natural and acquired faculties—laboriously plying the lexicon and the commentary, and all the arts and resources of scholarship. For the other, we must pray.

33. That intervention of the Deity by which prayer is answered, is in the first place effectual, and in the second out of sight—effectual, because made so as to influence some one term of the causal procession; out of sight, because made far enough back to be behind the furthest limit of our observation. It is thus that philosophy might indefinitely widen her domain, yet without banishing God from the universe—which on the one hand might exhibit throughout the harmonies of a general system, and on the other be a theatre for all the minutest adaptations and fulfilments of a special providence. The twofold lesson to be gathered from this contemplation, is the utmost

respect for experience, yet the utmost dependence of a reverential and childlike piety. It is the combination of these which we should labour to realize—for it is only by proceeding upon both that we shall attain that rare but most inestimably precious union—the union of high scholarship with high sacredness. We have no right, in the first instance, to look for a miraculous reversal, in our behalf, of nature's processes; and therefore no right to aim at any given fulfilment but by nature's ordinary stepping-stones. Therefore, in the whole business of our mental discipline, we should proceed on the certainty that the known sequences of the mental philosophy are never violated—that belief never comes but in the train of evidence—that knowledge never comes but by dint of converse and observation and reading, and the busy exercise of all the intellectual faculties—that right affections never are upholden in the heart but in virtue of a sustained attention to the counterpart objects which are fitted to awaken them. We must proceed on these maxims of a sound experience in the study of our Bibles. We must betake ourselves to all the arts and the methods of ordinary scholarship. We must describe the very processes of criticism and of classification which are gone through in all similar investigations. In the course of this sustained and busy exercise, we may pass out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel—and yet it be impossible for the eye of the most subtle metaphysician to detect the violation of one sequence in the mental physiology, up to the farthest verge of all that we know of it. Yet beyond that verge there sitteth a power which, acting in the secret places of the machinery, controls the final result without deranging the wonted order of those palpable evolutions which go immediately before it. It is to Him we pray, that from the unseen fountainhead of influence He may guide and prosper the machine without disturbance to any of its visible harmonies. It is to a presiding touch from His omniscience that all the success is owing. The power and the glory are His; and yet the care and the painstaking, the work and the labour of Christian scholarship, are all our own.

34. We must not expatiate too much on this topic—yet we like not to omit a remark that has often occurred to us on our Saviour's temptation. It would seem as if both the principles that we are now urging entered into the moral of this celebrated passage in His history. He *in opposition to experience* withstood the trial that would have seduced Him from His confidence

in God—and on the maxim that man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of God's mouth, He feared not the death which after so long privation all the sequences of nature and history pronounced to be inevitable. Yet in *respect for experience*, or rather for the established ordination of God, He would not, in compliance with another suggestion, precipitate Himself from the pinnacle of the temple. He would not commit His body to such an antecedent as, according to all the similarities and sequences of bygone occurrence, must have involved its consequent destruction. There is finely blended in this exhibition the wisdom of experience with the wisdom of piety. We have no right so to count on a miracle in our favour, as wantonly to place ourselves in a condition which by all observation is one of danger or of certain calamity. Yet if so placed by a series of uncontrollable events, we ought still to trust with unshaken firmness in God. It is the part of sacred wisdom to be regardful of the evolutions of providence. It is the part of secular wisdom to be regardful of the notices of experience. There is a real harmony between them. The constancy of nature is that on which, in no circumstances, we should cease to proceed. The protection of Heaven is that for which in no circumstances we should cease to pray. It is on the former that all human industry turns—for what is the object of industry but to realize certain antecedents on which certain consequents might be expected to follow? It is on the latter that our devotion turns—and so labour supersedes not prayer, prayer supersedes not labour. They have always been the most influential men in the Church of Christ who like the apostle united both these—that is, the utmost diligence as if man did all, and the utmost dependence as if God did all.

35. Let us only remark in conclusion, that we shall find this principle to be of pervading importance in theology. It runs in fact along that whole line of speculation, where lie the innumerable questions which respect the limits of the Divine and the human agency, and so is of mighty interest both in the dogmatic and the moral or practical theology. The speculation may be difficult to adjust—but the practice or the habit is invaluable—of him who can both look intelligently around upon all that is visible, and look piously upward unto God.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE DEFECTS AND THE USES OF NATURAL THEOLOGY.

1. NATURAL Theology in the hands of some of its expounders has not had justice done to it; and this has aggravated the views of many respecting its impotency and its blindness. The unwarrantable metaphysics which have been called to the aid of this high demonstration, have tended to obscure the reasoning both for the existence and the character of God.

2. We have already attempted to appreciate a style of demonstration respecting the Divine existence, of which we can at least say that it has no efficacy with ourselves. And accordingly our decided preference is for the *a posteriori* to the *a priori* argument. Now the same style of demonstration has been applied with equal confidence to the topic of the Divine attributes. In the works of Dr. Clarke and others, they are expounded synthetically, though he admits of the intelligence of God, that it cannot be properly and strictly demonstrated *a priori*. For this attribute, he does make appeal to the existing order and constitution of things—and after having based as it were one property or perfection of the Godhead on the evidence of observation, we do feel that though he resumes the synthetic process, he walks henceforth on a firmer groundwork, because of the stronger and more tangible material that is now incorporated with the reasoning. For example, that it is the property of the highest intelligence not only to employ the fittest means, but to select the best and worthiest ends—or, that a Being possessed of all power, being elevated above rivalry and fear, is exempted from every temptation to malice or envy, and so is exposed to no adverse influence which might else have hurt the entireness of His character as a Being possessed of all goodness—these, if not altogether resistless considerations, are at least more within the grasp of ordinary comprehension than certain anterior passages in his demonstrations of the attributes of God. But we cannot sympathize with his argument for the immensity of God, grounded on the consideration, that, if without contradiction He can be absent from one place, He may also without contradiction be absent from all places; and so not be a necessary or self-existent Being. He holds the same argument for the ubiquity of God, which he holds to be distinct from the former attribute—the

one being the infinity of His immensity, and the other the infinity of His fulness. He argues even so too of the unity of God, alleging that, "to suppose two (or more) distinct Beings existing of themselves necessarily and independent of each other, implies this plain contradiction; that each of them being independent of the other, they may either of them be supposed to exist alone, so that it will be no contradiction to imagine the other not to exist; and consequently neither of them will be necessarily existing." This will serve as a specimen. The whole tract of this *a priori* reasoning seems equally obscure, save at the place of transition which we have just referred to from the natural to the moral attributes.

3. The natural attributes of God are His self-existence, His eternity, His omnipresence, His unity, His power, His omniscience, His wisdom. We prefer no charge against the views which are commonly given, in this department of natural theology, by the most approved writers. It is on the moral attributes that we are most exposed to meagre and imperfect representations of the Deity. In regard to the natural attributes, it is on the basis of observed facts, of what we see and know of the actual universe, that the demonstration of them mainly rests. But Dr. Thomas Brown, brief as he is on the theistical department of his course—and slender like almost all his fellows as we hold him to be in the view which he entertains of God's moral characteristics, has comprised in the correct metaphysics of a few sentences which we shall now quote, all that we are desirous of impressing ere we proceed to a few remarks on the moral attributes, which are the justice and the truth and the righteousness and the holiness and the goodness of God.

4. "The manifest *order* of the universe, in the relation of parts to parts, and of their joint results to other joint results of other parts, is a proof then of some designing power, from which all this magnificent order took its rise; and the great Being to whom, in discovering design, we ascribe the designing power, is the Being whom we denominate God. The harmony, which is the proof of design, is itself a proof of the relative unity of that design. This designing power is *one*, then, in the only sense in which we are entitled to speak either of Divine unity or plurality, as indicated by the forms of nature before us—for it is only from the phenomena of the universe, that we are capable of inferring the existence of any higher being whatever; and, therefore, as we have no traces of any other being than the universe, directly or indirectly, exhibits to us—the designing power

is not to our reason more than one; since in everything which we behold, there is that unity of design from which alone we have any reason to infer a designer. The laws of motion which prevail on our earth, prevail equally wherever we are capable of discovering motion. On our own earth, where our observation is so ample, in the infinity of objects around us, there is no *irregularity* or opposition of contrivances, but all have proportions or analogies which mark them as the result of one harmonious design. There *may* be many spiritual beings of greater or less excellence, though there is no evidence of them in nature; for where there is no evidence whatever, it is as absurd to deny absolutely as to affirm. But there is, as I have said, no evidence of any such beings; and the designing power then, as marked to us by all which we perceive in nature, is *one*, in the only sense in which the unity of the Supreme Being can be demonstrable or even at all conceivable by us. The power of which we speak exists, to our reason, only as the author of the design which we trace; and the design which we trace, various as it may be in the parts to which it extends, is all *one* harmonious contrivance.

“This *designing* unity, that is relative to *what we see*, is all, however, which we are logically entitled to infer from the phenomena; for the absolute and *necessary* unity of the Divine Power, as attempted to be proved by metaphysical arguments *a priori*, that are at best only a laborious trifling with words, which either *signify* nothing or *prove* nothing, is more than, in our state of ignorance, independently of revelation, we are entitled to assert. The unity which alone, from the light of nature, we can with confidence assert, is hence not strictly exclusive, but wholly relative to that one design, which we are capable of tracing in the frame of the universe.

“This *one* designing power, we are accustomed to say, is omniscient, and, in the only sense in which that phrase can have any meaning, when used by creatures so ignorant as ourselves, to signify our impossibility of discovering any limits to the wisdom which formed the magnificent design of the world—the phrase may be used as expressive only of admiration, that is justly due to wisdom so sublime. He who formed the universe, and adapted it, in all its parts, for those gracious purposes to which it is subservient, must, of course, have known the relations which He established; and knowing every relation of everything existing, He may truly be said to be omniscient in His relation to everything which exists. But it is in this de-

finite sense only that the phrase has any meaning, as used by creatures whose knowledge is itself so very limited. Beyond this universe, it is presumptuous for man to venture, even in the homage which he offers. The *absolute* wisdom of the Deity, transcendent as it may be, when compared even with that noble display of it which is within us and without us, wherever we turn our eyes, we are incapable even of conceiving; and admiring what we know, an awful veneration of what is unknown is all that remains for us. Our only meaning of the term "omniscience," then, does not arrogate to us any knowledge of those infinite relations which we assert the Deity to know. It is merely that the Supreme Being knows every relation of every existing thing—and that it is impossible for us to conceive any limit to His knowledge.

"His *omnipotence*, in like manner, *as conceived by us*, whatever it may be in *reality*, is not a power extending to circumstances, of which, from our own ignorance, we must be incapable of forming a conception; but a power which has produced whatever exists, and to which we cannot discover any limit. It may be capable of producing wonders as far surpassing those which we perceive, as the whole fabric of the universe surpasses the little workmanship of mortal hands; but the relation of the Deity to these unexisting or unknown objects, is beyond the feebleness of our praise, as it is beyond the arrogance of our conception.

"God, then, the Author of the universe, exists. He exists, with a *wisdom* which could comprehend everything that fills infinity, in one great design—with a *power*, which could fill infinity itself with the splendid wonders that *are*, wherever we endeavour to extend our search. We know no *limit* to His *wisdom*, for all the knowledge which we are capable of acquiring flows from *Him* as from its source; we know *nothing* which can limit His power, for everything of which we know the existence is the work of His hand."—*Brown*, vol. iv. pp. 423-427.

5. That the proof of the moral rests on a distinct consideration from that of the natural attributes may thus be made obvious. The adaptation of means to *an* end of itself demonstrates intelligence, and also power when the means are effectual. But to be satisfied that there is goodness in the adaptation, we must ascertain what the end particularly is, we must be presented with adaptation of means to *the* end. The proof both for intelligence and power may be as complete with one set of ends as with

another set wholly opposite. There may be as thorough an impress of skill and energy on a machinery of torture, as on some bland and beneficent contrivance that operates a blessing throughout the sphere of its activity—on the structure, for example, of a serpent's envenomed tooth, as on the structure of those teeth which prepare the aliment for digestion, and subserve one of the most useful functions of the animal economy. It is thus that a wicked and malignant spirit could give decisive, but most terrible demonstration withal of his natural attributes—so that these on the one hand may be most strikingly and satisfactorily evinced, while the moral attributes, on the other, may be involved in the mystery of those contradictory appearances in nature, which the wisdom of man has so vainly endeavoured to unravel.

6. The adaptation of parts to *an* end might of itself demonstrate the intelligence and power of a creative mind—nor is it needed for this conclusion, that we should advert to what the end particularly is. This latter inquiry may lead to other conclusions. It may throw light on the moral attributes of the Creator. Adaptation for *an* end might indicate all the natural attributes—the power, the skill, the unity, the omnipresence of the Deity. Adaptation for *the* end might indicate Him to be a God either of benevolence or cruelty, a God of virtue or vice, a God who loved righteousness and hated iniquity, or a God who patronizes the wicked and delights in thwarting and discouraging the good. So that after the natural attributes have been fully ascertained, the moral might still be in a state of deepest ambiguity. From adaptations alone, and without our adverting to the special object of them, we may gather the power and wisdom, and virtual presence of the Deity in all places of the creation; and His complete intelligence of everything that is going on through its mighty amplitudes; and even His unity, as far as this can be gathered from unity of counsel; and last of all His eternity, which is irresistibly obtruded upon us indeed by the consideration of the very simplest elements of thought. Thus it is that from adaptations in the general, we may be able to complete one list of the Divine perfections. But there is another list, comprehending His goodness, His justice, His truth, His august and inviolable sacredness; or, in other words, that instant and determined recoil from evil which hath affixed to Him the denomination of Holy. Now adaptation alone, or adaptation in the general, will not suffice to indicate these as the

characteristics of Him who hath made and who rules the universe. To ascertain these, we must look to the objects of this varied adaptation. The skilful and effective adaptation of means to an end may indicate both power and wisdom—whether the end be such as would minister complacency to a good or an evil spirit—to one that delights in a world peopled with happiness and virtue, or to one that hath fiendish satisfaction in the agonies of a sentient creation, and in the triumph and prevalence of wickedness over it. There may be refinements of most exquisite ingenuity, and the felt demonstration given of a power mighty and resistless, in the machinery of a system that is ever working off and by a multiplying process new and perpetual additions to the amount of disease and depravity and death. The subserviencies even of a system like this might be enough to mark the utmost skill and the utmost energy on the part of its Author. In a word, from the mere operation of the instruments which He hath formed, we may collect His natural attributes. But to fix our belief of His moral attributes, we must look to the result of that operation.

7. The untenable metaphysics which have been employed in demonstration of the being and natural attributes of God, have given to Natural Theology an aspect of mysticism which is not necessary and not natural to her. But this is not the whole of the injustice which she has received at the hand of her advocates. If she have been obscured by one style of reasoning in respect to the natural attributes of God, she has been weakened and made precarious by another style of argumentation in respect to His moral attributes; and the principal defect, as we have already hinted, lies in the confinement of the reasoning to fewer data than nature has actually set before us—to the phenomena, and these viewed but partially, of external nature, apart from the phenomena of our own moral nature or the lessons and the intimations of human conscience; and certain it is, that observations made on the outer field of society might of themselves afford a much greater amount of instruction respecting the character of God, than many of our Theists have been inclined to draw from it—particularly those who would limit their attention to but one moral perfection of the Deity, and who expatiate on His benevolence alone. It is this which has not only limited but greatly weakened their conclusions. For on looking singly to the good and the evil of life, we can infer the Divine benevolence only from the balance of the former over the latter. But

looking to that good and that evil in connexion with their moral causes, we can not only more firmly establish the Divine benevolence; but, in conjunction with this, elicit evidence of a very striking character for the righteousness of Him who is the governor and parent of the human family.*

8. When the good and the ill of life are looked to in themselves, and apart from the consideration of their moral causes, they seem wholly incapable of being turned to any theological conclusion which can be at all depended upon. For first, it must be admitted that the joys of life are innumerable—and it were obviously an unconquerable task, should we attempt the description of them. Who can tell those countless diversities of pleasure, which are ministered by the eye and the ear and the other senses—or rather ministered to us by external objects through these various inlets of pleasurable sensation—and, if to these we add the pleasures of taste and affection and intellect, they altogether compose a vast amount and variety of happiness. In the utter impossibility of making a full or distinct enumeration of nature's joys—should we be required but to specify a few—then, at random and among the first which offer to our notice, might we instance the cheerfulness of light, and those manifold hues of loveliness into which it is broken and wherewith it is reflected from the face of our world—and then the glories of nature's panorama, by every look at which there are souls of finer mould, that send forth a responding ecstasy upon the landscape. And to pass from this order of gratification to another yet higher in the scale, there are the delights of prosperous study—the calm but intense satisfaction wherewith the understanding imbibes of its proper aliment—the zest more particularly of the youthful mind now opening and advancing towards the maturity of its powers, as it hurries on from one perspective to another in the field of contemplation—the charm, which none but scholars know, that lies in the march of successful inquiry; and that, not merely in the truths which are attained, but in the very train and exercise of the reasonings which lead to them. But as the philosophers of our world are few, let us rather instance those joys and satisfactions which are

* See a former chapter on the capacities of the world for making a virtuous species happy—the reasonings of which we do not repeat here—our only motive for reverting to the subject at all being to expose the precariousness of those views, which have reduced Natural Theology to a far more meagre and precarious system of doctrine than is suited to the real strength of its own proper and inherent evidences.

accessible to all—and, laying aside those which depend upon sense, let us notice those which depend on the sympathies that reciprocate between man and man, whether in jovial companionship or in the serious and tender relations of domestic society. There is a felt and pleasurable glow even in those more distant exchanges of courtesy, that, whether in the bustle of a market-place or along the streets of a crowded city, indicate the acting and reacting of good-will between man and his fellows. But when this mutual attraction becomes more adhesive and peculiar—when it strengthens into friendship or love or the affinities of kindred—when from the hilarities of the social board, it passes upward to vows of constancy, or the services of faithful and devoted attachment—when the heart regales itself among the charities of home; and the soberness of age, and the sanguine buoyancy of youth, and the simplicity of sportive childhood, are all blended together under one parental roof into one delightful harmony—then it is that we are called to witness in one of its most blissful conditions, that humanity which has been made so exquisitely and so variously alive to blessedness. Indeed, the whole imagery of family life is bright with the promises of enjoyment; and when to these we add the notices that break upon our observation from a more general and extended survey of human intercourse—such as the hearty gratulations of the festive party, and the songs of merry companionship, and these irrepressible gaieties of man responded to by the frolic and gambols of the inferior creation—they all seem to indicate a world made for happiness—a scene of jubilee lighted up by the glorious luminary that is suspended over it—and in which we may at once see the beatitudes of our existing creation—the bounteousness of Him from whom it has sprung.

9. But over against this there is another enumeration to be made. There are the ills of life as well as its gratifications—and many are the theologians who have attempted to strike a balance between these rival elements. They have tried their arithmetic upon this question; and contend, not for the benevolence of God alone, but for the infinity of His benevolence, from the overplus of the good above the evil. It does not seem a very clear demonstration of this attribute—when thus made out, not by the absolute happiness of creation, but only by a difference—a difference of superiority, it is alleged, over its misery. One is apt to think that Infinite Power might have overruled all the tendencies to suffering on earth, so as to have maintained

within its confines a full and unexcepted blessedness. In the phenomena of sentient nature, there is a perplexity which we fear cannot be extricated by the mere consideration of power and goodness alone. Amid the vast capacities for enjoyment both of mind and of the external nature by which it is surrounded, there are the undoubted symptoms and the undoubted effects of a very sore distemper over the whole of that sentient creation which is within the reach of our experience. We need not speak of that countenance of menace and boding disaster which is put on by inanimate things—or, for the smile and the verdure and the gracefulness of nature in her happier moods, tell also of her angry tempests, of her wasteful volcanoes, of her sweeping hurricanes and floods, or of that dread thunder wherewith she overawes a prostrate world. It is enough faithfully to record the moral perversities wherewith the social state of man is vexed and agitated—the distrust and the selfishness and the busy competitions of pride or interest, which are constantly infusing of their gall into the whole business of human intercourse. We advert not merely to those outcries of resentment which might so often be heard on the broad and general face of society—but to those secret heartburnings which fester in the bosom of families—the sad alienations that obtain under the same roof between those whose tastes and whose tempers are wholly uncongenial—the gloom, the discontent, the bitterness, that so mar those pictures of enchantment on which the sentimentalist loves to dwell; and by which the domestic retreat, that he would fondly liken to one of the bowers of Elysium, may in fact be peopled by the demoniacal passions of hatred, malice, and revenge. At all events, the representation which, when we attend but to one set of elements, looks so flattering and so fair, is sadly shaded or alternated by another set of elements now in busy and actual operation—so as to make of human life either a very prosaic or a very chequered story—and to prove that if there be materials within our reach whereof one might build a lovely and inviting paradise; there are other materials actually poured forth upon our world, and which, had they been poured without mixture and without mitigation, would indeed have made of it a most dire and dreadful Pandemonium.

10. Now the puzzle is, how to clear our way to any definite or satisfactory conclusion amid this warfare of good and evil—and what possibly to make of it, in our attempts to determine the character of Him who willed such an enigmatical world as

ours into existence. It were indeed a most enigmatical world, did it offer nothing to our view from which to infer the moral character of God, but the mere balance of its pleasures and its pains. We should be utterly at a loss how to manage such a computation; nor, through the multitude and perplexity of its materials, could we find any clear or confident way by which to strike the numerical difference between the good and the evil. Even though the respective summations could be accurately made, still the question would invariably obtrude itself, Why any evil at all? If we indeed live under the government of a God, whose goodness and whose power are both perfect, why under such an economy should there be so much as the slightest taint or remainder of evil? Why is it that we have any balance between the opposite ingredients to adjust? The mere predominance of one of these ingredients will not satisfy a spirit that is exercised with difficulties, because of the mere existence of the other ingredient. And even this predominance of good is so very questionable. How shall we proceed to take an inventory of all the beatitudes, and then of all the banes of our earthly existence? By what arithmetic shall we settle the difference betwixt them; or where is the one argument that, without any process of this sort, will guide us at once to a right conclusion upon the subject? We are aware that the love of life has been employed for such an argument. But the love of life is not the fruit of any previous calculation on the worth of the commodity. It is an instinct; and there is in it, we believe, a great deal more of horror at the pains of that awful and unknown transition by which we are conducted away from it, than there is of regret at the privation of any or all put together of its affirmative joys. We think it must be quite palpable, that far the most noticeable, and therefore far the most vivid and powerful of those emotions which are connected with our view of death, is the recoil wherewith nature shrinks from its imagined agonies and terrors; and that such should be the agonies and terrors of every sentient creature who is capable of anticipation, and more particularly that all, without exception, who belong to the family of man, should have to bear upon their spirits the burden of so dread a perspective, that their life should be exposed at every turn to the damping visitation of such a thought, or that the progress of their existence through the world should only be easy and tolerable by the steeping of all their senses in the utter forgetfulness of its sore and affecting termination—this surely marks

a state, whence it were most difficult to infer the goodness of Him by whom it is originated. Nor when we look to the pain, and the shrinking, and the breathlessness, and the insufferable languor or sickness which mark the approach of the last messenger; or look to the hideous spectacle which he leaves after having fulfilled his errand, and consigned the once animated body to the loathsomeness of the grave—can we avoid remarking the total diversity which there is between the rough lessons of experience, and the lessons of a poetic and sentimental theism.

11. But while the good and the ill of life, regarded in no other light than as so much happiness on the one hand and so much misery on the other, seem wholly insufficient data for the determination even of one of the moral attributes—if viewed in connexion with their causes, as we have attempted to do in a preceding chapter, they furnish very strong probabilities both for the benevolence and the righteousness of God. Beside which we have a still stronger argument in the supremacy of conscience, or of a moral sense in man, which goes far to prove Him a God who combines in His character all the virtues. Whatever an enlightened conscience deems to be right, or, in other words, whatever the Creator has made the creature feel with entire and universal consent to be of paramount obligation, that we are led to regard as the expression and the evidence of a corresponding virtue in the Divine nature. Else there is a dissonance between what we, in the exercise of our best and highest principles, feel to be virtuous, and the actual character of the Godhead; or He hath so fashioned us, that the supreme homage of that moral nature which Himself hath constituted must necessarily be given to attributes of character which differ, or even to attributes which are opposite to His own. It is most unlikely that a God of falsehood would so mould and attemper the creatures of His own making, as that what themselves felt to be the superior principles of their nature should depon to the worth and excellence of truth, and so to the turpitude of the Being from whom they had sprung; or, in like manner, that a God of cruelty should deposit within the hearts and the breasts of His own fabrication a similar attestation on the side of benevolence; or that a God of injustice should have done the same by uprightness and honesty. In spite of the aberrations of a watch, it is impossible to inspect its mechanism, and especially the presiding office of its regulator, without the conviction that its primary

intention was for the measurement of time; and that to this object the aim of the artificer was supremely or rather solely directed. And it is equally impossible, whatever the aberrations of actual humanity may be, to inspect the moral nature of man, and take notice more especially of that presiding sense of obligation within us which attaches to our every feeling of what we ought to be or ought to do—without the conviction that this conscience was given as a power wherewith to control and overrule all the inferior propensities of our nature, and to secure for virtue that practical ascendancy which forms the healthy condition of our species. By reading, then, the natural tablet of morality in our own hearts, we read an impress as it were or reflection from that original tablet of all moral and spiritual excellence, even the character of Him from whom we have emanated. The book of conscience may be regarded as a transcript by the hand of this Being from that primeval virtue which belongs essentially and eternally to Himself—and whatever lineament we discern there, is the evidence to us of a corresponding lineament in the image of the Godhead. It is thus that we read the moral character of God in the book of our own consciences. From what we find to be the constitution of our moral nature, we directly infer the mind and disposition of Him who framed it. It is true that there are certain local or accidental modifications, which have caused slight and occasional difference in the moral judgments of men. But whatever, apart and aloof from these, has been enthroned by the universal sense of mankind as a virtue, or as that which should have a dwelling-place on earth—announces itself through the organ of conscience to have had an eternal dwelling-place in heaven—being seated there as one of the lovely or venerable characteristics of Him who framed us. If truth, and purity, and integrity, and kindness be virtues in men, and are recognised by him as of supreme obligation—the very fact of man being so framed as thus to recognise them, is to us the strongest argument within the compass of our natural vision, for the truth, and righteousness, and goodness, and holiness of God.

12. When ethical philosophers investigate the origin and foundation of our moral ideas, they sometimes, for the eliciting of principle, put imaginary cases—at one time disjoining, at another variously blending, the elements of their speculation. For instance, they make the supposition of man being so constituted, that with a moral nature utterly the reverse of his present one, his

moral judgments should be altogether opposite to those which he now passes on the virtues and vices of the human character. It is possible to conceive, and alike possible to argue on such a thing—on our species being so organized that what we now honour as righteous and incumbent moralities, we should then execrate as crimes, and what we now feel to be moral abominations, we should then revere as the best habits or accomplishments of humanity. The supposition, however violent, can certainly be made, that honour and generosity and truth should be proscribed by a race of beings so differently cast and moulded from ourselves as to associate blame or culpability with these observations; and, on the other hand, that deceit and murder and licentiousness should be canonized as so many virtues in the hearts of a thus regenerated species. We are all aware of the question whether virtue have a substantive and independent character of its own, or is a mere thing of arbitrary will and appointment on the part of Him who framed us—and it is in the management of this question that the hypothesis which we now advert to has sometimes been put. Now of whatever avail it may be for determining an abstract question about the nature of virtue, it at least supplies us with an obvious argument for determining the moral character of God. Let the imagination be formed of a superior being, the creator of a planet which he peopled with creatures of his own making—and the whole mechanism of whose moral judgments was the reverse of ours—inasmuch that they gave obeisance not of their lower but of their higher faculties, nay, of conscience, the highest of all, to what in our estimation are the worst atrocities of human guilt. Let but the vices of our world be deified into virtues there, and what should be the inference in regard to the character of him who was the maker of such a world, and of such a world's family? From a law written in the heart so different from our own, should we not infer a lawgiver equally different from our own? Should our existing decalogue have proceeded from God, it bespeaks a Sovereign who is the enemy of all falsehood and rapacity and violence. But another decalogue, the reverse of this in all its enactments, would have bespoke a sovereign the enemy of all that we are taught at present to revere as good, the friend and patron of all that we are taught to abhor as evil. Now the argument is the same, whether the enactments be written on a tablet of jurisprudence or on the tablet of our moral nature. A law of conscience opposite to the actual law would have indicated

an opposite moral character in Him who framed us—just as much as would the law of an authoritative code, proclaimed by revelation from heaven, if opposite in all its commandments to the law of Sinai. In other words, had our species from the constitution given to them rendered their moral acknowledgments to vice, we should have inferred the author of such a constitution to have been a God of wickedness—a sound inference truly—but not more sound than the conclusion we now make of what God actually is from the conscience He has actually given to us—a conscience that, amid all the obstructions and obscurations of the inferior faculties in a nature which has gone into unhingement, speaks loudly for the obligations and against the transgressions of moral rectitude—and therefore for a God who, amid the anarchy of the lower elements in this lower world, still asserts with overruling voice that He loveth righteousness, that He hateth iniquity.

13. Let us here take the opportunity of explaining a term which occurs but rarely in any of the expositions of natural theology—we mean the holiness of the Godhead. This is sometimes conceived of merely as virtue in its highest possible state of exaltation. But this is not just the appropriate definition of it. It is not virtue in itself, but virtue in relation to its opposite. The term “holiness” suggests the idea not of perfect virtue, but of that peculiar affection wherewith a Being of perfect virtue regards moral evil—and so much indeed is this the precise and characteristic import of the term, that, had there been no evil either actual or conceivable in the universe, there could have been no holiness. There would have been perfect truth and perfect righteousness, yet not holiness—for this is a word which denotes neither any one of the virtues in particular, nor the assemblage of them all put together, but the recoil or the repulsion of these towards the opposite vices—a recoil that never could have been felt, if vice had been so far a nonentity as to be neither an object of real existence nor an object of thought. It is thus that the peculiar quality of holiness, instead of a separate or additional attribute in God’s moral nature, may be regarded as a peculiar modification of that nature which extends to all its attributes—marking the strength of their repugnance to their respective opposites, and by this very strength indicating, if we may so express it, that force of character which belongs to Him. For such is the holiness of God, that He not only doeth no evil, but evil cannot dwell in His presence. Such is the holiness of God,

that He not only committeth no iniquity, but He is of purer eyes than to behold it without abhorrence. Such is the holiness of God that He not only doth not lie, but He cannot lie, so that heaven and earth must pass away ere any of His words can pass away. Holiness is not virtue—but virtue under a peculiar aspect, the aspect of its antipathy to vice—and in effect of which it so resolutely shrinks from all contact and contamination of its opposite. It is not by a mere statement or description of any of the virtues in God that the impression of His holiness is given. These virtues must be viewed in relation to moral evil—and by their holiness we understand the moral impossibility of their fellowship therewith. It is a term expressive of strict and guarded separation—just as the vessels of the temple were called holy, because set apart from all common uses, and that by a law the violation of which would have been sacrilege. And such too is the impression of Heaven's high sacredness—not a feeling of our sensitive, but the deeply-seated feeling of our moral and rational nature. Though little owned by poetical religionists, it has an undoubted echo in every conscience, whose paramount and peremptory voice within the heart is felt to proceed from a Being who is intolerant of evil and who resents its approach as profanation. It is this uncompromising purity of God which in the eye of the awakened sinner makes Him so tremendous—so that he views Him as a God of unappeased if not of unappeasable jealousy, and feels checked from advancing towards Him with the apprehension that should he offer to draw nigh, fire would come forth of the sanctuary to burn up and to destroy. It is at this passage, we conceive, in natural theology, that it becomes the germ of great and high preparations—for precisely on our slight or our lofty apprehension of God as a judge, of God as a righteous sovereign and lawgiver, will it depend whether Christianity shall be hailed as a saviour, or be neglected and turned from as a thing of nought.

14. Natural Theology is often spoken of as a useless thing, because of its defective evidence; but on this subject we should not forget the distinction between the ethics of the science and the objects of the science. There is an obscurity which, in various degrees, may rest upon the latter; and yet that be an obscurity wherewith the former is not at all chargeable. Let the objects of theology be shrouded as they may—that does not hinder the ethics of theology from being promptly and vividly seen by us in the light of intuition. Even although the very being of a God should require an inferential process ere we have ascertained

it—the duty we owe to God, on the supposition of His being, is clearly and immediately apprehended by the mind. This evidence for the one is as distinct from that for the other, as the evidence of moral is distinct from that of historical truth. The question—what are the actually existent things whether in the spiritual or in the material world—is *toto cælo* different from the question which presupposes the existence of the things, and simply confines itself to the relations between them. We have a mathematics which determines the action and reaction that take place between our earth and the various bodies in the firmament; and which mathematics would have been alike available to the same conclusion, although there had been no planets, and none of those facts which form the materials of our actual astronomy. We have a morals which determines the relative obligations which subsist between the creature and the Creator to whom he owes his birth and preservation; and what is purely ethical in the principle can neither be more illustrated nor more obscured by the brighter or the fainter evidence for an existing Deity. The mathematical is not more distinct from the observational truth in physics, than the moral is from the observational truth in theology. So that when we hear of the dimness of Nature's light; and how imperfectly it is that the things of God can be apprehended by man—we should distinguish between the things which differ; for, however we may have to grope our way to the substantive truths of theology, no sooner is a God made known than the incumbent gratitude and the incumbent obedience are forthwith recognised as the instant suggestions of our moral nature.

15. Even then when the objects of theology lie under their envelopment of deepest obscurity, there is a clear and imperative call addressed to us from the ethics of theology. And it is obvious that the call becomes louder, the more that this obscurity is dissipated, or the further that we proceed successfully in our inquiries after God. Neither for this purpose is it at all indispensable to form a previous estimate of the strength or the evidence of natural theology. Practically, the stronger it is and the clearer it is, it will speak all the more imperatively to the obligation of our respectfully entertaining every proposal that wears even but the likelihood of having come to us from the upper sanctuary. However profound the haze may be which rests on the objects of theology, its ethics remain so far distinct that the ethical principle which we have tried to unfold still

keeps its ground—and there is no state or period of the mind too far back, as it were, for being reached by its most righteous challenge, that we should stir ourselves up to lay hold of God. There is a duty which we owe to a certain, but there is also a duty which we owe to a likely, nay, even a possible Deity. Whenever the spirit of man is visited by even so little as but the thought of a Maker, it is a thought which should solemnize, which should fix, which should engage him in the prosecution of an active search after this unknown Benefactor, and should lead him to catch, as it were, at every promise, however faint, of a further intelligence respecting His character and ways. There was a moral obligation on the part of the Athenians to listen to Paul, when he spoke to them of the unknown God. And it is an obligation which extends from the most refined to the rudest of Nature's children. All humanity lies within the circle of it. And though the light of Nature glimmers more feebly towards the outskirts of the species—yet even there its dimness is visible to the last of men, and should reclaim them to seriousness. There is an incipient voice heard even in the extreme parts of the earth, and which goes to the very root and embryo of religion. It is a call upon man's attention—not perhaps to inform but to awaken him. He obeys this call who places himself on the outlook for any traces or manifestations of a God. The missionary who lands upon his shore will find him the first to listen to his message—at least the first to be impressed by its aspect of honesty and sacredness.

16. The principle which we now labour to impress might be made to subserve the vindication of a missionary enterprise—but our most direct interest in it is founded on its home application to the most unlettered of our own peasantry. It is of mighty use that there should be initial ground upon which we can obtain firm entry for our ministrations among the ignorant—that as the church bell is the summons upon their attendance, there should be a moral summons upon the attention of the people. Now this is the important function of their natural theology—the theology of conscience, which challenges supremacy within them, and gives the impression of a supreme Judge and Ruler over them. It is the existence of this impression which secures an introduction for us. There is at the very least the conception of a God; and, however obscure the conception may be, there is a felt clearness and certainty in the principle that a professed message from Him, unless it palpably belies itself, is not to

be disregarded. The former may be obscure as belonging to the objects of theology—while the latter is not so as belonging to the ethics of theology. This ethical principle, in fact, felt and recognised wherever there is a conscience or a moral nature, is the hold whereby the fishers of men may reclaim them from the lowest depths whether of ignorance or depravity. It is surely of importance to know that the process of Christianization has a clear outset in the moral and rational principles of our nature, and that there is a natural theology among the people which may serve as a harbinger for the higher lessons of the gospel. It is by this natural theology of theirs that the first steps of the process are made good—that a hearing is gained, and attention is drawn to the verisimilitudes of the Christian Revelation. It is by the evidence of the gospel itself that these verisimilitudes brighten into verities. It is natural theology which accomplishes the first—it is the proper evidence of Christianity which accomplishes the second part of the process. But mainly it is the internal evidence. The great majority of our people have no access to the other. They are strangers to all that scholarship and criticism and historical investigation, which serve to illustrate the outward credentials of the book. But they need be no strangers to the contents of the book—and we will not anticipate how it is that they discern the signatures of a divinity there—or how from the simple apparatus of a Bible and a conscience, that light is struck out which guides the peasant safely to heaven. It is saying much for the importance of natural theology that it does contribute to a result so glorious—nor let us longer speak of nature's light as if it had gone into utter extinction—when in fact the two great instrumental causes for the Christianity of all our cottages, are the light of nature and the self-evidencing power of the Bible.

17. Having said thus much for natural theology, we feel the less hesitation in admitting that it does leave us in difficulties from which itself cannot extricate us. But it is well that it makes discovery of these. It gives us to know our disease, and therefore prompts us to cast about for a remedy. It manifests the fearful dilemma in which we are placed; and so inclines us to hail every symptom or promise of deliverance therefrom. Whatever be the darkness of our spirits in regard to God as an object, there natively belongs to us enough of the ethical to feel that we have not done what we ought by this unknown God. There is a light of conscience by which we can apprehend what

sin is. There is a light of consciousness by which we can know ourselves to be sinners; and thus it is that every man is placed in a state of recipiency for the overtures of the Christian Revelation. It is enough for this, though without entering very strictly or specifically upon the question, if he but share however generally in nature's perplexities; in her undefined terrors, and these strangely blended with her vague and uncertain hopes; in her unresolved doubts, her longing yet fruitless aspirations.

18. We have already observed the difficulty to which natural theism is put in accounting for the ills of life—and, by availing ourselves of the undoubted fact, that mainly they are reducible into moral causes, we have certainly approximated at least to the right interpretation of them. The most appalling of all these in our mysterious world is the mystery of death. Even although it could be made out, that there is here a triumphant superiority of happiness to misery—this, instead of bringing an explanation to the difficulty, would in fact bring a difficulty to the explanation. Let the few little years of our pilgrimage have been as bright and as beautiful as they may—still what account is to be given of that universal plague, wherewith all that ever breathes on the face of our earth hath been so hopelessly and incurably infected? Of what avail are the smile and the sunshine of our ephemeral being, when they only serve to aggravate its closing horrors; and to give a more revolting hideousness to that desolation, by which it is so fearfully ended? Let the picture of all those joys which gladden the family circle be rendered as touching as it may—it is death, it is universal and unsparing death, which turns it all to cruelest mockery. Even though without one other ingredient to imbitter the cup of life, this fatality alone were enough utterly to change the aspect of our world—from a pleasing habitation for the sons of men, transforming it into the vast sepulchral abode of its mouldering generations.

