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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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INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY,

WITH

PRELECTIONS ON HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY,

AND FOUR ADDRESSES DELIVERED IN THE

NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH.

BY THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D. LL.D.

VOL. II.

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INSTITUTES OF THEOLOGY.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

PART II.—ON THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.

CHAPTER VII.

ON FAITH, IN SOME OF ITS CONNEXIONS AND CONSEQUENCES.

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

2. But while bound on the testimony of an authentic and authoritative revelation to admit the fact of this connexion, even though utterly unable to comprehend the reason of it, it is a possible thing that Scripture may have given some partial information at least of the one, even as it has given entire and absolute information of the other. And besides, on the subject of the laws and the processes of human nature we have an in-

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

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

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

dience and faith under the two covenants. In the one, man's own obedience made the right. In the other, his faith does not make the right—it only receives it. It lays hold by an act of compliance on a ready-made right, and a ready-made righteousness. It sees no right in itself; but, looking out from itself, sees it in the sufferings and the obedience of another. The believer, in looking to that which forms the ground of his meritorious acceptance, looks not to his belief, but to that which is the object of his belief—not to any right or righteousness which faith has wrought in himself, but to the righteousness which Christ has wrought for him; on which righteousness, viewed apart from himself and external to himself, he rests as the ground of his justification before God. When faith is said to justify a man, it is just as the window enlightens an apartment—it is a mere organ of transmission through which the light of the Sun of Righteousness enters into the soul. When faith is said to enrich a man, it is just as the recipient hand of the mendicant appropriates the supply that is rendered to him by the bounty of an almoner. To the righteousness by which we are justified, faith just stands in the relation of the perceptive faculty by which we see, or the receptive faculty by which we lay hold of it. Faith in the evangelical, has neither the character nor the pretension of obedience in the legal economy. So unlike are the two economies in this respect, that that boasting which the law of works gives rise to, is said by the apostle to be wholly set aside and annihilated by the law of faith. Faith is not that which forms the meritorious condition of our salvation—it is only that which looks to or lays hold of the condition of our salvation, even the righteousness of Christ which is unto all and upon all who believe. To Him it ascribes all the merit, and all the glory of a sinner's justification. His righteousness is the objective thing which forms the whole matter and groundwork of a sinner's acceptance. The subjective thing, faith, is no more to be accredited therewith than the open window can be said to have originated the radiance of day, or the beggar's hand to have been the fountainhead of the wealth it has appropriated.

5. But there is another mischief connected with this same topic of faith, still more subtle in its operation, yet not less substantial than the one that we have now animadverted upon. By the one which we have just endeavoured to expose, we place the merit of salvation in a wrong quarter—in ourselves, instead of the Saviour. By the other, we look to a wrong quarter for the

comfort of salvation—to ourselves, instead of the Saviour; to the quarter, in fact, whence it constantly eludes our grasp, and in a direction where, from the very nature and constitution of the thing, we can never realize it. We should understand the delusion did we know how to discriminate aright between the objective and the subjective in Christianity—for then we should never be looking to the act of faith, when we ought to be looking to the object of faith. It has been well observed by Mr. Hume, that should one try to make himself acquainted with some one of his affections, as anger, on the moment of his turning his eye inwardly for that purpose, the thing he is in quest of takes flight and disappears. It evanishes so soon as the eye of consciousness is turned towards it. And the reason of this is, that to uphold any particular affection, there must be present to the mind, either in remembrance or in reality, the particular thing or object which excited it. One ceases to be angry so soon as he ceases to think of the provocation. Let there be an attempt, then, on the part of the mind, to study the phenomena of anger, and its attention is thereby transferred from the cause of the affection to the affection itself; and so soon as the attention is withdrawn from the cause, the affection, as if deprived of its needful aliment, dies away from the field of observation. There might be heat and indignancy enough in the spirit, so long as it brooded over the affront by which they have been originated. But whenever it proposes, instead of looking outwardly at the injustice, to look inwardly at the consequent irritation, it instantly becomes cool; and hence the difficulty of finding that which is dissipated by the very act of seeking after it, and which glides away like a spectre that is seen by fits and momentary glances, but recoils from the intense and steady observation of human eyes. The mind ceases to feel when it ceases to think of that which caused or perpetuates the feeling. But it ceases to think when it looks inwardly upon itself, and begins to analyze its own phenomena or its own processes. When I am thinking of my anger, I am not thinking of the man who made me angry; and the more that I concentrate my thoughts upon the one, with the view, perhaps, to a close and thorough inspection of it, the more I abstract my regards from the other. And thus, unlike to other subjects of examination, the more that I fix my attention upon its lineaments, the more do they fade away from my observation; and the darkness thickens, as it were, with every effort that is made of intenser discernment.

6. This applies to every mental state and affection whatever. Of the emotions it is quite obvious. To feel hatred, something must be present to the mind's eye that is hateful. To feel esteem, something must be present to the mind's eye that is estimable. To feel gratitude, or pity, or moral approbation, something must be within notice, and be noticed—a benefactor must be seen or thought of—a sentient creature in suffering must be adverted to—a virtuous person or a virtuous deed must have the eye of contemplation fastened upon it. These are the objects either of perception or memory at the time of the emotion in question; and the mind is the subject of the emotion. Now it is in turning from the object to the subject that the emotion vanishes. If it be true of the mind that it can only think of one thing at a time, then it cannot at the same instant look with intentness on that which is lovely, and reflect with intentness on the love that is felt for it. The love is felt when it is not reflected upon, and why? because the mind is otherwise employed, even in gazing upon that which is lovely. And again, when it is reflected upon, it is not felt, and why? because the lovely object is then out of view, the mind being turned away from it to look at the impression which it maketh upon itself. But then the impression fades into evanescence, even by the momentary leave which the mind takes of the object, and can only be renewed again by another visit, as it were—an act of recurrence that shall again bring the mind and the object into contact. It is when the eye looks openly and directly outward on external nature—it is only then that the whole scene of contemplation is pictured forth on the retina behind. But should the eye attempt to see this picture, and, in turning round upon its socket, withdraw the pupil from its original exposure to the objects that were before it, the retina would instantly be darkened, and all that was looked for there would cease to be. And thus it is with every attempt to explore the recesses of the mind. The desire, and the aversion, and the kindness, and the blame and the approval, and all the other feelings that spring up there, do so as it were at the touch of certain objects of which the mind is then taking cognizance; and when, passing from the objects, it proceeds to take cognizance of the feelings themselves, they go into dissipation, and leave a blank over which the eye of consciousness wanders and seeks in vain to be satisfied.

7. It is this fugitive character of the mental phenomena

which attaches a difficulty, not merely to the philosophy of the emotions, but also to the philosophy of taste and of the intellectual processes. Were the mind isolated from all converse with that which is without, there would be no phenomena of taste for classification, no principles to make up a philosophy, because there would be no facts, and it would be utterly in vain to look to the mind for its elementary conceptions of grandeur or of beauty, when they had never been called forth by its communions with external nature. It is when the eye rests on some scene of loveliness; or when, by an act of memory, some secondary reflection of it is held up to the eye of the inner man—it is then that the mind gives to it the responding homage of its grateful and delighted admiration. It is the presence, either by vision or by remembrance, of the objects of taste, which gives rise to the emotions of taste; and when the mind takes leave of the objects to look at the emotions, then, as at the turning of a mirror, the whole reflection hath disappeared. So long as the mind's gaze is outwardly from itself, all the internal principles of taste may be in vivid and busy operation; and the rapt enthusiast, while inhaling the utmost enjoyment from the scene that lies before him, may be not only in warmest but in most legitimate ecstasies—the inner tablet of his breast carrying upon it the accurate as well as bright exemplification of the whole philosophy of the subject. But when he turns himself round to look at that philosophy and to expound it, he looks upon a tablet that is blinded and bereft of all its characters. The chamber that he now tries to explore has become a camera obscura, whose opening has just been averted from the light of day and from the irradiations of that landscape, with the reflection of whose graces and whose glories it had been so recently illuminated.

8. For the mind to have within itself the phenomena of thought, it must be provided with something to think about. To have the phenomena of taste, there must be offered to its notice that which it admires. To have the phenomena of moral feeling, the virtues of life and character must be submitted to its contemplation; and never can it have the feeling of its own affections, without having had the objects of desire and hatred and esteem and fear set before it. It is the mind that is most practised among externals, that is most crowded with internal phenomena and processes; and the way to keep these processes in action, is not to descend into our own minds as into a sub-

terranean vault, having shut the door after us, but to keep open communication with the light of day, which can only be done by a perpetual interchange of notices between the world of feeling that is within, and the world of fact and of familiar experience that is around us.