19. But this is reasoning on a supposition the most favourable. It is presuming that, apart from death, all within us and about us is in the very heyday of happiness. But really it is not so. It is evident that nature labours under a sore distemper—and whereof she hath given palpable symptoms, not only in the volcano, and the earthquake, and the storm—but in that general conspiracy of all her elements, against which man hath to fight and to fatigue himself his whole life long—that he might force out a subsistence, and keep footing through a history which is

made up of little better than to drudge and to die. Should we try to unriddle the mystery, we would state it as one of the likeliest solutions—that she was at one time healthful and entire, but that a universal blight had come upon her, and she hath now become the wreck of what she was—still lovely in many of her aspects, though in sore distress—still majestic and venerable, though a venerable ruin—appearing as if out of joint; and giving token, by her extended deserts, and the gloom of her unpeopled solitudes, and her wintry frown, and her many fears and fitful agitations, that some mysterious ailment hath befallen her.

20. There is, we think, an utter derangement into which nature has been thrown—so that all her elements are impregnated with disease; and often the hurricane, and pestilence, and sweeping flood, become the ministers of desolation. Even mute and inanimate things are subject to the power of decay—under which many of them, and these the loveliest in nature, do sicken and expire—and so exemplify that death which likens them to those who are immediately above themselves in the scale of creation. The inferior animals, too, are all under the law of mortality—and not a few of them under that law of their sentient and organic nature by which, in obedience to a tyrant appetite, they go forth upon each other in mutual fierceness to raven and to destroy. And with man, also, the seeds of mortality are in his tainted constitution—they are born with him—and they lie undeveloped, and sleep in mysterious embryo among the curious receptacles of an infant bosom. Throughout all her domains, in short, nature hath taken on a hue of sickliness—and the very elements are charged with disease—and even that ground which might have offered a soft and flowery carpet, for the impress of ethereal footsteps, hath gathered into a rugged and intractable temper—and more especially man has been doomed by the very nobleness of his endowments, by the greater reach of his forebodings and the finer sensibilities that belong to him, to a larger participation, to a higher pre-eminence in the general distress.

21. There is one alleviation, and an alleviation felt even in bosoms where the light of revelation hath not entered. There is the mingling of a strange undefinable hope with all this helplessness. There is a sort of vague undefinable impression, we think, upon all spirits, of some great evolution of the present system under which we live—some looking towards, as well as longing after immortality—some mysterious but yet

powerful sense within every breast, of the present as a state of confinement and thralldom, and that yet a day of light, and largeness, and liberty is coming. We cannot imagine of those who live without the scope of Christianity, that they have any very precise or perhaps confident anticipations on the subject. But certainly there is abroad even among them a dim and a distant vision of better days, of a brighter and a blander period that is now obscurely seen or guessed at through the gloom by which humanity is encompassed—a kind of floating anticipation, suggested perhaps by the experimental feeling that there is now the straitness of an oppressed and limited condition, and that we are still among the toils, and the difficulties, and the struggles of an embryo state of existence. It is altogether worthy of remark that, in like manner, as throughout the various countries of the world, there is the very wide impression of a primeval condition of virtue and blessedness from which we have fallen—so there seems a very wide expectation of the species being at length restored to the honours of their original excellence, and the world being recovered to the same health, and harmony, and loveliness as before. The vision of a golden age at some remote period of antiquity, is not unaccompanied by the vision of a yet splendid and general revival of all things. Even apart from revelation, there floats before the world's eye the brilliant perspective of this earth being at length covered with a righteous and regenerated family. This is a topic on which even philosophy has her fascinating dreams; and there are philanthropists in our day who disown Christianity, yet are urged forward to exertion by the power and the pleasure of an anticipation so beautiful. They do not think of death. They only think of the moral and political glories of a renovated world, and of these glories as unfading. It is an immortality after all that they are picturing. While they look on that gospel which brought life and immortality to light as a fable, still they find that the whole capacity of their spirits is not filled, unless they can regale them with the prospect of an immortality of their own. Nothing short of this will satisfy them—and whether we look to those who speculate on the perfectibility of mankind, or to those who think in economic theories that they are laying a basis on which might be reared the permanent happiness of nations, we see but man spurning at the narrowness of his present condition, and waiting in earnest expectancy for a nobler manifestation.

22. Still death forms the most grievous deduction from the

entireness of that world, which is so often appealed to as containing in it ample evidences for the goodness of God. It is this which stamps the character of vanity of vanities on all who are subject to it. Through the whole of life man walketh in a vain show, and vexeth himself in vain—and though it had flowed in one clear and untroubled current of felicity, how surely and how sadly it wanes onward to its close! It is death which puts impressive mockery on all the splendour and fulness of this world. The grave absorbs all, annihilates all—and as one generation maketh room for another, and the men of the present age are borne off by the men of the age that is to follow, we cannot but regard the history of our species, and indeed of all the living tribes that people the surface of this labouring earth, we cannot but regard it in any other light than as a series of abortions. There is so much of the promise of immortality in the high anticipation and heyday of youth—there is so much of the seeming power of immortality in the vigour of established manhood—there is even so much of the character of endurance in the tenacity wherewith age keeps itself riveted to the pursuits and interests of the world, to its busy schemes and its eager prosecutions, and its castles of fame or accumulated fortune—clinging as it does to these things, even on the very brink of the sepulchre, and keeping a firmer hold with the hand of avarice, the sooner that its deeds, and its documents, and its various parchments of security are to be torn away from it—why, the whole looks so farcical, if we may be allowed the term, that well may it be said of life, even in its happiest guise and in midst of its gayest prosperity, that it is altogether subject to vanity.

23. But, as we have already said, there is with all this actual and undoubted helplessness, there is strangely and mysteriously mixed up a kind of vague aspiration or hope in the heart of men after some coming enlargement. The very thirst after immortal fame, on the part of orators and philosophers and poets, is an example of it; and so are the magnificent sketches of a prouder and better day for our species that float before the eye of our sanguine economists; and so is every effort to shake off the trammels of antiquity, and to speed, if possible, with an innovator's hand, the amelioration of our race; and so are those lovely visions of a world regenerated into benevolence and purity and peace, that certain uninspired prophets love to gaze upon. Each hath a millennium of his own, on which he dotes and dwells with kindred imagination; and whether we read of the

future triumph of virtue by the march of intellect, or are called to look upon it in the perspective of planned and regulated villages, it may well be put down to the craving appetite, or even the strong expectancy that there is in human bosoms, for some bright and beauteous evolution in the history of human affairs.

24. Take these two elements—the actual state of man, and yet the high anticipations that even in spite of death are found to lighten and elevate his bosom—and we should figure the world to be in a state of big and general distress, giving token of some pregnant but yet undisclosed mystery wherewith it is charged, and heaving throughout all its borders with the pains and the portents of its coming regeneration.

25. This seems to be the general aspect of things. The world is not at ease. The element wherein it floats is far from being of a tranquil or a rejoicing character. It hath somehow got out of adjustment, and is evidently off the poise or the balance of those equable movements in which we should desire that it persisted for ever. Like the stray member of a secure and blissful family, it hath turned into a wayward, comfortless, ill-conditioned thing—that still teems, however, with the recollection of its high original, and wildly gleams and gladdens in the hope of its coming regeneration. It hath all the characters now of being in a transition state, and with all those symptoms of restlessness about it which brooding insect undergoes ere it passes into the deathlike chrysalis, and comes forth again in some gay and beauteous expansion on the fields of our illumined atmosphere. Meanwhile it is in sore labour; and the tempest's sigh, and the meteor's flash, and not more the elemental war than the conflict and the agony that are upon all spirits—the vexing care, and the heated enterprise, and the fierce contention, and the battle-cry both that rises among the inferior tribes throughout the amplitudes of unpeopled nature, and that breaks as loudly upon the ear from the shock of civilized men—above everything, the death, the sweeping, irresistible death, that makes such havoc among all the ranks of animated nature, and carries off as with a flood its successive generations,—these are the now overhanging evils of a world that is groping in darkness for its God.

26. There are certain topics in natural theology which we would rather pass over in this rapid and cursory way, than bring them each successively forward in the shape of a distinct and definite argument. We conceive that injury is done to a cause,

when the stress of it is laid in any great or ostentatious degree on that which is merely conjectural. There has been too much made of what may be called the surmisings, or the longings, or the presentiments of nature. For example, we should hesitate to urge either nature's dread of annihilation, or its desire of posthumous fame (that is of a species of life, because of living in the recollection of yet unborn generations), or its towering wishes and capacities beyond all which earth and time can satisfy; we should not very anxiously expound, or very confidently insist on, these as reasons for immortality—not but they have some force when viewed in analogy with the general fact, that for each appetency in man, whether mental or corporeal, there is a definite object in external nature—so that it seems to exhibit the anomaly of what may be called a waste feeling or a waste faculty in our constitution, should there be a heaving of the soul towards eternity, without an actual eternity to meet and to satisfy its aspirations. Still, we would view these things, not in the light of substantial proofs, but rather of slender presumptions. They are not manifestations of the truth; but, to make use of a homely yet expressive term, peculiar, we believe, to Scotland, they are but *inklings* of the truth. Now, we hold that natural theology abounds in such faint and distant notices, as may very aptly be denominated *inklings*. And if we have at all succeeded in conveying our sense of the worth and magnitude of a principle which we have much insisted on, they are very far from being destitute of practical importance. They may not challenge the belief, and yet most rightfully may they challenge the attention. They are not enough to produce conviction, but they should be enough to prompt and to stimulate inquiry. They do not unveil the objective truth, but they bring the ethical principle into play. They do not bring light to the spirit, but they bring to the test its love for the light or its love for the darkness. They do not form the materials of such a proof as should carry the assurance of the mind, but they at least form the materials of such a precognition as should set it on a busy and desirous search after its own immortality, and make it hail the arrival, from whatever quarter, of any offered manifestations. There is not as much light in the theology of nature as should satisfy and inform the spirit of man, but certainly as much as should utterly condemn the spirit's lethargy. It cannot fetch down the secret of heaven's economy to earth, but it puts the earth into a state of ripeness and responsency for heaven's revelation.

27. Perhaps the first tendency of the youthful spirit is to ascribe a sufficiency and a strength to natural theology which do not belong to it. It is at this period that the mere plausibilities of the subject are most likely to be sustained as proofs—and that such agreeable reasonings as those of Addison, in his "Spectator," about the aspiring and the indefinite capacities of progress in man, will be held enough to warrant our confident expectation of immortality. But after that we have entered on a severe discipline of thought, and have exchanged the imaginative for the experimental or the historical—we are apt to discard the speculations of natural theism altogether, and to rest our exclusive as well as firm belief on the foundation of that sound testimony which gives the force of observational evidence to the statements and revelations of the gospel.

28. The true apprehension seems to be, that natural theology, however little to be trusted as an informer, yet as an inquirer, or rather as a prompter to inquiry, is of inestimable service. It is a high function that she discharges, for though not able to satisfy the search, she impels to the search. We are apt to undervalue, if not to set her aside altogether, when we compare her obscure and imperfect notices with the lustre and the fulness of revelation. But this is because we overlook the virtue that lies in the probabilities of a subject—a virtue, either, on the one hand, to fasten the attention; or, on the other hand, to condemn the want of it. This we hold to be the precise office of natural theology—and an office, too, which she performs, not merely, as the theology of science, among those who listen to her demonstrations in the academic hall, but which she also performs with powerful and practical effect, as the theology of conscience, throughout all the classes of our general population. It is this initial work which makes her so useful, we should say so indispensable, as a preliminary to the gospel. Natural theology is quite overrated by those who would represent it as the foundation of the edifice. It is not that, but rather the taper by which we must grope our way to the edifice. The stability of a fabric is not greater than the stability of that upon which it rests; and it were ascribing a general infirmity to revelation, to set it forth, as leaning upon natural theism, in the way that a mathematical doctrine leans upon the axioms or first principles of the science. Christianity rests on its own proper evidence; and if, instead of this, she be made to rest on an antecedent natural religion, she becomes weak throughout, because weak radically. It is true,

that in theology the natural goes before the revealed, even as the cry of weakness or distress goes before the relief to which it aspires, and which it is prompted to seek after. It goes before, not synthetically in the order of demonstration, but historically in the mind of the inquirer. It is not that natural religion is the premises, and Christianity the conclusion; but it is that natural religion creates an appetite which it cannot quell; and he who is urged thereby, seeks for a rest and a satisfaction which he can only obtain in the fulness of the gospel. Natural theology has been called the basis of Christianity. It would accord better with our own views of the place which it occupies, and of the high purpose which it undoubtedly serves—if it were called the basis of Christianization.

29. The most important exemplification of the way in which natural religion bears upon Christianity, is furnished by the question of a sinner's acceptance with God. Natural religion can suggest to man the apprehension of his guilt; for however dim her objective view of the Deity, there is no such dimness in her ethical notion of what is due even to an uncertain God. Without having seriously resolved the question, we may stand convicted to our own minds of a hardened and habitual carelessness to the question. If our whole lives long have been spent in the midst of created things, without any serious or sustained effort of our spirits in quest of a Creator—if, as our consciences can tell, the whole drift and practical earnestness of our thoughts are towards the gifts, with but a rare and occasional anxiety towards the Giver—if the sense of Him touch but lightly on our spirits, and we, by our perpetual lapses from the sacred to the secular, prove that our gravitation is to earth, and that in truth our best-loved element is atheism—if the notices of a God, however indistinct, wherewith we are surrounded, instead of fastening our regards on this high contemplation, do but disturb without at all influencing the general tenor of our engagements—these are things of which the light of nature can take cognizance; and these are things because of which, and of their felt unworthiness, nature is visited by the misgivings both of remorse and of terror. She has data enough on which to found the demonstration and the sense of our own unworthiness; and hence a general feeling of insecurity among all spirits, a secret but strong apprehension that all is not right between them and God.

30. And without fetching the lesson of our guilt from the

depths and the subtleties of our latent ungodliness, it gleams forth obviously upon us from the palpable misdoings of outward and visible history. We do not need to dive among the arcana of our inward nature to be informed of that moral perversity which is so broadly announced by act and by every-day behaviour. Not to speak of the frauds and the profligacies of the worst in society, there is enough in the failures, and the infirmities, and the omissions of the best to account for that sense of sinfulness which, in spite of every disguise, may be detected in the purest of bosoms. The truth is, that wherever a real moral superiority of character is found, there is also a greater moral delicacy of conscience, and so a quicker sensibility to what may be deemed by many but the slighter violations of rectitude. And hence we should imagine that a sense of guilt and of deficiency is well nigh universal throughout our species. It is a felt and familiar impression everywhere—not the fruit of that education which prevails within the limits of Christendom, but an instant suggestion of conscience throughout all the climes of our habitable earth. Such is the experience of missionaries. They do not need to demonstrate the sinfulness of the human character—for even the dark imagery of superstition proves that the ground is thus far prepared for them. There is a certain misgiving sense of condemnation in every bosom—a distrust grounded on the fear of Heaven's provoked enmity—and the feeling of this enmity alienates the world from its God.*

31. This is not a matter of mere sensitive and popular impression; but in strict accordance with the views of a calm and

* There is on this subject a distinction between one principle and another in natural theology, on which there in fact turns a corresponding distinction between one system and another in Christianity. If we hold the Supreme Being to be a God of indefinite placability, then will it be our feeling that the barrier of separation which sin hath interposed between God and His creatures, may be easily surmounted. But if, on the other hand, we hold Him to be a God of inflexible justice, then the barrier will appear to be impassable; or, at least, it will appear in our eyes a problem of difficulty, how mercy can be so dispensed to a guilty world that the honours of the one attribute may be preserved, under the exercise and manifestation of the other. So that the question between one gospel sect or denomination and another, hangs upon an anterior question in natural theism. If we look on God only as a benign and affectionate parent, then we might imagine Him recalling His strayed children by a simple act of connivance. But if, instead of this, we look on God only as a judge and a moral governor, then might the dignity of this government seem to require that they should be irrecoverable outcasts from a kingdom whose laws they have violated. It were altogether worthy of a revelation from heaven to unriddle this perplexity; and precisely as we are inclined to cherish the sentimental or the severe and sacred view of the Divinity, will either the apparatus of redemption be set at nought or will we welcome the tidings that unto us a Saviour has been born.

intelligent jurisprudence. It enters into the very essence of our conception of a moral government, that it must have sanctions which could not have place, were there either to be no dispensation of rewards and punishments; or were the penalties, though denounced with all the parade and proclamation of law, to be never executed. It is not the lesson of conscience, that God would, under the mere impulse of a parental fondness for the creatures whom He had made, let down the high state and sovereignty which belong to Him; or that He would forbear the infliction of the penalty, because of any soft or timid shrinking from the pain it would give to the objects of His displeasure. There is nothing, either in history or nature, which countenances such an imagination of the Deity, as that, in the relentings of mere tenderness, He would stoop to any weak or unworthy compromise with guilt. The actual sufferings of life speak loudly and experimentally against the supposition; and when one looks to the disease and the agony of spirit, and, above all, the hideous and unsparing death, with its painful struggles and gloomy forebodings, which are spread universally over the face of the earth—we cannot but imagine of the God who presides over such an economy, that He is not a being who will falter from the imposition of any severity, which might serve the objects of a high administration. Else all steadfastness of purpose and steadfastness of principle were fallen from. God would stand forth to the eye of His own creatures, a spectacle of outraged dignity. And He of whom we image that He dwells in an inviolable sanctuary, the august Monarch of heaven and earth—with a law by subjects dishonoured, by the sovereign unavenged—would possess but the semblance and the mockery of a throne.

32. Such a conception is not only a violence to the apprehensions of nature, but is even acknowledged at times by our academic theists, as a violence to the sound philosophy of the subject. The most striking testimony to this effect is that given by Dr. Adam Smith, on the first appearance of his "Theory of Moral Sentiments;" nor does it detract from its interest or its value, that he afterwards suppressed it, in the subsequent editions of his work. "All our natural sentiments," he says, "prompt us to believe, that as perfect virtue is supposed necessarily to appear to the Deity as it does to us, as for its own sake and without any farther view, the natural and proper object of love and reward, so must vice of hatred and punishment. That

the gods neither resent nor hurt, was the general maxim of all the different sects of the ancient philosophy; and if by resenting be understood that violent and disorderly perturbation which often distracts and confounds the human heart; or if by hurting be understood the doing of mischief wantonly, and without regard to propriety or justice, such weakness is undoubtedly unworthy of the Divine perfection. But if it be meant that vice does not appear to the Deity to be for its own sake the object of abhorrence and aversion, and what, for its own sake, it is fit and reasonable should be punished, the truth of this maxim can by no means be so easily admitted. If we consult our natural sentiments, we are apt to fear lest before the holiness of God vice should appear to be more worthy of punishment, than the weakness and imperfection of human virtue can ever seem to be of reward. Man, when about to appear before a Being of infinite perfection, can feel but little confidence in his own merit, or in the imperfect propriety of his own conduct. In the presence of his fellow-creatures he may often justly elevate himself, and may often have reason to think highly of his own character and conduct, compared to the still greater imperfection of theirs. But the case is quite different when about to appear before his infinite Creator. To such a Being, he can scarcely imagine that his littleness and weakness should ever appear to be the proper objects either of esteem or of reward. But he can easily conceive how the numberless violations of duty of which he has been guilty, should render him the proper object of aversion and punishment; neither can he see any reason why the Divine indignation should not be let loose without any restraint, upon so vile an insect as he is sensible that he himself must appear to be. If he would still hope for happiness, he is conscious that he cannot demand it from the justice, but he must entreat it from the mercy of God. Repentance, sorrow, humiliation, contrition at the thought of his past misconduct, are upon this account the sentiments which become him, and seem to be the only means which he has left for appeasing that wrath which he knows he has justly provoked. He even distrusts the efficacy of all these, and naturally fears lest the wisdom of God should not, like the weakness of man, be prevailed upon to spare the crime by the most importunate lamentations of the criminal. Some other intercession, some other sacrifice, some other atonement, he imagines must be made for him, beyond what he himself is capable of making, before the purity of the Divine justice can be recon-

ciled to his manifold offences. The doctrines of revelation coincide in every respect with these original anticipations of nature ; and as they teach us how little we can depend upon the imperfection of our own virtue, so they show us at the same time that the most powerful intercession has been made, and that the most dreadful atonement has been paid for our manifold transgressions and iniquities."

33. This interesting passage seems to have been written by its author under a true apprehension of that dilemma in which the world is involved. He admits a moral government on the part of God. He admits a universal delinquency on the part of man. And his feeling is, that the government would be nullified by a mere act of indemnity, which rendered no acknowledgment to the justice which had been violated, or to the authority of that law which had been trampled on. In these circumstances, he casts about as it were for an adjustment ; and puts forth a conjectural speculation ; and guesses what the provision should be, which, under a new economy, might be adopted for repairing a defect that is evidently beyond all the resources of natural theism ; and proposes the very expedient of our professed revelation, for the resolving of a difficulty which had been else impracticable. We deem it a melancholy fact, that this noble testimony to the need of a gospel should have disappeared in the posterior editions of his work, revised and corrected as they were by his own hand. It is not for men to sit in the chair of judgment ; and never should they feel a greater awe or tenderness upon their spirits, than when called to witness or to pronounce upon the aberrations of departed genius. Yet when one compares the passage he could at one time have written with the memoir that, after an interval of many years, he gave to the world of David Hume, that ablest champion of the infidel cause—one fears lest, under the contagion of a near and withering intimacy with him, his spirit may have imbibed of the kindred poison ; and he at length have become ashamed of the homage that he once had rendered to the worth and importance of Christianity.

34. This notwithstanding remains one of the finest examples of the way in which the natural bears upon the Christian theology, and of the outgoings by which the one conducts to a landing-place in the other. We hold that there are many such outgoings ; that at the uttermost margin of the former there is a felt want, and that, in accurate counterpart to this, the latter

has something to offer in precise and perfect adaptation thereto. Now the great error of our academic theism, as commonly treated, is that it expresses no want; that it reposes in its own fancied sufficiency; and that all its landing-places are within itself, and along the uttermost limits of its own territory. It is no reproach against our philosophical moralists, that they have not stepped beyond the threshold of that peculium which is strictly and appropriately theirs; or not made incursion into another department than their own. The legitimate complaint is, that, on taking leave of their disciples, they warn them not of their being only yet at the outset or in the prosecution of a journey, instead of having reached the termination of it. They, in fact, take leave of them in the middle of an unprotected highway, when they should have reared a finger-post of direction to the places which lie beyond. The paragraph which we have now extracted, was just such a finger-post, though taken down, we deeply regret to say, by the very hand that had erected it. Our veneration for his name must not restrain the observation, that, by this, he undid the best service which a professor of moral science can render to humanity. Along the confines of its domain, there should be raised, in every quarter, the floating signals of distress; that its scholars, instead of being lulled into the imagination that now they may repose as in so many secure and splendid dwelling-places, should be taught to regard them only as towers of observation, whence they have to look for their ulterior guidance and their ulterior supplies to the region of a conterminous theology.

35. There is a difficulty here in the theism of nature, within the whole compass of which no solution for it can be found. It will at least afford a specimen of the way in which the one bears upon the other, if we state the method of escape from this difficulty that has been provided in the theism of Christianity. The great moral problem which under the former waits to be resolved, is to find acceptance in the mercy of God for those who have braved His justice, and done despite to the authority of His law; and that without any compromise of truth or dignity. By the offered solution of the New Testament, a channel has been opened up, through a high mediatorship between God and man, for the descent of a grace and a mercy the most exuberant on a guilty world; and through it, the overtures of reconciliation are extended unto all; and a sceptre of forgiveness, but of forgiveness consecrated by the blood of a great atonement, has been stretched

forth, even to the most polluted and worthless outcasts of the human family ; and thus the goodness of the Divinity obtained its fullest vindication, yet not a goodness at the expense of justice—for the affront done to an outraged law has been amply repaired by the homage to its authority of an illustrious Sufferer, who took upon Himself the burden of all those penalties which we should have borne ; and, in the spectacle of whose deep and mysterious sacrifice, God's hatred of moral evil stands forth in most impressive demonstration. So that, instead of a conflict or a concussion between these two essential attributes of His nature, a way has been found by which each is enhanced to the uttermost, and a flood of most copious and convincing illustration has been poured upon them both.

36. This specimen will best illustrate of moral philosophy, even in its most finished state, that it is not what may be called a terminating science. It is at best but a science *in transitu* ; and its lessons are those of a preparatory school. It contains but the rudiments of a nobler acquirement ; and he discharges best the functions of a teacher, not who satiates, but who excites the appetite, and then leaves it wholly unappeased. This arises from the real state and bearing of the science, as being a science not so much of doctrines as of desiderata. At most, it leaves its scholars in a sort of twilight obscurity. And, if a just account is rendered of the subject, there will unavoidably be the feeling, that, instead of having reached a secure landing-place, we have broken off, as in the middle of an unfinished demonstration.

37. That indeed is a most interesting adjustment between moral philosophy and the Christian theology, which is represented to us by the unresolved difficulties of the one science, and the reduction which is made of these difficulties in the other. We have far the most important example of this in the doctrine of the atonement—that sublime mystery, by which the attributes of the Divinity have all been harmonized ; and the most liberal outlet has been provided for mercy to the offender, while still the truth and justice of the Lawgiver have been vindicated, and all the securities of His moral government are upholden. By the disloyalty of our race, the principles of Heaven's jurisprudence are brought to a test of utmost delicacy ; for there seems to be no other alternative, than that man should perish in overwhelming vengeance, or that God should become a degraded sovereign. It nullifies the moral government of the world, if all force and authority be taken from its sanctions ; and it is a problem which

even "angels desire to look into," how the breach could be healed, which had been made by this world's rebellion, and yet the honour of heaven's high Sovereign be untarnished by the compromise. The one science lands us in the difficulty; and by the other alone it is that we are extricated. The one presents us with the case; but, for the solution of it, we must recur to a higher calculus, to an instrument of more powerful discovery and of fuller revelation. The one starts a question which itself cannot untie; and the other furnishes the satisfactory response to it. The desideratum of the former meets with the doctrine of the latter: and it is this frequent adjustment, as of a mould to its counterpart die; it is this close and manifold adaptation between the wants of nature and the overtures of a professed revelation; it is this fitting of the supernal application to the terrestrial subject upon which it is laid; it is the way, more especially, in which the disruption between heaven and earth has been restored, and the frightful chasm that sin had made on the condition and prospects of our species is wholly repaired, to all who will, through the completeness of an offered Saviour; it is this mingled harmony of the greater and lesser lights, which gives evidence that both have been kindled by the same hand, and that it is He who put the candle which glimmers so feebly into my heart, it is He also who poured the noonday effulgence of Christianity around me.

(37.) It were foreign to our present subject to attempt an exposition, in however brief and rapid a sketch, of the credentials of Christianity. We only remark, that, amid the lustre and variety of its proofs, there is one strikingly analogous, and indeed identical in principle, with one of the main arguments in natural theology. If in the system of external nature we can recognise the evidence of God being its author, in the adaptations wherewith it teems to the moral and intellectual constitution of man, there is room and opportunity for this very evidence in the book of an external revelation. What appears in the construction of a world might be made to appear as manifestly in the construction of a volume, whose objective truths may present as obvious and skilful an accommodation to our mental economy, as do the objective things of a created universe. And it is not the less favourable, for an indication of its Divine original, that whereas nature, as being the original system, abounds with those fitnesses which harmonize with the mental constitution in a state of health—Christianity, as being a restorative system, abounds in

fitnesses to the same constitution in a state of disease. We are not sure but that in the latter, from its very design, we shall meet with still more delicate and decisive tests of a designer, than have yet been noticed in the former ; and certain it is, that the wisdom and goodness and even power of a moral architect, may be as strikingly evinced in the reparation, as in the primary establishment of a moral nature.

38. Our conclusion on the whole is, that no alleged defect of evidence in natural theology can extinguish the use of it—a use which might still remain, under every conceivable degree whether of dimness or of distinctness in its views. Even the faint and distant probabilities of the subject may still lay upon us the duty of careful and strenuous inquisition, and that long anterior to our full acquaintance with the certainties of the subject. The verisimilitudes of the question are the signal-posts, by following the intimations of which, we are at length conducted to the verities of the question. Although natural theology, therefore, should fail to illuminate, yet, by a moral force upon the attention, it may fully retain the power to impel. Even if it should have but some evidence, however slender, this should put us at the very least into the attitude of inquirers ; and the larger the evidence, the more earnest and vigilant ought the inquiry to be. Thus a great object is practically fulfilled by natural theology. It gives us to conceive, or to conjecture, or to know so much of God, that, if there be a professed message with the likely signatures upon it of having proceeded from Him—though not our duty all at once to surrender, it is at least our bounden duty to investigate. It may not yet be entitled to a place in our creed ; but it is at least entitled to a place in the threshold of the understanding, where it may wait the full and fair examination of its credentials. It may not be easy to measure the intensity of nature's light ; but enough if it be a light that, had we obeyed its intimations, would have guided us onwards to larger manifestations of the Deity. If natural theology but serve thus to fix and direct our inquiries, it may fulfil a most important part as the precursor of revelation. It may not be itself the temple ; but it does much by leading the way to it. Even at the outset period of our thickest ignorance, there is a voice which calls upon us to go forth in quest of God. And in proportion as we advance does the voice become more urgent and audible, in calling us onward to further manifestations. It says much for natural theology, that it begins at the commencement,

and carries us forward a part of this way ; and it has indeed discharged a most important function, if, at the point where its guesses or its discoveries terminate, it leaves us with as much light as should make us all awake to the further notices of a God, or as shall leave our heedlessness wholly inexcusable.

39. There is a confused imagination with many, that every new accession, whether of evidence or of doctrine, made to the natural, tends in so far to reduce the claims or to depreciate the importance of the Christian theology. The apprehension is, that, as the latter was designed to supplement the insufficiency of the former, then, the more that the arguments of natural theology are strengthened, or its truths are multiplied, the more are the lessons of the Christian theology unneeded and uncalled for. It is thus that the discoveries of reason are held as superseding, or as casting a shade of insignificance, and even of discredit, over the discoveries of revelation. There is a certain dread or jealousy with some humble Christians of all that incense which is offered at the shrine of the Divinity by human science—whose daring incursion on the field of theology, it is thought, will, in very proportion to the brilliancy of its success, administer both to the proud independence of the infidel, and to the pious alarm of the believer.

40. But, to mitigate this disquietude, it should be recollected, in the first place, that, if Christianity have real and independent evidence of being a message from God, it will be all the more humbly and respectfully deferred to, should a previous natural theology have assured us of His existence, and thrown the radiance of a clear and satisfying demonstration over the perfections of His character. However plausible its credentials may be, we should feel no great interest in its statements or its overtures, if we doubted the reality of that Being from whom it professes to have come ; and it is precisely in as far as we are preoccupied with the conviction of a throne in heaven, and of a God sitting upon that throne, that we should receive what bore the signatures of an embassy from Him with awful reverence.

41. But there is another consideration still more decisive of the place and importance of Christianity, notwithstanding every possible achievement by the light of nature. There are many discoveries which, so far from alleviating, serve but to enhance the difficulties of the question. For example, though science has made known to us the magnitude of the universe, it has not thereby advanced one footstep towards the secret of God's moral

administration ; but has, in fact, receded to a greater distance from this now more hopeless, because now more complex and unmanageable problem than before. To multiply the data of a question, is not always the way to facilitate its solution ; but often the way rather to make it more inextricable. And this is precisely the effect of all the discoveries that can be made by natural theology, on that problem which it is the special office of Christianity to resolve. With every new argument by which philosophy enhances the goodness and greatness of the Supreme Being, does it deepen still more the guilt and ingratitude of those who have revolted against Him. The more emphatically it can demonstrate the care and benevolence of God—the more emphatically, along with this, does it demonstrate the worthlessness of man. The same light which irradiates the perfections of the Divine nature irradiates with more fearful manifestation than ever the moral disease and depravation into which humanity has fallen. Had natural theology been altogether extinct, and there had been no sense of a law or lawgiver among men, we should have been unconscious of any difficulty to be redressed, of any dilemma from which we needed extrication. But the theology of nature and conscience tells us of a law ; and in proportion as it multiplies the claims of the Lawgiver in heaven, does it aggravate the criminality of His subjects upon earth. With the rebellious phenomenon of a depraved species before our eyes, every new discovery of God but deepens the enigma of man's condition in time, and of his prospects in eternity ; and so makes the louder call for that remedial system which it is the very purpose of Christianity to introduce into the world.

42. We hold that the theology of nature sheds powerful light on the being of a God ; and that, even from its unaided demonstrations, we can reach a considerable degree of probability, both for His moral and natural attributes. But when it undertakes the question between God and man, this is what it finds to be impracticable. It is here where the main helplessness of nature lies. It is baffled in all its attempts to decipher the state and the prospects of man, viewed in the relation of an offending subject to an offended sovereign. In a word, its chief obscurity, and which it is wholly unable to disperse, is that which rests on the hopes and the destiny of our species. There is in it enough of manifestation to awaken the fears of guilt, but not enough again to appease them. It emits, and audibly emits, a note of terror ; but in vain do we listen for one authentic word of comfort from any of its oracles.

It is able to see the danger, but not the deliverance. It can excite the forebodings of the human spirit, but cannot quell them—knowing just enough to stir the perplexity, but not enough to set the perplexity at rest. It can state the difficulty, but cannot unriddle the difficulty—having just as much knowledge as to enunciate the problem, but not so much as might lead to the solution of the problem. There must be a measure of light, we do allow; but, like the lurid gleam of a volcano, it is not a light which guides, but which bewilders and terrifies. It prompts the question, but cannot frame or furnish the reply. Natural theology may see as much as shall draw forth the anxious interrogation, "What shall I do to be saved?" The answer to this comes from a higher theology.

43. These are the grounds on which we would affirm the insufficiency of that academic theism, which is sometimes set forth in such an aspect of completeness and certainty, as might seem to leave a revelation or a gospel wholly uncalled for. Many there are who would gloss over the difficulties of the question, and who, in the midst of all that undoubted outrage which has been inflicted by sinful creatures on the truth and the holiness and the justice of God, would, by merging all the attributes of the Divinity into a placid and undistinguishing tenderness, still keep their resolute hold of heaven, as at least the splendid imagination by which to irradiate the destinies of our species. It is thus that an airy unsupported romance has been held forth as the vehicle on which to embark all the hopes and the hazards of eternity. We would not disguise the meagreness of such a system. We would not deliver the lessons of natural theology, without telling at the same time of its limits. We abjure the cruelty of that sentimentalism, which, to hush the alarms of guilty man, would rob the Deity of His perfections, and stamp a degrading mockery upon His law. When expounding the arguments of natural theology, along with the doctrines which it dimly shadows forth, we must speak of the difficulties which itself suggests, but which it cannot dispose of; we must make mention of the obscurities into which it runs, but which it is unable to dissipate—of its unresolved doubts—of the mysteries through which it vainly tries to grope its uncertain way—of its weary and fruitless efforts—of its unutterable longings. And should, on the one hand, the speculations of human ingenuity, and, on the other, the certainties of a well-accredited revelation, come forth to illuminate this scene of darkness, we must not so

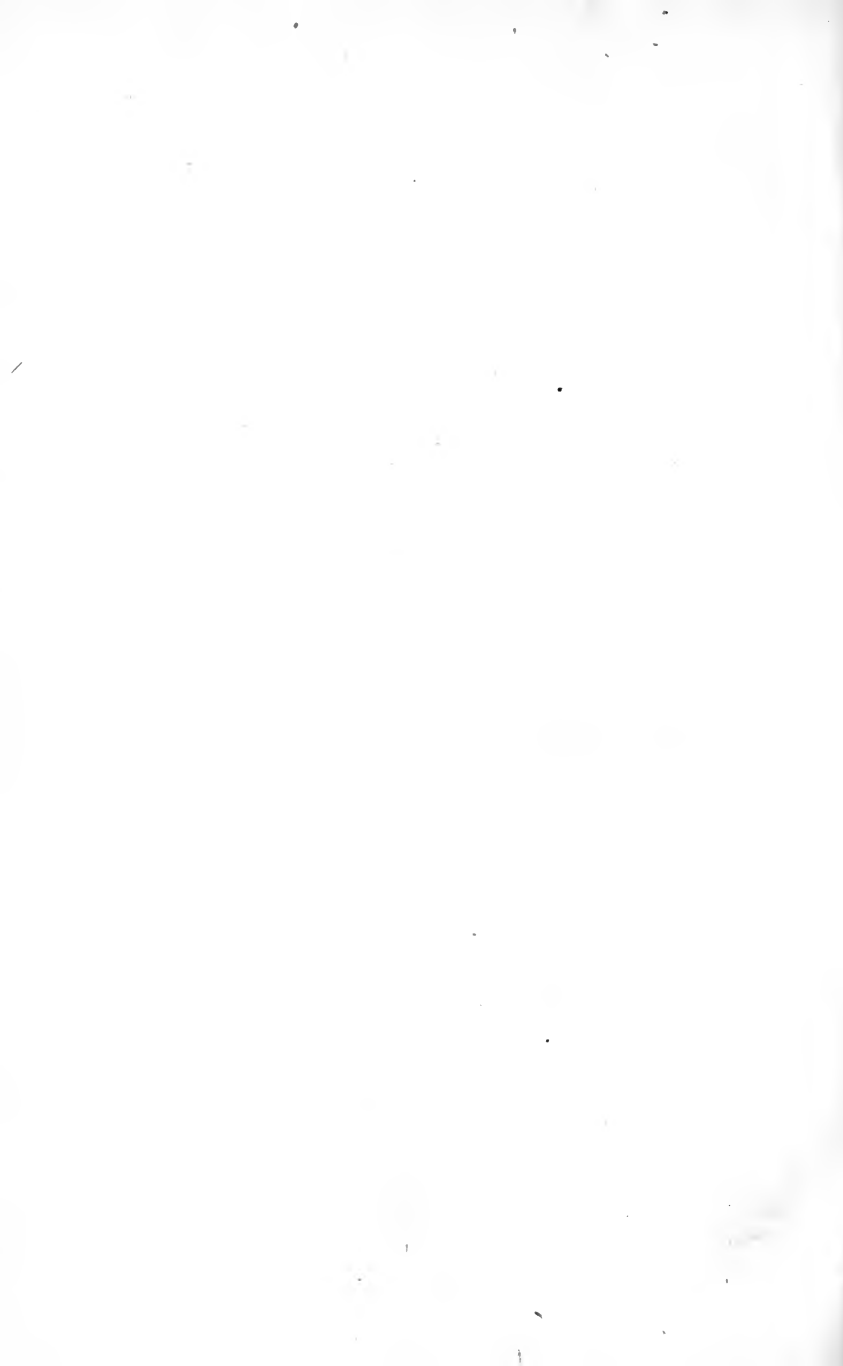
idolize the light or the sufficiency of nature, as to turn from the firmament's meridian blaze that we might witness and admire the tiny lustre of a glow-worm.

44. The two positions are perfectly reconcilable,—first, of the insufficiency of natural religion; and secondly, the great actual importance of it. It is the wise and profound saying of D'Alembert, that “man has too little sagacity to resolve an infinity of questions, which he has yet sagacity enough to make.” Now, this marks the degree in which natural theology is sagacious—being able, from its own resources, to construct a number of cases, which at the same time it is not able to reduce. These must be handed up for solution to a higher calculus; and thus it is, that the theology of nature and of the schools, the theology of the ethical class—though most unsatisfactory when treated as a terminating science—is most important, and the germ of developments at once precious and delightful, when treated as a rudimental one. It is a science, not so much of dicta as of desiderata; and from the way in which these are met by the counterpart doctrines of the Gospel, the light of a powerful and most pleasing evidence is struck out by the comparison between them. It is that species of evidence which arises from the adaptation of a mould to its counterpart form; for there is precisely this sort of fitting in the adjustment which obtains between the questions of the natural, and the responses of the supernatural theology. For the problem which natural theology cannot resolve, the precise difficulty which it is wholly unable to meet or to overcome, is the restoration of sinners to acceptance and favour with a God of justice. All the resources and expedients of natural theology are incompetent for this solution—it being, in fact, the great desideratum which it cannot satisfy. Still, it performs an important part in making us sensible of the desideratum. It makes known to us our sin, but it cannot make known to us salvation. Let us not overlook the importance of that which it does, in its utter helplessness as to that which it does not. It puts the question, though it cannot answer the question; and nowhere, so much as at this turning-point, are both the uses and the defects of natural theology so conspicuously blended.

LECTURES

ON

BUTLER'S ANALOGY.



LECTURES

ON

BUTLER'S ANALOGY.

INTRODUCTION.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, the high and the holy One, who inhabitest eternity, and the praises thereof. Do Thou impress us aright with a sense of Thy greatness as contrasted with the littleness and the limitation of all our faculties; and do Thou impress us aright with a sense of Thy sacredness as contrasted with the exceeding sinfulness of our nature. May we be clad with humility. In studying the lessons of Thy word may we evince all the duteness and docility of children. May we sit at the feet of Him who is meek and lowly in heart; and seeking at His mouth the revelations of Thy blessed will, may ours be the blessed privilege of those who hear, and believe, and obey.

1. THE work of Butler on the Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature, is one of the best cures for infidelity I know, and one of the best preservatives against it. Or rather, instead of a remedy for unbelief, it may be termed a most effectual remedy against disbelief; for there is a most weighty and important difference between these two things. One might have no positive reason for affirming the truth of a given doctrine, in which case it is the proper object of unbelief; but he might have as little positive reason for affirming its falsehood, in which case it cannot be the object of disbelief. There is many an imaginable object in nature, of which we cannot say that it positively is, but of which we can as little say that it positively is not. Were we to assign for such objects a place in the mind, we should say

that they lie neither in the region of belief nor in the region of disbelief, but along an intermediate line betwixt these two, as being the objects of neither the one nor the other, but simply of unbelief. For an example of this, we can allege it as a conceivable thing, that there rolls a planet in our system between Mercury and Venus, but still invisible to us, because too small for the observation of our most powerful telescopes. Who can affirm this in the absence of all substantive proof? yet who, it may still more emphatically be said, who can deny it? We cannot say that such a planet is; and still less can we say that it is not. But at the very least we can say that, for aught we know, it may be. We have not yet discovered it in the region of the actuals; but neither have we so thoroughly explored that region as to qualify us for affirming that it is not there. Its true place or category is in the region of the possibles—its right logical position being the midway, or ambiguous state of pure scepticism.

2. We cannot yet say of any intermediate planet between Mercury and Venus, that it is; but it is not without design that we have employed the words, that *still less* can we say that it is not. The time may yet come when, on the strength of one simple observation by a competent instrument directed to its place of little room in the heavens, we shall be enabled to descry such a body, and so to make positive affirmation of its real and substantive existence. But we do not see how we shall ever be enabled to make positive affirmation of its non-existence. For the assertion that it is, we may have but to allege the definite finding of some one astronomer, and which, with our knowledge of its path and quarter in the firmament, we can repeat at any time; but for the sweeping assertion that it is not, we should have to make a sweeping survey and exploration of that mighty annular space amounting to millions and millions more of square miles which lies between the orbits of these two planets, and to report that throughout the whole of this vast extent, a moving body so small as to have escaped all our former methods of discovery, is nowhere to be found. Such often is the momentous difference between the establishment of a proof and the establishment of a disproof. It might require but one finding to ascertain of a given thing that it exists somewhere; but it might require an infinity of findings, and that too in places to us inaccessible, to ascertain that it exists nowhere. And if there be one department of truth where this principle is of surest and

most obvious application, it is when brought to bear on the things of faith and eternity. One would need to compass the outskirts of immensity, and to have traversed all within them, ere he could pronounce a negative on these things. By one single manifestation might God make Himself authentically known to us; but for us positively to state that there is no God, no Jesus Christ, no angels, or that there has been no creation and will be no day of judgment—this implies a mastery on our part over all space and all time. In the things of religion, belief must have its own proper and precise ground to rest upon, else it is presumption. In the absence of any such ground there is no presumption, but the contrary, in unbelief. There is a disbelief, again, the presumption of which is tremendous—a usurpation of Omniscience.

3. Yet there is a warrantable disbelief even in the matters of religion. If I have valid evidence for a certain proposition, and believe it accordingly, then am I not only an unbeliever, but a disbeliever in its opposite. If I have direct observation that the wind is blowing from the north, I must be a disbeliever in the proposition that it is blowing from the south, and also a disbeliever in the truth of him who tells me so. If I have reason to know that God cannot lie, then will I not only be an unbeliever, but a disbeliever, in the professed revelation which tells me that He does lie. I must be a disbeliever in all which is specifically the opposite of that which I do believe; and if such belief be well grounded, then such disbelief must be equally well grounded. I cannot believe that the wind now blows from the north, without disbelieving that the wind now blows from the south—which is another proposition altogether than that the wind never blows from the south. A disbelief in the singular or specific proposition, that the wind now blows from the south, might be perfectly warrantable; while disbelief in the universal proposition that the wind ever blows from the south, would be monstrously presumptuous and unwarrantable, because it were disbelief not as before, in a specific or singular, but in a universal negative. It is true that the proposition, God cannot lie, may be held as a universal negative.

4. There is more or less of this presumption in all the enemies of our faith. For example, we should deem it immensely arrogant in the creatures of a day, to pronounce of the unseen and everlasting God—that He never does or can act in a particular way, that He never has adopted, and never would adopt, such

or such a method of administration. Ere one can be warranted in speaking or in thinking thus, he would need both to have observed and studied the Divine government in all the vastness of its extent, and throughout all the endless variety of its manifold and multiform processes; and yet it is on such an implied acquaintance with the infinite and the everlasting, that a great part of our infidelity is based. As an instance of this, it is alleged, and with all confidence, by adversaries of the Christian religion, that God would never make the innocent suffer for the guilty; and, therefore, because this procedure is ascribed to Him in the Bible, they would charge upon that book a false representation of the Deity, and so deny it to be a genuine communication from heaven to earth.

5. There are two ways of meeting this objection. The first is by taking account of the actual and positive credentials which might be alleged on the side of this professed revelation as being a message from God—its miracles, supported by the best and amplest of human testimony—its prophecies, substantiated by the history both of the anterior writings and their posterior fulfillments—its many discernible signatures of goodness and sacredness and truth, as palpably standing forth in the pages of this record—its minute and marvellous consistencies both with itself and with contemporaneous authors, such as no impostor could ever have maintained;—above all, its felt adaptations to the wants and fears and longings of the human spirit, and the sense and perception of which are often given in answer to prayer, so as to constitute the evidence to an inquirer of a most distinct and satisfying revelation to himself. These are what form the great bulk and body of the Christian evidences; and what distinguishes them from such of the objections of Deism as have now been specified, is, that they are founded not on what we conceive of the ways of God, but on what we observe and can verify of the ways of man, or on what the characteristics of truth and falsehood are in human witnesses, human histories, and human experience. In other words, the arguments for our Bible revelation are grounded on the certainties of a familiar and oft explored territory—these arguments against it are so many imaginations fetched from the obscurities of a distant unknown. It is competent for us to sit in judgment on the conduct of our fellow-men; and this judgment, whether it have respect to its first teachers as in estimating the historical evidence, or to its present disciples as in estimating the experimental evidence, is

all on the side of Christianity. It is not competent for us to sit in judgment on the counsels of the unsearchable God ; yet this judgment of arcana beyond our reach, and waywardly expatiating over a region that is purely conjectural, is all which can be plausibly alleged in opposition to Christianity. We feel at no loss for a decision as to which of these two should countervail, or rather overmatch the other. We have as great a preference for the first over the second, as we have for the findings of the Baconian philosophy over the fancies and reveries of the old schoolmen. Such is our general argument in favour of Christianity ; and for the purpose of repelling objections of the character that has now been specified, we require no other.

6. Yet there is another way of meeting these objections ; and it is Butler's way of it. With us it is enough that they are objections not competent to be made by a creature of such limited faculties, and with so narrow a sphere of observation as man. We hold that it is not for him to say that God never would do this one or that other thing alleged of Him in Scripture, and that therefore Scripture is not of God. Our reply is, that we cannot tell ; and on the strength of this *argumentum ab ignorantia*, we regard such gratuitous and unauthorized assertions on the part of the infidel as of no possible avail against the host of positive evidences which attest the truth of Christianity. Such is our reply, but it is not Butler's. He meets the adversary who says that God never would do this one or that other thing ascribed to Him in the Bible, by showing that these very things He has actually done ; or that what is excepted against in Scripture, is exemplified in nature and experience. Or to put it otherwise, what is said of God in the word, and because of which the infidel rejects it as being His word, is done by Him in His works, and which yet the infidel continues to regard as His works. We should have been satisfied to dispose of the adversary's objection on the ground of his ignorance ; but Butler advances a step further, and convicts him of inconsistency.

7. It were well to estimate the precise argumentative force of his peculiar reasoning. Its main office we hold, then, is to repel objections against Christianity, not to supply or establish any substantive evidence in its favour. Take, for an example, the observation of Origen as given by Butler in the introduction to his work. It is to the effect, that " he who believes the Scripture to have proceeded from Him who is the author of

nature, may well expect to find the same sort of difficulties in it as are found in the constitution of nature." Now, surely it will not be insisted on as a proof for the Divine origin of Scripture, that it contains difficulties, for innumerable are the books teeming with these which have been framed by human hands. Yet though these difficulties in Scripture may form no proof of its divinity, the allegation of like difficulties in nature forms a most complete and conclusive reply to the objection of the Deist against Scripture because of its difficulties. For, as Butler says, in following up the observation of Origen, "he who denies the Scripture to have been from God upon account of these difficulties, may, for the very same reason, deny the world to have been formed by Him." In how far such analogies may afford a presumption, that both Scripture and nature, or both the word and the world, have the same author, we shall not inquire; but they are perfectly decisive in the words of Bishop Butler, "at least so far as to answer objections against the former's being from God, drawn from anything which is analogical or similar to what is in the latter, which is acknowledged to be from Him." To repel objections, in fact, is the great service which this analogy has rendered to the cause of Revelation, and it is the only service which we seek for at its hands.

8. It appears to us, then, that they overrate the power of analogy, who look to it for any very distinct or positive contribution to the Christian argument. There are passages in his work where Butler ascribes this virtue, this augmentative power to it, by which an addition is made to the evidence for revelation—which addition, however, it were extremely difficult to state or to estimate; insomuch, that in our controversy with infidels, we should willingly forego all claim to any *positive* accession from this quarter of strength to our cause. When giving in our reasons for the truth and divinity of the Bible, we should speak of the evidence from miracles, and the evidence from prophecy, and the evidence from the morality of Scripture, and the evidence from those marks of sincerity and sacredness which abound in it, and the evidence of its numerous adaptations to the wants and the weaknesses of sinful humanity; but we should scarcely, by way of increment, and so as to make out a larger summation, adduce the evidence from analogy. And yet we hold it, notwithstanding, to be a most powerful and efficient auxiliary in this warfare, though its office is mainly, if not altogether, a defensive one; for, although it should supply no proof,

it may confer a mighty benefit on our cause by repelling all disproof. It may in itself yield no positive evidence, and yet be of most important service, by clearing away from all the evidence which is positive, the burden of any drawback or deduction that might otherwise lie upon it. It might form no part or ingredient of the probation, and yet remove a bar in the way of the probation. A given proposition might be regarded as liable to one or other of three verdicts—proven, not proven, or disproven. Though analogy should furnish no materials on which to construct a plea for the highest of these verdicts, it may nevertheless be of perfect avail for raising up the proposition in question from the lowest of these verdicts to the middle one—for raising it from the state of disproven to at least the state of not proven, and so placing it in what may be termed the midway and neutral state of indifference or pure scepticism. This is the distinct and definite, and withal most valuable service to which analogy, we think, is fully competent, and which service, we further think, Butler hath overtaken and finished. He has raised our question from the depth and the discredit to which infidels would have sunk it—far beneath zero in the scale of evidence. He has at least brought it up to zero; and this is doing an immense deal, even though analogy should utterly fail to place it by ever so little above this, and all further elevations can only be looked for from other quarters of reasoning and contemplation. After that analogy hath done its own proper work—that is, cleared away a whole host of objections; or, in other words, left nothing to be neutralized or counteracted, then every new item of evidence tells affirmatively, and is a clear make-weight on the side of the Christian argument. The sceptic, who says that there is no reason for believing in Christianity, tells us a different thing from the still more daring adversary who says that there are many reasons for disbelieving it. It is with the latter of these two combatants that analogy has properly to do. It does not meet the demand of the first with reasons in proof of Christianity, but it holds parley with the second, and thoroughly disposes of his reasons against it. Let it not be imagined that this is a mean or inconsiderable benefit to the Christian argument. Even though it should not supply one atom of evidence for the verdict of credible, it does much, and what is most important, if it fully establish the verdict of not incredible. In algebra, a larger summation might be had in two ways, either by placing in the column to be added up some more affirmative quantities,

or by the removal therefrom of its negative quantities. It might be questioned whether Butler has done much, or even anything, in the one way of it; but he has unquestionably done much in the other. Though he may not have contributed a single positive reason himself on the side of Christianity, he is a most valuable auxiliary notwithstanding, if he have cleared away those objections, on the neutralizing of which a great part of the force of the positive reasoning may have been otherwise expended. It is thus, that though he should not have added one stone to the superstructure, it may, in virtue of the labour of his hands, have not only become a firmer, but a statelier and loftier superstructure than before.

9. His argument is not addressed to Atheists. It presupposes a God, but without assuming for Him all those attributes which even Natural Theology would affix to His character. All which it claims at the outset for this great and mysterious Being, is intelligence and power. It views Him as a natural, and thence proceeds to regard Him as a moral Governor also. Not that it proves this latter doctrine, but repels the objections against it—its proper office being not to establish, but to vindicate. Butler, in the first part of this Treatise, has accomplished this service for the religion of Nature; and, in its second part, accomplishes the like service for the religion of the Bible.

SECTION I.

THE USE WHICH BUTLER MAKES OF THE ANALOGICAL ARGUMENT IN NATURAL THEOLOGY.

PART I.

CHAPTER I.—OF A FUTURE LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, hast brought life and immortality to light by the gospel. We rejoice that whatever the doubts or whatever the darkness of nature may be on the question of our eternity, there is ample manifestation afforded to us in Scripture both of the endless bliss which is reserved in heaven for the faithful, and of the way that leads to it. We would bless Thy name for the information which Thou hast given both of the duties and the destinies of man; and it is our prayer, that whenever beset with perplexities of our own, we may take refuge in Him who alone hath the words of eternal life.

1. THIS chapter, which treats of a future life, we hold to be the least satisfactory in the work; this, however, not because the subject of it is beyond the reach of analogy, but because it is so much infected by the obscure metaphysics which obtained in England at the commencement of the last century, which even the reasonings of Clarke have not been able to sustain; and which, when disjoined from his talent, as in the pages of Wollaston, and throughout the greater part of the Boyle lectureship, betrays the same sort of mysticism, the same want of clearness and conclusiveness, as do the scholastic subtleties of the Middle Ages. We allude more particularly to what Butler says of the indivisibility of consciousness, and to the confident inference that he would found thereupon as to the simple and so indestructible nature of the agent in which this uncompounded faculty

resides*—reminding us of certain argumentations which are still to be heard on the immateriality, as a ground for believing in the immortality of the human soul. And neither can we admit with him that because we have no positive reason for believing death to be the destruction of the living agent, there is the same ground for believing him to be still alive that there is for our natural faith in the continuance of anything. If this consideration hold true, then instead of its yielding but a dim or slender probability, it presents us with an absolute demonstration. Not as if Butler thought of analogy that it constitutes this argument; but he evidently thinks that it hands us over to it. We think that it hands us over to sounder and better arguments than this; while of itself it should claim no higher than the negative power which we have contended for—the power of placing the question of our soul's immortality in that negative and neutral position where it is freed of all the presumptions against it, but where the presumptions for it have yet to be sought for from other quarters; or, in other words, where, though no longer a disproved, it still remains an unproved thing. It is not enough to say that the entire self survives the loss of a limb. The conclusion is, that therefore it *may* survive the loss or separation of the whole body—very different truly from the conclusion which is more than hinted at in this chapter, that the soul *must* so survive it. In all instances which are alleged here of mutilation or destruction, we have the remaining sensible proof for the continuance of the living powers. In the grand or final destruction of the whole body, we have no such proof; and this must be supplied from another source than from the analogy itself, which has demonstrated but the *posse*, and not the *esse* of the soul's immortality. It has not supplied the proof, but only removed every bar in the way of it. It has not, at least to any sensible or calculable extent, mounted the question upward on the scale of evidence; but it has done a great deal, if, raising it from lower depths, it shall have placed it at the bottom of the scale. For any further ascent above this, it must stand indebted to other and positive considerations—such as the powers and aspirations of the mind, and its capacity for indefinitely higher enjoyments than any it meets with in this world; but most of all the moral argument, or that

* [Butler's argument is minutely analyzed, and its fallacy very fully exposed, in Duke's "Systematic Analysis" of the Analogy.—Appendix L. See also Whately's Essays on some of the peculiarities of the Christian Religion, p. 63.—W. H.]

grounded on the conscience of man, and which points to a coming judgment and coming immortality for a righteous settlement of all these innumerable questions of constant occurrence in our present state, whether of unavenged sin against God, or of unredressed injustice between man and man, which, if left without equitable adjustment in a future state, would cause that our world should be not only a deep moral enigma never to be solved, but a scene of perfect moral anarchy and confusion never either to be reformed or reckoned with.

2. And yet the analogies of this chapter serve all the purposes of that argument which legitimately and properly belongs to them. Let but the metaphysical reasoning for the indivisibility of consciousness, and so for the continuance of the human soul, on which it is here attempted to build up a positive consideration in favour of the doctrine of immortality—let these be discarded. Let it further be held as the main function of analogy not to supply the proofs, but to repel the disproofs: and then nothing can be imagined more effective and more beautiful than the illustrations of this otherwise least interesting and least successful of all Butler's demonstrations. The transmutations which take place in the state of other animals, as birds and insects, and yet with the subsistence of the living principle in each of the stages; and most of all, the mutilations which the human body undergoes, and yet without the destruction of the living powers—these all abundantly warrant the conclusion, not that the soul must, but that the soul may survive the entire dissolution of that material framework wherewith it is now encompassed. They make the doctrine *probable* in the sense that they make it provable; or in other words, that they lay it clear and open for being proved, which is truly a different thing from the positive work of proving it, whether in part or in whole. These analogies have achieved a useful service, if they have brought up the doctrine to that point of neutrality at which any further evidence, however small, may affirmatively tell upon it, and that on evidence contributed from other quarters than from analogy itself.

3. In this view of it we feel relieved from all the difficulty which attaches to the consideration, that, as far as there is positive weight in these reasonings of Butler, they serve to establish not the immortality of men only, but also of the inferior animals. And so they would if they could lay claim to a weight that is positive. The vital principle in a beast survives the loss of a limb in as great vigour and entireness as that of a

man does—nay, many are the inferior creatures whose life remains in them after far severer mutilations, or more frightful dislocation and derangement of the parts, than man could undergo, and yet continue alive. Nay, if the worshippers of this argument will persist in ascribing to it an affirmative value, they might proceed on the strength of it to demonstrate the immortality of the vegetable life in plants as well as of the animal life in man, and throughout all the species beneath him; for there are kinds of wood which might be specified, and where the vegetative power has been known to survive all the processes of the wright-shop—insomuch that, after having been subjected to the treatment of the saw, and the plane, and the hatchet, and then inserted as a stake or piece of paling in the ground, it has actually broken out into foliage, and thus given evidence that the vital or vegetative principle of growth has been so far indestructible. It were a somewhat extravagant conclusion from such phenomena, that plants, or rather that what constituted the vitality of plants, must be an indestructible or an undying principle. It is an extravagance, however, not at all chargeable on those who do not seek to found on the analogical argument so much as one atom of affirmative probability for the immortality either of men, or animals, or vegetables, but willingly at the same time concede to analogy the power of raising all the three from depths which are beneath, to the same dead level of the perfectly neutral and unknown—thus warranting the like assertion in regard to each class of these organic creatures, or rather of the life which is within them, not that it must, but that for aught we know it may be immortal. This is the whole length to which we should carry the inference from analogy, with the full conviction, at the same time, of high probabilities for the immortality of man—founded, however, not on that which is common to him with the others, but on that which is peculiar, and which signalizes him from or above the others—as the conscience, which is his exclusively, and those indefinite powers and aspirations which are his exclusively. The analogical argument places all these three, then, on the same level in regard to the possibility of their being immortal. The probabilities, however, of this high destination can only be claimed by man. We should hold it the most unphilosophical temerity to affirm so much as the slightest atom of evidence for the immortality either of beasts or of plants, and that notwithstanding the kindred phenomena which they exhibit to those of the human

framework. Yet we deem it to be neither temerity nor extravagance, but in the very spirit of the true philosophic modesty, to affirm on the strength of those phenomena, that for aught we know they may be immortal—the affirmation this not of a positive knowledge, but of conscious ignorance.

4. And in like manner, we do not see that there is a positive incompatibility between the doctrine of the soul's immortality and the system of Atheism. In our estimation it would then rank among the propositions of the *terra incognita*. We could allege no reason for the denial, but most assuredly as little for the assertion of this immortality. It is the doctrine of a God, and that alone, which yields for the doctrine of man's immortality all the positive evidence that it can rightfully pretend to. It is because we think that God will not leave either the vices or the virtues of men without such a reckoning and such a recompense as are far from being fully realized in this world; and it is because we think that He would not have endowed man with such boundless conceptions and desires, and such expansive faculties, unless He meant to provide him with a larger and more enduring theatre in which he might expatiate. It is on these considerations, each of them presupposing a God, that we reason onward to the conclusion of a future state of existence, both for repairing the inequalities and supplementing the deficiencies of the present.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD BY REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS, AND PARTICULARLY OF THE LATTER.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art unchangeable, and there is a steadfastness of principle which reigns throughout all Thine administration. Thou canst not look upon evil with complacency; neither can sin be dealt with under Thy holy and inflexible government without a ransom or without an expiation. May we count it no light matter that we have broken the law of God, and that the first and greatest of its commandments, even the supreme love of Himself, has been hourly and habitually violated. May we therefore feel our need of a Saviour and our need of a Sanctifier, and submit ourselves to the authority of that message which came to our world charged with the overtures of a world's reconciliation.

5. Though we should not hold the analogies of this chapter to be even presumptive reasons for a future state of rewards and punishments, they are all sufficient for repelling the objections against it. They might supply no grounds of evidence, yet effectually cut away all grounds of opposition. Should it be alleged from the benevolence of God that He would not only confer happiness on His family below, but absolutely secure it so as to place it beyond the reach of accident and hazard—and more especially that He would not make this happiness dependent on aught so precarious as the conduct of creatures so frail and capricious as we—this is conclusively met by the facts and observations of what is going on around us. Let us devise what explanations we may for the rationale of such a procedure, it is the actual procedure of the Almighty in His government of our present world. Both the happiness and misery of man are in many instances placed at his own disposal, and in his own power; and it is quite of a piece with this, that his state, whether of enjoyment or of wretchedness in the life that is to come, should be the result of his character and doings in the life that now is. Man often knows beforehand that such a good or such an evil will be the consequence of his present actions—so that if apprised of a state of existence beyond death, where he will be happy or miserable according to the life which he leads in this world, there is nothing to object against such a regimen which might not be objected against the regimen of which, in our present state, we have countless exemplifications. This consideration may not afford a sufficient basis on which to affirm the doctrine of future rewards and punishments, but it is complete as a defence against the infidelity which would deny them.

6. Such an economy, then—that is, of actions followed up by foreseen pleasures and pains, and which are therefore fitted to induce one line of conduct and deter from another—is, to all intents and purposes, a government, making it not unlikely that there may be a similar though a more extended government, and by which, consequent on our actions here, there are rewards or punishments hereafter. We do not say that the one which is seen makes the other which is still unseen positively credible. But the analogy between them warrants, at least, the more limited and juster inference of its being “not incredible;” or, in Butler’s own language—“The whole present course of things most fully shows that there is nothing incredible in the general

doctrine of religion as far as the notion of rewarding and punishing is concerned."

7. And as they are the punishments rather than the rewards which are more liable to be excepted against, he points out certain striking analogies between the actual punishments of this life and the alleged punishments of another, which, whether they have in them any of the virtue of proofs or not, are at least of full effect in clearing away a whole host of objections. For example, the actions which are thus visited are generally committed for the sake of a present tempting gratification, as when intemperance is followed up by disease; and these eventual pains or chastisements are often far greater than the immediate enjoyment, as when the disgrace of a whole lifetime results from the indulgence, which lasts but for a moment, of some ungovernable passion; and frequently a long delay intervenes between the commission and its penalty, as when the secret fraud or profligacy, it may be of many years back, at length breaks out, to the consequent ruin of the perpetrator either in character or circumstances; and when these natural punishments do come, it is often with an astounding suddenness and when they are altogether unlooked for; and the sufferers may have very far from a clear evidence or expectation beforehand of what is to follow; and yet their want of this clear and confident anticipation, nay, the delusive hope, perhaps even the probability that after all they may escape the calamity in question, might not prevent the sure and sore fulfilment of it. In these various ways, and with these various accompaniments, may the imprudence, or, as is often thought, the natural and excusable heedlessness of one stage of life, be followed up by the irretrievable want or wretchedness of its future stages—so as to realize in living and actual experience, the very things which are most readily seized upon by infidels, and protested against as the intolerable severities of the religious system. The paragraph of this chapter where the enumeration of these resemblances is given, presents us with one of the finest triumphs of the analogical argument, and in which its power as a weapon of defence appears to great advantage—cutting down, as with a scythe, a whole army of those objections which are most frequent in the mouths of adversaries, being not only the most plausible in themselves, but the most formidable in point of effect, from a certain tone of generous denunciation against all arbitrary and tyrannic rule in which

they are propounded, and so as to associate the semblance of a protesting and moral indignancy with the infidel cause.

8. They who say to themselves, Peace, when there is no peace, and cherish a delusive security, as if in the hands of an indulgent God who will not bear too hard upon them, but make allowance for the frailty of nature and the force of external temptations—such as these would do well to ponder the reasonings of this chapter. If they do not make out a positive demonstration on the side of religion, they at least make out the decisive overthrow of aught like a positive demonstration on the side of Atheism. They do not of themselves constitute the argument by which to uphold the systems either of natural theology or of the Christian Revelation; but they level to the ground many of the strongest and likeliest defences which the enemies of religion have to rear in opposition to the argument.

9. In the third paragraph of this chapter, Butler makes a fine display of true philosophic modesty. He undertakes no absolute defence of God's administration, but proposes a series of conjectures, which, like the queries of Sir Isaac Newton, express rather the confessions of ignorance than any disposition to press into mysteries which are yet unknown to us. The object of his treatise, in fact, does not require that there shall be any positive solution of existing appearances; for he is not holding parley with Atheists, but supposes his adversary in the argument to believe a God, and of course to acquiesce in all that is, as consistent with the plans of His wisdom and the perfections of His moral character. So that all that which He undertakes to show is, that the things excepted against in any given doctrine of theology, are the very things which may also be detected in the actual phenomena of nature or of Providence. This may not furnish any valid proof on his own side of the question, but at least enables him to do away what might otherwise have stood as a valid objection on the other side of the question. Our antagonists can no longer persist in urging against the schemes either of natural or revealed theology what they find to be revealed in that part of the Divine scheme which is before their eyes. Analogy may have done nothing yet to substantiate either natural or revealed theology. It may yet have supplied no proof, but it has done much if it have cleared away all disproof, and so left both theologies in a free state for being advantaged by all the appropriate evidences which might be brought forward to sustain them.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE MORAL GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

THE PRAYER.

THOU sittest, O God, on a throne of judgment, whence Thine eyes do behold and Thine eyelids do try the children of men. Give us to feel the control of Thine omniscient eye; and on comparing the sacredness of Thy character with the sinfulness of ours, may we be visited with a sense of guilt and of danger, and gladly betake ourselves to the refuge set before us in the gospel. May we at length be constrained to yield a thankful acquiescence in the overtures of the New Testament, that with Jesus Christ as the Lord our righteousness and the Lord our strength, we may walk before Thee without fear, yet walk before Thee in holy and new obedience all the days of our lives.

10. The subject of the present chapter is as distinct from that of the former, as the generic idea of a government is distinct from the more particular idea of it as possessed of a certain character, or as being of a certain kind and species. If certain actions are followed up by pleasure and others by pain, and these are known beforehand, so that the agent can foresee the consequences of his doings, even as he would have done if under a proclaimed law, which told at the same time of its own rewards and its own penalties—these are enough of themselves to constitute a government having its regulations which are known, and its sanctions which are executed. So much for government in the general; but should it be found among these general phenomena, that those actions which are righteous were followed up by pleasure, and those actions which are wicked were followed up by pain—this would present us with a moral government enveloped, as it were, in the general and natural; and it is to the manifestations of such a government in the course and constitution of nature that the author now addresses his observations.

11. As in the former chapter, so here too, he discovers the same cautious reverence for things unknown, and more especially when they relate to the character and ways of God, of whom he had already said that we are apt to make greatly too free in our speculations. He obviously lays discountenance on that

theory which would represent benevolence as the alone attribute of the Godhead, and that all the other attributes are but phases or modifications of this—an imagination which has given rise to much of our meagre and much of our heretical theology. But without stopping to consider this dogma, and without pronouncing either for or against it, he rightly holds it enough for his argument, that God does manifest Himself in this world as a righteous governor, a master over servants, as well as the parent of a family; and that therefore he may so manifest Himself in the world which is to come. But it is to be observed, that the considerations in which he here deals are such as not merely serve to annul objections, but to make out a substantive proof in favour of his doctrine; and therefore we venture to affirm, that every intelligent reader will feel as if in this part of his work he had firmer hold of a positive argument than generally throughout the volume. The explanation of this seems to be, that the things which are here alleged of present observation warrant a much larger conclusion than that, as they take place in this world, so they *may* take place in the next—a conclusion sufficient of itself to neutralize all reasons of disbelief. But the truth is, they are such things as make out the strong probability of God being a moral Governor here, and hence the probability, alike strong, that He will not renounce this character in another state, but sustain there the part of a moral Governor also. It is on the footing of this intermediate term in the reasoning that the argument gathers into a strength and an affirmative value beyond what we are sensible of in the other departments of this treatise. Everywhere do the analogies quoted by our author fulfil their own definite and appropriate function, which is to repel objections. But here, and for the reason, we apprehend, which has now been proposed, they seem to shoot ahead of all the others; and, supplying weighty proofs rather than slender presumptions, to perform a higher service than we generally seek or look for at their hands.

12. The express purpose indeed of this chapter is to prove in how far a moral government has been already and actually established, and so as to found on its present appearances and first beginnings here, the anticipation of its larger developments hereafter. In the prosecution of this task, he takes full advantage of all the existing phenomena that bear upon the question—as our own natural sense of justice; the undoubted consequences of prudence and imprudence—these rewards and punish-

ments either of a propriety on the one hand, or of its violation on the other; the chastisements which fall on vice, as being hurtful to society; the natural pleasures of virtue and pains of vice, as such and in themselves apart from their effects either of good or evil to the commonwealth; the regard so far borne to virtue by men, and the detestation so far of its opposite, that the former is on the whole followed up by the esteem of society, and the latter by its contempt and disapproval. These all serve to indicate a moral government, being so many specimens before our eyes of the manner in which He deals with the righteous and the wicked respectively, and so as to reward the one by certain present advantages and pleasures, and to punish the other by certain present damages and discomforts, both inwardly and outwardly. It is true that there are certain cross or adverse phenomena which seem to make against this argument, but which, in the hands of our author, and by the help of his sound discrimination, are most effectually disposed of. As when it is said that there is pleasure in the indulgence of certain vicious passions—as indeed there must be in every indulgence; and our author replies that this is owing to the passion itself, and not to what is vicious in it; for while the passion must necessarily by its gratification yield pleasure, the vice that is in it may, notwithstanding and simply as vice, yield pain, being followed up by self-dissatisfaction from within and disgrace from without. There is another wise and important distinction made by him, and by which he gets quit of many apparent exceptions to the rule for which he argues a moral government in this life. These are the instances of vicious actions being sometimes rewarded, yet never, he well replies, *because* they are vicious, but *though* they are vicious; and again, virtuous actions are sometimes punished, yet never as virtuous, or never because virtuous, but *though* virtuous. It is thus that all contradictory appearances are put out of the way; but it is when reasoning on the tendencies of things, and on what the full and final result would be, if either a universal virtue or universal vice was to prevail in the world, that the advocates for its being under a moral regimen are placed on their highest vantage-ground. In the chapter before us, Butler takes the full benefit of this consideration, and shows most effectively that, in like manner, as by dint of the innate tendency and force of reason men have the superiority over brutes, notwithstanding the greater strength in many instances of the latter—so by dint of the same innate tendency and force in vir-

tue, the righteous of our species will come in fair circumstances, that is, in a state of union and mutual understanding, to bear the rule or maintain the just and wholesome ascendant over general society. Now these considerations have in them a great weight of positive argument on the side of a moral government, and so of a moral governor; insomuch that though our attention at the time were not at all directed to the future, but confined to present appearances, we should thence alone infer a strong probability for a reigning and righteous God. But when once we have attained to this, we come into possession of a strong affirmative evidence, the strongest within the reach of unassisted nature, for virtue being rewarded and vice being punished in another world, and hence perhaps the reason why in this passage of the Demonstration, there seems a greater ascent above the level of mere neutrality, or but the power of countervailing objections, than in any other part of the treatise. And yet the author himself recognises, and nowhere more than in this portion of his work, a distinctness between the proper arguments for religion and his own argument from analogy, the peculiar and chief function of which is not to supply the proofs for, but to repel the disproofs against it. He tells us that "suppositions are not to be looked on as true, because not incredible." Now it is for the other argument to satisfy us that religion is true, and more strictly for the analogical to satisfy us that it is not incredible. And again, he admits that "it is not the purpose of this chapter, nor of this treatise, properly to prove God's perfect moral government over the world, or the truth of religion, but to observe what there is in the constitution and course of nature to confirm the proper proof of it, supposed to be known;"—though the office of analogy, in our estimation, is not so much to confirm as to defend. Our inestimable author expresses very nearly the same notion, when he speaks of the proof of a future state of retribution resting upon the usual known arguments for it, which he thinks plainly unanswerable, and would be so, though there were no additional confirmation of them from the things above insisted on. "It is true," he adds, "but these things are a very strong confirmation of them;" and yet he distinguishes these from what he calls "the proper proof of religion," and acknowledges of his own special argument, that while it gives just ground to hope and to fear that virtue and vice *may be* rewarded and punished in a higher degree hereafter—this alone is not sufficient ground to think that they *actually*

will be so rewarded and punished. We should hold it enough to claim for analogy the power of demonstrating that religion may be true—leaving it to the other arguments to prove that it actually is true. But it is comfortable to think that, however different the impressions may be of its precise argumentative amount and value, it, at least to the former of these two achievements, or the demonstration of what *may be*, is fully and altogether competent.

CHAPTER IV.

OF A STATE OF PROBATION, AS IMPLYING TRIAL, DIFFICULTIES, AND DANGER.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art throned in mystery, O God. It is but a part of Thy ways that we are admitted to behold; but the whole extent of Thy wondrous plan, and the processes, whether of creation or of providence, who can comprehend! Give us to wait with patience those further evolutions, in virtue of which what we see not now we shall see afterwards; and meanwhile let us cultivate that blessed charity whereof Thou hast said that it is greater than all faith and than all knowledge. We feel assured, that though clouds and darkness are round about Thee, there is wisdom in all Thy ways, there is kindness in all Thy visitations.

13. It might be, and often is, indeed, made an objection to the religious system, that our way to the everlasting blessedness which it proposes should be beset with so many lures which tempt us aside from the prosecution of it; and, on the other hand, that so many hardships and difficulties should be attendant on our steadfast perseverance in that way. The thing complained of is that our great and ultimate good should have been made of such difficult attainment—insomuch that the frail powers of humanity, either for the achievement of what is good or the resistance of what is evil, are so greatly overtaken, as in the great majority of instances to be overborne. Why, it may be asked, is the realization of our true and eternal happiness made so very operose as to be well-nigh impracticable? and would it not have been in better keeping with the character of a God of love, had there been fewer obstructions on our road to heaven, or the bliss of our coming immortality been reached by an easier and more accessible path? It is spoken of as an

intolerable grievance that we should be punished for what is natural, and only rewarded for an obedience which, save in the cases of a select and privileged few, is greatly beyond the strength of nature

14. Now in this chapter we are presented with a complete and conclusive analogy, which, if it do not establish the reality of our religious trial, at least serves to vindicate it against the exceptions which we have just enumerated. Whatever doubt we may stand in regarding those doctrines which respect the future and the unseen, there can be no quarrelling with present and actually observed facts. If the doctrine be, that the way to our eternal good is a way of labour and self-denial, it is in perfect analogy with the fact that this is the way to our temporal good also. It is quite palpable that often many toils must be undergone, and many temptations resisted, ere we can secure the most highly-prized advantages of the life that now is; and the conclusion is, not that similar toils and temptations must, but that they may be the precursors and the preparatives of our happiness in another state of being. In both cases a future and greater good is sacrificed to present ease or present gratification. If religion tells us that men, by the indulgence of their sloth or their passions, often forfeit the good of their eternity, experience tells us that in the very same way men do often forfeit the wealth and health of a whole lifetime. In this respect the season of youth stands related to the seasons of manhood or old age, very much according to the way in which we are told that the acts or habits of man on this side of death stand related to his state, whether in respect of suffering or enjoyment, on the other side of death. In both we behold the same recklessness, the same defiance to consequences, and the same misrule of headstrong or overmastering appetites—and that, too, in the face of all hazards and apprehensions, whether for time or for eternity, whether of disgrace and poverty in this world, or of never-ending wretchedness in the next. If because of these things we must give up the God of religion, we should give up the God of nature also. If we persist in our objection notwithstanding these analogies, then should we conclude, either that we are under the regimen of an unrighteous Deity, or that there is no Deity at all. And there are certain aggravations in our lot which furnish the enemies of religion with other topics of invective against it, but which are similarly matched by what takes place under our own observation, so that the futurities of which we are told beyond

the day of human life, are analogous to facts and fulfilments within it of which we have the daily experience. That men, for example, should be in worse circumstances for the preparations of another world by the neglect of parents, or a wrong education, or in any way by the influence and example of others, thus suffering for a wickedness not originally their own, this is quite of a piece with the manner in which the interests of a more advanced stage in our journey here are affected not merely by our own misconduct, but by the misconduct towards us of relatives or associates during its earlier stages. And thus it is, too, that as continued indulgence, whether in idleness or pleasure, is constantly adding to the difficulties which attend our prosecution of a right course of education for eternity, the very same thing takes place regarding our interests in time—insomuch, that the dissipations, nay, even but the delays of slothfulness and the love of ease, persisted in for a few years of early life, might bring on such an utter incapacity for the restraints of labour or business, as might ruin one's temporal prospects, and subject him to degradation and want throughout the whole of his existence in this world, as penalties for the mismanagement of his younger days.