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

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

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

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

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

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

14. The first congruity we shall notice between faith and salvation is grounded on the right moral disposition in which this faith commonly originates. Did we mean by this that the faith merited the salvation, we should be offering an express contradiction to a principle which, we trust, has been explicitly and distinctly enough affirmed by us already, that there is no such legal relation of desert whatever between faith and eternal life in the new economy, as there was between obedience and eternal life in the old economy. But there is nothing in this to preclude the expectation or the likelihood, that, in the administration of a moral and righteous Governor, the blessings which He has to confer should come in the train of what is morally good, rather

than in the train of what is morally evil. And so on this ground there seems a befitting propriety that salvation should be attached to belief, should be withheld from unbelief. It is in unison with many other analogies of nature and experience, that what we desire, and with earnestness labour for, that we should obtain. Now when the conscience-stricken sinner is visited with the desire of his salvation, he makes diligent inquisition into the means and methods of realizing it. Desire induces attention. Attention brings the mind into contact with the subject and its evidences. The studies and the prayers of moral earnestness are followed up by the consummation of a discovery. He who describes this process realizes in his own person the fulfilment of the saying—that he who seeketh findeth; and it is surely a more likely thing that salvation should be come at through such a medium, than through a medium of indolence and unconcern; that he who, all awake to the personal importance of the subject, has arrived at faith as the result of a serious and sustained inquiry, should find it the stepping-stone to eternal blessedness, than that eternal blessedness should be the lot of him who has never been awakened, and felt no such interest or alarm as to prompt any inquiry upon the subject; or of him who repudiated the whole contemplation, and turned away from the offered light because he loved the darkness better, and would persist in the deeds and the desires of iniquity. There is a moral evil in unbelief, which our Saviour Himself assigns as the principle of the condemnation that rests upon it. On the other hand, faith has a moral origination in the desirousness of a heart bent on being right with God, which is altogether in keeping with the moral salvation in which it terminates, with the pure and virtuous character of that heaven to which it conducts the inquirer.

15. But again, there is another, and we hold a still more essential congruity in this connexion between faith and salvation. Faith recognises the sacrifice which has been made for the sins of the guilty; faith recognises that righteousness of Christ, in virtue of which we obtain a title to the rewards of eternity; faith recognises the reparation which has been made for a broken law, and the consistency of the sinner's acceptance with the truth, and justice, and dignity of the Lawgiver. We cannot imagine how, without those recognitions, the sinner can find admittance into heaven, unless by forcing his way to it over the fallen majesty and the dishonoured attributes of heaven's Sovereign. We cannot see how he can partake aright in the

solemn services of heaven, unless his reverence for heaven's high sanctity be upholden. We cannot conceive of any being, that he is fit to join in the adorations of the upper sanctuary, who is not fully possessed by a sense of the unbroken authority of the Godhead—the untarnished lustre of all the graces and perfections which belong to Him. Till the pardoned rebel can find entrance there, it seems indispensable he should know that though forgiveness has been awarded to him, it is such a forgiveness as preserves inviolate the security of heaven's throne, and the high imperial state of Him who sitteth thereon. Now this he can only know through a knowledge and belief of the gospel propitiation. He is justified by faith in this; but it is by faith in this that he beholds the truth and righteousness of God to be justified; and unless he can look upon these with unabated reverence, we positively see not how he can import into heaven a sense of heaven's sacredness. The exquisite skilfulness of the gospel lies in this, that the sinner is thereby delivered from the fear of terror, yet without diminishing or doing away from his heart the fear of deepest reverence. When God is seen by him through faith, in the face of Christ, He is seen in the brightness of His mercy to the sinful; but it is a mercy so accompanied with holiness and truth, so enshrined, as it were, in the high honours of a vindicated law, as to throw over the character of the Godhead a deeper sacredness than before. In the halo which is over the mercy-seat of Christianity, there is a radiance of all the attributes—along with the love which gladdens every believer's heart, there is an august and awful majesty to solemnize it; and while, in this wondrous spectacle, we behold peace to the sinner—yet, seen as it is through the mystery of a world's atonement, we there, too, behold the evil of sin in most fell and appalling demonstration.

16. But perhaps the highest and most important congruity of all in this connexion which obtains between a sinner's faith and his salvation, is that he is sanctified by faith. It is faith which at the first sets him on a hopeful career of activity; for, anterior to faith, he was either paralyzed by terror, or chilled into inactivity by despair of ever reaching the perfection of the law, or satisfied himself with a low standard of obedience. Faith brings him into contact with moral influences which had no place, and could have no place before, with the love of God, whom he once viewed with indifference, or spurned as the object of dread and of aversion, but now regards with the confidence and affection of

a son to his reconciled Father—with gratitude to the Saviour, who gave up His life unto the death for him, and to whom in return he gives up his own life in absolute and entire dedication—with the strengthening aids of that Spirit who is promised to them who believe, and whose office it is to begin and to perfect the work of moral renovation—with the prospect of a heaven, the very anticipation of which, if it please and elevate the heart, is a virtuous sentiment, for it is a heaven of virtue; and he who carries the hope of it in his bosom purifies himself, even as all its exercises are pure—lastly, with all the prospects and all the encouragements of Scripture on the side of new obedience—for faith binds itself to the whole testimony of God, and proceeds not on the partial but the universal truth of His inspired record. It limits not itself to but one article—to the truth which quiets the forebodings of guilt, while regardless of the truth which announces the necessity and awakens the ambition of universal holiness. With a whole faith in a whole Bible, it expatiates with open eye over the length and breadth of the volume, and so cannot miss this greatest and highest of its disclosures—that to raise our prostrate nature from the ruin into which it has fallen, and by a new moral creation to make man the perfect and the holy creature that he once was, is the great object of the economy under which we sit. So indispensable is the connexion between faith and salvation, that one sees not how the moral salvation of the New Testament can be realized without it; and, on the other hand, it seems a great and manifest propriety, that the principle which ushers all these influences into the moral system, should be the principle which ushers him who owns it into heaven.

CHAPTER VIII.

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

1. THE controversy respecting faith and works has given the impression, that obedience holds but a very secondary and subordinate place in the evangelical system. Nay, after having refused to it all share in a sinner's justification, some are at a loss to imagine what precise character, or what significance can

be assigned to it at all. Because obedience is of no use in helping to make out a title-deed to heaven, the conclusion with many is that it is of no use whatever. Because now discarded from the place it wont to have under the legal economy, they are at a loss where to find a place for it under the gospel economy. There is a felt puzzle, a felt obscurity upon this subject, in many an understanding; and the conception is, that if you deny to human virtue the power of earning the rewards of a blissful immortality, just as an earthly wage is earned by the faithful industry of a servant—then virtue becomes a matter of no account in religion; and the righteousness of man, superseded as it is represented to be by the righteousness of Christ, may be as well set aside from Christianity altogether.

2. Nevertheless, human virtue has an undoubted place in Christianity; and there is nothing contrary to this, in the position that we are justified by faith alone. For what is this faith, of which some imagine that it casts virtue utterly into the shade, and reduces it to a thing of no estimation? It is belief in the testimony of God, and, of course, belief in the truth of all which is included within the limits of that testimony. There can be no real faith in any saying of the Bible, resting on the ground that God is the author of that book, which does not extend to all its sayings, and does not consent to the truth of all. If in virtue of faith you reckon it a faithful saying, that God hath set forth His Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the world; you will also, and in virtue of the same principle, reckon it a faithful saying, that God hath set Him forth an example that we should walk in His steps. Faith is represented by the orthodox as the channel through which the righteousness of Christ passes, as it were, into contact with the soul, and invests the whole man with the garment of acceptance. But it should ever be remembered of this same faith, that it is an open channel, through which every lesson of the Bible passes in like manner, and works its appropriate effect on the mind of the honest disciple, who travels over the full length and breadth of the land, and gives a whole faith to a whole testimony. When an alarm is felt lest the doctrine of justification by faith should lead to licentiousness, it is forgotten that a partial faith is not a real faith; and, on the other hand, that if the faith be universal as the testimony, then it cannot admit the tenet of a justification by our faith, without admitting the tenet of a judgment by our works, and that unless we repent we shall perish. By attaching the privilege of justi-

fication to faith, it is attached to that which, in every instance where it really exists, opens a door of entrance for every doctrine and declaration of that Scripture which is profitable not for comfort only, but for warning and reproof and instruction in righteousness. Had the justification been annexed to any other act or property of the human spirit, then I can imagine how it might have been appropriated by one who, after all, shall be found to have made but a very lame and imperfect preparation for heaven. But by being annexed to faith, it never can be realized but in conjunction with a full admission of all the essential truths of the gospel, and, of course, the influence of these truths on the affections and practical feelings of our nature. I can fancy a man to read these words, "unless ye repent ye shall perish," and yet to care no further for his repentance. But not the man who in good earnest believes these words; for then most assuredly he would pause and tremble, and give himself no rest, till the work of repentance was begun and was going forward unto perfection. I can conceive a man to read these words, "without holiness no man shall see God," yet without one effort or aspiration after holiness; but still not the man who in earnest believes the words, else he would proceed on the awful alternative, and prosecute the way of holiness to escape a ruined and undone eternity. Or, again, I can conceive him to read these words, "Be not deceived: neither covetous, nor extortioners, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor unrighteous persons, shall inherit the kingdom of God," and yet recklessly and securely indulge himself in all these varieties of wickedness; but still, as before, not the man who *bona fide* believes them, else he would flee from the present wickedness, in the full assurance, that, unless he did so, he could not flee from the coming wrath. And so when justification and belief are made to go together, the privilege is conjoined with that which ushers into the heart, and thence pours forth upon the history, all the moral influences and effects which belong to the truths of God's revelation. This faith, in fact, is the best guarantee for a man's Christianity being co-extensive with the Christianity of the record. It may be regarded as the duct of conveyance, through which all that the hand of God hath graven on the tablet of revelation, passes into the inner man, and is there graven on the fleshly tablet of the heart—so as to make the Christianity of every genuine believer a full and a fair transcript of the Christianity that is in the New Testament.