15. Butler, in one brief paragraph of this chapter, exceeds the usual aim and limit of his argument, and aspires to an absolute vindication of the ways of God. He tells us, that in regard to religion, there is no more required of men than what they are well able to do, and well able to go through. We fear that he here makes the first, though not the only exhibition which occurs in the work, of his meagre and moderate theology. There seems no adequate view in this passage of man's total inability for what is spiritually and acceptably good; for, by the very analogy which he institutes, the doctrine of any special help to that obedience which qualifies for heaven is kept out of sight. We are represented as fit for the work of religion in the same way that we are fit, by a moderate degree of care, for managing our temporal affairs with tolerable prudence. There is no account made here of that peculiar helplessness which obtains in the matters of religion, and that does not obtain in the matters of ordinary prudence, yet a helplessness which forms no excuse, lying, as it does, in the resolute and, by man himself, unconquerable aversion of his will to God and godliness. There is nothing in this to break the analogies on which to found the negative vindication that forms the great and undoubted achievement of this volume, and with which, perhaps, it were well if

both its author and its readers would agree to be satisfied. The analogy lies here—that if a man wills to obtain prosperity in this life, he may, if observant of the rules which experience and wisdom prescribe, in general make it good; and if he will to attain to blessedness in the next life, he shall, if observant of what religion prescribes, and in conformity with the declaration that he who seeketh findeth—he shall most certainly make it good. It is true that in the latter and larger case the condition is universally wanting; for man, in his natural state, has no relish and no will for that holiness without which he cannot see God. But to meet this peculiar helplessness there has been provided a peculiar remedy; for God makes a people willing in the day of His power, and gives His Holy Spirit to them who ask it—so as to give forth, not an analogous and neutral, but a special, and that a positive demonstration of the Divine goodness. It had been well if in this matter Bishop Butler had attempted to carry the analogy no farther than it will go. Sound as his general views were on what might be termed the philosophy of religion, this formed no security against the errors of a lax and superficial creed on certain of its specific doctrines, any more than the comprehensive philosophy of Lord Bacon formed a safeguard against the crudities into which he fell when he entered in detail on the lessons of physical science.

16. Bating the exception that we have now made, we deem this chapter to be one of the most successful in the volume, as holding forth a perfect specimen of analogy between what we observe of the present and what we are told of the future life—in that the good things of both are offered, not to our acceptance, but to our acquisition, and this an acquisition which can only be made out at the expense of great painstaking and self-denial. He undertakes not to say why this is, but acquiesces in the finding that so it is, in the spirit of that just and characteristic philosophy which refrains from speculating further on the constitution of nature till it shall know the whole or much more of the case, and resting satisfied with it as a sufficient basis for its argument, that this constitution is as it is.

17. Before proceeding further, there is one general exception, not against the reasonings of this chapter only, but against the reasonings of the whole volume, which we should like to dispose of. It is grounded on the consideration of the infinitely larger interests of the future than of the present state of being. The analogy might be admitted as complete *in kind* between the

hardship of a ruined fortune in this world because of misconduct or neglect, and the hardship, from the same cause, of a ruined eternity; but, along with this, there might be the lurking imagination of a failure in the analogy because of the tremendous difference between these two hardships in point of degree. The one, or smaller of the two, and of which there is no questioning the reality, because palpably acted before our eyes, may be tolerated as somehow consistent with the moral perfections of God, while the other, because incomparably the larger, and which we do not yet see, but are only told of, may be resented and resisted as an incredible outrage on all equity and goodness; or, while the one might pass, the other might be regarded as a serious impeachment on the character of the Deity.

18. Now to meet this alleged difficulty, let it first be observed, that the objection thus conjured up involves in it a wrong moral principle. If there be indeed injustice in the larger dispensation, then in the analogous smaller there must be injustice also—and he that is unfaithful in the least is unfaithful also in much; so that, we must either give up the character, and with this, perhaps, the being of God, or admit that there is not the reality, but only, at worst, the semblance of injustice in both. And the truth is, that they who thus reason upon degrees, and would acquiesce in the smaller while they vehemently exclaim against the larger iniquity, are unconsciously running themselves into inconsistency, and supplying their adversaries with the means of an ample vindication. Once that there is a toleration for unrighteousness or severity in the little of the Divine government—as if this could be compensated by its beneficence and justice on the larger scale of eternity, or among the higher orders of creation—then all the degradation and distress to which inferior creatures of humbler faculties and ephemeral duration are subjected, might be allowed to pass, if only made up for by the gifts and the felicities which are heaped on the noble creature man—as if the richness of his liberality in matters of higher concern, and to beings of higher consideration, conferred a license for all lesser acts of caprice or cruelty in things of inferior moment. But to prove how inapplicable this whole reasoning about degrees is to the affairs of a universal administration in the hands of the infinite and unsearchable God, it should be recollected, that if there be hardship in the destruction of a reptile, and this can be compensated by His exuberant and overpassing goodness to man, then let there be hardship

in the destruction of a world, and of all who live in it, and there is room too for this being compensated in that amplitude of innumerable worlds to which our own is but an atom on the high field of immensity, and which are peopled, for aught we know, by beings of a far more exalted order than ourselves. It is altogether vain to reason of degrees amid the exhaustless varieties of a universe that is boundless—when in one direction there is an infinitude ever rising and expanding, and in the other a microscopic descent to regions of still deeper mystery. If injustice is at all to be tolerated—if it may be acquiesced in among the lower places, as it were, of creation, then may it be carried indefinitely higher, and still above and beyond would there be room for compensation in wider and loftier theatres for the manifestation and exercise of all those perfections, whether of love or of righteousness, which enter into the nature of the Godhead. But far the likelier solution is, that if there be the semblance of injustice in the Divine government anywhere, it is but a semblance, and that on the part of God there is real injustice nowhere. We have access to but a little part of His ways; and meanwhile, it should be enough for at least the silencing of objections, that we have the analogy of what is seen to what both the Natural and the Christian Theology tells us of the unseen—satisfied to wait for the final disclosure, when it will be found of God that He has done all things well, and that there is no unrighteousness in Him.

CHAPTER V.

OF A STATE OF PROBATION, AS INTENDED FOR MORAL DISCIPLINE AND IMPROVEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, hast placed us in a world that is full of danger and full of tribulation. But we rejoice that there is a power greater than the world upon our side—that the faith which overcometh all things hath the promise of the Spirit, of whom Thou hast said, Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. May we watch for this Spirit with all perseverance, that directed by its guidance, that animated by its strength, we may be borne off more than conquerors from every scene of duty and of difficulty through Him who loved us.

19. The present chapter stands in the same relation to the

one preceding it which that on the moral does to that on the natural government of God. It still treats of probation, but of probation with a particular end—even that of schooling men in the practice, and so as to confirm them in the habits of virtue. The philosophic caution of the outset, and then the description given by him of the education of habits, are alike characteristic of the modesty and the observant sagacity of Butler. A just discernment of all that is within the sphere of competent knowledge, and a disinclination to speculate, far less to dogmatize, on all which is without that sphere, are fruits of the same right inductive spirit, and are both of them the constituents of true science. The evils that he remarks would ensue were man introduced all at once with mature faculties into a mature state of life, instead of having to undergo a slow process of education, afford not a positive solution, but somewhat like a glimpse of probability and promise toward a full understanding at length of the imperfections of our present state. But on this, too, he only touches, and wisely forbears to theorize.

20. It seems a bold analogy to institute between the waste of so many vegetable seeds, destroyed in vast numbers before they have attained or fulfilled the proper end of their creation, and the ruin of so many moral agents, the great majority of whom have hitherto and throughout the successive generations of the world, apparently fallen short of that blissful immortality for which the theatre of our present life is fitted to discipline and prepare them. This were indeed an insufficient basis on which to found any affirmative conclusion—though it is not too much to say that the one phenomenon is as unaccountable as the other—which is enough for the purposes of our argument, that is not designed and does not pretend to account for “the whole end and the whole occasion of mankind being placed in such a state as the present.” The main object of the reasoning here, and indeed of the volume at large, is not to demonstrate what is, but what may be, the possible rather than the actual, and so as to prepare the subject in question for the full benefit of those other reasonings which serve to build it up unto the article of a creed. The two things thus brought into comparison, however like in kind, are widely different in degree, and ere the analogy between them can be sustained, the principle which we have just tried to expound in Sect. 18, must not only be understood but acquiesced in.

21. We do not understand that under the economy of grace the law of habit has been repealed, or any other indeed of those laws

of our mental nature on which Butler proceeds in the reasonings of this chapter. Whatever the peculiar aids and expedients of the gospel might be for the perfecting of our meetness for heaven, they supersede not the efficacy of that process under which, by reason of use, the senses are exercised to discern between good and evil (Heb. v. 14); and we may add, too, the powers are either enfeebled or strengthened, according as we yield to the temptations of the one, or fulfil the lessons of the other. But though there might be nothing in this chapter which is distinctly or articulately in conflict with revealed truth, yet the impression which on the whole it is fitted to give, is not altogether in keeping with it. It seems in fact to represent the matter so as if man could at his own pleasure turn himself from the path of degeneracy, and gradually, or by little and little, through the strengthening influence of habit, accomplish his own recovery. And as if in counterpart to this, the author gives an ideal representation of the manner in which man has been brought into a state of moral ruin—that is, by a slight deflection at the first, and a gently declining path from one stage of corruption to another afterwards. Now, one cannot help being struck with a palpable incongruousness or want of harmony between this hypothetical fall of Bishop Butler and the historical fall of Scripture, which is there said to have taken place *per saltum*, or with all the suddenness of a catastrophe, and so as to have effected an instant transition from a relationship of peace and favour to a relationship of enmity with God. But let us only consider the effect of a first sin, and it will be found that the account in the Bible has not only more of authority on its side, but is really in better accordance both with the nature of the case itself, and with the nature of man. Certain it is, that in civil government a single offence might not only put the transgressor into full hostility with the law, but incur for him an instant disruption from all the fellowships of creditable society—just as the single offence of Adam both constituted him at once an outlaw, and expelled him from the high and heavenly companionship of Paradise. And the effect was not more instantaneous upon his state than upon his character. For the love of God would, under the misgivings of conscious guilt, give place to a sentiment of dread and alienation, nay, of hatred to Him who must now be regarded as an enemy, or in the light of an offended sovereign. It is thus that an instant moral revolution behoved to take place; and as it was by a single act that man passed into

a state of ruin, so it is by a single act that he passes into a state of recovery and reconciliation. In the day that he ate of the forbidden fruit he died; but in the day or on the moment of his believing in the Son of God, he passes back again from death unto life. This is the turning-point of his salvation, and by which there is effected not only the instant translation of him into a new hope, but also into a new heart, and so a new character. A new-born love springs up with a new-born confidence, though we doubt not that in the history of this now regenerated creature, the law of habit, as well as all the other unrepealed laws of humanity, will still continue to find their full exemplification. The tenet of justification by faith is at antipodes with the idea of our virtue here being the adequate price, but not with the idea of its being the indispensable preparation for our eternity hereafter. Under the economy of grace, heaven is conceived essentially to lie in character—to be in fact but the expansion, the full-grown development of our present charity, our present piety, our present holiness. There is nothing surely in the doctrine and philosophy of habit counter to that system which represents it as the great business of those who have received the promises of the gospel to perfect their holiness—which tells us that what a man soweth, that shall he also reap—which speaks, on the one hand, of the path of the just, as if his rudimental virtue here were to his perfected virtue hereafter what the dawn of morn is to the shining of the meridian day—and which speaks on the other hand, of the wicked being filled with the fruit of their own ways—which, in a word, represents the kingdom of heaven as begun on earth, and at last closes its description of the relation between time and eternity with these impressive words:—“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; he that is holy, let him be holy still.” Nor yet is there aught in the doctrine of the Spirit’s agency which conflicts with what is here said of certain natural principles in the constitution of man, and of the share which they have in the growth and establishment of human virtue. The agency of the Spirit is completely reconcilable with all those successions in the phenomena of our nature which have ever met the observation or been at all reasoned upon by philosophers. The supernatural is effected without violence or derangement to the harmonies of the natural. A light and power are given, yet all the processes of mind, so far as they are discover-

able by us, move in their wonted order; and if the strengthening and confirming power of habit be one of these processes, then may we rest assured that after the revelation of a spiritual influence, it still remains a fit subject for all the discrimination and argument which the sound and sagacious Butler has bestowed on it.

22. The oversight of Butler, in that he lays down a hypothetical which quadrates so little with the historical fall, is, that he has not at all adverted to the essential moral element which attaches to a first sin. - By the first transgression, there is not merely a commencement made on a gently declining path, but there is a sudden transition effected into a new state of relationship with God. On the moment of transgression we become rebels to God, a sense of guilt enters the heart, and along with it the distrust, the alienation, the fears of guilt. We can no longer go freely forth to Him in willing and affectionate obedience, and a sudden moral disruption takes place between us and God. The narrative in the book of Genesis will be found, we are persuaded, far more accordant with the real nature of the human constitution. So that, instead of that gradual and progressive descent which Bishop Butler imagines, there is, in fact, a passage *per saltum* from a state of innocence to that opposite state in which man feels himself deserted by the only principle that can give life or value to his obedience, and landed in a condemnation which by himself is irrevocable.

23. But it is chiefly in his description of the reverse movement that our author discovers what I would call the meagreness of his Christianity. In making recovery from an undone state, he seems to regard nothing more as necessary than a strenuous and sustained endeavour on the part of man to acquire new habits, and shake off the tyranny of old ones. He forgets that a breach must be removed, that the sense of guilt must be taken away, that a reconciliation must be effected, and that it is only in the confidence of such reconciliation that man can go forth again with alacrity and vigour in the services of a new obedience. What he says of the vast majority finding the world to be a school of vice rather than of virtue, forms a most impressive commentary on the insufficiency of all natural motives and natural expedients for the world's regeneration. Nothing else, let us be assured, save the offered pardon of the gospel, possesses the charm and the efficacy of awakening us again to the virtue from which we had departed; and it is only by the tidings of

a sacrifice and the promises of a Spirit falling with acceptance on the hearts of our outcast species, that man will return unto God; or that in the universal reign of righteousness and truth, the Cross of Christ will behold the consummation of its triumphs.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE OPINION OF NECESSITY, CONSIDERED AS INFLUENCING PRACTICE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU reignest supreme, O God, in the moral as well as in the material universe. Thou turnest the hearts of men whithersoever Thou wilt: Thy command reaches to the processes of the living as well as to those of the inanimate creation; and while there is a countless diversity of operations, it is God who worketh all in all. We would comfort ourselves with the thought that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; and we are persuaded that when the mystery of God is finished, it will be found Thou hast done all things well, and that their final consummation is worthy of Thy perfect goodness and Thy perfect intelligence.

24. It is obvious from this chapter, that Butler partook, with almost all the English theologians of his age, in that religious horror so often felt and expressed by them against the doctrine of Necessity. And certain it is, that in the minds of its advocates, this tenet stood very generally associated at that time both with infidelity in religion, and with an utter subversion of the first principles, nay, of the very being and substance of morality. It was more particularly imagined, that it annulled the distinction between virtue and vice, and did away with man's responsibility. Leibnitz, however, though a Necessitarian, retained the orthodoxy, notwithstanding, both of his Christian and ethical principles; and we are persuaded that had his views been more thoroughly understood by Clarke and the other metaphysicians of our own country, or had Edwards appeared a century earlier, there would not have been the indiscriminate and undistinguishing abuse of this doctrine which then characterized, and which still continues to mark, the writings of the divines in the Church of England.

25. This is not the place for entering upon a discussion of the subject. It will be enough to observe, that many are the

advocates of a philosophical necessity in our present day, who retain entire both the accountableness of man and the reality of moral distinctions, and to whom therefore this chapter of the Analogy is wholly uncalled for. They hold that there is nothing in this doctrine which can do away, which can ever dilute, or cast a dimness on the argument for a God, from the symptoms of intelligence that are everywhere apparent in the constitution of visible things. They hold that there is nothing in it to nullify the doctrine of a moral government. They admit its consistency both with a will and a character in man, and with a will and a character in God. In short, they conceive that it leaves every doctrinal and every practical principle of theology just where it found them. And whereas Dr. Butler would place us in this dilemma, that our principles will not hold in practice—that after all we are obliged to act as if free—and that as the course of nature proceeds, in its dispensation of rewards and punishments, on the system of liberty, therefore that system must be true;—we would retort by our utter unconsciousness of there being anything in that doctrine of necessity we so strenuously hold, which takes away from choice and deliberation and character in religion, that Butler himself reasons upon the consistency of our doctrine with all these things. And therefore, after all, it may not be so violent and monstrous a speculation as it was apprehended to be in his days, and as it is still apprehended to be among those anti-Calvinists of the south, who profess to be revolted by the harsh and uncomplying features of our Scottish theology, by the horrors of its gloomy and repulsive Calvinism.

26. It is strange that Butler should labour to demonstrate, and indeed succeeds in demonstrating, that there is nothing in the system of necessity which ought to infer Atheism, and yet that he should ascribe to the abettors of this system a disposition to Atheism. Why does he not conceive it possible that a man may be a Necessitarian, and yet have the very view he himself has of its bearing on the theistical argument? We often read of a man not being chargeable with all the consequences of his belief, because it is a possible thing that he may not perceive them; but here we have the example of a man being made chargeable with that which is not the consequence of his belief, and which is even proved to be not the consequence by the very person who makes the charge. This is one instance of the hard dealing in the way of moral and religious imputa-

tion, to which Necessitarians have been exposed at the hands of their adversaries.

27. He conceives that a pupil, coming forth upon the world charged with the lessons of this system, would abandon himself to utter carelessness in regard to his conduct. A few considerations, put in the questionnaire form, may perhaps disabuse the mind of this apprehension. Suppose a pupil of this doctrine were told that a certain line of conduct was *often* followed up by the contempt and hatred of society, what effect should this information naturally have upon him? To make him shun the conduct, because fearful of its consequence. But suppose that instead of being told that it was so followed up *often*, it was followed up *always*,—whether would this enhance or relax the prudential obligation to avoid the obnoxious conduct? Most certainly to enhance it, because now certain of its hurtful consequence. And whether does the being followed up often, or the being followed up *always*, present the likeliest sequence to those which would take place under the system of necessity? Or instead of looking to the conduct of the pupil, let us look to that of the master or educationist, and put the following questions as to him:—1. Suppose he were told that the *frequent* effect of a certain argument, when presented to the minds of his pupils, was to recall them from a course of misconduct, what effect is this naturally fitted to have upon him? Surely to make him ply that argument.—2. Suppose that instead of the *frequent*, he was told that it was the *constant* effect of this argument,—whether should that strengthen or weaken his inducement to press it home? The reply is obvious as any truism.—3. And whether in the *frequent* or in the *constant* is it that we recognise an invariable sequence? In the constant.—4. But which of the two systems, that of liberty or necessity, is it which pleads for the sequences of the moral world being invariable? That of necessity.—5. Is there aught, then, in the said doctrine of necessity, which has been so arraigned as the enemy alike of wisdom and virtue—is there aught in it to lessen, and not rather to strengthen and confirm, all the motives to right conduct? So much for Butler's assertion, that necessity is not applicable to practical subjects.

28. By the same mode of reasoning, it will be found that there is nothing in this doctrine to invalidate, but, on the contrary, to fix all the more surely, the inference for a God from final causes. We should infer, for example, a benevolence in

God, from the vast amount of happiness produced by the various mechanisms around us. But doubtless it would make the conclusion all the more certain, if we conceived the connexion to be invariable between a disposition in the mind of Deity and the effect of that disposition in His works. But we need not dwell on this, as Butler himself thinks that the doctrine of necessity is reconcilable with a character in God, and as reconcilable with the particular character of benevolence and truth and justice as any other.

29. There is one great oversight respecting the scheme of necessity into which our opponents are constantly falling, and in which Butler himself participates—else this chapter might have been spared. No doubt our necessity implies the absolute sureness of every event that is to happen, whether in the department of mind or of matter; but still it is a necessity not irrespective of that which went before the event, neither will it be without fruit or efficacy on that which is to follow. Ours is a necessity running in trains of sequences, and which is made up of the invariableness wherewith the terms of sequences follow each other. It is not a necessity which fixes anything whatever in the character of an isolated or unconnected event—but of an event that came into being because of another that preceded it, and wherewith it is related by the tie of invariableness. Let the difference between these two necessities be well pondered, and it will be found that, in regard to influence on the practice of men, the one is *toto cælo* dissimilar from the other. The necessity of which no other account can be given, than that it has been fixed by some decree of inexorable fatalism, and must therefore come to pass by whatever antecedents it has been preceded, or in the midst of whatever circumstances it is to spring into fulfilment—such a necessity as this might well paralyze all the activity of man's doings or of man's deliberations, superseding as it does every effort of his to set aside the irrevocable sentence which he cannot annul, and cannot make head against. But if, instead of this, it be a necessity not made good under whatever antecedents, but made good by those antecedents of which itself is but one of the consequents—a necessity not evolved into being in whatever circumstances, but a necessity essentially linked with these circumstances, and the mere result of that constancy in nature wherewith the same effect always proceeds from the same cause, or combination of causes;—then, such a necessity as this, so far from chilling men into apathy and inaction, will

be found as favourable to the development of all the energies of his active and intellectual nature as any system of liberty that can possibly be devised.

30. Grant that my earthly fortune is immutably determined in the chain of causes and effects, this does not dissolve but rather strengthens the alliance between industry and prosperity; and so, under such a system, it is my right and rational part to put forth as much exertion as before for the purpose of realizing it. Grant that my eternal state is already made sure in the counsels of the Eternal, this does not break up the affinity between a character on this side of death, and a condition on the other side of it; and so, to make myself sure of a blissful eternity, I have the same inducement as ever to make good the faith and the holiness that always go before it. Grant that the salvation of my child has already been made the subject of a decree—it is not by a decree which but fastens and makes sure this individual event, but a decree which generally is carried into effect by the progression of the usual antecedents of prayer, and example, and instruction, on the part of the parent; and so there should be no relaxation, but the contrary, of all those busy expedients which a father ought to ply for the immortal well-being of those who have sprung from him. There is not one of the connexions between a cause and a consequent, between a means and an end, broken up by such a system of necessity. The connexion is only made all the surer than before, instead of being that wayward, capricious, fluctuating thing, which would make all activity hopeless, and all prudence inapplicable or un-availing. It does not loosen, it cements the various parts which compose a mechanism of instrumentality—so that, instead of paralyzing, it guides and animates human exertion when busily plying whatever instrument for the attainment of that good which it is fitted to realize. Let us be assured, therefore, that necessity, when rightly understood, instead of laying an arrest on the powers and purposes of man, or in any way destroying his spontaneity, leaves him as busy and active and vigilant and painstaking and diligent and ever-doing a creature as before.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD, CONSIDERED AS A SCHEME OR CONSTITUTION,
IMPERFECTLY COMPREHENDED.

THE PRAYER.

O God, it is but a small part of Thy ways that is submitted to our observation, and how then can we comprehend the mystery of Thy government, the principle or the end of Thine unsearchable counsels! We know but in part, we understand but in part. Give us, O Lord, in this the infancy of our being, to have all the teachableness and humility of children, and by the exercise of faith and charity, those great virtues of our present and preparatory state, may we become meet for the larger manifestations of that coming period when we shall know even as we are known. Meanwhile, O Lord, give us to understand, not the piety alone, but the reason and wisdom of casting down all our lofty imaginations, and bringing every thought into the captivity of the obedience of Christ. All we ask is for His sake. Amen.

31. This chapter of Butler reminds one of a very fine observation by Leibnitz. He bids us consider the perfection, the exquisite harmony and adaptation of parts, the absolute faultlessness of every mechanism in nature, which we can see in all its completeness; as, for example, an animal or vegetable, which, viewed as a system, is certainly one of most entire and orderly adjustment, and which, but for certain accidental and disturbing forces, it is quite obvious is fitted to maintain itself in a healthy and pleasurable state of existence. This is all the more wonderful, that it is a system made up of so many parts, yet the want of any one of which, or even the want of it in a certain proportion, would derange the functions of the organic apparatus altogether. Now, let it be conceived that we only saw but a part of either of these, whether animal or vegetable, or saw them separated from their relation to the whole—such as a bit of skin, or bone, or membrane, or muscle of the one, or a bit of root or bark or gummy exudation of the other, and how utterly meaningless, or even deformed an article it would appear in our eyes; and yet when seen in its proper place, and by an eye that can take in that whole system of parts, with their relations, into which it enters, how significant, nay, how indispensable does it evince itself to be, proving the difference that must appear in

respect to the use and wisdom of any given thing, when first exhibited to one who can only look to it in its individuality, and then to another who can look to it in connexion with the entire combination whereof it forms a part.

32. Now this admits of an all-important application, and Leibnitz has made the application most beautifully and effectively. Let us only conceive this world in the light of an individual or a part, which we might well do in relation to the immensity that surrounds it, and more especially since our modern science has made it known to us, that immensity teems with worlds and systems of worlds innumerable. And let us further conceive of our present generation, or rather of all the ages put together, which the light of history irradiates, that they but disclose one temporary evolution of a plan which originated in the depths of the eternity that is past, and has its indefinite outgoings in the eternity before us—and then let us put the question, Whether, in proportion to God's universal scheme, we really have access, by our own observation, to more than the veriest fragment of any organic structure in the animal or vegetable kingdom? In the plainer language of Butler, individuals have certain peculiar relations to other individuals of their own species, nor do we know how far these relations extend; and hence this world, in the midst of this peopled universe, may be but as the individual of a mighty empire. And he further says, that all events have future unknown consequences; and hence, to estimate the character of present events or present appearances, we must ascertain their issues in the endless futurity on the other side of death: and so it comes again to the question, Whether a creature, so beset and bounded in all his faculties as man, can sit in judgment on the plans and counsels of a Being whose eye reaches both to the infinite of space and the infinite of duration?—whether, with his limited access to so small a part of the universal machine, and his short-lived observation to so small a time of its working, he, on present appearances, is at all warranted to pronounce upon the whole; or to set aside the positive evidence of religion because of objections which can only be legitimately urged by one who knows the whole scope and evolution of the Divine workmanship, and the whole mind and purposes of its author.

33. From the doctrine of this chapter we may perceive how it is, that in proportion to the enlargement of one's philosophy may be the submissiveness of his faith. A man of bounded views

could not comprehend the solution given of the apparent difficulties of religion, by such minds as those of Leibnitz and Butler. He is conversant with individuals and not with relations, and least of all with that relation on which the answer to objectors is here suspended—the relation of his own little sphere to the vast unknown that is around it. He is incapable of conceiving the magnitude of duration as it reaches onward to eternity; he is alike incapable of conceiving the magnitude of space as it extends without limit on every side of us, and holds within its ample reservoir an infinity of worlds. Such views as these call for a reach and elevation of sentiment which do not belong to him; but who does not see, that in proportion to the capacity of making this wide survey of things, must be the emphasis of the lesson which proceeds on our incapacity of resolving all, of reconciling all? In very proportion to the extent of our knowledge does there open upon us, though in dim perspective, that region of mystery where lie an exceeding multitude of things either wholly unknown to us, or known but imperfectly. It is because with every increase of diameter in the sphere of light, there is an increase of surface in the circumambient darkness; it is because with every step of advance on the path of knowledge, the onward obscurity retires a little, no doubt, but at the place where it begins is as deeply shrouded and presents a greater number of profound and unfathomable recesses than before; it is because, for example or illustration, the more powerful telescope, which now casts tenfold irradiation on the moon or on a planet, summons into vision millions of distant and hitherto unobserved suns, which but tell of their bare existence, and leave in secrecy impenetrable both the moral and the physical economy of the unknown and the unnumbered worlds that roll around them—in a word, it is because every accession to the truths and the discoveries of science but brings into notice the still more impracticable difficulties, the still deeper arcana which lie beyond them;—this is the reason why, while on the one hand, a little learning is a dangerous thing, they are our highest and most colossal men who have evinced the most childlike modesty both in the speculations of theology and of general learning. It is thus, in particular, that the cause of religion has nothing to fear from the cause of an ever-advancing, if legitimate, philosophy. The greater the number of objects that come within the circle of our contemplations, the greater also is the number of their unknown relations to the objects in the ulterior and un-

travelled distances which she has not overtaken. By every footstep she takes in the search after truth, she is more baffled by a sense of her own incompetency to environ the truth that is infinite, the truth that is universal. And when thus overwhelmed by the feeling of her own helplessness, she rises to the thought of that mighty Spirit who created, and who alone, therefore, can comprehend all—she feels that one authentic note of information from Him should outweigh a thousand of her own darkling speculations.

34. The concluding observations of this chapter are all-important for the vindication of Butler's whole argument. They show most satisfactorily how our ignorance may invalidate the objections against, and yet not invalidate the proof of the thing. The essence of the reasoning here lies in the distinction between our knowledge of God's will and our knowledge of His ways. We have positive proof of His moral character, in virtue of which He wills both the righteousness and the happiness of His creatures; and yet may be utterly in the dark as to the most effectual ways or methods of procedure by which these objects can be most fully accomplished. We may know the end, and yet not know the best means of bringing it about. A total ignorance would place both the objections and the proof alike beyond our reach, but a partial ignorance may not. God's wisdom may be learned by its vestiges within the limits of a mere handbreadth, as in the construction of an eye; yet, after having learned this, we may fail in our judgment of the subserviency of things that go out and far from view, whether widely in space or distantly in time. And so within the homestead of one's own conscience may we read the lesson of a righteous God, and yet be wholly unable to pronounce on the tendency or effect of those measures which enter into the policy of His universal government.

35. The conclusion of the first part of the Analogy calls for no particular remark, being in the main a recapitulation or summary of what had gone before. It is well that in the closing sentence he should discriminate so palpably between the "proper proofs" of religion, and his own analogical reasonings in defence of it—it being the chief function of the latter to neutralize the objections of infidelity, and of the former to build up a positive evidence whether for the doctrine of the natural or the Christian theology.

SECTION II.

THE USE WHICH BUTLER MAKES OF THE ANALOGICAL ARGUMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.—OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us a deep sense, O God, of the weight and importance of that revelation which Thou hast made to the world. Make us to feel our need of the Saviour. Visit us with a spirit of concern and of inquiry. Shut us up by the terrors of Thy law to the faith of Thy gospel; and may we take no rest to our souls till we have found it in the revealed and offered Mediator. May we hold it no light matter that we have sinned against God, that the denunciations of a violated law are upon us, and that the truth and justice and unchangeable holiness of Thy nature are committed to the fulfilment of Thy proclaimed threats on the children of iniquity. Do Thou guide all our inquiries whether on the truth or the substance of that message of reconciliation which Thou hast sent into our abode.

1. FROM the introductory observations of this chapter, we might infer that Butler regards the question of the necessity of revelation as a preliminary to the question of its truth. It has certainly been so treated by the great majority both of theological authors and of theological professors. They proceed as if the first point must be made out ere they are warranted to enter upon the second; and in this way I hold not merely that a principle of sound reasoning has been violated, but that a general weakening has been inflicted thereby on the Christian argument.

2. The religion of Jesus Christ is essentially a religion of facts; and to its truth we have, through the medium of one branch of its evidences, the same direct access that we have to the truth

of any other facts in general history. We have both an original and a derived testimony in behalf of its alleged miracles. We have the professed announcements from heaven to earth where-with these miracles were associated. We have the record of these announcements, and for the integrity of this record, we can hold up the very light which avails us in any question of ordinary criticism. We walk on firm experimental ground throughout the whole of this investigation, and are led by it to the conclusion, that within the whole compass of antiquity, there has nothing come down to us in the shape of narrative so fully accredited as are the narratives of the gospel. Now, possessed as we are of such competent proofs on the *credibility* of this said revelation, are we to suspend the determination of it till the previous question of its *necessity* has been settled and set by? Are we to forego the consideration of the evidences which lie patent before us on the field of observation till we take up a matter, not so much, let it be noticed, of palpable fact as of recondite principle? The necessity of revelation involves in it topics that stand related both to God and to eternity—to the hidden counsels of the One, to the fathomless unknown, and by us, undiscoverable, of the other. The truth of revelation depends on credentials which lie on an open platform, or certain tangible things within the circle of our perceptions, which have been addressed to human eyes, which have been heard by human ears. It is not sound dialectics to suspend the second of these topics on the first of them. It is like placing a piece of firm architecture on a precarious foundation. It partakes of the vices of that philosophy which, anterior to the days of Lord Bacon, behoved to settle its principles before it would condescend to look upon facts. It is the same as if, instead of giving ourselves up to the business of observation in order to see what kind of planetarium the Creator had framed, we should keep this work at abeyance till we had rightly adjusted the speculation, what kind of planetarium were best suited to our wants, or what the most reasonable for a God of perfect wisdom to have devised. The first sentence of Paley's work on the Evidences is one of the best he has written. He puts aside the question of the necessity altogether. He treats it as one of the idle preliminaries of the main question. In the act of setting to, he brushes aside, as if by a single movement, the irrelevancies of the argument, and comes at once to close quarters with the matter on hand. I therefore should prefer that the student would read Paley before Leland,

rather than that he should read Leland before Paley. Instead of possessing him at the outset with the slender probability—therefore God will do it, I should like better to possess him with the main strength and confidence of the proof—that God has done it, and therefore it must have been necessary.

3. But it is not to be understood from these observations on the necessity of revelation, that we have any other quarrel with the topic than merely with the place which is commonly assigned to it in the logic of our science. The topic itself is interesting; but it presents us with but an auxiliary consideration, and is not entitled to a fundamental place in the argumentative evidence for the truth of Christianity. But there is another species of evidence, to the effect of which, in conversion, the necessity of the gospel, or, rather, a sense of its necessity, is of prime and radical importance. We should distinguish between the historical necessity for a revelation under which the world laboured before that the world was visited by its light, and that necessity, or rather that sense of necessity, which exists in the bosom of an individual visited by religious earnestness before that he has been visited by that understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ which brings relief to his fears and a solution for his difficulties. This belongs not to the historical, but to the internal evidence, and may be shortly stated thus:—When a man is visited, as he often is, in his conscience, by a loftier and purer sense than he wont to entertain of the law of God—when he is further visited, as he often is, in his consciousness, by a more vivid conviction of his own distance and deficiency therefrom—when the apprehended truth and righteousness and justice of the Lawgiver give him a more fresh and powerful impression than he ever had that the high authority of Heaven is not to be mocked, that its authority is not to be trampled on—when these considerations are brought to bear on the undoubted fact of himself being a defaulter, and he is therefore pressed with the difficulties of the problem, How can I escape from that condemnation which seems essential to be fulfilled, else the legislation of the upper sanctuary is but a mockery and a name? Here is a strong case of necessity made out; and if there be aught in the subject-matter of the gospel to meet that necessity, the view of it not only ministers relief to the spirit of the inquirer, but at the same time, carries a most pleasing and a most powerful evidence along with it—the evidence grounded on the adaptation which obtains between the offered remedy of the

gospel and the felt necessities of our own nature—an evidence which no other system of religion has, it being the glory and the distinction of the economy under which we sit that it tenders a free and full forgiveness, yet without violence to the rights of heaven's jurisprudence, to the state or dignity of heaven's offended Sovereign.

4. Butler here tells us of Christianity as being, first, a republication of natural religion, and then, over and above, as being, in virtue of certain additional lessons and peculiarities of its own, what may be termed a supplement to natural religion. But it is worthy of all observation, that every addition which Christianity makes to the clearness and authority of natural religion, so far from reducing, in fact aggravates the more our need of a revelation in all those matters which constitute the peculiarities of the gospel. It is a mistake, then, to imagine, that had it stopped short with a republication of the doctrines of natural theology, it would have done something in the way of positive addition and advantage for our species. It would but have added to their helplessness and despair. It would have made known to us, in a more vivid and alarming light, the disease under which we labour, and in so doing, would have made our ignorance of the remedy more intolerably painful. Along with the brighter views which it gave of the obligation and extent of the law, of the august and inviolable sanctity of the Lawgiver, of the authority of that moral government under which we sit, of the awful and unchangeable sanctions by which it was uphelden—along with these, it would not darken, but rather supply new and convincing evidence to the fact, that from heaven's rectitude we had universally fallen, and that heaven's jurisprudence had by one and all of us been violated. We should not therefore say of this second part of the Christian revelation, merely that it was additional to the first. The first, in fact, has more in it the character of the proposition of an enigma, and the second brings the solution to it. The first gives us more emphatically to feel our danger and our difficulties, the second brings the way of deliverance before us. There is a necessity for revelation; but it is a mistake to imagine that what it reveals to us of natural religion does away one-half of the necessity. It may be said, in the first instance, rather to thicken the perplexity of an inquirer, and to deepen still more the obscurity of the prospect which lies before him. The first without the second would have been a message of terror and denunciation to the world. It is the

second which reconciles all difficulties ; and besides adding the light of its own manifestation to all that we previously knew of the things of an invisible world, it resolves all the doubts and hushes all the fears which the first had awakened.

5. In addition to the clear and admirable observations of Bishop Butler in this chapter on the distinction between moral and positive duties, we have only to remark, that though the former be of higher value in themselves, and of higher estimation in the sight of God than the latter, yet obedience to the latter may be often a more discriminative and decisive test of a man's religiousness than obedience to the former. A moral duty has both the will of God and its own native rectitude to recommend it ; and in as far as the last of these two motives is concerned, it is often felt and proceeded on in virtue of the natural morality among men. There are many who would recoil from fraud, who would act on the impulse of generosity, who would maintain courteousness in their fellowship with others, wholly apart from the consideration of a Lawgiver in heaven ; but to keep the Sabbath, for example, is not a dictate of natural morality at all. There is not the same composition of influences concerned in this that there is in those duties which possess a natural rectitude antecedent to all jurisprudence. The will of God is more singly and separately our inducement for the observance of this or any other of the positive institutions ; so that, when there is neither hypocrisy nor the mechanical influence of habit in the case, the circumstance of a man being a good Sabbath-keeper may be a more decisive indication of that which strictly and philosophically one would denominate religiousness of character, than the circumstance of a man being a good neighbour, a good payer of his debts, a good landlord, or possessed of any one or all of those qualifications which, in the ordinary sense of the term, constitute a good member of society.