3. This is not enough reflected on. Should a man be rejoicing in his fancied exemption from the punishment of sin, while living in the practice and under the power of it; and such a man be appealed to as evidence against the doctrine of justification by faith; I would reply by questioning the reality of his faith. I would demonstrate that it was partial, and I would insist upon this as the test of its being null. I would affirm the impossibility of a man really believing in one part of Scripture while he rejected, or even while he was heedless of another part. What is true of the corporeal is just as true of the mental eye. It is not within the limits of possibility or nature for a man to see one visible object, and not, with his open eye and looking at it, to see another visible object within the field of view and immediately beside the former one. This is not a matter that is within the power of his jurisdiction or his will. There is an organic necessity, that, while he is looking full and open to the one, he must see the other also; and this is not more true of the material landscape than of the moral or spiritual landscape spread before him in the Bible. He cannot, if he would, behold, truly and actually behold, the truth of one clause, while he blinks another that is immediately in contact with it; and often are the danger of abuse, and the corrective of that abuse, to be found within the limits of the same sentence. If made to rejoice that there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, he, in the very same glance of the eye which directed him to this passage, is reminded that they who are in Christ Jesus walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. If led to repose in the security that Christ is exalted to give the remission of sins, he cannot even connect the first and the last of this proposition without having to travel in sight over another as indispensable a constituent of the Christian salvation; and the whole runs thus:—Christ is exalted at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins. If he in one place read of salvation through the belief of the truth, he can only make this out by traversing a few intermediate words which he cannot overleap; and from which words he will gather that the salvation of the gospel is through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth. If he be lulled into tranquillity when he reads in another place, that Christ gave Himself for us, he has only to complete the sentence that he may be raised into action; for He gave Himself for us, it is said, to redeem us from all iniquity, and

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

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

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

5. Now, we admit that much which has been said upon this subject is at one with the phenomena of the human constitution, and with the findings of experimental religion. The moral dynamics, if I may so term it, of the gospel, are in exquisite accordance with the subject mind on which it is brought to bear. There is not a doctrine of Christianity which, when admitted into the belief, does not tend to moralize and medicate the whole nature ; and we doubt not, in particular, that faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ has in it an efficacy and a charm by which to renovate the whole man into a state of personal righteousness. Still we do not think of this derivative process, that it furnishes the readiest or most effectual refutation of the charge of Antinomianism. We have that refutation at first hand in the Scriptures. No demonstration made out, however soundly, by the ingenuity of man, can have in it the conclusive

force which belongs to an express testimony of God. The authority of any such reasoning as that to which we have alluded can never equal, and far less can it supersede, the authority of a Bible quotation. We thus arrive by a shorter, and, we think, a surer way, at the refutation of this alleged Antinomianism. The same Bible which tells us of justification by faith in the righteousness of Christ, tells us also of the indispensable need, ere heaven can be ours, of a personal righteousness of our own. How can faith draw any vitiating influence to the heart from the first of these passages, when, if it have any being at all, it must recognise a co-ordinate authority and truth in the second of these passages? That faith which is but the semblance of belief, may, from that exclusiveness which is the mark of its nullity, imbibe a moral poison from isolated passages of the Bible; but a whole faith, which attaches itself to the whole testimony, never can. The Bible itself will furnish the best checks, the best counteractives, to the mischief which might result from the perversion of its own doctrines. Instead of finding an antidote in the result of some painful and lengthened excogitation, we shall find it lying palpably before our view on the face of the record. It needs but a simple acquiescence, not in one but in all its sayings, to be armed against the mischief of which we stand in dread. Let us receive the various lessons of Scripture in the spirit of a little child; and if we feel an emphatic comfort in the saying, that Christ is set forth as a propitiation, we shall feel as emphatic a warning in such sayings as that Christ is our Master and our Judge, and is set forth as an example that we should follow His steps.

6. I would rest the vindication of our doctrine from an immoral tendency, not on the remote conclusions of any reasoning, however unexceptionable; but, laying an immediate hold on this one testimony and that other of the Scripture, I would ask, How is it possible that the faith, through which, after all, it is that the righteousness of Christ is appropriated by the believer, can let in any depraving influence along with it—when, if it be faith at all, it must let in every threat and every solemn denunciation to be found in Scripture against the children of iniquity, and more especially against the self-deceptions of those who would turn the grace of God into licentiousness, and count the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? And here I may advert to another method, the worst that can be imagined, in which the expounders of Christian truth would protect the minds of those

whom they address from the abuses to which the doctrine is liable. Instead of doing this by calling forth to view other doctrines and other declarations from the face of the record, which would effectually neutralize the whole apprehended mischief of the doctrine in question, they would give a moderate and reduced view of the doctrine itself. More especially, in the article of justification by faith alone, they would veil as much as possible from observation the last word of it; they would fain admit human virtue to a share in this justification; they would partition the matter between the righteousness of Christ and the righteousness of man—making vague that which Scripture has made clear and determinate, and casting a haze over its limits and lines of demarcation. It is not by veiling any one part of Scripture that you neutralize the mischief; but it is by unveiling the whole of it. Let Scripture be fully and fearlessly expounded, and we may, with all safety, trust to itself for the effectual correction of any abuse that may have arisen from a partial and limited contemplation of it. The protection which some would seek by the cancelment of parts of the truth, is far better secured by the unreserved exposure of it in all its entireness. It is thus I would neither mince nor mitigate the apostolic doctrine of justification by faith alone; and I would have you to avoid all the shuffling, and the mixing, and the wretched policy of fast and loose, which have been practised in this doctrine. The deliverance is absolute and unqualified in Scripture. I would make it as absolute and as unqualified from the pulpit. Human virtue has positively no place in your title to heaven; it being the righteousness of Christ, even of Him who trod the winepress alone, when of the people there were none with Him, which of itself, and without one particle of addition or of aid from any other quarter, has completed the title-deed. * We deny not, nay, on proper time and occasion we shall most strenuously affirm, that human virtue has a place, an indispensable and high place, in Christianity—only we are not to seek for it in the Christian's right to an inheritance of bliss and glory. It forms no part of the purchase-money by which he acquires a property in heaven, though essential to the preparation by which he is qualified to enjoy it. In the claim for heaven, it is of no account; in the indispensable character for heaven, it is all in all.

7. We have only room for one observation more. Though there can be no special faith in any one of the sayings of Scripture without the principle that would lead to a general faith in

all the sayings, yet we must not overlook the distinct connexion which there is between each special faith and its special influence, or between the special faith and its special fulfilment. I wish I could make myself understood here—for I feel strongly the importance of the matter on which I am now treating. It receives illustration from the history of one of our Saviour's miracles. When the applicant requested the cure of his particular disease, he proceeded, we have no doubt, on a general confidence in the power of Christ. And he was met by the question, *Believest thou that I am able to do this?* It was not required of him at the time whether he believed in the gospel—how far he conceived the ability of his Saviour to extend—or if he thought He was able to do all things; but whether he believed Him able to do the special thing that he prayed for; and according to this, his special faith, so was it specially done unto him. The cure stood connected with the faith, not however with the general, but the special faith—the act of the mind which preceded the fulfilment, being just as distinct and specific as the fulfilment itself was. Now, we hold this to be a universal law in the economy of the gospel. A special faith in the truth of one Bible saying, we hold to be inseparable from a general faith in the truth of all the sayings—yet, though inseparable, they are not identical; and what we affirm is, that the special benefit to which any special saying has reference, stands immediately connected, not with the general faith in all Scripture, but with the special faith in that one distinct and particular truth of Scripture. For example, an atonement is made good to us, not immediately in virtue of our general assent to Scripture, but immediately in virtue of our special assent to that doctrine of Scripture: and, accordingly, we read of propitiation through faith in His blood. In like manner do we realize the benefit of the imputation, by a distinct act of faith in the efficacy of the righteousness of Christ for this special end. . And so of the atonement in general we would say, that it is not by a comprehensive act of faith, in the very generality of which the virtue of Christ's obedience and His death may be altogether lost sight of—it is not thus that its benefits are realized by the believer; but it is by that pointed act of attention and faith which rests on the special object of Christ both serving and suffering in our stead, in the contemplation of which object we are led to associate, with the confident sense of our forgiveness, the profoundest homage both to the law and to the Lawgiver. We feel that this

view of the matter would have saved the defenders of orthodoxy from the fatigue of many a fruitless and elaborate argument. For example, in proving that we are sanctified by the faith as well as justified by the faith, they have attempted to educe the special effect of sanctification from that special faith whose proper object is our justification; and so tell us of the holy influence which lies in the sacrifice of Christ for purifying the hearts of all who believe in it. Now this, though true, is not the whole truth respecting our sanctification, and the power which belongs to faith of working it upon our characters and lives. A special act of faith in the sacrifice is not the only, perhaps not the principal act concerned in the process. There is an act of faith in the saying, that without holiness no man shall see God; and so of many other acts, all of which enter into the explanation of the way in which faith sanctifies every disciple whom it actuates. And so of the habit of living by the powers of the world to come, which, if connected with faith, must mean our faith in the doctrine of immortality. The man who walks by faith and not by sight—what is the special object on which this faith terminates? He looks not to the things which are seen and are temporal, but to the things which are not seen and eternal. By thus connecting all these special faiths with their special fulfillments, we might have arrived, without any straining or any mysticism, at a more distinct explanation of the mighty power ascribed to this principle in the New Testament.

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

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

9. Should any then be cherishing a sense of forgiveness, because of the efficacy that lies in the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin—this he can only do legitimately, in virtue of believing the statement to that effect which he has met with in the Bible. But if he do believe this statement, then believes he that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God ; and he also believes that unless he repent he shall perish ; and he believes, that they who are in Christ, and to whom there is no condemnation, walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit ; and he believes, that on a day of reckoning every man shall be dealt

with, and shall be judged according to his works. He lies open to the influence of one and all of these passages; and we affirm that the evil which results from the confinement of our view to any one saying of Scripture, is best counteracted by all these sayings being brought forward, and co-ordinately, to bear on the mind of the Christian scholar and the Christian inquirer. It is not by the single influence of any one truth, traced downward, as it were, through a derivative process to its final effects on the heart and history, that the morality of the faith is best vindicated. It is by an enumeration of all the truths which, as well as that one, enter into the creed of every honest believer. There is a distortion in that man's Christianity who concentrates his regards on but some separate testimony of the Bible, and the way to rectify this distortion is just to ply him with the whole testimony. And thus it is that the man who, on legitimate grounds, has the most triumphant assurance of the faith among all his fellows, is at the same time the most signalized above them all by his resolute avoidance of moral evil, and the most aspiring in the pursuit of supreme moral excellence—the most strenuous in his conflicts with the power of that sin, from whose condemnation he is now altogether freed—the most assiduous in all the tasks and the toils of Christian obedience.

10. Before proceeding to describe or to characterize the nature of that obedience, we may advert for a moment to the reflex or the reciprocal influence which faith and obedience have upon each other. We think that the principles of the argument which we now employ might help to explain that remarkable process so often announced to us in the New Testament, in virtue of which he who, on the one hand, is strongest in the faith, is also the busiest at the work of obedience; and conversely, he, on the other hand, who is most diligent in the prescribed obedience of the gospel, is also the clearest and the most confident and the best established in its faith. Whether we can explain it or not, the fact is undeniable, that there is a connexion between obedience and light on the one hand, and also a connexion between disobedience and spiritual darkness on the other. The truth is, that it is the same with the eye of the mind and the eye of the body. We cannot clearly or distinctly see with either of them any one object of contemplation at the moment of our endeavouring to blink some other object which lies contiguous to it. We can have no strong or steadfast conviction of any one doctrine in the Bible, while we try to stifle the impression,

or to hide from ourselves the truth of certain other doctrines wherewith it is intermingled. The indecisive and vacillating and double-minded habit of him who would receive one part of Scripture, while he would shrink from the very sight, and, still more, from the application of other parts, must have a very darkening and distorting effect on the whole of his mental vision in reference to Christianity. It is only when the eye is single that the whole body is full of light, or, in other words, when it gives one and the same consistent reception to all the parts of the Divine testimony. A man may be conceived to rejoice when he gives credit to the declaration—He who cometh unto Christ shall not be cast out. But if still living in wickedness or in sin, it must check his joy when he meets with the other declaration—That he who cometh unto Christ forsakes all. With both these declarations full in his eye, he could not believe himself to have any part in the one while he lived in practical neglect of the other. He may by an act of unnatural violence cleave to the first of these sayings, and put forth the second from his attention altogether. But few minds could bear to have this force put upon them; and in these few, the result, after all, of this disingenuous abstraction from certain offensive parts of the testimony, would be fancy and not faith. But, in general, the Antinomian confidence breaks down under the power of so many Scripture warnings, which make it impossible, but in rare instances, for a man to combine the hope of a future heaven with the purpose and the habit of a present sinfulness. By putting away a good conscience, one will sooner or later make shipwreck of his faith. And so it is, that, in the vast majority of cases, the wilful transgressor must live without the light or comfort of the gospel. The experience of Augustine is in beautiful accordance with this moral phenomenon. He strained hard after the faith of Christianity, understanding that his salvation was suspended on it. He knew that if he could but place his reliance on the propitiation by Christ, according to his reliance so would it be done unto him. But there was a master-appetite which tyrannized over him, and this was the obstacle in his way. He could not at one and the same time fetch comfort from one set of sayings, while he took no warning from another set of sayings. He could not rejoice in the hope of forgiveness, while the call of repentance was unheeded by him; and so it was that the sinful indulgence, while he continued the slave of it, darkened to his view all the promises of the gospel. It was in

the act of quitting his sin that he felt the radiance of Christianity gather upon his soul. His faith from that moment became bright and steadfast, and just because now it was a whole faith in a whole testimony. So long as there was one thing which he would not forsake, he made a thousand unsuccessful attempts at comfort by coming unto Christ; but all was in vain, because made in the face of the Scripture declaration, that he who cometh unto Christ must forsake all. It was that one vice which stood between him and his enlargement, and not till he came to the full and the honest purpose of renouncing it, was that which letteth taken out of the way. The lights of conscience and of faith united into one consistent harmony. The obscuration that hung over the soul was dispersed when it broke loose from the chain of its only remaining idolatry; and so far from the faith of Augustine leading to licentiousness, it was only on bidding conclusive adieu to his licentiousness that he became established in the faith.

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

12. We have already said, that, in order to guard any doctrine against the abuses to which it is exposed, we are not to

reduce or attenuate the doctrine ; but, while rendering it in all its fulness, we are also to bring forward, and that with the very prominency which they have in the record, the other doctrines and declarations of Scripture. We are not, for example, to lay any mitigation whatever on the doctrine of our being justified by faith alone, and that faith resting on the atonement and righteousness of Christ, as on the whole the only foundation both of pardon and of acceptance with God ; but we must give all the doctrines of Scripture the benefit of this principle, and partition the application of it fairly and equally between them. Now you must be aware of a shrinking and sensitive fear, on the part of the orthodox, lest by preaching morality to the people, you encourage what they call the natural legality of the human heart, or lead them to repose on their own merit as the basis of their justification before God. Well, I would not, by way of preventing this abuse, give them one whit less of morality, or abate in the slightest degree the strenuousness and frequency wherewith I urged it as the indispensable preparation, nay, as in itself an integral part of the heaven of the New Testament. But telling them that their right of entry there is secured by the obedience of Christ, I would at the same time tell them, and with as much earnestness as if even this right depended on it, that without their own obedience they would infallibly fall short of heaven's preferments and heaven's joys. To guard against the perversion that has now been instanced, I would not refrain from urging their sanctification, in all its details and all its familiar and everyday varieties ; I would only tell them what the precise function of the sanctification was ; and this I should, in fact, be doing, when I presented to their notice the other doctrine, that while their preparation for heaven lay in their own righteousness, their plea for heaven lay exclusively and entirely in the righteousness of Christ. After having conceded to the alarmists about orthodoxy, that we should not keep back the doctrine of justification, they must allow us not to keep back the doctrine of sanctification either. A whole Scripture is, in fact, the best corrective against any abuses to which a partial Scripture is liable ; and we therefore call upon you, that, while as strenuous in sound doctrine as the apostles were before you—you at the same time be as earnest in the exposition of duty—as minutely practical and as closely applicable to all the varieties of life and experience—as they were.

CHAPTER IX.

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

1. AFTER having abundantly demonstrated that there is no dispensation from obedience under the gospel any more than there is under the law, we may now enter on the consideration of its distinctive character and spirit. The matter of the commandment is the same in both economies; but that the respective disciples of it are differently actuated is evident from various passages of the New Testament. In one place, Christians are said to serve no longer in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit; and we may gather from various places, that service in the spirit of bondage is wholly a distinct thing from service in the spirit of adoption. And there is a remarkable transition spoken of which takes place in respect to the law, when a man embraces the faith of Christianity. Anterior to this, he looks on the law as written upon tables of stone, whence it frowns condemnation, because of his fruitless attempts to obey its high requisitions; but posterior to this, the law is written on the fleshly tablets of his heart—and so, with his affections and his will enlisted on the side of obedience, his duty becomes his delight, instead of being, as before, the drudgery of an over-awed and reluctant slave. We cannot imagine a greater revolution in a man's character than when that becomes a thing of congenial taste which went to be a compulsory task-work; and the same law which was formerly a law of constraint, is rejoiced in as the law of liberty. It were surely an important analysis to discriminate aright between the servile obedience of the law and the spontaneous obedience of the gospel. The comparison will be found most honourable to Christianity, and to Christianity in that peculiar form of it which has been denominated the evangelical system. That orthodoxy, of which many conceive as if it had divorced morality from religion altogether, will be found not only to have heightened its importance, but inconceivably to have refined and exalted its character. Virtue is purified by it from all its sordidness; and instead of the purchase-money for heaven, is represented as

heaven itself, or as the constituting essence of its beatitude and its glory.

2. There are many who think they do homage to virtue when they impugn the doctrine of justification by faith; and that it has a higher place of consequence in their religious system, which represents a blissful eternity as the result of their doing, instead of being the result of their believing. In their imagination, virtue is the work by which heaven is earned in the shape of wages; and I think it may with all safety be affirmed, that, along with this, there is the very general imagination of the wages being a something distinct from the work. In the earthly relationship between a master and a servant, the service is one thing, but the reward is another, and in general a wholly dissimilar thing—insomuch that it would be held a very strange remuneration, if, in return for the first piece of service, it were proposed just to impose another and more laborious piece of service; or that, because he had done one thing so well, he must just get additional and more things to do. No doubt the customary effect when one is expert and faithful in the employment which has been allotted to him, is, that more of that employment is required from his hands; and he is pleased that it should be so. But most assuredly it is not the employment which yields him so much satisfaction, but a something given in return for it, and distinct from the employment. He is pleased that more work should be put into his hands—not, however, for the pleasure he has in the performance of the work, but for the pleasure he has in the payment that is made for it. If punctual, and honest, and able in the execution of his task, he may look for other and similar tasks being required of him; but this is not what he ultimately looks to. It is not the pleasure which he has in the exercise that prompts his assiduity, but the pleasure he has in the equivalent which is bestowed upon him, and which equivalent is a something addressed to the pure selfishness of his nature—the food that subsists him, or the lodging and raiment that shelter him, or the luxuries that regale him, or the money that purchaseth all things. This is the moving force that sets our servants, and tradesmen, and functionaries of all sorts in civil society, on the discharge of their respective obligations. And this, with all the inveteracy of a settled habit, is the main and moving principle of obedience, under the legal economy of—Do this and live. When a man works for heaven as for wages, he conceives of heaven as distinct from the

work—not as a place whose happiness consists in the joys of obedience, but as a place whose happiness consists in the compensations which there await him for the toils of obedience. In the estimation of every earthly servant, the wages are better than the work—that which is earned better than that which earned it. And so, under the legal economy, heaven stands forth to the eye of the imagination, not as virtue, but as something better than virtue. In other words, principle under this system degenerates into prudence; and the service of God becomes a thing of concentrated and absorbing selfishness.