6. At the close of this chapter we meet with a sentiment of most unsafe tendency and application in the hands of those who do not estimate aright the natural ignorance of man, and so would invest him with a mastery over a far larger range of speculation than with his beset and bounded faculties he is at all able to overtake. It is, that "if in revelation there be found any passages, the seeming meaning of which is contrary to natural religion, we may certainly conclude such seeming meaning not to be the real one."* It is under the cover of such a

* Analogy, p. 176.—Fitzgerald's Edition.

sentiment that both infidelity and heresy have indulged in all sorts of licentiousness—the one in rejecting Christianity, and the other in transforming it. Nothing can be more obvious than that Christianity must be so understood as to square with the certainties of all known truth, or be rejected altogether, whether that truth lie in the department of natural religion or anywhere else; but it is equally obvious that the theology of the Bible should be brought to the tribunal of an antecedent natural theology, only in so far as it is a just and right natural theology, or to the extent only in which its doctrines are clear and unquestionable, else any revelation, however well accredited, were liable to be either misinterpreted or set aside, and that on the authority of every hypothesis, however wanton and however presumptuous. There is no danger of a conflict between reason and revelation, when reason keeps within her own proper sphere, and proceeds aright on the knowledge and observation of her own limits. But these limits are often transgressed both by the proud and the imaginative; and hence it is that Deism, on the strength of her natural religion, has passed sentence of condemnation on the gospel of Jesus Christ, and Socinianism, on the strength of hers, has diluted it to the quality of its own meagreness.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SUPPOSED PRESUMPTION AGAINST A REVELATION, CONSIDERED AS MIRACULOUS.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to do homage to the Son in all our approaches to the Father. We esteem it a faithful saying, that His is the only name given under heaven whereby men can be saved. We make mention of Him as the Lord our righteousness, and we pray that He may be made unto us the Lord our strength. May His word dwell in us richly in all wisdom; and may the Spirit, which is at His giving, animate us with all strength in the inner man, that we may not be justified only, but also washed and sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

7. Butler was antecedent to Hume; nor is it very clear, from what appears in this chapter, how he would have met the subtle objections of this last-named philosopher, though probably by an

appeal to the obvious phenomena of belief in testimony. I am not sure that he would have done more than this. He would have likened miracles to the extraordinary phenomena of nature, and then adverted to the perfect confidence wherewith these are listened to and received on the report of credible eye-witnesses. He would have bestowed a few touches of his sagacity upon the question; but neither his taste, nor perhaps his talent, would have led him so thoroughly to scrutinize the argument as to disarm it of all power to puzzle and to deceive us.

8. Nevertheless, the observations which he has bequeathed upon this subject have not been overlooked by those who followed him in the work of sustaining the Christian religion against the assaults of infidelity. It is evident that both Campbell and Price felt the importance even of the brief remarks which have fallen from him; and the former, in particular, makes use of the argument that he draws from the power even of a very slight testimony, to accredit what, but for that testimony, would have had a very strong improbability against it. But there is a peculiarity here overlooked, I think, by all the three reasoners. They suppose, in the first instance, a series of events to have come gratuitously into one's mind; and, after stating the almost infinite number of chances against its being true, suppose, in the second instance, these very events to be deponed to by a credible witness. Now, that both the first and the second of these things should happen in coincidence together were the strongest possible unlikelihood; and Butler says truly, that the presumption against a miracle is a small presumption additional to this; for, in fact, this were itself a miracle. After that, in the silent depository of my own thoughts, I had figured a story made up of complex and various incidents, another should present himself and narrate the identical story in all its particulars, deponing, at the same time, to the truth of it, this were not an ordinary testimony to an ordinary series of events. The man who did so I should credit with the power of divination. I should regard him as a prophet; and, instead of having the mere commonplace marks of credibility about him, I should view him as armed with the vouchers of a miraculous personage. To predict ordinary events in the very way they are to happen were not more extraordinary than for one man to divine ordinary events in the very way that another has conceived them; and the case is altogether different, when, instead of the story being for the first time presented to me by my own imagination, it is

for the first time presented to me in the plain narrative of a plain witness ; and when, instead of bringing to me the marvellous confirmation of a mere reverie of my own, he brings, *ab extra*, and from the place whence he came, a narrative of events that took place under his own observation. The proper way of estimating the strength of the presumption against, or of the proof that would be necessary for the establishment of a miracle, is to bring it into comparison, not with the presumption against the truth of a previously conceived story, but with the presumption against the truth of an already reported story that related to events which were not miraculous. There will be found in this case a difference very much greater than the small additional presumption which Butler speaks of ; and so, however striking or original his observation may be, there seems nothing in it which can guide us into a right track for the solution of the difficulty that since his time has so exercised the skill of controversialists.*

CHAPTER III.

OF OUR INCAPACITY OF JUDGING WHAT WERE TO BE EXPECTED IN A REVELATION ; AND THE CREDIBILITY, FROM ANALOGY, THAT IT MUST CONTAIN THINGS APPEARING LIABLE TO OBJECTIONS.

THE PRAYER.

WE esteem it, O God, a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, and we accept with thankfulness all the information which Thou hast given respecting the design and the efficacy of His death. We would receive with gratitude and with faith the announcement that He died as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and that this propitiation was rendered that mercy and truth might meet together, and that righteousness and peace might enter into fellowship. We would carry our speculation no further than to the plain verities and informations of the Bible, and desire to rejoice in these as worthy of our most cordial acceptance.

9. This we hold to be a very important chapter, both because of the satisfactory deliverance which it makes on the special topic, and of the insight which it gives into the spirit and philo-

* [See note with extract from Mill's Logic, in Fitzgerald's Edition of the Analogy, p. 184. —W. H.]

sophy of Butler's whole argument, as grounded on a very clear perception of the limit between the knowable and the unknowable, and of the treatment due to the respective things which belong to the one or the other of these regions. Let there be but evidence to the amount of establishing the certainty, or even the probability, of what actually exists in the first, and this will completely overbear any presumption founded on what is only guessed at or imagined in the second. The spirit evinced by our author is identical with that of the experimental or the Baconian philosophy—a spirit, in the first instance, of the utmost hardihood in resolutely maintaining to be true all that accords with the findings of experience; and a spirit, in the second instance, of the utmost humility in that sentiment of utter diffidence and distrust wherewith it regards all the fancies of presumptuous, however plausible, speculation.

10. With this principle, which in its very essence is a Baconian one, then, on sufficient evidence, we shall admit of a thing that *so it is*, although profoundly ignorant of *how it is*. To speak in the language of the scholastics, it is evidence, and that alone, which must determine the *quiddity* of anything; and of this we may have all possible degrees of belief up to thorough conviction, under the most perfect and entire ignorance of the *quomodo* of that thing. We are forced by sense and experience to admit that the course of nature is such, and yet may not be able even to approximate to the solution of the question, why such? and, in like manner, we may be led by evidence of another sort—by the evidence of credible testimony, for example—which, after all, resolves itself, by tracing back the process of derivation, into the evidence of sense and experience;—we may be led by this evidence to believe that such is the scheme of an actual revelation from heaven, and yet may not be able to explain how it is such a scheme rather than another. The objection founded on the scheme being such as it is, and that in the face of evidence for its being the actual scheme of an actual revelation, is just an irrationality of the same sort as to refuse the evidence of the senses in regard to the actual course of nature, because it is a course, the reasons and principles of which we do not comprehend. To be able to comprehend them, we would need such an acquaintance as we have not, with the plans, and the purposes, and the policy of Him who is the ruler of nature. To presume, then, on some plan imagined by ourselves, as being indeed the plan of the Eternal Mind, and to

quarrel with the phenomena, whether of nature or of a proved revelation, as being not agreeable thereto, is to fetch something from the *terra incognita* of conjecture, and with it to overbear another something brought home, whether in the shape of a certainty or of a probability, from the *terra cognita* of observation. This is the very spirit which Bacon would abjure, which Newton would abjure, which every sound experimentalist of the present day would abjure. It is wrong in the things of natural, it is wrong in the things of supernatural knowledge. And could we only succeed in tutoring the spirits of our young disciples to the truth and the soberness of that logic which we are now labouring to impress, it would, on the former of those grounds, conduct them to a right philosophy, and on the latter to a right faith.

11. The object of this chapter is to prove the likelihood, in the general, of a revelation being liable to objections, or at least that its being so forms no proper ground for the rejection of it. This reduces us to the consideration of its proofs, as the only relevant inquiry that we have to do with. Doubtless every objection against these proofs must be entertained, and satisfactorily disposed of. But this is different from objections against the subject-matter of a revelation. These form what are here called its internal improbabilities, much insisted on by Deists; but all proceeding on the competency of the human understanding to decide upon a topic which is here shown to be much too high for it—we being no more judges beforehand of what a revelation ought to be, either in the way it ought to be conducted or what it should contain, than we are judges, anterior to experience, of what ought to be the course of nature. The alleged imperfections and anomalies in the methods by which Christianity distributed and gave forth her lessons, are most effectually met by the analogous imperfections and anomalies, if such they must be called, as contrary to all the likelihoods of previous expectation, that might be observed in the gifts and teaching of nature.

12. It is thus that he demonstrates the invalidity of objections against the subject-matter of Christianity, while he admits that objections against its proofs were quite fatal to the authority of that religion, could they only be made good—as, for example, could it be shown that there was an infirmity in the evidence for its miracles, or a failure in its prophecies, or even a flaw and blemish in its morality, or, he might have added, an

inconsistency between its averments and previously-known truth. We think him particularly effectual in his vindication of the Scripture morality, when he combats the exceptions which have been alleged against it on the ground of an apparent approval given by it to crimes—as the spoiling of the Egyptians by the commandment of God, and the extermination of the Canaanites. But for the Divine commandment, they certainly would have been crimes; while, with that commandment, they are no more to be regarded as such than the fines or the capital punishments inflicted by a court of justice should be regarded as examples either of theft or murder. In these instances the Israelites were but the executioners of a sentence; and to charge immorality on the procedure, is to confound the administrative acts of a government with its laws.

13. The question may be here put, What would have been our condition had the moral and the miraculous evidence for Christianity run counter to each other? It is somewhat analogous to a puzzle in ethical science, which meets and perplexes its disciples in the discussion of its elementary principles. It is the general sentiment of moralists, and we think a sound one, that virtue has an independent rightness of its own, apart from all consideration of the will of God; yet this might not prevent the inquiry, What would have been our obligation had it so happened that the Deity had come forth with an authoritative enactment on the side of all that conscience tells us to be wrong, and in opposition to all that the same conscience tells us to be right? It is well that the miraculous and the moral have not thus come into collision with each other, any more than the miraculous and the mathematical have come into collision. We should have been in a sad dilemma had a professed messenger from the upper sanctuary appeared upon earth, and after authenticating his commission by a miracle, had prescribed to us a moral code which reversed, we shall imagine, all the enactments of the Decalogue; and we should have been in the like dilemma had he affirmed to be true what we knew, on the competent evidence whether of sense or reason, to be false. Let us rejoice that, in the economy under which we sit, no perplexity of this sort has ever been realized; that Christianity, whenever it touches on things experimental, will bear to be confronted with experience; and whenever it touches on things ethical or moral, is found to be at one with the lessons of purest and most enlightened virtue, and that to such a degree as not only to stand

disencumbered from all objection upon this score, but to such a degree as to have founded a strong positive evidence in its favour, on that wisdom and that righteousness by which its whole system is throughout characterized. The perfection of its morality forms one of the brightest insigña of its divinity and truth.

14. The analogical reasoning of this chapter is all-triumphant when applied to the vindication of Christianity, notwithstanding the charge of its not being universal, or of its slow progress in the world, or of the difficulty and labour which attend the inquiry into its evidences, so as to be satisfied of its truth. The same impediments and the same limitations obtain in regard to the light of natural knowledge, and that, too, in things so important as remedies against otherwise fatal disease, and the most useful discoveries in science.

CHAPTER IV.

OF CHRISTIANITY, CONSIDERED AS A SCHEME OR CONSTITUTION, IMPERFECTLY
COMPREHENDED.

THE PRAYER.

WE approach Thee, O Lord, as the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We rejoice that in Him there is full acceptance, and that also through Him strength is made to descend on us for all right and holy obedience. We feel that in Him all our sufficiency lies—that without Christ we can do nothing, and that but for the Spirit, which is at His giving, there is no good thing either in our hearts or in our history. May He begin a good work in our souls—may He carry it forward to perfection, that advancing from one degree of moral and spiritual excellence to another, we may at length be found prepared for the joys and the exercises of a blissful eternity.

15. It were great and unwarrantable presumption to decide on the personal Christianity of Butler; but I may at least remark on the possibility—nay, I would even go so far as to say, the frequency of men able and accomplished, and zealous for the general defence of Christianity, being at the same time meagre and vague in their views of its subject-matter. I might state it as my impression of our great author, that when he does offer

his own representations on the form and economy of that dispensation under which we sit, he seems to me as if not prepared to state the doctrines of our faith in all that depth and peculiarity wherewith they are rendered in the New Testament. That man achieves a great service who, by strengthening the out-works of our Zion, places her in greater security from the assaults of the enemy without; but that man, I would say, achieves a higher service, who can unfold, to the friends and disciples who are within, the glories of the inner temple. Now I will say of Butler, that he appears more fitted for the former than for the latter of these achievements. I would trust him more on the question who the letter comes from, than I would on the question what the letter says; and I do exceedingly fear, that living as he did at a period when a blight had descended on the Church of England, at a time when rationality was vigorous, but piety was languid and cold, at a time when there had been a strong revulsion from the zeal, and the devotedness, and withal the occasional excesses of Puritanism—I do fear, I say, that this illustrious defender of the repository which held the truth, would have but inadequately expounded, in all its richness and personal application, the truth itself. I think it but fair to warn you, that up and down throughout the volume, there do occur the symptoms of a heart not thoroughly evangelized, of a shortness and a laxity in his doctrinal religion, of a disposition perhaps to nauseate as fanatical those profound impressions of human depravity and the need of a Saviour, and the virtue of His atoning sacrifice, and the utter helplessness of man without the Spirit of God, not to reform merely but to renew, not to amend but to regenerate, not to fan into vitality the latent sparks of virtue and goodness which may be supposed originally to reside in the human constitution, but to quicken him from his state of death in trespasses and sins, so that from a child of the world he may be transformed into one of the children of light, who aforesaid alive only to the things of sense, becomes now alive to the things of faith—alive to God. There is nothing I feel less disposed to exercise than the office of a jealous or illiberal inquisitor upon one who has wielded so high the polemic arm in the battle of the faith. But I would caution you, when I meet with such an expression as that of the Holy Ghost given to good men,* against the delusion of this preternatural aid being only given for the purpose of helping further

* See last line in p. 205.—Fitzgerald's Edition

onward those who have previously, and by dint of their own independent exertions, so far helped themselves. I would have you to understand that the intervention of this heavenly agent is the outset of conversion, and accompanies all the stages of it. He is not only given in larger measure to good men, but He makes men good. He is not only given to those who obey Him, but He makes a willing and an obedient people in the day of His power. He is present at the incipient as well as at the subsequent movements of the religious life, acting on men in the lowest depths of their alienation from God, and conferring both a significancy and a fulfilment on the prayer of—"Turn me, O God, and I shall be turned."

16. At the same time, I know not a more important lesson that can be urged from the pulpit, than that which flows from the relation between the Holy Spirit and those who are the subjects of His influence. When Butler speaks of this influence as given to good men, it may be necessary to pause a little ere we have settled the full orthodoxy of the question; but after this has been done, we are not aware of a more momentous truth than that which lies involved in the assertion of our great author. If by His being given to good men, it be understood that He descends in larger measure and brighter manifestation on those who have made a faithful and a conscientious use of His blessed influences, there cannot be a juster and sounder affirmation, or one that bears more importantly on the interests of practical religion. You are familiar with the idea that the effect of God working in us, is just to set us a-working—that when He addresses Himself to the object of putting a human being into a right state of character and operation, He does so without violence to any of the powers or principles of the human constitution—that He gives clearness to the understanding, and sensibility to the conscience, and rectitude to the will, and strength to the practical determinations, and effect to that whole process of thought, and sentiment, and reason, which connects the first feeble desires with the ultimate and the finished doings of righteousness; so that really this creature, subjected though he has been to an influence without him and above him, not only looks, but really is in every way as active and spontaneous and busy and hard-working a disciple, as if no special interposition on the part of any high and heavenly agent had been required. Now we know not how far back a decided visitation of this sort may have commenced, but we may at least appeal to the experience

of every man who breathes, that alienated though he be from the life and the light of Christianity, he can at least do something, and that his conscience, under all its present oblivion, has not left him wholly without direction as to the right and the wrong. We know not how far back in the movements either of remorse for the evil, or of desire towards the good in the character, we may recognise the first embryo aspirations after Christianity, or even Christianity itself in its incipient and rudimental form. The apostolical direction to an already advanced and confirmed Christian of—"Stir up the gift that is in thee," is applicable to one and all within the reach of our voice. There is a certain degree of light, there is a certain measure of strength, for the right use of which every individual is responsible, and to whom the declaration of Scripture is applicable—"That to him who hath more shall be given, and that from him who hath not shall be taken away that which he hath." By a faithful and conscientious application of all that we do know, we work our way as it were to a revelation of what we at present do not know. By a right exercise of the strength that we do possess, we are nurtured into more strength, and that not merely under the influence of habit as made known to us by experience, but under the influence of the Spirit, as made known to us in Scripture. He, in fact, is represented there as a personal agent, whose office it is to conduct us onward from one degree of grace and virtue to another, and whose nature it is to feel affected by the treatment that we give Him, whether of welcome or of resistance. He is invited by the one; He is grieved and discouraged by the other. He strives, but will not strive continually. If we persevere in our opposition, He in fine lets us alone, and at last, quenched by our obstinacy, He takes irrevocable leave of us. This is the peculiar economy made known to us in Scripture; and you will at once perceive how with a thorough recognition of the part which the Spirit of God has in the work of our progressive holiness, it secures the entire practical character of urgency and moral suasion in all our addresses to the spirit of man. It connects the supply and enlargement of future influence with the use that we make of present influence—it lays upon us the present and the perpetual obligation of stirring up all that is actually within us, at every given instant, to the work of obedience. And when, along with this, we recollect that it is not by a mechanical but by a moral necessity that He operates—that He addresses

Himself to man as man, and instead of working *against*, works altogether *by* the powers and the principles of our spontaneous nature, there cannot be imagined a system under which, when rightly understood and proceeded on, man is more put on the strenuous exertion of all the activities which belong to him.

17. When thus viewed, you will perceive that the further back you carry the work of the Spirit in the history of conversion, the further back do you carry along with it the urgency and the power of the considerations which we are now insisting on. Grant that He originates as well as advances and carries forward our Christianity, this is but saying that He is the author of the first and the faintest motions towards what is good, as well as of those more decided aspects and tendencies which take place afterwards in the progress of this discipleship; or, in other words, wherever such motions are to be found, you can bring the same impressive argument to bear upon them. Obey them, and they will be followed up by higher visitations. Stifle them, and even they will subside into acquiescence, and you will lapse into that most hopeless of all states—a state of immovable lethargy and unconcern. The orthodoxy which inclines to carry furthest back the doctrine of a spiritual influence, so as to make that influence the source and commencement of the whole, just leads us to carry as far back the moral or the hortatory lesson that is founded thereupon. Instead of chilling man into inaction, it gives a more decidedly practical outset to his Christianity, and this is another instance of the union which I should like, if I could make as clearly palpable as may be to the eye of every understanding, the union between the soundly dogmatic in the principles of theology, and the freely and urgently hortative in its practical lessons.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE PARTICULAR SYSTEM OF CHRISTIANITY; THE APPOINTMENT OF A MEDIATOR, AND THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD BY HIM.

THE PRAYER.

O God, Thou art emphatically the Being with whom we have to do; and how sad then the thought, that, in the vast multiplicity of our doings, Thou art so seldom and so little thought of! Give us to feel the burden

of our alienation from Thyself. Reclaim us from the deep ungodliness of nature; and whereas in time past we have been dead to Thee and alive to the world, may we henceforth die to the world and become alive to God. Naturally we stand afar off from the Father of our spirits. May we be brought nigh through Him who died the Just for the unjust. For His sake, forgive our innumerable offences, and receive us graciously, and love us freely. All we ask is in the name of Christ. Amen.

18. The sufferings of one person are often the medium of procuring benefits for others. The painful consequences of our actions are sometimes removed, either in the course of nature, or by the interposition of others. Here is an indication, first of severity, and then of compassion on the part of God; and it furnishes an analogy between the system of nature and that of revelation. This analogy does away *objections* to the mediation of Christ; but our *proof* of it comes from revelation. The Socinian merges all the attributes of God into modifications of benevolence; but there will be misgivings of conscience, in spite of his sentimental representations of the Deity. The hope of the Christian is one that can bear to be confronted with the whole un mutilated character of God, without being obliged to put any of His attributes into the background. There is a difference between goodness and compassion; goodness may be regarded as the genus comprehending mercy, and compassion as species. The object of *compassion* is *misery*; the object of *mercy* is *guilt*. The Socinians wish to make truth, justice, and the other attributes of mercy, to be modifications of benevolence too; but the atonement is a great impregnable argument on the side of the orthodox system.

19. Butler says, very properly, that the necessity of an atonement arises from the universal ruin of the world. He disapproves of certain speculative objections, such as whether any other way of mediation could have been devised—and what would have been the fate of the better sort of men, if Christ had not come into the world. He refuses to entertain such questions, observing that we do not know the whole of the matter. I do think, however, that he blinks the question of the obvious meaning of the sacrifice. He confines himself to generalities of expression, with the apparent view of shunning the specific import of Christ's death being a sacrifice for sin. He admits the scriptural statement; but I do have the feeling of an inclination on his part to slur over the obvious sense and meaning of the statement. I should not like to bear hard upon our inestimable

author, but I may at least take this occasion of adverting for a few moments to a habit of those who call themselves Rationalists in theology. They profess that their taste is for what is plain and lucid in theology, and along with this they profess an utter loathing for mystery : hence their relish for the plainly moral and devotional pieces in the volume of inspiration, such as the Psalms or the Proverbs ; hence their preference of the preceptive to the doctrinal parts of Scripture, their liking for the gospels, their aversion to most of the epistles of the New Testament.

20. It were well if we could settle in our own minds what is meant by the mysteriousness of a thing, and how it is that the mysteriousness is dissipated. I beg you will advert to the distinction which there is between a proposition and the reason of a proposition. The one may be clearly understood, while the other lies in profoundest secrecy from our view. In this case the proposition will still continue to be termed mysterious, and that you will observe, though the meaning of it be clearly comprehended, is just because the reason of it is not comprehended. The thing stated may be understood as a fact, but not understood in connexion with its principle. Now, attend to what that is which you precisely gain, after all, by the discovery of a principle, or by the discovery of that, the knowledge of which is thought to do away the mysteriousness in question. Take any fact in nature for an example, the mind may be fully satisfied as to the reality of the fact, but utterly in the dark as to the reason of it. There is a mystery connected with it because of this, and there occur to us two ways in which the feeling of mystery might be done away : first, let me suppose the fact to be an observed sequence, as that when A is presented C is continually sure to follow. There can be no misunderstanding the statement of this fact, and it is conceivable that it may have the utmost degree of observational evidence in its favour. The reality of the connexion between A and C may be abundantly made sure to us ; but we want to know the reason of the connexion, or what the ligament is that binds these two terms so invariably together. Perhaps, then, on a closer observation we may discover something intermediate between A and C that will reveal to us the ligament ; we may find that B occurs betwixt the two, and forms, in fact, a stepping-stone from the one to the other. The mind is regaled by such a discovery. It has found out the modus of a connexion that was before inexplicable. The reason why A is followed by C is conceived to be because

of the intervention of B, in which explanation of the phenomenon it may perhaps acquiesce and be satisfied.

21. But the curiosity of some is not so easily appeased, nor is their appetency for the reasons of things so soon satisfied. The question, why is A followed up by C may be followed by the equally reasonable and pertinent question, why is A followed up by B? The connexion between A and C was felt to be mysterious till the intermediate B was discovered; but we mistake the matter, if we yet think that the mysteriousness is chased away—for both the connexion between A and B and that between B and C may be still felt to be alike mysterious.

22. To get rid of this feeling, we may address ourselves to the new task of ascertaining the ligament between A and B, and we may either succeed or fail in it. If we succeed, the mysteriousness of the connexion between A and B is now cleared away; but how? just by the interposition of another term, just by the manner in which the mysteriousness of the connexion between A and C was cleared away, just by the discovery of a before hidden and intermediate fact lying between A and B, just, in short, by a something which may leave the spirit of inquiry as restless and unsatiated as ever; for still there is room for the question, whence the connexion between the prior term A and this new interpolated mean in the series of causation? or whence the connexion between this mean and the posterior term B?

23. All this has been well unfolded by the masterly hand of Dr. Thomas Brown, and he grafts upon it what I have no hesitation in pronouncing to be the wisest and the weightiest philosophical aphorism that was ever framed, and as solid as it is profound, that “either nothing is mysterious, or everything is mysterious.” Now I would have you observe how differently it is that two distinct classes of people in mind and intellect are affected by this contemplation: the one set, resting all their convictions in the realities of fact and phenomena and observational evidence; the other never resting, but haunted by the feeling of a mysteriousness which, with their utmost efforts, they can never chase away. The former, satisfied by observation, believe in the reality of the sequence between A and C; the latter perhaps almost suspending their belief in its reality till they have discovered the reason of it. I dispute not the use of the principle by which the latter are actuated. It may have been the impellent force which led to the discovery both of B and of the still more

hidden intermediate term, and may even lead to further discoveries in the series.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE WANT OF UNIVERSALITY IN REVELATION, AND OF THE SUPPOSED DEFICIENCY IN THE PROOF OF IT.

THE PRAYER.

In Thy light, O God, may we clearly see light. Give us to recognise in the Book of Thy counsel, the impress which Thou hast there given of Thyself. Enable us to discern the truth, and the holiness, and the majesty, and all the other high characteristics of the Divinity which are stamped upon its pages. We rejoice and are convinced by its precious adaptations to the wants of our moral nature. Enable us to verify it still more by the experience of having had all those wants satisfied. May our willingness to do Thy will conduct us to the knowledge of Christ's doctrine, as having come indeed from God.

24. One great lesson of Butler's "Analogy" is the propriety of conforming ourselves to the actual state of the circumstances in which we are placed. One evidence which the early Christians had in larger measure than we, was derived from the lives of the early professors, which shone with a much brighter lustre than in our day. Any deficiency in the evidence of revelation will be made up by the fulfilment of prophecy, and, we trust, also by the exemplary lives of Christians.

25. The statement of Butler, that people will be judged according to the light they have received, is just; but it has been perverted to the object of nullifying the importance of religious light, and is a sentiment which we have often heard applied in opposition to missionary enterprises, and which, if just in an argument against these, would be alike just against the mission of the apostles, nay, against the mission of Christ Himself to the world.

26. Objections to the evidence of Christianity, as not being obvious, are met by saying that the Christian dispensation is one of trial; and that this obscurity may be part of the probation. Man's dissatisfaction with Christianity does not always arise from want of evidence; but from his not setting himself earnestly and rightly to seek it. The unbelief of such inquirers resolves itself into carelessness and want of inquiry.

CHAPTER VII.

OF THE PARTICULAR EVIDENCE FOR CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, that with signs, and wonders, and divers miracles, Thou didst usher into the world the message of its salvation. We rejoice in thinking that the God of nature, and who made such visible assertion of His supremacy over all its processes, is the author of our Christianity. We bless Thee for the evidences of our faith, for the ample means which Thou hast afforded us for giving to every man a reason for the hope that is in us, for the light that shines around the history of the gospel, and above all, for that surpassing light which, radiating from the gospel itself, shines into the hearts of those who believe. May we give earnest heed to the word of this testimony, and persevere therein till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts.

27. At the place where we now find ourselves Butler makes a transition in his argument: he passes from the subject-matter of Christianity to its evidence. He has hitherto been employed in removing the objections against Christianity itself by the argument of analogy, and by the same engine he now proceeds to remove the objections that may be levelled against the proof of it. The two objects are altogether distinct. By succeeding in the one he may have said nothing which can positively recommend Christianity to our acceptance; but he does a great deal, if, by nullifying the objections of adversaries, he simply places it in a midway condition between the negative and the affirmative, and therefore open to a favourable impulse from any argument which might be alleged in its favour. It is a great matter to relieve the subject from the burden of any disproof which may be conceived to lie upon it, after having done which, it may still remain in the state of not proven—nay, in such a state of absolute neutrality, that not the slightest probability may have yet been alleged in its behalf. But it is well that it should be brought into such a state as that the very slightest probability will tell. And now having accomplished his task thus far, he proceeds, in the chapter before us, after having met by analogy the objections which are levelled against the contents of Christianity, to meet, by the same weapon of repulse, the objections which are levelled against its credentials.

28. In the discharge of this second service, he is not called upon to propound very fully, or in the way of positive vindication, the evidences of Christianity. He adverts to them; he states what they are; he even renders a passing homage to their authority and force; but his proper task is to do by them what he had before done by the subject-matter of revelation, that is, clear away the objections, not now against the doctrine of Christianity, but against the proof of it, and that by showing that the similar or analogous objections in other cases are not admitted to have the validity which, in the case of the evangelical story, the opponents of the gospel would fain allow to them. By accomplishing the first service, he disencumbers Christianity of objections, and brings it into a free state for the application of the proof; by the accomplishment of the second service, he disencumbers the proof itself of its objections, and leaves it to its own proper and positive force in the upholding of Christianity. His argument does not call upon him to offer any absolute computation of this force; this will be done by Dr. Paley in our next text-book, which will follow in the most orderly succession that can well be imagined after the great preliminary service which is rendered by Bishop Butler.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE OBJECTIONS WHICH MAY BE MADE AGAINST ARGUING FROM THE
ANALOGY OF NATURE TO RELIGION.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, that after having, at divers times and in sundry manners, spoken to them of old time by the prophets, Thou hast at length spoken to us by Thine own Son. And we further bless Thee, that after Thy Son had left the world, He left not the world without a witness, but that He left the word of His testimony and the promise of His Spirit for the guidance of all future generations. May we give earnest heed thereto, and not cease the busy application of all our faculties to the revelation of Thy will till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. May the growing evidence of the Bible be to us as the shining light which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

29. A position, whether it relates to a doctrine or a matter of fact, admits of all gradations in regard to the state of its credi-

bility. In the first place, there may be positive reasons for believing that it is not true, in which case it may be regarded as in a minus state with regard to its credibility. There is evidence on the question whether the position be true or not, and this evidence is against it, requiring, therefore, an equal force of evidence on the opposite side to neutralize it, and a still greater degree to overbalance it, so as to give a positive impression in its favour.

30. Or, which is quite a different state in regard to the question of a thing's credibility from the former, there may be no reason either for or against the truth of a given proposition, nothing which may incline us to one or other side of a question, placing it, therefore, neither in a plus nor minus condition in regard to evidence, but just on the line of demarcation between them. I would say of a proposition when thus situated, that it was in a state of zero. In reference to my knowledge, a proposition like this, that Cicero was above the middle size, is precisely in such a state, and countless other things of the same sort can be specified. It is obvious that in this state of any proposition there is nothing to neutralize, nothing either to countervail or to get the better of; and that for the object of advancing it to the rank of a probability, it lies open to the smallest proof or presumption on the positive side of the question.

31. Now I hold it to be the achievement of a very great service in behalf of any doctrine if you can transfer it from the first to the second state now specified—if from its station on the minus side you can place it on the line of demarcation; although you bring it not over to the plus or positive side, you in this way secure its full strength and benefit to the positive argument—you as yet supply no proof, but you nullify all disproof; and, placing the balance on an even scale, you lay it open to an inclination on the favourable side by the least force which can possibly be applied to it. This I hold to have been the main service of Butler in the treatise which we are now on the eve of finishing. To avail ourselves of an expression in this chapter, although the analogies which he instances do not contribute one iota of proof to the establishment of anything as true, they do a very great deal if they establish that, for aught we know, they may be true. The doctrine, for example, of punishment hereafter for misconduct here, is, at the very least, susceptible of being proved thus far by analogy; that perhaps it may, for aught we know, be true, although we are in possession of no such

analogies as can enable us to prove that it is true. It goes most completely to neutralize any disbelief that may be alleged against the doctrine on the ground of its inconsistency with the character of God, when you can allege, that under the government of that God the very same thing—of misconduct being followed at longer or shorter intervals by suffering—takes place in the course of experience. That it happens here may not be a sufficient reason that it shall happen there, but a most sufficient reason that it may happen there. The analogy has taken this proposition out of the class of unlikelihoods; and even though it should not have transferred it to the opposite class of likelihoods, it is a great thing if it should only have placed it in a state of indifference, whence it may be made to ascend in the scale by the force of other conclusions and other arguments. But Butler claims more in the way of virtue for his argument than this; and let us now therefore endeavour to appreciate the validity of the claim.

32. In the first place, I would have you understand how it says nothing for the power of analogy to furnish a positive argument on the side of Christianity that it is applicable, not merely to the removal of objections against Christianity itself, but also to the removal of objections against the proof of Christianity. After having accomplished the former service, it leaves the subject in a state of indifference, which is far better, certainly, than a state of discredit; but after having accomplished the latter service, it leaves Christianity in a state of positive credit. But it is not analogy, you will observe, which puts it into this positive state. In this state it has been put solely by the positive argument; and all which analogy does is to uphold the native power of this argument by warding off the adverse forces that have been brought to bear against it. The last of its two services might delude some into the imagination that analogy contributes something to the stock of affirmative reasons for Christianity. I should be very cautious of asserting this; but it at least repels the inroad of any such invader as might offer to take away this stock or any part of it. I wish not to overstate its power, as, I think, has been occasionally done by Butler in some incidental expressions that occur here and there in the volume, and yet I feel that I cannot render sufficient homage to the argument which first, addressing itself to the subject-matter of Christianity, relieves it of all disproof, and pronounces it worthy of a trial, and then, addressing itself to the evidence of Christianity, relieves it

of all objection, and so makes good to this evidence the undisturbed possession of all the entireness and efficiency which natively belong to it.

33. The objections removable from the Christian religion by the power of analogy are such as affirm certain parts of it to be incredible, whether considered as facts or considered as making against the moral attributes of God. The first set of objections are set aside by the exhibition of similar facts in the constitution and course of nature; and the second set of objections are set aside by evincing that they hold equally good against the system of natural religion. He seeks no absolute solution of these objections. He only shows that they equally lie against the natural economy of things, which economy, then, if consistent either with the natural or the moral government of the world, proves that, for aught of force which is in these objections, the author of this economy of nature may indeed be the author of the economy of revelation also.

34. Let me repeat once more, that I doubt if analogy can go further than simply neutralize objections, whether against the substance of Christianity or against the proof of it. Her office I hold to be entirely a defensive one. Under her power every honest inquirer will abandon the region of disbelief, and take his station at the margin which separates this region from its opposite. It is by means of other implements and other influences that he will be led to enter on the region of positive conviction.

35. There are certain other objections incidentally noticed by our great author, and which cannot be met by his peculiar argument. They do not lie within the scope of analogy, and if grounded on truth, it would not be in the power of an analogical argument at all to make head against them. Any obvious and flagrant immorality in the system of Christianity, or any distinct contradiction between one part of it and another, or any assertion by it relative to the things of nature and history, and which I know from previous and independent knowledge to be false—these would outweigh the force of all its evidences, and justify men in setting it aside as a hateful and wicked imposture. Such objections require a direct treatment on their own proper ground; and it was of these I spoke when I called your attention to the highly important result that issues from the argument which is held regarding them.

CONCLUSION.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near to Thee, O God, under a deep sense both of our dependence as creatures and of our unworthiness as sinners. Yet sinners though we be, we draw near not without hope, but rather with full assurance of heart in the blood of the everlasting covenant. We obey the invitations of Thy gospel, we plead its assurances, and build our confidence before Thee on the exceeding great and precious promises of Thy word. We pray for mercy to pardon, we pray for grace to help us. May the blood which cleanseth from all sin, cleanse us from our sin; and may the Spirit which quickens even the dead in trespasses, quicken us into a new moral and spiritual existence.

36. I shall be strictly observant of my promise to expatiate no more on the substance or contents of the volume which we have now traversed; but let me not take leave of it without expressing my hope that many of you have imbibed, along the passage, the sound and philosophical spirit of its great author. I have already given repeated intimation that, viewed as a Christian composition, I do not regard it as being sufficiently impregnated with the *sal evangelicum*, and that even his own principles are not fully and practically followed out. He is like one who, with admirable skill, lays down the distances and directions of a land which himself hath not travelled far into. The wisdom of Butler is more like the wisdom of the letter than the wisdom of the Spirit; yet let us never forget, that it is the letter, animated and lighted up by the Spirit, which constitutes the pabulum of Christian instruction. The Spirit, in revealing truth to the mind, reveals to it nothing that is beside or beyond the record; still it is Bible instruction that we receive even under the teaching of the Spirit, though, if I may so express myself, it is the Bible in illuminated characters. Spiritual Christianity takes the very shape and dimensions and outline and whole structure of literal Christianity. The lessons of the Spirit are but the lessons of the word made impressive, or of the word brought clearly and powerfully home; and without sitting in judgment on the personal religion of Butler, it is the part of the Christian world to own their deepest obligations to the man who hath so nobly asserted the authority of that word over all the darkling specula-

tions of human fancy, and who hath evinced to us, by the truest of all philosophy, that we should cast down every lofty imagination, and bring all our thoughts into the captivity of its obedience.

37. The service which Bacon rendered to science, that service hath Butler rendered to Christianity. The former succeeded in nullifying the pride and the presumption of all human excogitations respecting the natural constitution of the universe, and reduced the work of discovery in things of science to the business of observation; the latter hath, with like success, demonstrated the vanity of man's preconceptions respecting the moral constitution of the universe, and reduced the work of discovery in things sacred to the business of observation also. If rightly tutored by the one, we go forth with the plumb-line, and the balance, and the crucible, and the telescope, and all the apparatus of experiment, on the observation of nature; if rightly tutored by the other, we go forth with the grammar, and the lexicon, and the polyglot, and all the apparatus of criticism, on the observation of Scripture. In the first enterprise we patiently collect the facts of what God hath done in the world, and out of these we build up the entire system of our philosophy; in the second enterprise we patiently collect the facts of what God hath written in the Bible, and out of these we build up the entire system of our faith. There is an identity of spirit and principle in the two processes, and whether they be the works of God or the word of God that we investigate, it is alike the lesson of those great masters that we evince the truest wisdom by sitting down to the task with the docility of little children. And whatever the disposition may be in the philosophers of our present age towards Christianity, the days have been when the men of most colossal strength and proudest achievement in science pressed forward to do her reverence, as when Newton transferred his mighty intellect from the study of the works of God to the study of His word.

38. And now that we have made full trial of one book, and actually finished it, I leave the question to yourselves as to the best method of learning theology—whether from a succession of lectures alone, or from a succession of text-books supplemented by lectures, and mixed up with the familiar remarks and urgent reiterations of an expounder—reiterations persevered in till every misconception be rectified, and all resistance be driven in? I ask in which of the two ways you can be made to drink more deeply into the existent literature of a science, or have a com-

pact and memorable impression of its truths effectually wrought upon you? Is there any comparison between the efficiency of the methods, whether the object be to multiply the lessons of the course or to revise them? Do you not experience that, in the one way, the instruction is far more abundant, in its quantity, as well as far more enduring in the fruits of it? and that by a series of actual deliverances on every topic, whether direct or incidental, which occurs in the volume, you are not only rendered masters of the book, but masters of the subject of the book? And we speak not merely of the effect it must have on the cast and habitude of your own thoughts by being brought into collision with authors of such staple as Butler and Paley, we speak of the virtue that lies in your own preparations—we speak of your abridgments and your analyses and your written memoranda—these substantial products of your own well-exercised intellects; and while we appeal to all this palpable handiwork as the enduring memorial of your industry, we confidently ask, whether, in the actual moulding of your conceptions on the matters of Christianity, there be not effects which, though by their nature unseen, are alike enduring?

39. Were my own conceptions on the subject of a theological seminary realized, there would be distinct classes for the students of each year, in which case the whole number would be broken up into forties or fifties, and the examinational process would circulate with far greater rapidity, so as to complete the rotation somewhat oftener than once in the fortnight. The charm and efficacy of the method would thus be brought out in far more convincing illustration; but even as it is, and without the advantage of this division, your own appearances have fully vindicated the course that we have taken; and from the highly intellectual exhibitions which many of you have made, I feel abundantly encouraged and warranted to persevere in it.