3. If virtue be the price, and heaven be a remuneration distinct from the price, then the end that we propose to ourselves in the work of obedience, is not heaven because of its moral but heaven because of its intellectual, or heaven because of its physical enjoyments. We believe that in the popular imagination of heaven, the physical will be found greatly to predominate; and there is no saying how much the prospects, even of those professing Christianity, are tinged with the idea of a sensual paradise. Into our vague and indefinite conception of its happiness, there by no means generally enters the happiness of virtuous affection, or the delight which is necessarily and immediately felt in the service of God. We figure to ourselves a heaven of splendour, and of spaciousness, and of melody—all fitted to regale not the spiritual, but the sentient nature of man; and what gives a more decidedly physical character to our notions of the upper sanctuary is, that we are sure to associate with our admittance there a secure and everlasting exemption from the agonies of hell. Now, if to us the main charm of heaven be, not its psalmody, or its sacredness, or its charities, or its seraphic adorations, but its freedom from the sore inflictions of the place of condemnation—then it matters not whether the moving force of our obedience be to obtain deliverance from physical suffering, or to obtain the enjoyment of physical gratifications. Either way in working for such a heaven, we are working not for the moral, but for the physical; and the wages we look to are just as distinct from the labour that we are rendering, as in any mercenary contract of an earthly trade, or an earthly service. Now, this inserts a vitiating flaw into the whole character of our obedience. It so taints and transforms as to annihilate its virtuousness. The moral is degraded thereby into the sentient and the physical; and instead of a native principle sustained by its own energies, or the outgiving of a

high disinterested love for God and for goodness, we behold in every aspirant for heaven a system of action whereof self is perpetually the centre, and the sordid interests of self are mainly the objects which the heart longs after, and the desires of the whole man are intently set upon.

4. To ascertain what virtue should be in man, we have only to consider what virtue is in the Godhead. It is not with Him a price given for happiness—for what being is there in the universe to confer the remuneration? Virtue is the very essence of His happiness; it is that which constitutes the eternal and ineffable beatitude of His nature. Neither is it extorted from Him at the bidding of authority—for in what quarter, external to the Godhead, can any such authority be lodged? He is virtuous, not because responsible at the bar of any jurisprudence; but He is virtuous, because prompted thereto by the spontaneous workings of a love for righteousness, of a hatred for iniquity. It is with Him not the product of a dictate from without, but the product, the native product and emanation of a desire from within. You will at once perceive the infinitely higher character of that morality which is loved and cultivated for itself, over that morality which is rendered at the bidding of another, and for the sake of a something distinct from itself. By this change in its object, it in fact ceases to be morality, and assumes one or other of the forms of selfishness. At all events, it ceases to be godlike; and restoration to the very character of the Godhead is the great design of that economy under which we sit. This is another way in which you may be made to perceive the transcendent superiority of the evangelical over the legal virtue. The one is but the term of a mercenary bargain, which any man with but the spirit and the selfishness of a hireling, may execute—the other needs the Spirit of the Divinity to awaken it. It is the spontaneous homage of the inner man to the worth and excellence of virtue in itself, and apart from its consequences. It is virtue unmixed and unpolluted—the elements of selfishness, and calculation, and interest being wholly detached from it. Virtue would be heaven enough to a being so framed and so actuated. His is a pure moral existence, and a moral atmosphere is the only one suited to him. Such a heaven is the generous and lofty ambition of every true Christian. It is there where all his fondest hopes, and all his most exalted conceptions of happiness lie. With him, sin is wretchedness; and righteousness is the element in which he desires to

live and luxuriate through eternity. He would be happy enough were he but holy enough. With him these two things are not only conjoined but identical. With him the education of virtue is the ascending ladder to heaven; and heaven itself is but the perfection of virtue. This is the mark for the prize of his high calling—the perpetual aim of his existence—the high and holy aspiration of his now regenerated nature.

5. Now it never can come to this with any aspirant after immortality, till the legal economy be set aside, and all its mercantile fears and mercantile jealousies are disposed of. So long as the object is to establish a right to heaven by our righteousness, the constant set of the spirit is towards a something ulterior to the righteousness, and distinct from it. Righteousness is but the work, and a something different from righteousness is the wages—the one being the path of transition along which the spirit toils, the other the ultimatum on which the spirit rests. The bliss and beauty of the landing-place are conceived to be a recompense for the weariness or discomforts of the journey. In other words, virtue is the hard and revolting labour that must be submitted to, in return for an equivalent, distinct from the virtue which earns it. This conception is greatly fostered by those elements of a right, and a claim, and a legal challenge to reward, which are all bound up in the dispensation of—Do this and live. Inseparable from these, there is the idea of an exchange, which presupposes two sides or two terms—whereof the one is virtue, and the other is its mercenary hire. This marketing for heaven belongs to the very essence of legality; and it is impossible to compute how much morality is vulgarized by it. It is, on the great scale, making a gain of godliness; and those feelings of self, and sordidness, and ignoble affection, which are implicated with the pursuit of gain, gather around the preparation for eternity, and spoil the virtue by which we hope to win our way to it, of its celestial character altogether.

6. And the effect is greatly enhanced by that consciousness of insufficiency which haunts and dispirits this whole enterprise. If there be aught like a sufficient estimate of the law, there must, along with it, be a perpetual sense of distance and deficiency therefrom—so that he who seeks to establish a righteousness of his own, is ever and anon pursued by the apprehension that he has not made good his term of the bargain. The jealousies of a contract enter into this converse between God and man, and selfishness takes its most concentrated, and, at the same time, its

most degrading form—the form of fear. At this rate, religious obedience has no other principle than that which actuates the effort of a creature to struggle and keep back from the precipice, down which its persecutors are endeavouring to cast it. In so far as it is the terror of hell which forms the principle of our religious services, it is not a moral but an animal salvation after which we are aspiring. To have the desire of such a salvation, no higher endowment is requisite than the capacity of pain. It were enough that we had a sentient nature, though with an extinct moral or an extinct spiritual nature. The desire to escape from physical pain is certainly not a higher principle than the desire to obtain physical gratifications; and so, whether the moving force be to work out our exemption from the agonies of hell, or to work out a right in law to the joys of heaven—still there may be but the grossness of sense, and nought of high or heaven-born principle in our religious observances.

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

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

8. You will now understand the respective places which virtue holds in the legal and the evangelical dispensations. In the legal, virtue is the price of heaven—in the evangelical, virtue is heaven itself. In the one, virtue is the purchase-money wherewith we buy heaven—in the other, virtue is heaven already in possession; and there is nothing of equal worth in the whole compass of the universe that could be given, or that would be taken in exchange for it. The wages given for earthly work are meat and drink. Under the legal economy, virtue is conceived to be the work; and the wages are the meat and the drink, not perhaps suited to our present animal constitution, but

the meat and the drink suited to a more exalted physical or a more exalted intellectual nature, wherewith humanity shall then be invested. But under the evangelical economy, the kingdom of heaven is not meat or drink of any sort—it is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, even in Him whose fruit is represented to be in all righteousness, and goodness, and truth. These moral treasures form the main beatitude of heaven. They themselves are the meat and the drink of all who are admitted to heaven's glorious and immortal festival—their only meat and their only drink, like the Saviour's before them, being to do the will of God. Their will is at one with that of God. They need not first to acquire virtue, and therewith to purchase heaven. In the very act of acquiring virtue, they lay an immediate hold on heaven. Let them but have virtue, and they hold within their grasp the very essence of heaven's blessedness.

9. The advocates of the legal system arrogate this glory to themselves—that it is by them only, and not by their opponents, that morality is exalted to the place and the precedency which rightfully belong to her. But we leave it to yourselves to judge, by which of the two systems it is that the highest honours are awarded to her—whether by that system which represents virtue as standing on one side of the exchange, and heaven on the other; or by that system in which virtue and heaven are identified—whether by those who employ virtue as the stepping-stone to eternal happiness; or by those who, in taking hold of virtue, rejoice as in their immediate possession of that wherein the main happiness of eternity lies—whether by those who regard virtue but as an ascending ladder to the *summum bonum*; or by those in whose estimation virtue is itself the *summum bonum*, the ultimate and the highest good of existence—whether by the men who, in labouring at the work of heaven, are only truckling for heaven by their services; or by the men who, on entering the career of virtue, feel that their heaven is already begun, and know that it is just by their virtue being complete that their heaven is perfected—whether by those with whom virtue is the beggarly element of a sordid negotiation; or by those with whom virtue is that element which they would not barter for all the glories and felicities of creation besides, the element in which they desire to breathe and to be regaled by its own native beatitudes for ever—whether, in one word, by those with whom virtue is a thing of ignoble selfishness and speculation; or by those whose virtue, apart from all its con-

nexions and its consequences, is like that of the primary fountain-head whence it springs, native and generous and godlike.

10. But our only quarrel is not with the legalists on this question. We hold that virtue has been degraded to a secondary rank by a vast number, perhaps by the majority of those writers who are termed evangelical. It is so degraded when represented merely as the evidence of faith. We are not sure but that in one view they have made a farther remove from the real importance of virtue, and the honour which is due to it, than even the legalists. They make virtue but the index of our faith; and so reversing the apostolic maxim, that charity is greater than faith, they would make faith greater than charity—that which is indicated being greater than that which indicates. And again, they make faith the condition on which salvation is suspended; and surely the fulfilment is a greater thing than the mean or condition of the fulfilment. It is thus that they would reduce virtue to a very humble and subordinate rank in the scheme of their Christianity—not allowing it to be heaven itself, not even allowing it to be the price of heaven, but only the symptom or evidence that we have the price in our possession. With them it is neither the money, nor the money's worth. If I may use so strange a figure, it is but the reflection of that money in a looking-glass. Now, we refuse all this. Virtue is not the mere token of heaven—it is the great reality of heaven. It is not but the sign, it is the very substance of salvation. It is something a great deal more, and a great deal higher, than only a diagnostic of our spiritual health: it is itself the very health and harmony of the soul. It is heaven within us; and when at length placed before the throne of the righteous God, and in the midst of His righteous family—still it will be virtue that gives its quality and its charm to the heaven around us.

CHAPTER X.

ON SANCTIFICATION.

1. THE heart of man is the proper seat of the kingdom of God, as far as man has a part or interest therein. His heaven, and indeed the heaven of every created being, consists mainly and essentially in the sway of heaven's principles and affections

within him ; or, to express it otherwise, in the possession of heaven's character. That this is the doctrine of the Bible may be collected from a number of its passages, as in Luke xvii. 21 —“The kingdom of God is within you ;” though this admits of being so rendered as only to express that the kingdom of God is among you. There can be no misunderstanding, however, of the very clear and express definition given of the kingdom of God in Rom. xiv. 17, as being neither meat nor drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. The things here enumerated are evidently within. They are internal feelings or internal characteristics. They are the fruits of the Spirit dwelling in us. The peace and the joy are directly stated to be among His fruits in Gal. v. 22, and righteousness also in Eph. v. 9. To conclude this very limited induction, the Spirit is said to be given as the earnest of our inheritance, as in 2 Cor. v. 5. Now the first-fruits that we have of the Spirit here are not only earnest, but earnest in kind, of what we shall be made to enjoy in full and perfect measure hereafter. They are samples, as it were, and foretastes of the coming blessedness. They form the germ in time of what shall be so far expanded here, but which will only be consummated, or have its full-blown development in eternity. In other words, heaven is not to be spoken of as a locality, a thing to be pointed at, and of which you can say—Lo here, or lo there ; but heaven is a character which begins on earth, though its full and final establishment may be either in the new heavens or new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. We do not deny that heaven is a place—we only affirm that the constituting essence of heaven, that which may be said to form the substance or the staple of it is the principles, the moral perfections, the graces of those by whom it is occupied. We cannot refuse that there must be a somewhere for heaven ; and that there the sons of God, whether redeemed or unfallen, rejoice for ever in His manifested presence. We only hold that the question, where is heaven ? is but a very subordinate one indeed to the question of, what is heaven ?—the reply to which might convince us, that heaven already begun, exists in embryo even on this side of death ; and that, whether we take the Psalmist's description of it as the land of uprightness, or that of one Apostle, who tells of it that there the servants of God for ever serve Him, and cease not day nor night from their ascriptions of glory to Him who sitteth on the throne ; or, finally, that of another Apostle, who sets forth heaven as the eternal abode

of the charity which never faileth, and where the happiness of loving and being loved, and that with perfect and immaculate holiness, seems to constitute the essential happiness of the glorified and celestial beings who are assembled there. In short, there is a body of most sufficient scriptural evidence for the heaven of the New Testament, or the heaven of Christianity, being substantially and in essence a moral and spiritual heaven—a paradise not of sensuality but of sacredness, and where the essential beatitude, the oil of gladness, the elixir as it were of a blissful immortality, is distilled from the tree of life, the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. This happiness, in short, of rightly attuned and rightly constituted spirits, the spirits of just men made perfect, lies mainly and radically in the delight which the Author of our being, who Himself loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity, has annexed to the play and the exercise of those good affections which, in the state of glory, will meet with nothing to impede their pure and vigorous operation in our then glorified natures.

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

3. But instead of fetching our whole argument from considerations of so general a character, let us see whether the experience of familiar and everyday life does not lend a full confirmation to the view which we are now advocating. We make a confident appeal to your own feelings and your own recollections. Both the delights and the discomforts of the outward sense are quite palpable; but though less sensible, you must all admit equally real are the delights and the discomforts of spirit also—the difference of which every man can tell, because every man daily and hourly feels it—the difference in point of enjoyment between one state and another of the inner man. Take account of those affections which are purely mental, and from which bodily pain and bodily pleasure are alike excluded. Just conceive what the soul, and the soul alone, or apart from sensation altogether, might be made to suffer, if lorded over either jointly or severally by any of those distempered emotions which war against its peace—as tempestuous anger, heaving in the bosom like a troubled sea; or corrosive envy, eating inwardly as doth a canker; or deep and settled hatred, brooding over its fell purposes of revenge; or without the imagination of aught so dark and tragical, and to convince you that we are dealing in the experimental and not in the pictorial, just take the instance of a vexing and fretting peevishness, that frequent inmate of the family circle, which operates by a constant effusion, like the dropping of a perpetual wormwood, on every half-hour of human existence. Yet as we are raising an argument on the capacities of the human spirit—whether for suffering or pleasure—capacities that might be enlarged to an unknown extent in the developments of our future and eternal state, let us therefore recur to the enumeration that we were making of the more fierce and turbulent passions of our nature, and, without the limitation of our view to the findings of commonplace and everyday life, take account of the mortified pride, the frenzied ambition, of which Scripture tells that it pierceth itself through with many sorrows: or extending our cognizance to those affections of the human spirit which stand more properly and nearly related with conscience and the coming judgment, let us think of the remorse, and the inward dissatisfaction, and the terrors of a deserved vengeance, and the brooding melancholy of our hopeless and out-cast condition, when abandoned by those pleasures of sense and of time which serve to divert and to occupy us here, we are given up to the hands of an offended God, who, to consummate

the wretchedness of our eternity, has but to turn upon us the rebuke of His countenance, and never lifting it off, therewith to haunt and disquiet us for ever. All those affections which we have just noted are purely internal. Their operation and their place of residence are within; and we ask, whether apart from all inflictions of physical pain on these our corporeal frameworks, they be not of themselves sufficient to constitute a hell in the heart of every several transgressor against the law of God. But to aggravate still more the horrors of this our final destiny, we should recollect that it is not a single offender, but a society and assembled host of offenders, that we have to look to—brought together and cast into one place, like the tares in the parable, respecting whom the order was given to bind them up in bundles, and burn them. We reckon on no other burning at present than of those fiery and tumultuous passions which not only prey on the heart of every separate criminal, but are let loose in the fierce encounters of mutual resentment and mutual disdain on each other. We shall not carry out this awful representation, or dwell any longer on a contemplation so revolting as the moral state of the ungodly when turned into hell; but we bid you judge for yourselves whether it be not in the power of moral elements alone to make out a lake of living agony; or whether, in the action and reaction of those distempered spirits turned in fierce hostility against each other, or only united in one cry of daring and desperate rebellion against God, there be not, aside altogether from material torments, all the miseries of a dire and dreadful Pandemonium.

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

tions which are sweet unto the taste, and melody in the ear of the inner man. The experience I am sure of some here present, can tell that it is no dream of fancy, no description of fairy-land in which we are indulging, when we speak to you of the peace and the pleasure and the inward satisfaction, which are felt in the mere desires of a rightly constituted spirit. We are not dealing in romance surely, but in plain and sober reality, when we tell what is so palpable to your own consciousness—as that love is a pleasurable, just as hatred is a painful sensation, and that the one rejoices the heart, just as the other rankles and agonizes it. Let there be but kindness in place of malignity—let there be confidence in place of suspicion—let there be frank and cordial affability, in the place of proud and sullen disdain—let there be open-handed and open-hearted generosity, in place of a cold, creeping, contracted selfishness—let there be a placid contentment with one's lot, however humble, in place of the ambition which never rests, the avarice which no accumulation of treasures can satisfy—let there be the clear element and daylight of truth, in place of low, sneaking, distrustful concealment—let there be the manly, and I will not say a proud, but an elevating sense of perfect integrity and perfect honour, in the place of fraud and meanness and conscious degradation—let there be an ethereal delicacy, a lofty self-command, a steadfast and serene mastery over all the inferior propensities of our nature, in place of debasing intemperance or debasing impurity;—and who does not see, that simply on the exchange of one set of affections, or on one set of moral habits and characteristics for another, simply on passing from the evil to the good, the mind passes from a state of suffering to a state of enjoyment—from the darkness and the distemper and the disquietude, capable of being aggravated downward to the misery of the lowest hell, to the light and the liberty and the heart's ease and the harmony of all the faculties and all the feelings—composing, on the whole, a happiness capable of being raised upward to the bliss and the joy of heaven's immortal festivals? And all this, you will observe, forms but the establishment of a new character and new moral regimen set up within you. The heaven of which we speak, felt by every man apart who has turned from sin unto righteousness, is sensible to the conscience of each within the deep recesses of his own bosom. But it would become more patent to general observation were all men righteous, and were our eye permitted to expatiate over the smiling aspect of a regenerated world.