40. In one respect you will find Paley less laborious than Butler, and in another respect more so. You will have to prepare a greater quantity of the latter; but then, in the description of his lucid pages, you will experience the facility and even the entertainment of light reading. Let me recommend that you give a portion of each evening in the week to your preparations, if you find that the space traversed by the three days' examinations actually require it. Above all, let me recommend the construction of an ample note-book, grounded on this inestimable work, and leaving space in it for our own supplementary

observations. Remember that we are now entering on the positive evidence for Christianity, and you will find it a precious acquisition to have a manuscript written by your own hands, presenting the outline of this very extensive argument, with notices of the authors who have most signalized themselves by the contributions which they have made to it.

NOTE BY THE EDITOR.

MUCH as Dr. Chalmers prized the benefits of an extemporaneous converse with his students, he did not, in examining them upon the text-book, put such questions only as at the moment suggested themselves; he prepared beforehand a complete series of questions, adding his own answers to those which he regarded as of greatest importance or difficulty, and interjecting among these questions and answers modifications, or corrections, or illustrations of his own, which were sometimes brief, and often long and elaborate. All these preparations he entered in manuscript volumes, written in short-hand; upon an inspection of which, it appeared that many of the remarks originally intended for his examinations on Butler and Paley had been transferred *verbatim* to his published volumes on Natural Theology and the Christian Evidences. But although such use had already been made of some of his observations on the Analogy, that work was deemed worthy of further and separate treatment in the series of Lectures upon its different chapters which have just been presented to the reader. These Lectures, down to that which embraces the fourth chapter of the Second Part of the Analogy, had been written out, and were left by him ready for publication. The remaining lectures are taken from the short-hand notebook out of which the others had been extended.

I have elsewhere* had occasion to record the signal benefit which at a very early period of his life Dr. Chalmers derived from the perusal of the Analogy. That some of his latest efforts were devoted to a short course of Lectures which should embody his maturest reflections on it, may be regarded as his final tribute to the value of that inestimable and immortal treatise, which, "carefully and closely packed up out of twenty years'

* See "Memoirs of Dr. Chalmers," vol. i. p. 107, cheap edition.

hard thinking,"* has won for itself the character of being "the most original and profound work extant, in any language, on the philosophy of religion." †

"I have derived," says Dr. Chalmers, in the preface to his Bridgewater Treatise, "greater aid from the views and reasonings of Bishop Butler, than I have been able to find besides in the whole range of our existent authorship." To this acknowledgment of obligation, let us add that of three other distinguished writers. "The course of reading to which he now devoted himself," says the biographer of Dr. M'Crie, "embraced the polemical writings of the most famous divines who flourished during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. From these giants in theology, who have anticipated all the arguments and objections of modern times, he received much of his information on the doctrine regarding the duty of the civil magistrate. Nor did he fail to investigate what may be termed the philosophy of the subject, comprising the principles of scriptural interpretation and the analogies between natural and revealed religion, a knowledge of which is essential to a right understanding of the controversy. On this subject he always acknowledged himself peculiarly indebted to Bishop Butler's 'Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed,' &c. Alluding many years afterwards,

* Quarterly Review, No. lxxxv. This assertion appears to be almost literally correct. Butler was nominated preacher to the Rolls in 1718, and in 1726 he published his Fifteen Sermons, telling the reader, in his preface, "that he is not to look for any particular reason for the choice of the greatest part of these discourses; their being taken from amongst others preached in the same place through a course of eight years, being in great measure accidental." We must regard this as virtually an announcement that among the sermons which were retained, there were some as much prized by their author as those which he presented to the public. "The question has therefore often been asked," says Mr. Fitzgerald, "What became of them? It is well known that at his death Butler desired his manuscripts to be destroyed; but we cannot suppose him to have wantonly wished to suppress what he himself judged fit for publication. Perhaps, therefore, the best conjecture we can form may be, that the remaining sermons at the Rolls, (for the future publication of which that sentence in the preface seems designed to prepare,) were afterwards worked into the Analogy." This conjecture is strongly supported by our finding that the germ or leading principle of the Analogy had already been recognised, as when, in his sixth sermon, Butler says, "That there is a much more exact correspondence between the natural and moral world than we are apt to take notice of." If when arranging his sermons at the Rolls, taking out fifteen from amongst them for present publication, there were others which, on account of their containing the great principles of his future work, Butler carefully reserved, and if he took these sermons with him to the country to be slowly reconstructed and condensed during the long period of his seclusion at Stanhope, the Analogy, which was at last given to the world in 1736, might fairly enough be said to have been "carefully and closely packed up" out of at least eighteen years' hard thinking.

† Mackintosh's Dissertation on the Progress of Ethical Philosophy.

in one of his lectures, to the advantages of applying the principle of analogy to the interpretation of the Old Testament, he paid the following compliment to that celebrated treatise:—"It was from this book (nothing the worse of being written by a bishop) that I learned this principle of interpretation, and have been confirmed in many truths of which it does not speak a word, and which probably never entered the mind of the author. It is by it that I have learned to expound the historical books of the Old Testament with some degree of profit, without having recourse to type, allegory, or accommodation. It was by it that I was prevented from becoming an Independent, a Baptist, or an enemy to religious establishments; and by it I learned that I could be friendly to such establishments and to the Protestant constitution of my country, though I never partook of their worldly emoluments—a fact which appears a mystery and a miracle to some wise heads and would-be statesmen.'"*

"If upon the points of which I treat," says Dr. O'Brien, "I seem to owe anything to any writer who supports the same views, I have no mode of fixing the obligation so as to make a particular acknowledgment of it as I should desire. But I can be quite clear that I owe a deep debt throughout to the illustrious Bishop Butler, and I am ready and anxious to acknowledge that I trace so distinctly to his writings the origin of the soundest and clearest views that I possess upon the nature of the human mind, that I could not write on this or any kindred subject without a consciousness that I was directly or indirectly borrowing largely from him."—Two Sermons on the Human Nature of Christ.

"The author," says Dr. Wayland, "to whom I am under the greatest obligations, is Bishop Butler. The chapter on Conscience is, as I suppose, but little more than a development of his ideas upon the same subject. How much more I owe to this incomparable writer, I know not. As it was the study of his Sermons on Human Nature which first turned my attention to this subject, there are doubtless many trains of thought which I have derived from him, but which I have not been able to trace to their source, as they have long since become incorporated with my own reflections."—*Elements of Moral Science*, by Francis Wayland, D.D.—P. 5. Boston, 1844.

As it would be difficult to name another author who ranks so high, and who published so little as Bishop Butler, so it would

* Life of Dr. M'Crie, by his Son, pp. 83, 84.

be difficult to name another to whose writings so many and such weighty approving testimonies have been borne. And if the task could be executed of surveying the works of all who have succeeded him, marking every quarter where silently, and it may be unconsciously, he has been borrowed from, and referring to every author in which any abridgment, expansion, modification, or illustration, of one or other of his great and distinguishing arguments are to be found, an unparalleled array of illustrative literature would be gathered round the small inner circle of his writings. Meanwhile, let us present the reader with such a catalogue as we have been able to prepare of those works the direct and declared object of which was to criticise, condense, or popularize the arguments of the "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature."

I.—REMARKS ON DR. BUTLER'S SIXTH CHAPTER OF THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION CONCERNING NECESSITY; AND ALSO UPON THE DISSERTATION ON THE NATURE OF VIRTUE. By Philanthropos.—[The Rev. Mr. Bott, Rector of Spicksworth, Norfolk.]—1737.

In his preface this writer remarks, "It is most likely I shall not hereafter publish any more remarks upon this author; and therefore I would take this opportunity of reminding him of a few things in the other parts of his book which, in my humble opinion, greatly deserve to be reviewed and corrected." For the general character of the "Remarks," see Bartlett's *Memoirs of Butler*, p. 67.

II.—A SECOND VINDICATION OF MR. LOCKE, WHEREIN HIS SENTIMENTS RELATING TO PERSONAL IDENTITY ARE CLEARED UP FROM SOME MISTAKES OF THE REV. DR. BUTLER. By Vincent Perronet, Vicar of Shoreham, Kent.—1738.

"It is an ingenious and modestly written tract, and there is reason to believe that the later and more popular defender of Mr. Locke, against Butler, Bishop Law, was more indebted to the vicar of Shoreham than he chose to acknowledge."—Fitzgerald's *Life of Butler*, p. 45.

III.—SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE OF MAN'S REDEMPTION. By Arthur Ashley Sykes, D.D.—London, 1756.

"This unwearied polemic, whose pen, worn to the stump in the great Bangorian Controversy, was never allowed to rest while its master had a hand to wield it, has animadverted (with some ingenuity as usual) upon Butler's chapter concerning a Mediator, in the first, fifth, and sixth sections of his Scripture Doctrine of Redemption."—Fitzgerald's *Life*, p. 46.

IV.—REMARKS ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY. Sixth Edition.—Glasgow, 1764, 12mo.—Canterbury, 1783, 8vo.

This little work consists of a series of short notes, generally commendatory. They do not exhibit much talent, and rarely elucidate the subject. The author is not known.

V.—ESSAYS ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS, MORAL AND CRITICAL; CONTAINING REMARKS ON BUTLER'S ANALOGY, A REVIEW OF LOCKE'S PHILOSOPHY, &c. By William Belcher, Esq., Kent.—London, 1787, 2 vols., 12mo.

“There are writers who bid defiance to all the powers of criticism, some by rising above, and others by sinking below the level of common sense. To one or other of these classes the author of these Essays certainly belongs, but to which it is impossible to determine.”—*Monthly Review*, for October 1787, quoted in Bartlett's *Memoirs*, p. 69.

VI.—A SERIES OF PAPERS IN THE LOOKER-ON.—London, 1794, 3 vols., 12mo.

The first number of this work appeared on the 10th March 1792, and the last on the 1st February 1794. It was conducted by William Roberts, author of a *Life of Hannah More*. The papers on Butler consist of a selection and expansion of the leading ideas contained in the successive chapters of the *Analogy*, designed to exhibit them in a more popular form. No criticism of the *Analogy* is attempted.

VII.—THE PLEIAD; OR, A SERIES OF ABRIDGMENTS OF SEVEN DISTINGUISHED WRITERS, IN OPPOSITION TO THE PERNICIOUS DOCTRINES OF DEISM. By the Rev. Francis Wrangham.—1820, 8vo.

This work consists of tracts separately printed, and here combined, with a general title. The fifth of these tracts is entitled, “The Principal Parts of Bishop Butler's *Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature, abridged.*” The *Pleiad* was republished in *Constable's Miscellany*, of which it forms vol. xxvi.

VIII.—BUTLER'S ANALOGY; WITH INTRODUCTORY ESSAY. By the Rev. Daniel Wilson.—Glasgow, 1829, 12mo.

The Bishop of Calcutta's *Preliminary Essay* is well known and highly appreciated; but to make this a good edition of the “*Analogy*,” to each chapter a table of contents should be prefixed, and an index should be added. There are no notes.

IX.—AN ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE; WITH NOTES. By the Rev. Richard Hobart, A.M., Trinity College, Dublin.—Dublin, 1834, 8vo.

To each chapter is prefixed a short summary of its contents. The notes are few, and consist mostly of references to illustrative passages in other authors. The *Analysis* is well

executed, though capable, with advantage, of condensation. It wants an index. "Examination Questions, grounded on Hobart's Analysis," have been separately published.

X.—THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, &c. ; WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR. By the Rev. George Croly, LL.D.—London, 1834, 8vo.

This forms volume eighth of the "Sacred Classics." The Memoir is very brief and meagre. The volume has neither notes nor index.

XI.—DIGEST OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, IN A COMPENDIUM OF RUDIMENTS OF THEOLOGY. By the Rev. J. B. Smith, B.D., of Christ Church, Cambridge. For the use of Students.—London, 1836, 12mo.

The argument of each chapter is given in a few prefixed sentences. The digest is ably executed.

XII.—AN ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, &c. By the Rev. J. P. Wilson, M.A., Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.—Oxford, 1837, 24mo.

This is merely an analysis for the use of students, preceded by a short preface, but without notes or index.

XIII.—A COMPENDIUM OF BISHOP BUTLER'S ANALOGY, ANNEXED TO MEMOIRS OF HIS LIFE, CHARACTER, AND WRITINGS. By Thomas Bartlett, A.M.—London, 1839, 8vo.

Mr. Bartlett's interesting Memoirs have supplied what it is surprising should have been so long wanting—a copious life of his illustrious relative, exhausting all existing sources of information. His Compendium is given in the Bishop's own language.

XIV.—BISHOP BUTLER'S TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE, (WITH A SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT, AND THE STYLE IN SOME PARTS SIMPLIFIED.) By the Rev. Edward Bushby, B.D., Fellow and Tutor of St. John's College, Cambridge.—London, 1840, 8vo.

XV.—ANALYSIS OF BUTLER'S ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, TO THE CONSTITUTION AND COURSE OF NATURE. By the Rev. K. M. Pughe, B.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge.—London, 1842, 16to.

XVI.—AN INDEX TO THE ANALOGY OF BISHOP BUTLER. Prepared by the Rev. Dr. Bentham, Regius Professor of Di-

vinity in the University of Oxford, and adapted to the original editions, and to the later Oxford editions, by Thomas Bartlett, A.M.—London, 1842, 8vo.

XVII.—A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF NATURE, AS FAR AS RELATES TO NATURAL RELIGION. To which is added, SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON CERTAIN ARGUMENTS THEREIN ADVANCED. By the Rev. Henry Duke, B.A.—London, 1847, 8vo.

This Analysis extends no further than to the end of the first part of the Analogy. It is admirably executed, exhibiting, by its divisions and subdivisions, the main stream and smaller tributaries of the advancing argument. The Appendix is devoted to a minute and most logical dissection and examination of three arguments of the Analogy; all of which, as it appears to us, Mr. Duke successfully repudiates. It is to be regretted that one so capable should not have completed the work.

XVIII.—A SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF BISHOP BUTLER'S COMPLETE TREATISE ON THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, &c. By the Rev. John Wilkinson, B.A., of Merton College, Oxford.—Oxford, 1847, 8vo.

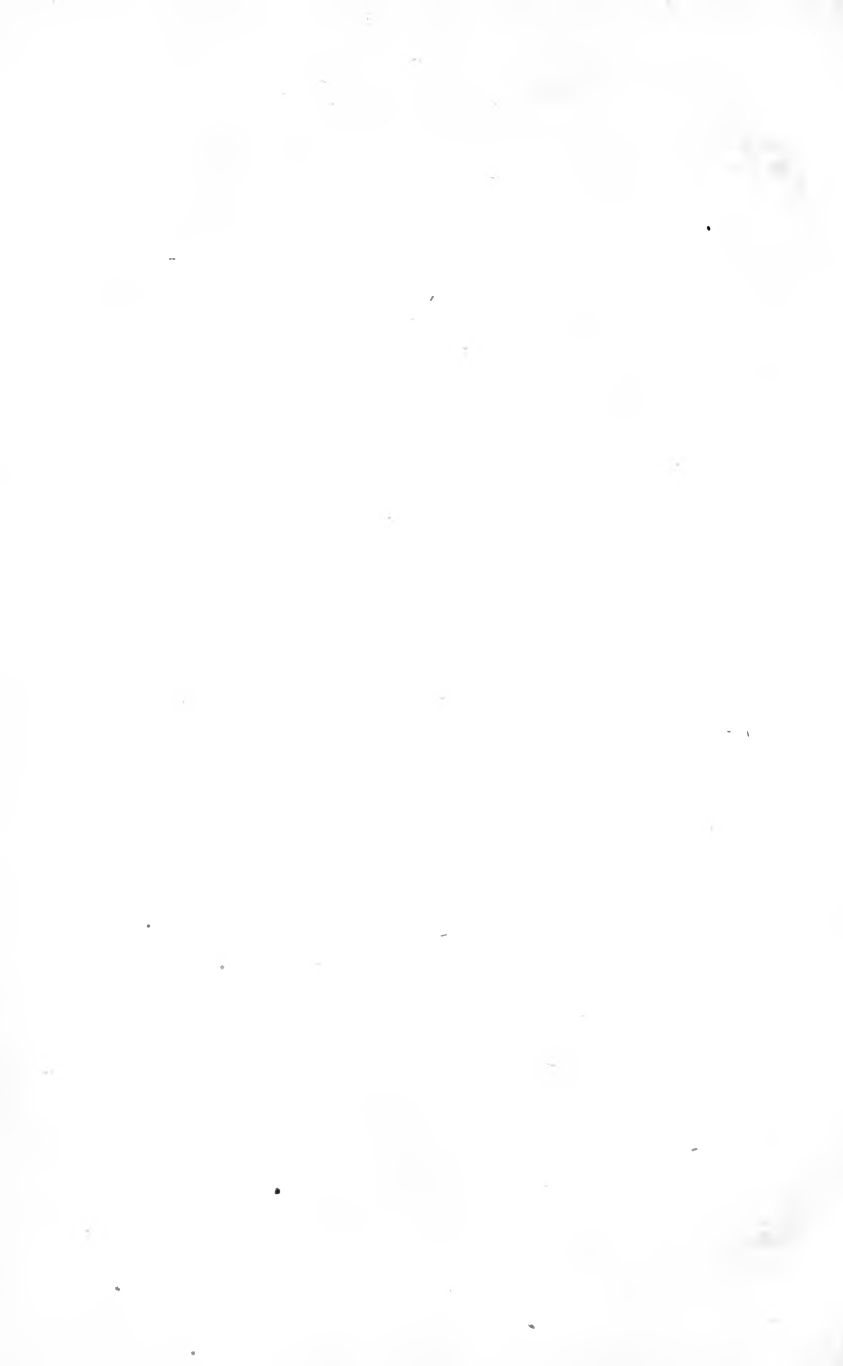
"This little volume has no pretensions to originality. Finding that Dr. Mill's Analysis of Bishop Pearson's Exposition of the Creed was useful to my pupils, I have applied his method, with but little alteration, to Bishop Butler's Analogy. The form of the Analysis explains its purpose, which is, by types, by position in the page, and by different subordinate signs, to trace at once the course and the dependence of the argument. . . . I must add, that though my task was completed before the publication of Mr. Duke's Analysis, of the first part of the Analogy, I am yet under some obligations to him; and had Mr. Duke analyzed the complete treatise, the following pages would not have been printed."—*Extracted from Prefatory Notice.*

XIX.—THE ANALOGY OF RELIGION, NATURAL AND REVEALED, &c.; WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR, COPIOUS NOTES, AND INDEX. By the Rev. William Fitzgerald, A.M., Prebendary of Donoughmore, and Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Dublin.—Dublin, 1849, 8vo.

Although nothing is added to what Mr. Bartlett's diligent and affectionate researches have supplied, yet Mr. Fitzgerald's Life of Butler is so admirably executed, and there are so many illustrations thrown in, indicating a familiar acquaintance with a wide range of literature, that we rejoice that he has prefixed it to the volume. His defence of the Analogy from the exceptions taken against it by Tholuck, is judicious and triumphant. The notes are more those of the scholar than of the metaphysician, though exhibiting a happy blending of both. As an edition of the Analogy, this volume leaves nothing to be desired. Its typography is highly creditable to the Dublin press. The text has been diligently revised, and many errors in the Oxford edition of 1844 have been corrected. A collation of the first edition is subjoined—a literary curiosity, showing "the singular pains which Butler

took in a matter in which he has been commonly censured for carelessness." Great care has been taken in the preparation of a complete and easily consulted index.

Two Essays on Butler's Analogy, from the pen of the Rev. Albert Barnes, appeared in the numbers for December 1830, and March 1831, of the "Quarterly Christian Spectator." These, somewhat amplified, are prefixed to an issue of the Analogy from the New York press, which has already reached to the 18th edition. In the "Gospel Advocate" for 1823, published at Boston, there is a paper on the obscurity of Butler's style, accompanied by a few pages of the first chapter, translated into what is presented as intelligible and readable English. The tenth volume of the "American Biblical Repository" contains an article on the writings of Butler.



INTRODUCTORY LECTURES.

[THE TWO FOLLOWING LECTURES, DELIVERED BY DR. CHALMERS AT THE OPENING OF HIS COURSE, AND THE ARTICLE ON CUVIER'S THEORY OF THE EARTH, ARE INSERTED HERE, AS FORMING A NOT UNSUITABLE APPENDIX TO THE PRESENT VOLUME.]



INTRODUCTORY LECTURES.

LECTURE I.

ON THE USE OF TEXT-BOOKS IN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION.

THE PRAYER.

HEAVENLY FATHER, by Thy preserving hand Thou hast ushered us into the labours of another week. Do Thou give support and strength for the execution of them. In every good work may we be enabled to consult our own souls; and may the wisdom from above preside over all our deliberations and all our doings. May they who are here present hold it no light work to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: and grant that the fatigues of study may be lightened to them all, both by the complacency of an approving conscience, and by the charm which Thou hast been pleased to annex to the exercise of all our faculties.

Theology is by far the most voluminous of all the sciences. There is none that comes nearly up to it in the amount, or in what may be termed the dimensions of its authorship. But it were not saying much for the glory of sacred literature merely to say that it had attained the bulk of a colossus. It is, in fact, a colossus of most precious and solid materials, brought together by the multiplied efforts of a most prodigious industry, and elaborated into form by the skill of many thousand intellects, some of which equal, both in power and in achievement, the most gigantic of those spirits that ever signalized themselves in any of the walks of philosophic investigation.

When one not extensively conversant in the erudition of the science, sets himself down to the work of composition on any of its topics, he is apt to delude himself with the imagination that by his creative power he is giving birth to novelties; and yet, in the vast majority of instances, there will be found a much

fuller exhibition of his very thoughts and arguments by authors who have gone before him. The truth is, that already every department of this multifarious theme is marvellously filled up, and scarcely a question can be started which has not been met in one way or other by powerful and original thinkers of former days. It is a mistake, that when the human mind was set at liberty about three centuries ago, they were the sciences which experienced the chief effect of the sudden emancipation. The consequent force and freedom and exuberance of intellect thus set at large, flowed over, in fact, on every walk of speculation, and theology had its full share in this enlargement—the vast and varied lore which belongs to it having been most laboriously traversed, and many of its most arduous difficulties having, on the whole, been successfully grappled with. In the *Edinburgh Review*, in a paper on the *Dramatic Writings of Ford*,* we have an admirable sketch from the pen of Mr. Jeffrey of the intellectual activity and power which broke forth through England in the seventeenth century; but the very characteristics of vigour and independence and prodigious industry, which he ascribes there to the philosophers of England, were also abundantly realized by the divines of England, from whose hands an ample and well-stored treasury of things, new and old, has been bequeathed to succeeding generations.

Now, the question is, How shall we make best and fullest conveyance of the lessons of this science, to the students of a theological school? One method is for the professor to describe the whole mighty series of topics in written compositions of his own, and by the delivery of these to acquit himself of his task. In other words, ere he shall proceed to teach the science, he must have produced a treatise upon it, or rather a succession of treatises on the different parts or subjects of this vast and varied scholarship. Upon this system his part is to read, and yours is to listen to his reading of these treatises; and whatever during the process may have been apprehended by your understanding, or may have gained your conviction, or may have adhered to your memory, that is the instruction which he has given, and that is the instruction which you have received. The essential peculiarity of this method lies neither in the substance of the doctrine nor in the order of it, both of which may be alike unexceptionable under different methods; but it lies in its coming to you through the medium of his own written language.

* *Edinburgh Review*, No. xviii. p. 275.

Every sentence and every paragraph must be framed by himself; and though on many a given topic of his extended lectureship some gifted reasoner or expounder of former days may have left behind him the standard and the classic model, which distances all imitation, and makes superiority hopeless if not impossible, still the professor is expected to try his own hand upon it, and so to thrust as it were the dim transparency of his own shaded and imperfect lucubrations between the mind of his disciples and all that purer and more penetrating light which might else have directly beamed upon them from the wisdom and the genius of past ages.

Now, to warrant such a universal engrossment as this by the professor, to make it indispensable that every theme and every argument of his course, however well they may have already been propounded by one or other of the great masters in theology, shall not be brought into contact with your understanding till they have been recast in the mould of his conceptions, and transmuted into his phraseology—to expect, that throughout the whole length and breadth of the science, he must be ever speaking to you *in propria persona*, instead of guiding you to those oracles whence the best possible deliverance hath already been sent forth, or at least as good, if not better, than any which the great majority of living instructors can substitute in its place—why, he would need to be a man who, by the strength of his single arm, could do the accumulated work of many ages, and do each portion of it, too, in higher style than all and every of the separate authors who have gone before him. Such an extraordinary personage as this, who could condense within his own little day the labour of centuries, and, by the superior force of his demonstrations, displace from the office of your immediate instructors all his predecessors in theology—such a one may aspire to the formation of a universal system, and make it the sole instrument of your tuition in his classroom; but you will suffer, and by the excess, too, of his supererogation, unless he can reason more sagaciously than Butler, and push more deeply into the mysteries of our nature than Edwards, and deliver the precepts of Bible criticism with more clearness and cogency than Campbell, and make more lucid and masterly exposition of the evidences both of natural and revealed religion than Paley, and systematize the doctrines of our faith with more orderly arrangement, or pour forth upon them a greater fulness of illustration and argument than Calvin, or Turretin, or Pearson, or Burnet, or Hill; and,

lastly, on the momentous theme of your practical and professional duties, more solemnly impress the conscience, and speak with a more awakening energy than Richard Baxter. To supersede these men, or rather to supersede their writings by his writings, he should be able to unite the characteristics of all, and to excel them all, and so to radiate forth upon you with a brightness and a power surpassing the concentrated force of all the luminaries who have yet made their appearance in the world.

Be assured that there is a better way of ordering this matter, whether for the object of seasoning your minds with the sound and right spirit, or supplying them with the solid informations of theology. Let us take, for an example, Butler's Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion. I might transfer the whole substance and argument of this masterly composition into lectures of my own, and so discharge the main contents of the volume upon you, after they have been made to undergo this elaborate process of distillation. But I speak both the convictions of my reason and the findings of my professional experience, when I tell you of a more excellent way—a way by which, I am quite sure, that I could make a far more effectual lodgment in your understanding of all the principles and philosophy of Butler. I would conduct you immediately to himself; I would bid you draw at once, and with your own hands, from the fountain-head; I would have you read, in successive passages, the work; and the course should be practically carried forward on the strength of these readings, and of my examinations. The book while it lasts will be the subject of a daily and, I trust you will find it, of a delightful and animating converse betwixt us. It will be your part to make the intelligent and attentive perusal; it will be my part to try your intelligence, and that by means of a questionary process; to help on your conceptions of the author, if I find them deficient either in fulness or accuracy; and so to cause that the whole wisdom of Butler shall be heard in the midst of us, whether in sounds of extemporaneous utterance from me or from yourselves. He for a time, in fact, will be in possession of this chair. The light that shines from it will, mainly speaking, be by a primary radiance from him, though tinged, and occasionally modified, by a secondary reflection from its living occupier. Still the chief business of the expounder will be to bring out to view the life and lustre of his great original; and I repeat, that the joint impression made upon you by the direct radiance which cometh from the one, when mixed with the reflection that

cometh from the other, will be tenfold more complete and durable than can possibly be effected either by the solitary readings of the closet, or by the unaccompanied lectures of the classroom.

But you are not to conceive that we purpose a slavish adherence to Butler, or indeed to the doctrines of any text-book. By means of text-books, we are persuaded that we shall not merely save ourselves a prodigious waste of most unnecessary and misplaced labour, but that we shall be enabled to guide you over a far more extended course of theological study, and through a richer variety of theological lessons. Yet for this purpose it is not indispensable that all the text-books, over which we propose to carry you, as over so many successive groundworks of the course, shall in themselves be absolutely faultless. They may suggest the topics, but in no instance shall they control the judgment that we may entertain of them. We may have at one time to dissipate the obscurities of our author; we may at another have to rectify his errors. We may have to add; we may have to illustrate; above all, we may have to confront him with other authors, and direct you to such readings at home as might tally with the current lessons of the classroom, and so extend and complete your scholarship in the departments through which you are passing. I should be greatly disappointed, if, after having thus traversed any standard work in theology, you could only state it, as the whole amount of your acquisition, that you had mastered the book. I want you to master the subject of the book. The book I regard but as a nucleus for all that instruction which may be naturally or pertinently grafted thereupon. You therefore greatly mistake it, if you think that this is a device for superseding the energy of your living instructor. He is, or he ought to be, alert and awake throughout the entire process. He may, in fact, be as much on the foreground, as your teacher, in this work of conversational exposition as in the work of a formal and elaborate lectureship; and though he does move in the stream of another's argument, yet it is argument mixed and amalgamated with his own running commentary. He might throw the full force of his mind into it; and it is the light of a presiding intellect from him that should direct and vivify the whole.

Be assured, whether we present you with the whole analysis of such a process or not, that its benefits are incalculable. By a series of the best selected authors, you secure for the classroom the soundest and the wisest lessons in theology; and at the same

time these lessons urged home upon you with all that power of excitement which somehow or other lies in the living voice of an expounder. His address on the various topics of the course you will not find to be less impressive that it consists of a spoken conference with yourselves, instead of a written soliloquy which he reads in your hearing. And remember that you bear a part in the conference; that you will have to prepare for it; that a stimulus is thereby obtained, not merely to your attention here, but to your constant work and study out of doors. And in proportion to your attention in the closet, will you be able to signalize yourselves by your appearances in the classroom; and when daily put upon your own resources, both for thought and expression here, you will be led to the daily habit of pondering at home the subjects of tuition. On the other, which is still the more common system, there is no reciprocation of mind between the teacher and the taught. There may be action, but there is no reaction; and the first is in danger of languishing under the want of that alimant and animation which the second so abundantly affords it. I esteem very highly this colloquial method of instruction, when the teacher comes among you with no other preparation than the preparation of thoughts, and is left to flounder as he may for those words by which he might clearly and expressively convey them—When he has to cast about for phraseology; and if he find by examination that he has not yet obtained the sympathy of your intelligence, he re-states and re-illustrates, and desists not from the repetition of his attempts till he has carried the understanding of at least the ablest of his auditory: when, with thorough premeditation of the truths, but without any premeditation of the terms in which they are to be couched and conveyed to you, he fearlessly trusts himself to the language of the moment; and so the meaning that is within has to struggle for utterance till it finds an effectual discharge, and has made full deposition of itself in the minds of many of his hearers. It may appear odd, but I think I am quite right when I say, that granting the speaker to have the whole sense and substance of the thing in his head, the impression of the sense is often enhanced by the very difficulties which are felt in the articulate conveyance of it, by the very strength of those impediments through which it has to force its way. The natural signs are often found, in these circumstances, to repair the defects of the arbitrary. The eye, and the emphasis, and the whole action of the speaker, are pressed into the service of this labouring

communication, and these, as bespeaking a mental activity on his part, in general beget a sympathetic activity in the minds of those who are around him. It is in these various ways that the extemporaneous converse of a professor has often awakened a busier play of intellect than the delivery of any more formal and elaborate preparations. It may not be the way to set off himself, but it is the way to give powerful and perpetual impulse to his students, and to speed onward the great object of their practical education.

I would not speak of this matter so confidently, did I not feel that I was speaking experimentally. According to my views of the science, there is none so destitute of unexceptionable text-books as moral philosophy, and I therefore taught it by the delivery of a series of written lectures. The same observation does not apply to political economy, where Dr. Smith, in his book on the Wealth of Nations, presents at least all the topics of the science, however short he may yet have come of having fully ascertained or conclusively established all the doctrines of it. I accordingly adopted it as the groundwork, not for a series of lectures, but for a series of conversations, reserving to myself, of course, the liberty of rectifying, or refuting, or further vindicating and illustrating, just as I felt to be necessary. I can positively vouch for the superior efficacy of the latter method for the higher zest and interest of the students, and, above all, for their surer advancement, and more solid proficiency in the lessons of the course. Now, to be neither one of the exact nor one of the physical sciences, there is none better furnished than theology is with the best and most desirable text-books; insomuch that, by a judicious arrangement of these, a pathway might be constructed which shall lead from the first elements to the most sublime and arduous speculations. A conversational course is just the holding of a continued parley between the professor and the students along this pathway, and is in fact the joint result of his views and of your preparations. The lights which cannot fail to be struck out between the professor and the students under such a process—the adjustment of his different explanations to your different habitudes of thought or states of intelligence—the facility wherewith he can accommodate his instructions to the subject-mind upon which he is operating—and also the facility wherewith he can ascertain the effect of these instructions—these are benefits wholly unattainable under the tuition of a mere lectureship; and they altogether compose what

appears to me a resistless argument in behalf of that way for which I am now contending—the way, I am persuaded, of making the best scholars in every department of academic education, the best moralists, the best economists, the best theologians.

But is he never, it may be asked—is he never to radiate upon his students with any original light of his own? Is he to act at all times in the capacity of a reflector only, or as an humble interpreter of the views, a mere copyist of the arrangements of others? Are we to understand, more especially, that there is to be an entire abolition of that ancient method of lecturing by which the Scottish universities have been so long and so honourably distinguished? for it is to this that Scottish literature is indebted for much of its highest authorship. It is well known that many of the best works which have been produced in this land of intellect were prepared, in the first instance, for the class-room, and found at length their way through this medium to the press. And, besides, can it be affirmed of any of the sciences that they are stationary? and, although the subject-matter of theology is unalterably fixed by that authority which dictated the volumes of inspiration, and which hath pronounced a curse on the man who shall add thereunto, yet is there not a constant necessity for accommodating both the vindication of this authority and the illustration of this subject-matter to the ever-varying spirit and philosophy of the times? Grant the doctrine to be immutable, this is only saying that there can be no change in the substance of it; yet, with the ever-shifting phraseology of our current literature, there may be an infinity of changes in the expression of it. Besides, as truth, though at all times one and inflexibly the same, can be translated into every language, and even into every dialect of the same language, from that which will convey it best to the homely peasant, to that which will recommend it best to the cultured and lofty academic; so also may it be turned into multifarious, or rather into endless diversities of application. On this last ground, indeed, theology may be regarded to be as inexhaustible as any other of the sciences; and if there be room, it may well be urged—if there be room in theology for new authorship from year to year, is there not also room from one generation to another for a new lectureship in the theological chair? On these various considerations, and without our having adverted to the new lights which philology, and history, and travel, and the

gradual developments of prophecy, are ever casting on the subject-matter of inspiration, is not theology as much a progressive and accumulating science as any other which can be named in the encyclopædia of human learning? And does not that professor, therefore, lay a freezing arrest on the growth and augmentation of a naturally growing and augmenting subject, who but follows, without deviation, in the track of his predecessors, or but carries his disciples, year after year, through the same unvarying round of antiquated text-books?

There is much of force and justness in these interrogations; and we shall not avail ourselves of the reply, that most of the objects which have now been specified might be provided for in the extemporaneous or questionnaire course. We fully admit that in theology, as well as in all the other sciences, there is indefinite room for novelties both of thought and illustration; and when the most important of these are to be propounded, our own preference most assuredly is for the utmost efforts both of elaborate thought, and if not of elaborate, at least of choice and well-weighed phraseology in the preparation of them; in other words, while I would have the professor to expound colloquially all that is best in the existent literature of his profession, I would have him to put forth all originalities of his own through the medium of written lectures, whether these originalities should lie in the argument, or in the mode of putting the argument. I would have him always to write, whenever there is a chance or a likelihood of his writing differently, and at the same time better in some one respect or other from aught that has been already written; and though not better in substance, yet better in arrangement, or in style, or in the property of adaptation to the spirit and the habitudes of our most recent literature. If there be any topic, in fact, on which a book would be pertinent, and called for, and acceptable to the public, that is the topic on which a series of lectures would be alike pertinent, and should be alike acceptable to a class. Let the professor, then, have any favourite walk in theology—let him have the feeling of certain defects or desiderata in any of the parts of its widely extended literature—let him have the confidence in himself that on these he could bestow either a more conclusive reasoning or a more vivid and effective illustration than are to be found in any of our standard and accessible works—and then I should say that his very highest effort of composition upon these would not be an idle and unproductive expenditure. It is truly to concen-

trate the force and quality of this composition that I would relieve him from the composition of an entire system. It is for the precise object of insuring his contributions to theological literature that I would not have him to diffuse and so attenuate himself by toiling at the work of authorship over the whole round of theology. It may be a misdirection, and so a waste of energy, to strive at doing better what Butler and Paley have done so well; and therefore I should like him to give this energy unbroken and unexhausted to some independent products of his own. When engaged with the lessons of his text-books, he reflects in conversation upon his students the light of others. Any original lessons of his own he may give in writing. In this way you will have more of them, and I may add also you will have more of him. It is a far more strenuous, because more of what may be called a creative exercise to write than to talk. He ought not to incur the fatigue of this creative process with any topic on which he has been already superseded by the hopeless, the unattainable excellence of those who have gone before him. But when he can really add, or really ameliorate, let him put forth all his strength upon lectures, even to exhaustion. You have thus a twofold advantage. In the questionnaire, which I would further call the regular course, you are placed under the tutorage of the best authors in theology; and parallel to this, you have the best efforts of your living instructor concentrated in supplementary or episodal lectures of his own.

We are persuaded that with this treatment of the business of a class, there would have been a far brighter emanation of theological literature from the colleges of Scotland. You can understand how it should have been more precious in quality—I believe it might have been also more copious in the amount of it. We can expect no original contributions from the men who have worn themselves out by the drudgery of their immense and ponderous compilations: they feel no warrant for their authorship, when they feel that they have been outdone by some men in all things. It might not have been so, had they only spared themselves for the effort of outdoing all men in some things. They might thus have acquitted themselves of a double function. They might, by means of their conversational course, have soundly and thoroughly taught the existing lessons of theology; they might, by means of their own subsidiary lectures, have pushed forward the limits of the science.

There is doubtless one very precious contribution which might

be made by a professor who grapples, and that not only in the way of practical teaching, but in the way of literary execution, with the whole system. He might construct not merely a syllabus, but a syllabus more or less expanded of a theological course. This has been ably done by Dr. Hill of St. Andrews, who had the faculty beyond most men of comprehensive and luminous arrangement. We shall have occasion at a posterior stage of our course to avail ourselves of the important service which he has rendered to theology; and we shall only remark at present that such a valuable offering as he has made to the science came from him more naturally at the termination than at the outset of his professional career. Other compends, in virtue of the yearly accessions which are made to sacred learning, may at length be called for; but they who have not only described a lengthened course of study, but have had a lengthened course of experience in teaching, are best qualified to frame them. I am not sure if I can recommend a more complete manual of Divinity than the one I have now adverted to, of which I may be permitted to speak with some degree of pride, as having issued from my own native university, and as being executed by the hand of my first master in the science. While engaged in the preparations to which I am now called, I have repeatedly occasion to consult him; and it is not without feeling that I open the identical copy of his heads of lectures, marked over with my short-hand notes, and used by me when his student thirty years ago; or that when reading the lectures themselves, I can associate with so many of its passages the memory of a voice now hushed to silence, and that has passed away with all the living society and then busy interests of an older generation.

In conformity with these general views on the subject of your tuition in theology, I now proceed to announce the arrangements of the present winter; and I shall forbear any explanation of the ulterior parts of the course till the termination of the session, when I propose, along with directions for the prosecution of your studies through the summer, to offer a general prospectus of the field whereon we now enter, and in which we shall then have proceeded a certain way, but the greater part of which, I can foresee, will still lie before us.