Instead of looking to each individually, just figure a society of the good and the upright, within the precincts of which no vice and no malevolence were known—where each recognised in every one of his fellows a brother and a friend—where integrity and good faith reigned in every transaction between man and man—where all were bound together by the ties of mutual goodwill, and the love of kindness on the one hand was ever responded to by the love of gratitude on the other;—why, under a regimen like this, the earth we tread upon, in spite of its hurricanes and floods, and its whole train of physical evils and disasters, would, by a moral transmutation alone, be mightily approximated to the heaven that is over our heads. Each family, each village in our land, would become a little heaven, and that even in the midst of poverty and hard labour, and purely because of the moral sunshine which had been lighted up among their habitations. For, apart from all gifts and from all that ministers in this world to the desires of selfishness—out of a moral economy alone, by mind acting upon mind, and one benevolent emotion re-echoing to another—there are materials enough out of which an Elysium might be formed. And in proportion as this good-will on the one hand, and its responding gratitude on the other, are multiplied upon earth, in that proportion shall it be assimilated in its joys as well as in its virtues to the paradise that is above. It is not by turning everything into gold that the delights of the golden age are at length to be realized. It is by a higher and nobler alchemy, the alchemy of the heart, which can transmute every condition of human life into one of purest blessedness; which, even without the gifts, can pour a lustre on all around it by the manifestations of kindness; which by the ethereal play of the affections alone, can give a transport and a tranquillity that wealth cannot buy; and, singly, by the mechanism of human feelings, can work off the best and most precious ingredients that enter into the bosom of human families.

5. These, however, are but the social moralities, or social affections, of which we have hitherto spoken—the virtues only of the second great law, which is not the first, but only like unto the first; yet we thought it right to begin with the love of man to his neighbour, as fitted to give you a more familiar and a more experimental conception of the moral heaven, which I am now trying to describe. But we must not forget that the great, the predominant affection in such a heaven, what may be called

its proper and pervading element, as being, in fact, the main essence both of its character and blessedness, lies in the love of man to God. It is when this love of God is shed abroad in the heart, that the kingdom of God is set up within you. But this is done here in the work of regeneration; and so your heaven begins here, a heaven on earth, the same in kind though lower in degree, yet with the very feelings and foretastes of that heaven which afterwards awaits us among the choirs and companies of the celestial. It is because with your human feelings and human experiences you would sooner apprehend us, that, in telling you of the paradise of the blest as a paradise of virtue, we spoke first of the love between man and man—for in the formation and growth of the new creature, I would say that it is the love of God which is the first in the order of time, or at least first in the order of cause and effect, it being in truth the primary or germinating principle of that great moral revolution, which every sinner must undergo ere he becomes meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. It is this, in fact, of which we read in the book of Revelation, as the main, the occupying affection of the saints and the seraphs who are above. The supreme, the engrossing sensibility of their hearts, is the love of God—His service is their best loved employment, “There thy servants serve thee;” and the chief delight of their eternity lies in the beatitudes of His immediate presence. They overflow with the love, they are satisfied with the likeness of God. In the land where these happy immortals dwell, most significantly termed in the Bible the land of uprightness, and where they hold everlasting jubilee—it is a festival of virtue and of the virtuous affections, which they cease not day nor night to celebrate, a moral and spiritual jubilee. And we are told that the glory of the Lord is the light thereof. The graces of the divine character there stand out in open manifestation, and ever and anon call forth this song of eternity—“Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints.” It is the love of moral esteem for Him who sitteth on the throne which prompts this acclamation; and it is love, too, the love of gratitude for the Eternal Son at His right hand, which prompts this other acclamation of the redeemed, another of the songs of eternity, even to “Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.” Now, all this is internal. Both the affection and its consequent enjoyment have their residence in

the home of a man's own bosom. Both are felt by the good on this side of death; and so the essential blessedness of heaven, for which many are looking upward among the stars, might be realized in the midst of earth's lowly habitations. The kingdom of God must be set up here—the kingdom of God is within you.

6. We are not pronouncing on the material sanctions either of a future hell or a future heaven, nor whether the representation which the Bible gives of these be literal or figurative. We are not denying the fire, or the brimstone, or the everlasting burnings in the place of condemnation, although we have been looking also to the moral character of its unhappy inmates, and setting forth the wickedness as one main ingredient of the wretchedness which is there—of its bitter and ever-during agony. Neither are we denying the sensible glories of the upper paradise—the music, the splendour, the surpassing loveliness of its innumerable mansions—“in my Father's house” there are many of these—the magnificence of that city whose builder and maker is God; nor that there are sounds of melody for the ear, and sights of beauty for the eye, in that place which Christ hath gone to prepare for us. We only affirm that it is chiefly the righteousness, the holy love of these ethereal regions, which forms the vital and rejoicing element of all who live in them—whether as felt in thrilling harmony within their own hearts, or as beheld multiplied and reflected throughout the society of the blest, and, above all, in the countenance of Him who sitteth on the throne. We certainly have no right to exclude materialism from those high abodes of innocence and immortality, for Adam, at his creation, realized both, and yet was placed on the firm basis of the earth we tread upon, and with the very sky spread over his head that mantles our present habitations. And what we know has been done once might be done over again. In the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness, the matter, for aught I know, which is now around us, might only be purified of its corruption, but not swept away. And so we should hold it very rash to deny the materialism of our future state; or that, for aught we can tell, there might be sights of surpassing loveliness, and sounds of surpassing richness and melody in heaven, and rivers of pleasure, and fields of bright and unfading verdure, and pavements of emerald, and all that can minister delight to the glorified senses of those whose bodies have been transformed into the likeness of the glorified body of

our risen Saviour. Yet these are but the accessories of heaven; and what we affirm is, that, in its characteristic and constituting essence, heaven is a place of righteousness—that nothing which defileth or is unholy can enter there—that it is chiefly a moral glory which is lighted up there—that virtue blooms and is immortal there—that what forms the happiness of the good here is identically and in substance the happiness of the good through all eternity: and that to be prepared and perfected for such a heaven, we must forthwith enter on the busy cultivation of heaven's virtues and heaven's graces, the charity which never faileth, the holiness without which no man can see God.

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

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

heaven, how could it prove a heaven at all to those bereft of understanding?—or, finally, being, what it is, a moral and spiritual heaven, it can be no heaven to the wicked, or the secular, or the earthly; and that it might be a heaven to us, there must be an adaptation of the subjective to the objective; or, in plainer language, we must be sanctified—we must be moralized. Antinomianism is thus reduced to a practical absurdity, a contradiction in terms. And I would say of all who seek to be justified and care not to be sanctified, that theirs is a religion of intense selfishness. There is a way, a heavenward way, for the ransomed of the Lord to walk in; but it is a way of holiness.

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

10. Our third lesson is not against the evangelicals, but it proceeds on the ground that there is perhaps a something to rectify and to amend in certain of the writers of that class. Virtue is not in their estimation the price of heaven; and here they are right—for, vastly higher than this, it is the very substance and being of heaven in the soul. But do they never

forget this high attribute, and assign to virtue or holiness a lower place and character than belong to it, when, instead of being heaven itself, they speak of it only as the evidence of our title to heaven? Is not this fitted, too, to sustain and foster the imagination, that heaven is a something different from virtue—as different, if not as wages are from work, at least as a thing signified is from its sign? Is there no taint of selfishness and sordidness, we would ask, in this view also? And is it not calculated to make us satisfied, if we just make out as much of obedience as might warrant the conclusion that we are safe? Now, our safety, our state of salvation—or, which is the same thing, our state of spiritual health, and so of spiritual enjoyment—lies in a state of earnest, progressive, aspiring holiness, along a career in which the greater our holiness the greater will be our happiness also; or, in other words, the more virtuous here, the greater will be our preferment there—the more we heighten and multiply our graces on this side of death the greater will be our moral and spiritual treasures through all eternity. Thus ought we to understand the precept of laying up our treasures in heaven; and the virtues of the new creature, instead of being the price which we give in exchange for these treasures, or only the evidence of their being in reserve for us by the time that we enter into Paradise, are the very treasures themselves which regale and satisfy the spirits of the celestial. It is thus that the evangelical system, fully carried out, not only adds indefinitely and without limit to the amount, but exalts the aim as well as refines and ennobles the whole character of the gospel obedience. Holiness is more than the way to some better and higher landing-place: holiness is itself the landing-place, and our restoration to holiness the great object of the economy under which we sit. Christianity does not begin with virtue and end with justification—it begins with justification and ends with virtue. And thus we are told by the Apostle, after having received the grace of the gospel, after having received the promises, our unceasing business is to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect our holiness in the fear of God.

11. But in the pulpit you must not confine yourself to these generalities, but come to such pointed and personal applications as might tell upon your hearers. The question for each of them to entertain, the matter on hand with them, is, How am I to obtain a part and an interest in these things? What are the footsteps, or what the transition, by which I, perhaps at this

moment an earthly and unregenerate creature, am to pass over from the state of nature to the state of grace, and so that this kingdom of heaven, the enjoyments and affections of which have now been set before me, may actually and in very deed be set up within me? Certain it is that I cannot change my affections from the world to Him who made the world, so as to set them upon God and goodness, simply at the bidding of my own will. I cannot of myself work so great a moral revolution on my own character: and the question recurs, How am I to go about it, and by what way is it that I make entry on the heaven of goodness here, and which forms the portal, as it were, and way of preparation for the heaven of eternity?