I purpose, then, to have two lecture-days in the week, which will be appropriated to the delivery of my own written lucubrations; and I have fixed on Monday and Tuesday for the fulfil-

ment of that object. The questionnaire or conversational course will occupy three days—Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. There may be an occasional encroachment upon these by the extension at times of that lectureship wherewith every week commences according to our arrangement; and besides, when we meet with certain topics of peculiar interest in the text-book, the likelihood is that we may write as well as talk, and that the delivery of what is thus written may take up a good many successive days, during which our ordinary colloquial exercise will be altogether suspended.

Our first text-book will be Butler's *Analogy of Religion to the Constitution and Course of Nature*, with the various topics of which we shall be occupied till Christmas. I shall be as observant as possible of a harmony, in point of subject, between the lessons of the text-book and my own written lectures, which, during that period, and perhaps a little beyond it, will be occupied with natural theology, chiefly with the view to such an exposition, both of the leadings and of the defects in the light of nature, as should make you aspire after the light of revelation, and even indicate your way to it. We trust in this way to acquaint ourselves of the most important of these preliminary topics which usually precede the inquiries of the student into the truth of Christianity.

Our second text-book will be Paley's *Evidences*. In the discussion of his various topics we shall carefully note whatever is most valuable in the reasonings or informations of other authors; and besides presenting you with as complete a view in the class as our time can afford of the Deistical Controversy, we hope so to guide your own readings upon the subject, that you might become thoroughly proficient in this highly important branch of the literature of your profession. Our questionnaire course will, at this stage of it, be accompanied with a series of lectures on a subject which you must all admit to be sufficiently akin to a text-book that is chiefly occupied in the historical evidence for the truth of Christianity. You are aware of the celebrated argument by which Hume attempted to demonstrate that a miracle was insusceptible of proof from human testimony. I am not satisfied with the replies which have been made to this argument—not even with Campbell's, which has long been reckoned a very triumphant one. I shall endeavour to present you with my own views on this radically important subject; and meanwhile, I would recommend to you the perusal of Camp-

bell on Miracles, in the anticipation of that argument which we propose to bestow upon it.

For our third text-book, which will fully see us to the remainder of the session, we shall make use of Horne's pocket abridgment of his larger work on the Critical Knowledge and Study of the Holy Scriptures. Of the multifarious topics embraced in that publication, there are some that we shall have previously disposed of—as Natural Religion, and the Deistical Controversy. It suits particularly well, I think, that these should be immediately followed up by a subject on which Horne dilates with greater amplitude than on any other—what we should call the Bibliography of Scripture—a title under which we comprehend the formation of the canon, the distinct evidence which there is for the inspiration, as well as for the authenticity and genuineness of each of its books, the history of versions and manuscripts, with their various readings, and the principles upon which, amid these variations, the integrity of the text is ascertained. We shall then conclude with the rules, and perhaps with a few exemplifications of Biblical Criticism; and I feel quite assured, that at the close of the session we shall find ourselves in the possession of ample materials for the employment of your leisure months during the vacation, which I should like indeed to be so filled up, that on your return next winter, you may be in complete readiness for the more advanced studies, and the higher lessons of the second year of our course. The topic wherewith I mean to accompany this third text-book, is one on which both Paley and Horne have left ample room for supplementary observation and argument—I mean the internal evidences of Christianity, which shall form the third and last subject of my lectures for the season.

There is one advice which, though chiefly of a mechanical nature, would, I am sure, if followed up, add much to the comfort and the efficacy of both our tasks—I mean both of your preparations and of my examinations. I would not have you to bring your text-book to the class at all; but instead of it I would have you to bring a MS. note-book, in which you have marked all you consider as necessary out of the prescribed portion of the text-book to accomplish you for the examination of the day. To look for your reply in the text-book would be counteracting the purpose of the exercise altogether; but to look for it in your note-book, whenever you have occasion so to do, is a thing to which you are as much entitled as any man is

to avail himself of the fruits of his own industry. Both parties will reap great benefit from this simple device. In the first place, it will warrant the professor in being very minute with his questions, and even though they relate to such matters as neither his own nor your memory ought to be charged with ; and, in the second place, it will prove to you a most useful exercise ; for there is really no better method by which to appropriate the subject-matter of any volume than to prepare an analysis, or even to have transcribed with your own hand the abridged contents of it. Let me further recommend alternate blank leaves through the whole of your manuscript, to be followed up by such suggestions, or illustrations, or notices of kindred authorship, as might be given in the class-room. You will thus have, as the tangible product of your labours, a written compend, which, if not in itself a complete hand-book of all the literature that exists on the various topics of our course, will at least abound in those notices, by acting upon which you will be put in the way of acquiring it ; and I feel satisfied that a far more effectual lodgement, both of the principles and details of our science, will be made in this way than could possibly have been achieved by any series of lectures whatever.

LECTURE II.

ADVICE TO STUDENTS ON THE CONDUCT AND PROSECUTION OF THEIR STUDIES.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, what our hands find to do may we do with all our might ; and forbid that in the urgency of this world's business the thought of God should be displaced from our hearts, or we should lose the daily and habitual reference of our spirits to the things of faith and of eternity. May we know what it is to combine diligence in business with fervency of spirit in Thy service, remembering the admonition of the apostle, to be not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.

I AM aware that upon this subject there might be a ridiculous and even hurtful excess of pedagogical regulation. There might be a virtue ascribed to certain specific and subordinate directions which really does not belong to them. Grant but zeal and energy of purpose on your part, and these I affirm to be the un-

failing guarantees of your ultimate success, even under a thousand imaginable varieties in the distribution of your hours and the succession or method of your studies. On this topic, then, I must not be so very particular as to ascribe a mystic efficacy to those circumstantials which admit of being endlessly diversified without injury to your progress. On the other hand, I must not be so very general as to be satisfied with the delivery of certain vague and inapplicable truisms, and which are indeed so very true, that the utterance of them just leaves you no wiser than before, and as much at a loss what specifically to do, or how to turn yourselves.

There is a certain anxious minuteness of prescription for one's mental regimen which is just as little called for as it is in any ordinary healthful subject for his bodily regimen. There is a spontaneous or native healthfulness—a *vis medicatrix*, on the strength of which both mind and body are found to prosper under very great diversities of treatment. Let me, therefore, without laying an unmeaning stress upon things of indifference, or urging them upon you with the emphasis of a misplaced exaggeration, confine myself to a few great essentials, which announce and vindicate their own importance on the moment they are stated, and which, at the same time, have such a distinct and definite character, that they each hold out a precise object to the mind, and each carry in them a plain direction for the management of your studies.

Let me then assign, first, your subjects of study in what I conceive to be the order of their importance; and, secondly, the best habitudes of study for insuring solid advancement in the acquisitions of scholarship.

I.—What I recommend, then, as your *first* study in the order of importance, is the study of the Scriptures in your vernacular language. There may be two exceptions taken—not to the advice, but to the rank and precedency which I have assigned to it. It may, in the first instance, be imagined that the study of the evidence for the book should precede the study of the book—that its credentials should be first ascertained, and then that its contents should be diligently examined; or, in other words, that the question who the letter comes from, should go before the question what the letter says. I would have been more ready to admit the force of this consideration, did I not believe that far the most effective of the Christian evidences are the *internal*; that the brightest and most satisfying credentials

of Scripture are to be gathered from the contents of Scripture; that the Divine inspiration of the Bible is nowhere so legibly inscribed as on its own pages; and that, therefore, by a daily, assiduous, and meditative perusal of the letter itself, if conducted with moral earnestness and the love of truth, you are in the likeliest circumstances for at length determining whence the letter comes. I am not grounding the advice of a daily and most attentive converse with your Bibles—I am not grounding it at present on the incumbent piety of the observatiou. I contend that, philosophically, and for the purely literary object of the right ordering of your scholarship, this, among all the advices which I have to offer, is entitled to the highest place in the scale.

A second exception may be taken, not to the advice, but, as before, to the priority of station which I have given it. Why, it may be asked, is my foremost recommendation the study of Scripture in the vernacular, and why not rather in the original language? I have this reason for it. The common English Bible can, generally speaking, be made the subject of more rapid, and therefore of more frequently repeated perusal than either the Hebrew Old or the Greek New Testament. Now, grant that though not scrupulously accurate in all its individual parts, yet that it is a faithful translation on the whole, and then mark the distinct benefit of the exercise which I am now prescribing for you. Will you not through this more accessible medium come more frequently into contact with the substance and matter of the book? Will you not arrive sooner thereby at a familiar acquaintance with the contents of it, and while a more familiar, will it not also substantially, and in the main, be a correct acquaintance? Is there such a difference, for example, between the common translation and Campbell's translation of the Four Gospels, that, after studying to the uttermost, and drawing the full sense out of first the one and then the other, the variation in the result will be of any more than a small fractional importance to the whole mass of that doctrine and information which can be obtained from either of them? And might not the very same thing be said of the difference between just our common translation and the one which is perhaps awaiting us, after that, by the labours of Scripture criticism, the *beau-idéal* of a perfect or a best possible translation has at length been realized? Now, my recommendation is this—admitting the minor deficiencies of our English Bible, still you should turn to its utmost advantage that

readier access which its being English opens up to its almost accurate representation of sacred truth and sacred history. For this purpose, I would have you to keep up diligent and daily converse with that book, which, with all its imputed shortcomings, is sufficient, we all do admit, to guide and enlighten the families of our general population. Just try to master it as you would any other English book of multifarious contents, but pervaded withal by one great ascendant principle, and by the unities of a harmonious and comprehensive system of doctrine. Gather as much from it as you would have done if English had been its primitive language, or as any intelligent Englishman might do who is ignorant of its primitive language. There is, be assured, a very great deal that can be achieved in this way; and my reason for urging it in this way is, that the achievement can be made thereby in shorter time, and so your whole progress in theology be accelerated. You can treasure up the informations of the book; you can become thoroughly conversant with its histories; you can compare scripture with scripture; you can note its parallel passages; you can collect those innumerable lights which strike the observation in the very act of pursuing the train of its marginal references; you can, more especially, confront the prophecies of the Old Testament with the counterpart narratives either of the Old or of the New. It is by these and similar exercises that many a cottage patriarch, with no other medium than his mother tongue, becomes a greater proficient in the wisdom and doctrines of the Bible than the most accomplished linguist or grammarian. Let me add, you can perform, in this way, too, what Franck, in his *Guide to the Study of Holy Scripture*, calls the analysis of its particular books; you can obtain possession of the general scope and design of each epistle. These are invaluable acquisitions; and what I labour to impress is, that virtually they can be made by means of the English Bible, and of it alone, subject of course to such corrections as your posterior studies will enable you to make. But meanwhile do not wait till these studies are accomplished; make what you can of your Bibles now. The acquisitions which I recommend now to be made, and to be made forthwith, by means of the English Scriptures, will not thwart, but rather aid and facilitate the labours of that more delicate and profound criticism which is afterwards to be studied and made progress in by means of the Greek and Hebrew Scriptures. Just as the context illuminates the text, will the general biblical knowledge which you may obtain through the

medium of your native language, be of avail to your special scrutiny into the meaning of the Bible's separate portions through the medium of its original languages. There is much, very much, of biblical learning that I want you to get in English—just as much, in fact, as is practicable in English, for the plain reason that it can be got faster in this way, and therefore to get it in Greek or Hebrew, is to bring upon a number of most useful acquisitions the burden of a most unnecessary servitude. It is a wasteful expenditure of strength, in fact; and the argument becomes irresistible when you consider that this previous learning is a real auxiliary to the philological criticism; whereas the danger on the other hand is, that if not made previously, the criticism might absorb the whole man, and so withdraw his attention from the important generalities of doctrine and information, in virtue of the intense direction which it took to the mere renderings of isolated and controverted passages. It is not, most assuredly, for the purpose of depreciating the ulterior achievements of criticism that I thus speak, but for the purpose of securing their due prominency to other objects which are nearer at hand, and which are apt to be overlooked and neglected by men who, in their exclusive demand for language, evince a certain defect of comprehensiveness, and perhaps I may add, too, a certain spice of scholastic pedantry.

My next advice, and which I place the second in the scale, is that, along with the exercise which I have now recommended, you do study the Bible in its original languages. I should be anticipating the future lessons of my course, were I to deliver now the rules or the principles of Scripture Criticism; but meanwhile, I should like you to make a daily habit of mastering, even though it should be to the extent of a few verses only, a portion of the Hebrew Old and of the Greek New Testament. I want you to become quite familiar with the first vocables of inspiration; I want you to approximate indefinitely to the reading of the original, with the same fluency that you read the vernacular Scriptures. This needs only on your part the perseverance of a regular and sustained exercise. The difficulties of the outset will be abundantly compensated by the felt charm of a growing facility; and I venture to affirm of the great majority now before me, that would you only commence with firm purpose, and persevere with unfaltering constancy, you should in a single twelvemonth be able to read so currently as to achieve one chapter of the Greek New Testament, another of the Hebrew Bible, and a

third of the Septuagint, without almost a perceptible addition to the labours of the day. And in the course of a few rotations with these volumes, what a practical acquaintance should you obtain with the languages of Holy Writ—an acquaintance, no doubt, which, merely of itself, does not constitute the art of Scripture Criticism, but which would prodigiously facilitate your acquisition of the art. You are at present on high vantage-ground. Now is the time for accumulating or laying up in store what may be called the raw materials of many a future argument. Yours is the season of youth and vigorous exertion, and withal, which is of first-rate importance in the study of languages, it is the season of most impressible memory, when the greatest variety of facts, however unlike or however loosely associated, do by frequent reiteration leave such traces of themselves that through life they are indelible. It is thus that the reiteration of an oft-consulted dictionary will at length grave upon your memory, as with a pen of iron, the very words which apostles wrote, and which prophets and holy men of God did articulate under the movements of their inspiration. You will be at home in the original Scriptures; and though not even then versant in those principles which constitute the science of Scripture Criticism, you will at least be rich in the materials of the science. I cannot affirm that you will in consequence of this particular study obtain a greatly more rectified view of Christian doctrines than it is competent for the mere English student to obtain from our English translation. I honestly do not believe that there are such errors or defects in the English Bible as to leave room for any material rectification; and I will not, therefore, at the expense of a truth so cheering and comfortable, exalt beyond its legitimate measure that Biblical Criticism, which, nevertheless, I would have you all to study; and then I should feel confident of an enamoured few, who, giving themselves passionately up to the original languages, might become the Mills, and the Wetsteins, and the Griesbachs, and the Michaelises of Scotland. I want the many to be intelligent scholars in this department, upon which there would be the chance, or rather the certainty, of a few being masters and discoverers therein—the critics, and the emendators, and the Bibliists of our coming generation; they qualified to be the authors in this species of literature, and the bulk of our clergy at least so qualified for appreciating their excellence, as to constitute a sufficient literary public to encourage them in their labours. We should not on

this high and lettered walk arrive at another orthodoxy than what in the main lies patently before the eyes of our general population in the Bibles which they use. But remember that you are set for the defence of orthodoxy, and that in this age of licentious speculation it needs to be defended—that heresy can put on the guise of scholarship; and if on that ground you are unable to meet her, she may by a single quotation paralyze you—that even meagre Socinianism can furnish its specious plausibilities with Bible sentences in Greek and Hebrew characters, and that it lies with you to detect the treachery, and to disarm it. An endowed and an educated Church is the bulwark of orthodoxy. She may not at all times be animated by its spirit; but it is generally by her means, by her formularies, by her colleges, and, above all, by the prowess and the literary championship of her sons, that the letter of it is kept inviolate. It is thus that the hierarchy of England, with her erudite scholars and massive theologians—her men of armour and colossal achievement—has stood the foremost in the battles of the faith. And I should like that Scotland wielded as mighty a polemic arm,—that an Establishment which has done so much for the religion of families, stood in completed panoply for all services, labouring with one arm to foster the Christianity of our parishes, but with another to ward off the pestilence, whether of Deism or of heresy, from our borders.

I should perhaps apologize to the more advanced students for the very rudimental character of the advice which I have now given. But I do it in the confidence that could I only prevail on you all to begin this undertaking, though only with a view at first to a complete practical acquaintance with the original Scriptures, there must be a goodly number among you with whom it would not terminate there. Calculating merely on the varieties of human taste and talent, I should anticipate of so many, that the habit which I now recommend must ripen into an affection for the erudition, and more especially for the sacred erudition of other languages than their own. To indulge this, I have no doubt that they must spontaneously find their way both to the Latin of our Continental theology and the Greek and Latin of the Christian Fathers. I hold it of importance that some at least should be extensively read in these too unfrequented tracks of authorship; and I do confess it my ambition that the lessons of a lore so venerable should never depart from us.

My next advice, which I need scarcely have uttered at present, but with a view to mark what I esteem the order of its importance, is, that after standing acquitted of your scriptural studies for the day, there should be a diligent preparation on your part of each prescribed lesson in the text-books. This, of course, I exact from all; but from many I expect a great deal more. I do not speak at present of the notes which you may take here, whether of the lectures or conversations, and expand them afterwards at home. In this matter you have unlimited liberty, and may do just as you please. But I speak with particular reference to the books which I shall recommend for your perusal on the various topics of the course: to this I mainly look for your instruction in the subject-matter of theology. I shall do my best to direct your readings; and I confidently hope that by a very great number among you, these readings, to a greater or less extent, will be executed. And here, too, there will be room for the development of the interminable varieties of human genius. While I should like you all to have a general acquaintance with the literature of theology, yet I cannot but suppose that each will proportion his attention variously. Each may have his own favourite walk. One may feel his strongest affinity to be towards the evidences; another be in his congenial element when grappling with the difficulties; a third may delight in the adaptations of Christianity to human nature; a fourth in the adaptations of prophecy to the history of the world; a fifth in the doctrines, whether as comprising a regular system of truth, or as fitted to comfort, to regenerate, to moralize the heart which receives them; a sixth may give his utmost strength to some one selected topic which he prosecutes with all the devotion of amateurship. Your general scholarship I hold to be indispensable; yet I could not without violence to humanity, constituted as it is, forbid these endless diversities of taste and of application which I have enumerated. The complexional difference of minds is as great as that of faces: I shall therefore look for an exceeding variety in the direction of your theological readings; and it is well that we have such a fulness of theological authorship to meet this variety.

I should have mentioned under my first advice—that is, your diligent study of the English Bible, why it is that a person wholly unschooled in the original tongues, may nevertheless become an intelligent systematic theologian. But you already know the explanation of this. Those parts of Divine truth

which enter into the composition of a system, are also those which most pervade the Sacred Volume, and are of most frequent recurrence in it; and when, therefore, you have this security for the most accurate translation, that a greater amount of consensual light descends upon the passages which contain them. Generally speaking, the individual passages are faithfully rendered to his hand; and the only task which remains to him for the purpose of making out a system, is that of comparing scripture with scripture. You will further perceive how it is, that on many questions such a person may be an able and intelligent controversialist. The truth is, that though, on the one hand, our vernacular language had been the Hellenistic Greek, there would still have been controversies; or though, on the other, the message had come to us in the *ipsissima verba* of our English translation, the great bulk of our present controversies would still have remained to us. It is not necessary, in order to have disputes about the meaning of an author, that he should write in a different language from our own; and it is a great mistake to imagine, that for the decision even of our most important controversies in theology, they must be brought to philology as the ultimate court of appeal. I am not aware, for example, that philology can do anything towards the dissipation of that obscurity which hangs over the topic of the sin against the Holy Ghost, or of the sin unto death. I by no means think that the solution here is impracticable; but I think that the materials for the solution lie as much within the reach of an intelligent Englishman, ignorant of Greek, as of the most accomplished critic or grammarian. This is not an occasion for entering into the special consideration of these passages; but I may remark, by the way, on the manner in which we should receive the clear generalities of Scripture, even while the burden of an apparent exception is lying upon them. "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin" is such a generality, not made known to us by the compilation of many passages, as a general law of nature is made known by a compilation of phenomena, but made known to us by one authoritative declaration, even as a general law is sometimes clearly and conclusively ascertained by one experiment, when that happens to be an *experimentum crucis*. Now, the question is, whether shall we refuse to ourselves the instruction and the comfort of a gospel declaration till the anomaly is cleared up; or shall we only refuse to ourselves the intellectual gratification that one feels on looking at the harmony of an un-

excepted system? We should take the latter part; and this is precisely what astronomers did under the one unsolved difficulty in their science, to which I have more than once alluded. They had got hold of a general expression which harmonized all the phenomena of the heavens, save one. This of itself was a mighty enlargement to them; and they did not wait for the resolution of that one, ere they should apply the principle in question to the computation of all other casual movements and appearances, for in these the computation was unerring. And, in like manner, we must not refuse the comfort or the direction of what is clear in the Bible till we have generalized all the passages on a given topic to the degree of unexcepted and universal. We may not be able to reconcile the declaration, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, with the doctrine of the sin that is insusceptible of forgiveness. But we ought not, on that account, to suspend our faith in those passages where the general doctrine is clearly recognised—as that, Whosoever believeth in Christ shall be saved; Where sin abounds, grace does much more abound; Whosoever believeth shall not be confounded or put to shame. The full information and comfort of these ought to be taken *instanter*; and all that you do forego by the refractory passage is that luxury which the rationalists of theology aspire after. In estimating the soundness of the analogy, you should try it by the specific purpose for which it is used. It may be most competent and effective for that, though not capable of being extended further. The great lesson which I wished to illustrate, is that the generalizings of theology should defer as much to the findings of Scripture criticism, as the generalizings of science do to the findings of observation.

My fourth advice relates to the practice of composition. It comes properly after the one which I have just given; because you must first import knowledge before you can export it again for the benefit of others. By the former direction, you may become wise unto yourself; by the present, you may acquire the power of making the best and most impressive conveyance of this wisdom to the minds of your fellow-men. I would have you to write daily, and to write elaborately. Even were you called upon by other engagements to write much, and therefore rapidly, I would have you to observe at least one hallowed hour for your highest efforts of a strict and severe, and choice composition. It is a mistake that elaboration in this exercise necessarily or even generally leads to verbiage, that worthless result of a vain and

gaudy ambition. When you sit down to the creative work of composition, your first elaboration should be the elaboration of thoughts; and you should have no other concern about words than as the instruments by which these thoughts may be most clearly and correctly, and withal energetically rendered. The object of elaborate composition is not to multiply words, but to select them—not to luxuriate in copiousness or variety of expression, but to condense and to chasten, and to lop away all that is meaningless or redundant. You have to cast about for language, no doubt, but it is for most expressive language; and in so doing, you have to reject many a word and many a phrase which have presented themselves to notice in the midst of your ponderings, lest the quality of the composition should have been diluted, and so enfeebled thereby. What the profuse writer with facility admits, the elaborate puts away as he would the chaff of useless excrescences. He feels, it is true, a solicitude for words, but only for such words as are instinct with the force and fulness of that sentiment under which he is labouring. In such hands, even a multitude of words is not verbiage, because each word is impregnated with meaning; and there is a strength in his splendour, and a splendour in his strength, just because the phraseology that he employs has in it a metallic weight as well as a metallic lustre. They are the thoughts which have germinated the words; and whether they be thoughts of beauty or of power, they must tinge with their own character the language into which they effloresce. It is when the style goes beyond the subject—it is when there is a pomp of phraseology that exceeds the real worth or magnitude of the topics which are invested by it—it is when the subject-matter is well-nigh lost sight of in the blazonry of the language by which it has been attempted to set it forth,—then truly may it be said of the writer, that he spends himself in vain, that he labours for that which satisfieth not. I deprecate all such labour, and yet persist in saying that elaborate composition should form a regular part of your daily exercise. When the work is rightly gone about, it is a high mental exercise, and the high mental faculties of intellect, and imagination, and feeling, are all pressed into the service of it. The words have only an instrumental part in this operation, and stand related to the essential business of composition just as the colours which a painter uses with his hand do to the conceptions of his genius.

I am the more solicitous for this habit, that I am aware of none which so fixes and consolidates one's views on any given

subject of inquiry. It is just because so much a purely thinking exercise—it is just because, when going in quest of those words which shall be the most appropriate symbols of thought, the mind must engage itself so closely with the realities or the archetypes of thought, that to write upon a subject is the likeliest way to arrive at a clear and conclusive opinion about it. Your else cloudy or evanescent notions, by being thus bodied forth in language, settle into durability as well as into definiteness of shape and outline. In the act of giving them a local habitation in your manuscripts, they seem to acquire a local habitation in your mind; and there is a stability, a sort of substance imparted to them which they actually had not before. On these accounts, I do infinitely regret that my opportunities of converse with you on this particular ground are so exceeding scanty. One discourse from each of you in the year is not nearly enough either for you to produce or for me to listen to; yet, as things are at present constituted, I cannot do more; and, till the plethoric magnitude of the work be reduced, till relieved of this compression by a subdivision of labour, through the means at least of another labourer, I have no prospect of being able to do more. But meanwhile, might not you do much among yourselves? To realise the motto of *Nulla dies sine linea*, is it necessary to stimulate and sustain your habit of composition, that each line must be read in the hearing, or submitted to the judgment of another? The course will present an infinity of topics both for essays and sermons; and I shall occasionally point out those which I conceive to be fittest, whether for your own solitary exercise, or for discussion in your societies.

But the mention of this leads me to remark, that a society is a great engine for upholding the activity of those who evidence in fact their interest in its literary or professional object, by being voluntarily enlisted among its members. Such an institution may be turned to the best of purposes, and especially be of powerful effect in supplementing the unavoidable deficiencies of your formal or compulsory education. Convinced as I am of the permanent results, and, when under proper regulation, of the permanently good results which the practice of elaborate writing has on the whole condition of your intellect, I cannot but regard with peculiar earnestness whatever tends to stimulate this exercise, or to multiply the occasions of it. But I must here express the serious doubts which I have on the subject of debating societies, and must confess myself to feel a much clearer preference

for what I should rather style deliberative societies. The strength of my apprehension is just in proportion to the assurance which I feel, and have already expressed, that nothing contributes more to fasten a sentiment or a doctrine upon the mind, than to have written in the defence of it. It may be well enough in the students of another profession to have their combative societies, and to appoint their special pleaders on each side of the question for the evening; but I am not altogether fond of special pleading in theology. There is in it a sort of tampering with great principles, which is somewhat hazardous, to say the least of it; and it does seem to place an inquirer in unfair circumstances to place him under the necessity of advocating what is wrong. It is decidedly my own preference, if the thing could be so managed, that you should meet, not on the business of controversy, but on the business of investigation; that the one or two essayists for the night should give not necessarily opposite views, but each his own view on the subject which had been formerly prescribed for them; and that this should be followed up by general and extemporaneous converse on the part of the members, either upon the merits of these written performances, or upon the questions discussed in them. It is a mistake to suppose that there is nothing for a speaker to say because there is nothing to controvert. It is enough if he can add, if he can further illustrate, if he can confirm the positions of those who have gone before him by new arguments or informations of his own; or, if his militant propensity be very strong, and if he can meet with no present object on which to discharge it, still it might be pertinent enough to hold gladiatorship with all that is formidable in the infidelity or the unsound theology of authors. I am quite sensible that, even under the system which I recommend, all controversy among yourselves neither can, nor indeed ought to be precluded. But then you will observe that the part you take in it is altogether spontaneous; and, besides, one is not in such danger of talking himself into heresy as he is of writing himself into heresy. It is this last which I dread; and if there be justice in the apprehension, it goes, you must perceive, to confirm all that I have said on the power of elaborate composition as an instrument whereby to rivet not your conceptions alone, but your convictions of a subject. I have had repeated experience of this tendency in myself; I have had the frequent observation of it in others amid the controversies both of speech and of authorship. If one have only talked adversely, there still remains the hope of his

giving in ; but if he have written, even whether it cometh forth in the shape of a pamphlet or not, he is perfectly irreclaimable.

In each of these societies, the number of individuals should be rather small than otherwise, that the exercise of composition may come round more frequently. There is none which I should like better to see in busy and prosperous action, than a society for biblical criticism, which ought to be select in point of attendance, since none but the very *élite* of the Hall for taste and skill in the languages should be admitted into it. The elucidation of difficult passages—the history of particular books—the general scope and design of each of them—the discussion of controverted texts, with the evidence that lay in various readings for or against them,—these would supply matter for innumerable theses ; and they would also present definite objects of preparation for that subsequent converse which occupied the remainder of the meeting. We are quite sure that a society like this, if soundly and ably conducted, would be eyed with peculiar regard ; and that the most enlightened friends of our Church would take a vivid interest in the progress of their labours.

Before quitting this subject, let me observe, that here, too, Nature will give proof of her wonted variety in the gifts and faculties of her children. Some of you will be found to make the most effective conveyance of your thoughts by elaborate writing, others by extemporaneous language. The two certainly may be blended in the same individual ; but on this matter I would advise none to attempt compounding the two at one and the same moment. What I mean is, that you should never try to make out a sentence partly on the strength of what you have written, and partly on the strength of such words as might be immediately suggested to supply the deficiencies of your recollection. In the ambiguity between these two exercises, when both are attempted simultaneously, the mind is neutralized ; and what I should advise is, that in every single exertion of this sort, you either write wholly or extemporize wholly. It is true that after the delivery *memoriter* of a written paragraph, you may leave the preparation for a time ; and, after expatiating so long in words of instant occurrence, you may again revert to it. There might be no embarrassment in this way of it ; but there assuredly will be, if in the same identical moment the mind shall vacillate between an effort to remember words which you already have indited, and a direct effort of attention to the ideas or realities of your subject, thereby to suggest or originate words

for the occasion. Be assured, to use a familiar expression, there is not a likelier method than this of falling through; and while I repeat the advice which I have already given, that when you do compose, you should do it strenuously and with all your might, I would further say, that to obtain the practice and the power of extemporizing, you should venture upon the experiment without any other preparation than the preparation of thought, and see whether your luminous conceptions will not at length find vent for themselves in expressive and appropriate language. I am far from thinking that all or even the majority will succeed in this exercise; but though there should be only a few, the time is coming when their alertness and promptitude and daring might be of invaluable service. In the business of debate, though great execution is often done by the heavy artillery of the prepared speeches, yet the effect of these is incalculably aided by the well-timed discharge of those smaller fire-arms which are used in the skirmishings of the extemporaneous warfare. I knew only one individual in our Church who had this talent in perfection, and in his hands it was anything but a small fire-arm. Would that there were twenty alike able and intrepid, and as pure as I judge him to have been on many of the great questions of ecclesiastical polity.* The very presence of such would have resistless effect on the divisions of our judicatories. But it forms a very rare combination when so much power and so much promptitude go together, or when one unites in his speaking the quickness of opportune suggestion with the momentum of weighty and laborious preparation. It is to me a marvellous, I could almost say an enviable faculty, and never more to be envied than when, in a minute or two, one is visited by the very thought and the very turn of expression which would just have suited the purpose, but after the occasion is irrecoverably gone by—and which, had it but occurred at the moment, would not only have parried the home-thrust of his antagonist, but would have sent it back again with double effect to the quarter whence it came.

My concluding advice on the subject-matter of your studies, and which I place after all the former advices, connected as they are with your professional literature, is, that you give as much time as you can conveniently spare over and above theology to the pursuits of general literature. Though I place this object last, and I would even further say least, for those who have fully entered on the ecclesiastical vocation, yet this, as-

* The allusion here is to Dr. Andrew Thomson.

surely, is not because I hold the object to be insignificant. It was not so held by the great Reformers of our Church—the Luthers, and the Calvins, and the Knoxes, and, to confine the examples to our own land, the Andrew Melvilles, and the Samuel Rutherfurds, and the Halyburtons of other days—men who united with their depth of principle the depth of profoundest scholarship; and bright in learning as in piety, at one and the same time, evinced the lofty spirit of Christian apostles, and the spirit, lofty, too, in its way, of cultured and high-toned academics. There was nought of the drivelling or the superstitiously weak about the Christianity of these men; but strong in science as they were in sacredness, they compelled a homage to their cause. We should like to see the Church so represented in all ages, that while society should be impressed by the general intelligence of her clergy, there should at least be a few who, outpeering all their fellows, might be able to company with men on the highest walks of philosophy, and there, in the greatness of their conscious strength, urge the gospel argument with such intrepidity and effect, as might cause Christianity to be respected in the midst of our literary circles. This is a service peculiarly needed in the present age, both that a licentious philosophy may be overawed, and that the association which still lingers in the public mind between infidelity and intellect might be effectually done away. And besides, the same reason which makes it expedient that Christianity should be translated into all languages, makes it also expedient that it should be presented to the various orders of a chequered and complicated society in all the styles of the same language, from the homely dialect of our general population to the classic or philosophical dialect of the highest scholars, the most accomplished *savans* of a community. And so, while I should like the great majority of those who are here present to be capable in after-life of forcibly and intelligibly addressing even the most rustic congregations of our land, yet I should also like that all of you were more or less tinctured with the phraseology of the current literature of our nation, and that some of you should be able to deck the various themes of your profession both with the imagery of genius, and with all the graces of beauteous and tasteful representation.

We are aware of a certain sensitive and illiberal prejudice on the subject of human learning wherewith we cannot at all sympathize—as if the development of truth in any one quarter could be injurious to the cause of truth in any other quarter of possible

contemplation; or as if the glorious harmonies which obtain between the economy of revelation and the economy of nature did not serve to manifest a common Author for them both, and, at the same time, to pour a flood of evidence and illustration over the doctrines of Christianity. The parables of Scripture are standing memorials for the use of those analogies which are furnished by the intelligent observation whether of nature, of history, or of science, for the exposition and enforcement of the lessons of the gospel. The references made by Paul to the literature and mythology of the Greeks might serve both as guides and examples to the ministers of the present day; and on this subject it should never be forgotten, that the most learned of all the apostles was also the most effective of them all. We observe beside, that the psalmists and prophets of the olden dispensation do constantly illustrate invisible by visible things; and like as our Saviour, in His passing notice of the lilies of the field, offered the tribute of His admiration to the loveliness of a natural object, so from the compositions of David, and Isaiah, and the author of the book of Job, it would appear that among the communions of a higher inspiration, they, on the theme of creation and its glories, were awake to all the soul and sentiment of poetry. There is nought either in true poetry or in true philosophy that is adverse to revelation. "The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein;" and instead of the cross-lights which many apprehend, there will, when soundly conducted, be struck out the light of many precious and pleasing confirmations between the study of His works and the study of His word. There is, it will be found, a harmony of principle between that docility which is inculcated by modern science to the lessons of experience, and that docility which is inculcated by the gospel to the lessons of revelation. In the one there is the surrender of all theory to the evidence of observation, and hence a sound philosophy on the basis of ascertained facts. Altogether akin to this, in the other there is the surrender of all lofty imagination to the evidence of history, and hence a sound theology on the basis of ascertained facts also. And if the spirit which now reigns throughout in physical investigations lead to a higher estimate of the external argument, certain we are that every new step in the mental philosophy will add new strength and lustre to the internal argument for the truth of Christianity. In short, we have nothing to fear from the highest achievements that can possibly be made in any walk

or in any quarter of the field of discovery ; and we repeat, that had we a few at least of the friends of religion able to keep pace with the growing philosophy of the times, we should bear off from thence an augmented strength to the cause of the gospel, and a new accession to its glories.

II.—We now proceed to the second general division in this lecture of advice for the prosecution of your studies ; and having now assigned the respective subjects of your study in what I hold to be the order of their importance, let me forthwith, and as briefly as possible, state my ideas on the best habitudes of study for insuring your solid advancement in the acquisitions of scholarship.

It may be expected, in the first place, that I should fix the proportional time which should be given to each of the pursuits that I have now specified. Now this I purposely abstain from. It is true that I have announced to you what I deem to be the order of their importance, and I, of course, should like that this made its due impression on the arrangements which each of you shall form ; but, after this, I must leave the arrangements very much to yourselves. I could not, in fact, without prejudice to a great and a high interest, prescribe, in the terms of a rigorous and invariable measurement, the relative degrees of attention which each student should observe towards each of the studies that I have already enumerated. I should not regard it as a well-conditioned state of things if, in this respect, there were a monotonous and a mechanical uniformity of practice amongst you. I am quite confident that a far greater result would be obtained by humouring the varieties of genius and inclination ; or, in other words, by such a latitude as should permit the main energies of each individual student to go forth in that direction whither his taste and his talent most naturally carried him. It is true I should regard him as unfit for the ministerial profession if he did not, in obedience to my first and strongest recommendation, hold frequent converse with his Bible, and that for the purpose of drawing from this book of God's counsel and of His message to a guilty world those doctrines and informations wherewith it is charged. And I further hold it most desirable that all of you should at least attain to the level of a respectable scholarship in the various things which have just been set before you. But many of you, I doubt not, in some things will rise above this level ; and it is altogether, I repeat, a question of

your own individual taste and finding, in what walk of study, or on what particular field of scholarship it is, that you are to attain the rank and superiority of masters. I would not, therefore, lay a restraint on the singular aptitudes or tendencies of so many for the original languages of Scripture; nor on those of others for evidences of our faith; nor on those of others for the doctrines or subject-matter of theology; nor on those of others for the practical and hortatory department of our profession; nor on those of others for the work of societies, under which some might think it best to cultivate the extemporaneous talent, and some the talent for fine and energetic composition; and lastly, I would not restrain the disposition to general literature and philosophy—more especially if I saw along with it the talent and the desire of converting it to a useful professional application, whether to strengthen some lesson of theology by new arguments, or to recommend and set it forth by new illustrations. There is a diversity of endowments in the economy of nature, even as in the economy of grace there is a diversity of gifts, by that Spirit who, instead of compounding any one individual into a perfect exemplar of all those abilities which are of service to the Church, “giveth to every man severally as he will.” And we do wrong to thwart such a mechanism. We should thereby pervert from its obviously designed uses the apparatus, so to speak, that was put into our hands. We should not be marshalling aright the mental and the spiritual forces wherewith we had been intrusted, whether for fighting the battles, or for fulfilling the direct business of our Zion. It is by indulging, to a certain extent, the tendencies of each intellect and of each spirit, that we secure the best linguists, the best commentators, the best controversialists, the best expounders in the doctrinal, and the most impressive orators and heralds in the hortatory theology, the best judges or legislators for our courts, the best preachers for our parishes.

But while I would offer no pointed pedagogical deliverance as to the number of hours you should give to each exercise or study—while I would not thus distribute your time into the same regular portions for all, yet I would strongly recommend that each should make a regular distribution of his time for himself. I think I have deferred enough to the mental varieties that exist among the individuals of a class, when I abstain from prescribing identically and alike for all their proportions of grammatical, and critical, and doctrinal, and literary, and scientific study, but

have expressed it as my preference that each individual should make the adjustment of his own proportions. I will not condescend on the number of divisions, or on the length of each division in your plan; but I would proclaim it as quite a category on the subject of intellectual discipline, that there should be a plan. I will not venture to say how many or how few hours should be assigned to each particular employment; but I am perfectly clear that every hour should have its certain and its fixed employment. There is nothing of which I am more satisfied, than that you should move from one occupation to another in the order of some succession, to which you will adhere till you have found reason to alter it. The history of your day, if you want to make solid advancement in learning, must not be a desultory ramble from one object to another at the caprice or humour of the moment. It should not be a ramble but a rotation, where each hour has its employment, and each employment has its hours for the full and satisfying discharge of it. You will make, I believe, tenfold the progress in this way that you would, if, living at random, you abandoned yourself to the fortuitous and ever-varying influences which, in the tide of unforeseen circumstances, were brought to bear upon you. It is making the most of time thus to methodize it; and I esteem it no light advantage, that in virtue of such a system you might insure both your scholarship and your health; for such should be the productiveness of the hours which you do employ in the prosecution of the one, that there should be hours to spare for the recreation which might be indispensable to the other. Forbid that I should crush your rising energies by the impositions of a severe taskmaster; or that, amid the labours of a thoughtful and contemplative solitude, you should not daily and plentifully taste the enjoyments of liberty. Be assured, there is a charm in all this regularity which will inconceivably enhance the pleasure both of your relaxations and of your duties; and after the hours that you have spent vigorously and successfully in your apartments, you will find the beauty of your walks, and the animating converse of your fellows, to be all the more delightful. I can scarcely imagine a more grateful alternation than that which takes place between prosperous study at home, and cheerful society or exercise abroad. At your age of buoyant spirits and hopeful aspiring intellect, it will give a zest to all you do, and season every hour with enjoyment.

Before I conclude, then, this rather lengthened admonition.

let me repeat to you my earnest assurance of the vast power and advantage to a student of regulated industry. In point of result, I should expect more from the perseverance and the painstaking even of mediocrity, than I should from the wild undirected sallies of lofty, but withal reckless and wayward genius. One may act the part of a harlequin with his mind as well as with his body; and there is a sort of mental agility which always gives me the impression of a harlequin. Anything which can be spoken of as a feat, is apt to suggest this association. That man, for example, was a thorough harlequin, in both senses of the word, who boasted that he could throw off a hundred verses of poetry while he stood upon one foot. There was something for wonder in this; but it is rarely by any such exploit that we obtain deep, and powerful, and enduring poetry. It is by dint of steady labour—it is by giving enough of application to the work, and having enough of time for the doing of it—it is by regular painstaking and the plying of constant assiduities,—it is by these, and not by any process of legerdemain, that we secure the strength and the staple of real excellence. It was thus that Demosthenes, clause after clause, and sentence after sentence, elaborated, and that to the uttermost, his immortal orations; it was thus that Newton pioneered his way, by the steps of an ascending geometry, to the mechanism of the heavens—and after which, he left this testimony behind him, that he was conscious of nothing else but a habit of patient thinking which could at all distinguish him from other men. He felt that it was no inaccessible superiority on which he stood, and it was thus that he generously proclaimed it. It is certainly another imagination that prevails in regard to those who have left the stupendous monuments of intellect behind them—not that they were differently exercised from the rest of the species, but that they must have been differently gifted. It is their talent, and almost never their industry, by which they have been thought to signalize themselves; and seldom is it adverted to, how much it is to the more strenuous application of those commonplace faculties which are diffused among all, that they are indebted for the glories which now encircle their remembrance and their name. It is felt to be a vulgarizing of genius that it should be lighted up in any other way than by a direct inspiration from heaven; and hence men have overlooked the steadfastness of purpose, the devotion to some single but great object, the unweariedness of labour that is given not in convulsive and pre-

ternatural throes, but by little and little, as the strength of the mind may bear it, the accumulation of many small efforts, instead of a few grand and gigantic but perhaps irregular movements on the part of energies that are marvellous. Men have overlooked these as being indeed the elements to which genius owes the best and the proudest of her achievements. They cannot think that aught so utterly prosaic as patience, and painstaking, and resolute industry, has any share in the upholding of a distinction so illustrious. These are held to be ignoble attributes never to be found among the demigods, but only among the drudges of literature; and it is certainly true, that in scholarship there are higher and lower walks. But still the very highest of all is a walk of labour. It is not by any fantastic jugglery, incomprehensible to ordinary minds, and beyond their reach—it is not by this that the heights of philosophy are scaled. So said he who towers so far above all his fellows; and whether viewed as an exhibition of his own modesty, or as an encouragement to others, this testimony of Sir Isaac may be regarded as one of the most precious legacies that he has bequeathed to the world.

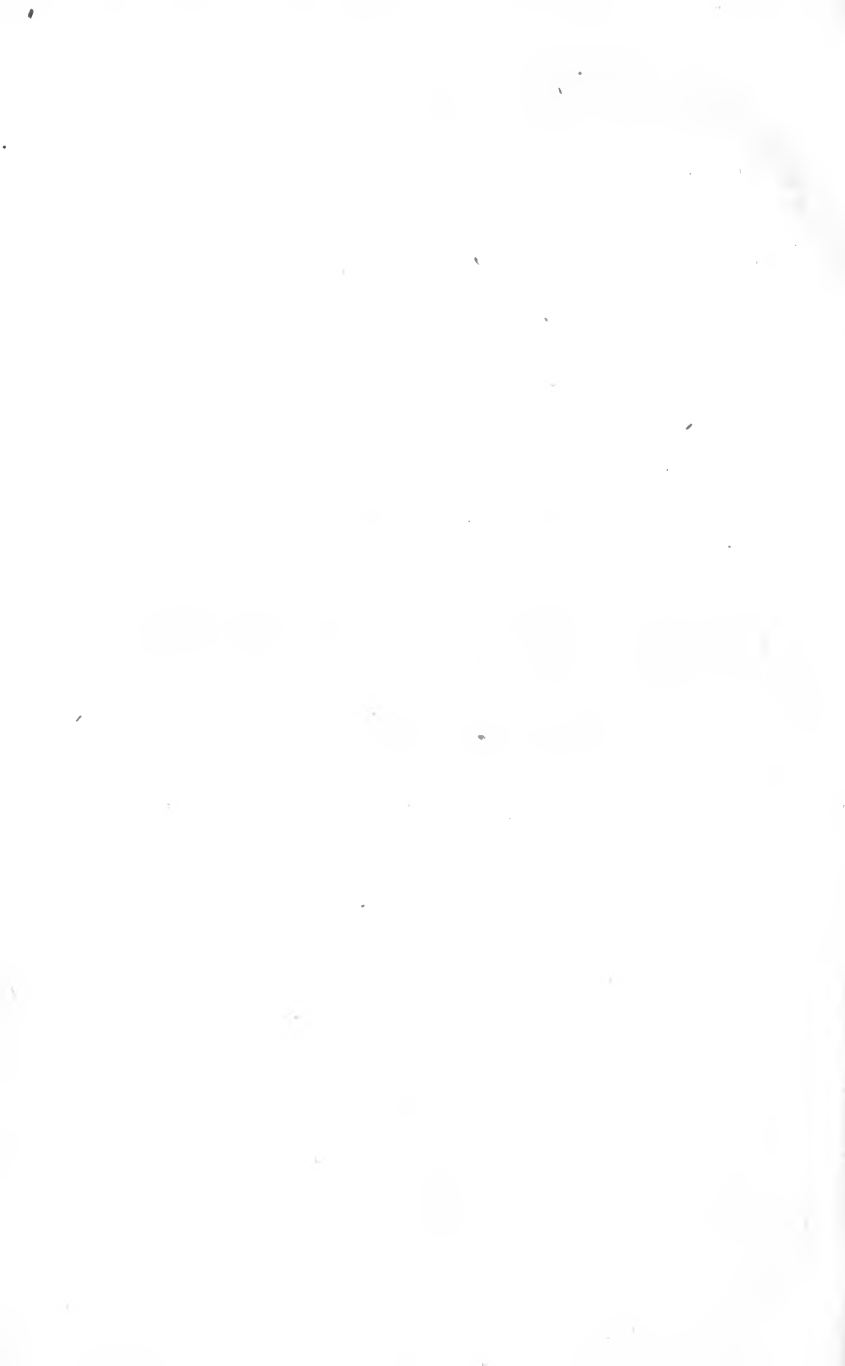
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I have been the more earnest in this explanation,* as I feel assured that, without those influences which are derived to the heart by prayer, the sacredness of your studies is no guarantee for the sacredness of your spirit or character. All the literature of Christianity may not Christianize you; and it is truly a possible thing that, while your biblical scholarship is growing apace, the heart may be wholly untouched by the lessons of the Bible. This has been oft experienced in the business of the clerical profession; and it strikingly marks the earthliness of our nature, that, in very proportion to our familiarity with the themes of religion, may be our insensibility to the force of their awful and eternal import. Our sermons may solemnize others, while they do not solemnize ourselves; and, even in the act of penning our sentences about deathbeds, or framing our urgent appeals to the consciences of men, our own consciences may be steeped in lethargy, or gather new hardihood from each repetition of the arguments which have ceased to impress, of the threats

* A separate Lecture was given "On the Efficacy of Prayer, and an advice founded thereon, of pre-eminent importance in the study of Theology," which will be found in Dr. Chalmers's *Works*, vol. ii. pp. 321-356. The paragraph inserted here formed the close of this Lecture.

and the eloquent denunciations which have ceased to terrify us. It may be a mere exercise in composition, when the intellect and the fancy are all awake, as in other exercises. The faculties of nature may be in animating play, but without one feeling of religious earnestness. It is more than a possibility, we fear it may be a frequent thing—that, amid the literalities of ministerial work, the minister himself is cradled into the profoundest spiritual apathy. He is far more pleased with the success of his sermon-making than he is practically moved or affected by the substance of his sermon. He is conversant with the forms of a high and holy calling ; but this may no more carry his thoughts or his affections on high than the skeletons of a churchyard remind the hackneyed grave-digger of a coming resurrection or a coming judgment. All this bespeaks the urgent necessity of prayer. Without it, the services of the clergyman may be both strenuous and manifold, yet may still be unconsecrated services. Upon which the certainty is, that he will not save his own soul ; and the likelihood is, that he will not save the souls of those who hear him.

REMARKS
ON
CUVIER'S THEORY OF THE EARTH;
IN EXTRACTS FROM A REVIEW OF THAT THEORY, CONTRIBUTED
TO "THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR" IN 1814.



REMARKS

ON

CUVIER'S THEORY OF THE EARTH.

It is not our object to come forward with a full analysis of the theory of Cuvier. The appearance of the work has afforded matter of triumph and satisfaction to the friends of revelation, though, in these feelings, we cannot altogether sympathize with them. It is true that his theory approximates to the information of the book of Genesis more nearly than those of many of his predecessors; and the occasional exhibitions which appear in the course of his pages, have the effect at least of stamping the character of a disinterested testimony upon his opinions. This leads us to anticipate the period when there will be a still closer coincidence between the theories of geologists and the Mosaical history of the creation. It is well that there is now a progress to this object; that the chronology at least of Moses begins to be more respected; that a date so recent is ascribed to the last great catastrophe of the globe, as to make it fall more closely upon the deluge of the book of Genesis; and when we recollect the eloquence, and the plausibility, and the imposing confidence with which a theorist of the day has magnified the antiquity of the present system, we shall henceforth be less alarmed at anything in the speculations, either of Cuvier or of others, which may appear to bear hard upon the credit of the sacred historian.

He assigns no distinct cause for the earth's revolutions, and leaves us utterly at a loss about the nature of that impelling principle, which gives rise to the sweeping and terrible movements that are thought to take place in the waters of the

ocean. We expected something from him upon this subject under the article of Astronomical Causes of the Revolutions on the Earth's Surface: nor has he chosen to advert to the theory of Laplace, though, in our apprehension, it would have imparted a great addition of plausibility to the whole speculation.

It is to the diurnal revolution of the earth round its axis, that we owe the deviation of its figure from a perfect sphere. The earth is so much flattened at the poles, and so much elevated at the equator, that, by the mean calculations upon this subject, the former are nearer to the centre of the earth than the latter by thirty-five English miles. What would be the effect, then, if the axis of revolution were suddenly shifted? If the polar and equinoctial regions were to change places, there would be a tendency towards an elevation of so many miles in the one, and of as great a depression in the other, and the more transferable parts of the earth's surface would be the first to obey this tendency.

But it is not necessary to assume so entire a change in the position of the earth's axis, as to produce a difference of thirty-five miles in any of the existing levels, nor would any single impetus, indeed, suffice to accomplish such a change. The transference of the poles from their present situation by a few degrees, would give rise to a revolution sudden enough, and mighty enough for all the purposes of a geological theory; and a change of level by a single quarter of a mile, would destroy the vast majority of living animals, and create such a harvest of fossil remains, as would give abundant employment to a whole host of future speculators.

Now, we have two observations to offer on the said theory; one in the way of a humble addition, and the other in the way of an apology for it.

First, from the planets moving all nearly in circular orbits, it is more likely that they have done so from the very commencement of their revolutions, than that they started at first with very unequal eccentricities, and have been reduced to orbits of almost similar form by the shocks which each of them individually sustained from comets. Assuming, then, that originally the orbits were nearly circular, how comes it that they remain so, in spite of those numerous impulses, which the theory of Laplace, combined with the allegation of Cuvier, that the catastrophes on the earth have been frequent, necessarily implies? Whether the impulse be in the line of the earth's motion, which

it may very nearly be with a few of the comets, or whether it cross that line at a considerable angle, which would be the direction of the impulse with the great majority of them, still we cannot conceive, from the great velocity of the impelling body, how the planet can avoid receiving from the shock, and far more from the repetition of it, such a change in its eccentricity, as would have given us at this moment a planetary system made up of bodies moving in very variously elongated ellipses. The way of evading this objection, is to reduce the momentum of the comet, by assigning to it as small a density as will suit the purpose; but small as it may be, there is momentum enough, according to the hypothesis of Laplace, to change the position of the earth's axis. A repetition of such impulses upon the different planets in every conceivable variety of direction, would, in time, give rise to a very wide dissimilarity in their orbits; and the fact, that such a dissimilarity does not exist, militates against that indefinite antiquity, which the deifiers of matter ascribe to the present system.

But again, it does not appear to us, that the theory of Laplace is insufficient to account for the highly inclined position of strata, which may have been deposited horizontally. By the conceived impulse of a comet, the earth receives a tendency to a change of figure. This can only be produced by the motion of its parts, and a force acting on these parts is put into operation. Who will compute the strength of the impediment which this force may not overcome, or say in how far the cohesion of the solid materials on the surface of the globe will be an effectual resistance to it? May not this force act in the very way in which Cuvier expresses the operation of his catastrophe? May it not *break* and *overturn* the strata? And will it not help our conceptions to suppose that masses of water, struggling in the bowels of the earth for a more elevated position, may have force enough to burst their way through the solid exterior, and tainting and mingling with the old ocean, may annihilate all the marine animals of the former era? Of the flood of the book of Genesis, we read that the *fountains of the great deep* were broken up*, as well as that the windows of heaven were opened.

We feel vastly little either of confidence or satisfaction in any of these theories. It is a mere contest of probabilities;

* It is remarkable that the original word for the *deep* corresponds, according to Dr. Campbell, in one of its significations, with the New Testament *hades*, conceived to be situated in the interior of the earth.

and an actual and well-established testimony should be paramount to them all. We hold the testimony of Moses to supersede all this work of conjecture; and we shall presently take up the subject of that testimony, and inquire in how far it goes to confirm, or to falsify the speculations of this volume.

The qualifications of M. Cuvier as a comparative anatomist, give a high authority to his opinion on the nature of the fossil remains, and the kind of animals of which they form a part. His inquiries in this volume are confined to the remains of quadrupeds; and the most amusing, and perhaps the soundest argument in the whole book, is that by which he unfolds his method of constructing the entire animal from some small and solitary fragment of its skeleton. We were highly gratified with his discussion upon this subject, nor can we resist the desire of imparting the same gratification to our readers by the following extract:—

“Fortunately, comparative anatomy, when thoroughly understood, enables us to surmount all these difficulties, as a careful application of its principles instructs us in the correspondence and dissimilarity of the forms of organized bodies of different kinds, by which each may be rigorously ascertained from almost every fragment of its various parts and organs.

“Every organized individual forms an entire system of its own, all the parts of which mutually correspond, and concur to produce a certain definite purpose, by reciprocal reaction, or by combining towards the same end. Hence none of these separate parts can change their forms without a corresponding change on the other parts of the same animal, and consequently each of these parts, taken separately, indicates all the other parts to which it has belonged. Thus, as I have elsewhere shown, if the viscera of an animal are so organized as only to be fitted for the digestion of recent flesh, it is also requisite that the jaws should be so constructed as to fit them for devouring prey; the claws must be constructed for seizing and tearing it to pieces; the teeth for cutting and dividing its flesh; the entire system of the limbs, or organs of motion, for pursuing and overtaking it; and the organs of sense, for discovering it at a distance. Nature also must have endowed the brain of the animal with instincts sufficient for concealing itself, and for laying plans to catch its necessary victims.

“Such are the universal conditions that are indispensable in the structure of carnivorous animals; and every individual of that description must necessarily possess them combined together, as the species could not otherwise subsist. Under this general rule, however, there are several particular modifications, depending upon the size, the manners, and the haunts of

the prey for which each species of carnivorous animal is destined or fitted by nature ; and, from each of these particular modifications, there result certain differences in the more minute conformations of particular parts ; all, however, conformable to the general principles of structure already mentioned. Hence it follows, that in every one of their parts we discover distinct indications not only of the classes and orders of animals, but also of their genera, and even of their species.

“ In fact, in order that the jaw may be well adapted for laying hold of objects, it is necessary that its condyle should have a certain form ; that the resistance, the moving power, and the fulcrum, should have a certain relative position with respect to each other ; and that the temporal muscles should be of a certain size : The hollow or depression, too, in which these muscles are lodged, must have a certain depth ; and the zygomatic arch under which they pass, must not only have a certain degree of convexity, but it must be sufficiently strong to support the action of the masseter.

“ To enable the animal to carry off its prey when seized, a correspondent force is requisite in the muscles which elevate the head ; and this necessarily gives rise to a determinate form of the vertebræ to which these muscles are attached, and of the occiput into which they are inserted.

“ In order that the teeth of a carnivorous animal may be able to cut the flesh, they require to be sharp, more or less so in proportion to the greater or less quantity of flesh that they have to cut. It is requisite that their roots should be solid and strong, in proportion to the quantity and the size of the bones which they have to break in pieces. The whole of these circumstances must necessarily influence the development and form of all the parts which contribute to move the jaws.

“ To enable the claws of a carnivorous animal to seize its prey, a considerable degree of mobility is necessary in their paws and toes, and a considerable strength in the claws themselves. From these circumstances, there necessarily result certain determinate forms in all the bones of their paws, and in the distribution of the muscles and tendons by which they are moved. The fore-arm must possess a certain facility of moving in various directions, and consequently requires certain determinate forms in the bones of which it is composed. As the bones of the fore-arm are articulated with the arm bone or humerus, no change can take place in the form and structure of the former, without occasioning correspondent changes in the form of the latter. The shoulder-blade also, or scapula, requires a correspondent degree of strength in all animals destined for catching prey, by which it likewise must necessarily have an appropriate form. The play and action of all these parts require certain proportions in the muscles which set them in motion, and the impressions formed by these muscles must still farther determinate the forms of all these bones.

“ After these observations, it will be easily seen that similar conclusions may be drawn with respect to the hinder limbs of carnivorous animals,

which require particular conformations to fit them for rapidity of motion in general; and that similar considerations must influence the forms and connexions of the vertebræ and other bones constituting the trunk of the body, to fit them for flexibility and readiness of motion in all directions. The bones also of the nose, of the orbit, and of the ears, require certain forms and structures to fit them for giving perfection to the senses of smell, sight, and hearing, so necessary to animals of prey. In short, the shape and structure of the teeth regulate the forms of the condyle, of the shoulder-blade, and of the claws, in the same manner as the equation of a curve regulates all its other properties; and, as in regard to any particular curve, all its properties may be ascertained by assuming each separate property as the foundation of a particular equation; in the same manner a claw, a shoulder-blade, a condyle, a leg or arm bone, or any other bone, separately considered, enables us to discover the description of teeth to which they have belonged; and so also reciprocally we may determine the forms of the other bones from the teeth. Thus, commencing our investigation by a careful survey of any one bone by itself, a person who is sufficiently master of the laws of organic structure, may, as it were, reconstruct the whole animal to which that bone had belonged.

“ This principle is sufficiently evident, in its general acceptance, not to require any more minute demonstration; but when it comes to be applied in practice, there is a great number of cases in which our theoretical knowledge of these relations of forms is not sufficient to guide us, unless assisted by observation and experience.

“ For example, we are well aware that all hoofed animals must necessarily be herbivorous, because they are possessed of no means of seizing upon prey. It is also evident, having no other use for their fore-legs than to support their bodies, that they have no occasion for a shoulder so vigorously organized as that of carnivorous animals; owing to which they have no clavicles or acromion processes, and their shoulder-blades are proportionally narrow. Having also no occasion to turn their fore-arms, their radius is joined by ossification to the ulna, or is at least articulated by the *gynglymus* with the humerus. Their food being entirely herbaceous, requires teeth with flat surfaces, on purpose to bruise the seeds and plants on which they feed. For this purpose also, these surfaces require to be unequal, and are consequently composed of alternate perpendicular layers of hard enamel and softer bone. Teeth of this structure necessarily require horizontal motions, to enable them to triturate or grind down the herbaceous food; and, accordingly, the condyles of the jaw could not be formed into such confined joints as in the carnivorous animals, but must have a flattened form, correspondent to sockets in the temporal bones, which also are more or less flat for their reception. The hollows likewise of the temporal bones, having smaller muscles to contain, are narrower, and not so deep, &c. All these circumstances are deducible from each

other, according to their greater or less generality, and in such manner that some are essentially and exclusively appropriated to hoofed quadrupeds, while other circumstances, though equally necessary to that description of animals, are not exclusively so, but may be found in animals of other descriptions, where other conditions permit or require their existence.

“When we proceed to consider the different orders or subdivisions of the class of hoofed animals, and examine the modifications to which the general conditions are liable, or rather the particular conditions which are conjoined, according to the respective characters of the several subdivisions, the reasons upon which these particular conditions or rules of conformation are founded become less evident. We can easily conceive, in general, the necessity of a more complicated system of digestive organs in those species which have less perfect masticatory systems; and hence we may presume that these latter animals require especially to be ruminant, which are in want of such or such kinds of teeth; and may also deduce, from the same considerations, the necessity of a certain conformation of the œsophagus, and of corresponding forms in the vertebræ of the neck, &c. But I doubt whether it would have been discovered, independently of actual observation, that ruminant animals should all have cloven hoofs, and that they should be the only animals having that particular conformation; that the ruminant animals only should be provided with horns on their foreheads; that those among them which have sharp tusks, or canine teeth, should want horns, &c.

“As all these relative conformations are constant and regular, we may be assured that they depend upon some sufficient cause; and, since we are not acquainted with that cause, we must here supply the defect of theory by observation, and in this way lay down empirical rules on the subject, which are almost as certain as those deduced from rational principles, especially if established upon careful and repeated observation. Hence, any one who observes merely the print of a cloven hoof, may conclude that it has been left by a ruminant animal, and regard the conclusion as equally certain with any other in physics or in morals. Consequently, this single foot-mark clearly indicates to the observer the forms of the teeth, of the jaws, of the vertebræ, of all the leg-bones, thighs, shoulders, and of the trunk of the body of the animal which left the mark. It is much surer than all the marks of Zadig. Observation alone, independent entirely of general principles of philosophy, is sufficient to show that there certainly are secret reasons for all these relations of which I have been speaking.

“When we have established a general system of these relative conformations of animals, we not only discover specific constancy, if the expression may be allowed, between certain forms of certain organs, and certain other forms of different organs; we can also perceive a classified constancy

of conformation, and a correspondent gradation between these two sets of organs, which demonstrate their mutual influence upon each other, almost as certainly as the most perfect deduction of reason. For example, the masticatory system is generally more perfect in the non-ruminant hoofed quadrupeds than it is in the cloven-hoofed or ruminant quadrupeds; as the former possess incisive teeth, or tusks, or almost always both of these, in both jaws. The structure also of their feet is in general more complicated, having a greater number of toes, or their phalanges less enveloped in the hoof, or a greater number of distinct metacarpal and metatarsal bones, or more numerous tarsal bones, or the fibula more completely distinct from the tibia; or, finally, that all these enumerated circumstances are often united in the same species of animal.

“It is quite impossible to assign reasons for these relations; but we are certain that they are not produced by mere chance, because, whenever a cloven-hoofed animal has any resemblance in the arrangement of its teeth to the animals we now speak of, it has the resemblance to them also in the arrangement of its feet. Thus camels, which have tusks, and also two or four incisive teeth in the upper jaw, have one additional bone in the tarsus, their scaphoid and cuboid bones not being united into one; and have also very small hoofs with corresponding phalanges, or toe-bones. The musk animals, whose tusks are remarkably conspicuous, have a distinct fibula as long as the tibia; while the other cloven-footed animals have only a small bone articulated at the lower end of the tibia in place of a fibula. We have thus a constant mutual relation between the organs of conformations, which appear to have no kind of connexion with each other; and the gradations of their forms invariably correspond, even in those cases in which we cannot give the rationale of their relations.

“By thus employing the method of observation, where theory is no longer able to direct our views, we procure astonishing results. The smallest fragment of bone, even the most apparently insignificant apophysis, possesses a fixed and determinate character, relative to the class, order, genus, and species of the animal to which it belonged; insomuch, that when we find merely the extremity of a well-preserved bone, we are able, by careful examination, assisted by analogy and exact comparison, to determine the species to which it once belonged as certainly as if we had the entire animal before us. Before venturing to put entire confidence in this method of investigation in regard to fossil bones, I have very frequently tried it with portions of bones belonging to well-known animals, and always with such complete success, that I now entertain no doubt with regard to the results which it affords. I must acknowledge that I enjoy every kind of advantage for such investigations that could possibly be of use, by my fortunate situation in the Museum of Natural History; and, by assiduous researches for nearly fifteen years, I have collected skeletons of all the genera and sub-genera of quadrupeds, with those of many species in some

of the genera, and even of several varieties of some species. With these aids, I have found it easy to multiply comparisons, and to verify, in every point of view, the application of the foregoing rules."—Pp. 90-102.

Now, this is a most interesting specimen of M. Cuvier. It bespeaks the tone and the habit of a philosopher, and is well calculated to gain a favourable hearing, if not an authority, to all his other speculations. But it is quite true that a man may excel in one department of investigation, and fall short in another; and none more ready than the ante-Mosaical philosophers, who oppose him, to exclaim, that though M. Cuvier be a good anatomist, it does not follow that he is a geologist. Now, we profess to be neither the one nor the other. The science of our professional department is different from both, and all that we ask of the geological infidels of the day is, that they will do us the same justice in reference to their speculations that they take to themselves in reference to M. Cuvier. A man may be a good geologist, and be able to construct as good a system as the mineralogical appearances around him enable him to do. But this system is neither more nor less than the announcement of past facts, and geology forms only one of the channels by which we may reach them. But there are other channels, and the most direct and obvious of them all to the knowledge of the past, is the channel of history. The recorded testimony of those who were present or nearer than ourselves to the facts in question, we hold to be a likelier path to the information we are in quest of, than the inferences of a distant posterity upon the geological phenomena around them—just as an actual history of the legislation of old governments is a trustier document than an ingenious speculation on the progress and the principles of human society. You protest against the knife and demonstrations of the anatomist as instruments of no authority in your department. We protest against the hammer of the mineralogist and the reveries of the geologist, as instruments of no authority in ours. You think that Cuvier is very slender in geology, and that he has been most unphilosophically rash in leaving his own province, and carrying his confident imaginations into a totally different field of inquiry. We cannot say that you are very slender in the philosophy of history and historical evidence, for it is a ground you scarcely ever deign to touch upon. But surely it is a distinct subject of inquiry. It has its own principles, and its own probabilities. You must pronounce upon the testimony of Moses on appropriate evidence. It is the testimony of a wit-

ness nearer than yourselves to the events in question; and if it be a sound testimony, it carries along with it the testimony of a Being who was something more than an actual spectator of the creation. He was both spectator and agent. And yet all that mighty train of evidence which goes to sustain the revealed history of God's administrations in the world is by you overlooked and forgotten; and while you so readily lift the cry against the unphilosophical encroachment of foreign principles into your department, you make no conscience of elbowing your own principles into a field which does not belong to them.

But it is high time to confront the theory of our geologist with the sacred history—with a view both to lay down the points of accordancy, and to show in how far we are compelled to modify the speculation, or to disown it altogether.

First, then, it is so far well that Cuvier admits the very last catastrophe to have been so recent, and accomplished, too, like all his former catastrophes, by the agency of water. The only modification we have to offer here is, that whereas Cuvier represents it to be an operation of so violent a nature as to agitate and displace everything that was moveable—we guess from the history that an olive-tree was still standing, and not lying loosely on the ground, with part of its foliage. If we are correct in our assumption as to the specific gravity of the olive-tree, it would, if separated from the soil, have been borne up on the surface of the water—and in that case the circumstance of a leaf being recently plucked or torn from the tree, would have been no indication whatever of the waters being abated from off the earth.

Again, the researches of M. Cuvier present us with no fact militating against the recent creation of the human species. It has been said to be the subject of a recent discovery; but at the time of writing this volume, M. Cuvier could assert that no human remains had been hitherto discovered among the extraneous fossils. This he holds to be a decisive proof that man did not exist in those countries where the fossil bones of other animals are to be found. This is no proof, however, that he did not exist in some other quarters of the globe antecedent to the last or any given number of catastrophes. He may have been confined to some narrow regions which escaped the operation of the catastrophe, from which he issued out to repopulate the new-formed land; or, the fossil remains of the human species may exist in the bottom of the present ocean, and remain concealed from observation till some new catastrophe lay them open to the

inquirers of a future era. But this is all gratuitous, and must give way to the positive information of authentic history.

There is one very precious fruit to be gathered out of those investigations—an argument for the exercise of a creative power, more convincing, perhaps, than any that can be drawn from the slender resources of natural theism. If it be true that in the oldest of the strata no animal remains are to be met with, marking out an epoch anterior to the existence of living beings in the field of observation—if it be true that all the genera which are found in the first of the peopled strata are destroyed—if it be true that no traces of our present genera are to be met with in the early epochs of the globe,—how came the present races of animated nature into being? It is not enough to say that, like man, they may have been confined to narrower regions, and escaped the operation of the former catastrophes, or that their remains may be buried under the present ocean. Enough for our purpose, that they could not have existed from all eternity. Enough for us the fact, that each catastrophe has the chance of destroying, or does in fact destroy, a certain number of genera. If this annihilating process went on from eternity, the work of annihilation would long ago have been accomplished, and there is not a single species of living creatures that could have survived the multiplicity of chances for its extinction afforded by an indefinite number of catastrophes. If, then, there were no replacement of new genera, the face of the world would at this moment have been one dreary and unpeopled solitude; and the question recurs, how did this replacement come to be effected? The doctrine of spontaneous generation we believe to be generally exploded; and there is not a known instance of an animal being brought into existence, but by means of a previous animal of the same species. The transition of the genera into one another is most ably and conclusively contended against by the author before us, who proves them to be separated by permanent and invincible barriers. Between the one principle and the other the commencement of new genera is totally inexplicable on any of the known powers and combinations of matter, and we are carried upwards to the primary link which connects the existence of a created being with the fiat of the Creator.

But, generally speaking, geologists are not guilty of disowning the act of creation. It is in theorizing on the manner of the act (and that too in the face of testimony which they do not attempt to dispose of), that they make the most glaring de-

viation from the spirit and principles of the inductive philosophy. We have no experience in the formation of worlds. Set aside revelation, and we cannot say whether the act of creation is an instantaneous act, or a succession of acts; and no man can tell whether God made this earth and these heavens in a moment of time, or in a week, or in a thousand years, more than he can tell whether the men of Jupiter, if there be any such, live ten years or ten centuries. Both questions lie out of the field of observation; and it is delightful to think, that the very principle which constitutes the main strength of the atheistical argument, goes to demolish all those presumptuous speculations, in which the enemies of the Bible attempt to do away the authority of the sacred historian. 'The universe,' says Hume, 'is a *singular* effect;' and we, therefore, can never know if it proceeded from the hand of an intelligent Creator. But if the Creator takes another method of making us know, the very singularity of the effect is the reason why we should be silent when He speaks to us; and why we, in all the humility of conscious ignorance, should yield our entire submission to the information He lays before us. Surely, if without a revelation, the singularity of the effect leaves us ignorant of the nature of the cause, it leaves us equally ignorant of the *modus operandi* of this cause. If experience furnish nothing to enlighten us upon this question, 'Did the universe come from the hand of an intelligent God?' it furnishes as little to enlighten us upon the question, 'Did God create the universe in an instant, or did He do it in seven days, or did He do it in any other number of days that may be specified?' These are points which natural reason, exercising itself upon natural appearances, does not qualify us to know; and it were well if a maxim, equally applicable to philosophers and to children, were to come in here for our future direction, 'that what we do not know we should be content to learn;' and if a revelation, bearing every evidence of authenticity, undertakes the office of informing us, it is our part cheerfully to acquiesce, and obediently to go along with it.

On this principle we refuse to concede the literal history of Moses, or to abandon it to the fanciful and ever-varying interpretations of philosophers. We have to thank the respectable editor of this work, Mr. Jameson, for his becoming deference to the authority of the Jewish legislator, and his no less becoming and manly expression of it. But we cannot consent to the stretching out of the days, spoken of in the first chapter of

Genesis, into indefinite periods of time. We fear that the slower revolution of the earth round her axis, is too gratuitous to make the admission of it at all consistent with the just rules of philosophizing; and there is, therefore, no other alternative left to us, but to take the history just as it stands. We leave it to geologists to judge, whether our concluding observations allow them room enough for bringing about a consistency between the first chapter of Genesis and their theories. In the meantime, we assert that the history in this chapter, maintains throughout an entire consistency with itself; a consistency which would be utterly violated, if we offered to allegorize the days, or to take them up in any other sense than that in which they obviously and literally present themselves. What shall we make of the institution of the Sabbath, if we surrender the Mosaic history of the creation? Is it to be conceived, that the Jews would understand the description of Moses in any other sense than in the plain and obvious one? Is it to be admitted, that God would incorporate a falsehood in one of His commandments, or at least prefer a reason for the observance of it which was calculated to deceive, and had all the effect of a falsehood? We cannot but resist this laxity of interpretation, which, if suffered in one chapter of the Bible, may be carried to all of them, may unsettle the dearest articles of our faith, and throw a baleful uncertainty over the condition and the prospects of the species.

We have heard it preferred as an impeachment against the consistency of the Mosaic account, that the day and night were made to succeed each other antecedently to the formation of the sun. This is very true; but it was not antecedent to the formation of light; it was not antecedent to the division of the light from the darkness; it may not have been antecedent to the formation of luminous matter; and though all this matter was not assembled into one body till the fourth day, it may have been separated and made to reside in so much greater abundance in one quarter of the heavens than in the other, as to have given rise to a region of light and a region of darkness. Such an arrangement would, with the revolution of the earth's axis, give rise to a day and a night. Enough for the purpose of making out this succession, if the light formed on the first day was *unequally* dispersed over the surrounding expanse, though it was not till this light was fixed and concentrated in one mass, that the sun could be said to rule the day.

And here let it be observed, that it does not fall upon the

defenders of Moses to bring forward positive or specific proofs for the truth of any system reconcilable with his history, beyond the historical evidence of the history itself. A thousand systems may be devised, one of which only can be true, but each of which may be consistent with all the details of the book of Genesis. We cannot, and we do not offer any one of these systems as that which is to be positively received, but we offer them all as so many ways of disposing of the objections; and while upon us lies the bare task of proposing them, upon our antagonists lies the heavy work of overthrowing them all before they can set aside the direct testimony of the sacred historian, or assert that his account of the creation is contradicted by known appearances.

We crave the attention of our readers to the above remark; and, satisfied that the more they think of it, the more will they be impressed with its justness, we spare ourselves the task of bestowing upon it any further elucidation.

We conclude with adverting to the unanimity of geologists in one point—the far superior antiquity of this globe to the commonly received date of it, as taken from the writings of Moses. What shall we make of this? We may feel a security as to those points in which they differ, and, confronting them with one another, may remain safe and untouched between them. But when they agree, this security fails. There is no neutralization of authority among them as to the age of the world; and Cuvier, with his catastrophes and his epochs, leaves the popular opinion nearly as far behind him, as they who trace our present continent upward through an indefinite series of ancestors, and assign many millions of years to the existence of each generation.

Should the phenomena compel us to assign a greater antiquity to the globe than to that work of days detailed in the book of Genesis, there is still one way of saving the credit of the literal history. The first creation of the earth and the heavens may have formed no part of that work. This took place at the *beginning*, and is described in the first verse of Genesis. It is not said when this *beginning* was. We know the general impression to be, that it was on the earlier part of the first day, and that the first act of creation formed part of the same day's work with the formation of light. We ask our readers to turn to that chapter, and to read the first five verses of it. Is there any forcing in the supposition, that the first verse describes the

primary act of creation, and leaves us at liberty to place it as far back as we may; that the first half of the second verse describes the state of the earth (which may already have existed for ages, and been the theatre of geological revolutions) at the point of time anterior to the detailed operations of this chapter; and that the motion of the Spirit of God, described in the second clause of the second verse, was the commencement of these operations? In this case the creation of the light may have been the great and leading event of the first day; and Moses may be supposed to give us not a history of the first formation of things, but of the formation of the present system; and as we have already proved the necessity of direct exercises of creative power to keep up the generations of living creatures; so Moses may, for anything we know, be giving us the full history of the last great interposition, and be describing the successive steps by which the mischiefs of the last catastrophe were repaired.

I take a friend to see a field which belongs to me, and I give him a history of the way in which I managed it. In the beginning I enclosed that field. It was then in a completely wild and unbroken state. I pared it. This took up one week. I removed the great stones out of it. This took up another week. On the third week, I entered the plough into it: and thus, by describing the operations of each week, I may lay before him the successive steps by which I brought my field into cultivation. It does not strike me that there is any violence done to the above narrative, by the supposition that the enclosure of the field was a distinct and anterior thing to the first week's operation. The very description of its state after it was enclosed, is an interruption to the narrative of the operations, and leaves me at liberty to consider the work done after this description of the state of the field as the whole work of the first week. The enclosure of the field may have taken place one year, or even twenty years before the more detailed improvements were entered upon.

The first clause of the second verse is just such another interruption; and it is remarkable, that there is no similar example of it in describing the work of any of the following days, so as to divide one part of the day's work from the other. It is true, that, in some cases, it is said that God saw it to be good; but there is no imperfection ascribed to anything, as it resulted immediately from the creating power. It is always said to be good in that state in which it came directly out of His hand;

and if in the second verse, it is said of the earth, not that it was good, but that it was without form and void ; this may look not like a description of its state immediately after it came out of the hand of God, but of its state after one of those catastrophes which geologists assign to it. It is further remarkable, that there is a unity in the work of each of the five days. The work of the second day relates only to the firmament ; of the third day, to the separation of sea and land ; of the fourth day, to the formation of the celestial bodies ; of the fifth, to the creation of the sea ; and of the sixth, to that of land animals. This unity of work would be violated on the first day, if the primary act of creation were to form part of it ; and the uniformity is better kept up by separating the primary act from all the succeeding operations, and making the formation and division of light, the great and only work of the first day.

The same observation may apply to all the celestial bodies that are visible to this world. The creation of the heavens may have taken place as far antecedently to the details of the first chapter of Genesis, as the creation of the earth. It is evident, however, that if the earth had been at some former period the fair residence of life, she had now become void and formless ; and if the sun and moon and stars at some former period had given light, that light had been extinguished. It is not our part to assign the cause of a catastrophe which carried so extensive a destruction along with it ; but he were a bold theorist indeed, who could assert, that, in the wide chambers of immensity, no such cause is to be found. A thousand possibilities may be devised, each of which is consistent with the literal history of Moses ; and though it is not incumbent on the one party to bring forward any one of these possibilities in the shape of a positive announcement, each of them must be overthrown by the other before that history can be abandoned ; and it will be found, that while the friends of the Bible are under no necessity to depart from the sober humility of the inductive spirit, the charge of unphilosophical temerity lies upon its opponents.

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