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

13. This is the way, and let me add the single and exclusive way, by which the light and the love and the blessedness of heaven will be made to descend on us. But here comes in the sad, the humbling experience of every Christian minister. He may succeed in carrying the attention of the general public to a demonstration of human ungodliness, and they will call it an interesting argument; and he may succeed in carrying their attention to the representation which he gives of the virtues by which regenerated humanity is adorned, so as that they shall call it a beautiful and interesting description; but with the

exception of the few who make the salvation of their souls a real, practical, business concern, he will not so carry their attention to God's own message of peace and pardon as that they shall call it an interesting statement, and act upon it accordingly. It is their acceptance of this message which forms the great bridge-way of communication from the carnal to the spiritual, from the old man to the new creature; and yet the terms of this message they will scarcely listen to. The great question between heaven and earth—the method of its settlement on the principles and according to the jurisprudence of the upper sanctuary—the way in which God might be just while the justifier of those who believe in Jesus—the free offer of the gospel as founded on the satisfaction made by Christ for the injuries of a violated law—the connexion between His sufferings and the glory that should follow;—these are the very things, we read, which angels desired to look into, and yet they fall as so many bald and meagre insipidities on the dull ear of a listless and alienated world. We can interest them on the collaterals of Christianity; but it is the essence, and, above all, the way of realizing it so as that it shall become personally theirs—it is this which they repudiate as tasteless and unsatisfying, insomuch that, while the apostle was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, this is the very knowledge in which they can see no form or comeliness that they should desire it. It is this remarkable phenomenon which has long convinced me, that our most successful evangelizers, they who best carry forward the real work of Christianization in the land, are those men of faith and prayer who preach simply and scripturally the great doctrines of the gospel, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Be assured that there is but a show and a delusion in all the noise and bustle and excitement which are created by anything different from this or opposite to this. Delighted with the argument, it may be, but not one inch of progress made towards the clean heart and the right spirit; lulled Sabbath after Sabbath, as if by the sound of a pleasant song, or of one who can play well on an instrument, and yet the old man persisting in all the obstinacy of his deep and in-born principles; rejoicing once a week in the house of God as if it were the gate of heaven, yet the whole week long giving his entire heart to the world, and resting all his security upon the world's wealth and the world's enjoyments; running after gospel ministers, and sitting in all the complacency of

approbation under them, and yet an utter stranger to the devotedness, to the spirituality, to the close walk, and the godly spirit of the altogether Christian ;—oh, it bids so flattering to hear the city bells, and see every house pouring forth its family of worshippers—to look on the avenue which leads to the house of God, and to see it all on a glow with the crowd and the bustle of passengers—to enter the church, and see every eye fastened attentively on the man of God as he tells of the high matters of salvation, and presses home the preparations of eternity upon an arrested audience ! Oh, if the charmed ear were a true and un-failing index to the subdued heart, the business of the minister would go on so prosperously ! But there is a power of resistance within that is above his exertions and beyond them—there is a spirit working in the children of disobedience which no power of human eloquence can lay—there is an obstinate alienation from God which God alone can subdue ; and unless He make a willing people in the day of His power, the influence of the preacher's lesson will die away with the music of his voice—the old man will be carried out as vigorous and entire as he was carried in—the word spoken may play upon the fancy, but it will not reach the deeply seated corruption which lies in the affections and the will—the seriousness which sits so visible on every countenance will vanish into nothing in half an hour—the men of the world and the things of the world will engross and occupy the room that is now taken up with something like Christianity, and all will dissipate into a thing of nought when you go to your shops, and your farms, and your families, and your market-places.

14. In urging home the lessons of religion, there is one consideration not so powerful as most of those which are purely theological, but which ought to have place too in your sermons, even as it occasionally has in the Bible—as when Paul says, “Brethren, the time is short.” In like manner, along with your other practical arguments, you may intersperse the question, Why it is that your hearers should suffer the short-lived pursuits and enjoyments of a day to seduce them from the magnificent aim and prospects of eternity ? When crossed in the business of life, we have heard men taking comfort that it will be all the same a hundred years after this—a good reason why they should sit loose to this world's interests, but surely a better reason why they should forthwith enter on a busy preparation for the world which passeth not away. A hundred years after

this! With what speed and what certainty will these hundred years arrive at their termination? This day will draw to a close, and a number of days makes up one revolution of the seasons. Year follows after year, and a number of years makes up a century. These little intervals of time accumulate and fill up that might space which appears to the eye of the fancy so big and so immeasurable. The hundred years will come, and they will carry along with them the wreck of whole generations. Every living thing that now moves on the face of the earth will disappear from it. The infant that nows hangs on its mother's bosom will only live in the remembrance of his grandchildren. The scene of life and intelligence before you will be changed into the dark and loathsome forms of corruption. The people who hear you will cease to be spoken of; their memory will perish from the face of the country; their flesh will be devoured by worms; the dark and creeping things which live in the holes of the earth will feed upon their bodies; their coffins will have mouldered away, and their bones be thrown up in loose and scattered fragments among the earth of the new-made grave.

CHAPTER XI.

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

1. I DO not think that enough of stress has been laid by theologians or Christian ministers on the various particular terms in which the overtures of the gospel are couched for presentation to the world. Each man would understand the import of a special message to himself, but he may not see how the Bible can be understood, as being adequately and fully such a message. An express letter from the upper sanctuary, with his name and designation, might satisfy him; but in the general record of Scripture, that name and that designation are nowhere to be found. He reads calls and entreaties and promises innumerable, but there wants something to warrant his own confident appropriation of them. We hold that the want he complains of is not in the Bible, but somewhere else. This, however, he does not

perceive, or at least does not proceed upon. He does not see, distinctly or confidently, how this universal can be transmuted into an individual revelation; or what entitles him to lay hold of encouragements and offers as designed particularly for himself, which are only found in a book that circulates at large, and is left, without any specific destination impressed upon it, to go vaguely and diffusively over the face of the earth. And so, in reading the Bible, he holds converse only with generalities. His own heart remains uncheered, his own path unshone upon.

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

3. There is a conscience within every heart that may be said to intimate individually to each man, both his special delinquencies and his special danger because of them. But as far as Scripture is concerned, he has as good reason to take to himself the comforts of the gospel, as to take to himself the terrors and threatenings of the law. For it has been well remarked, that whatsoever the defect or completeness of the warrant may be on which a man appropriates to himself the declarations of the one, it is in all respects the same with that on which he appropriates the declarations of the other. If he tremble because of the saying,

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

4. There can be no doubt, then, from the way in which the

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

5. It cannot be difficult to assign what is the first palpable thing which an appropriation in this instance will lead him to do, and which thing will be at once the effect and the indication of his faith. He will betake himself to the place of invitation. He will enter on the road that leads to it, and move with assured pace, just in proportion to the confidence which he feels in the honesty of the invitation. His very first footstep in the direction of the bidden walk and the bidden way, may be regarded as the first distinct and noticeable evidence of the faith by which he is actuated. Observers do not see the mental phenomenon, or the faith itself; but they see the hopeful and obedient movement, and from this they infer the faith. Even he himself does not look reflexly on the faith that is in him, but his mind simply rests on the truth of the Promiser, and is occupied with the certainty and value of the thing promised. The terms

of the invitation were enough to warrant an appropriating faith, and his compliance in deed and in action with the order given, is enough to evidence it. It were difficult for others, perhaps even for himself, to ascertain the faith by the direct view of it as a mental phenomenon. But it may be gathered at once from the broad and palpable exhibition of his obedience.

6. This applies, in all its parts, to our faith in the gospel. Eternal life is there held out as the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and the way is prescribed by which to reach it. We have already, I trust, made it obvious how by the terms in which it is held out, each man within hearing of the gospel has a right to appropriate the thing offered to himself, and to go forth on the bidden walk in the confident possession or confident prospect thereof;—that walk is the walk of repentance, or of new obedience. When the earthly benefactor invited the approach of those whom he addressed, and accompanied the invitation with the promise of some large and liberal gratuity, he did not bid them wait till the faith had arisen in their minds—he bade them instantly to move; and they, by their instant obedience, gave proof of the faith being already within them in vigorous and practical operation. They were not called upon to ascertain it before obedience; they ascertained it by obedience—the obedience to which they were urged at the very outset of this communication. It is true, unless they had put faith in this communication, they would not have stirred, and the doing as they were bid was the immediate effect of their faith, which was therefore anterior in influence and anterior in time to their obedience. But though the faith must have first existed, that is not to say the faith must first be known to exist, ere the obedience is attempted. You do not look reflexly on the faith by an exercise of consciousness, and then start on the bidden career of activity; but the faith immediately prompts the activity, and indeed it is through the medium of the activity that the power and reality of the faith are first and most satisfactorily ascertained. At all events, there are initial calls to plain and palpable doings from the very commencement; and you respond to these not by feeling inwardly after the faith, but by following externally the impulse of it—by plainly doing what you are plainly bidden to do. It would be deemed preposterous in the case now specified to lay an arrest on the movement, till by search and entry among the arcana of the mind the faith had been found. Instead of this, you are required on

the instant, and with all practical urgency, to enter on the movement, and simply, if the faith exist, whether it be known at the time to exist or not, the movement follows. There is nothing in all this to embarrass either the initial or the progressive footsteps of this process. The man is simply told what he is to expect, and what he has to do for the fulfilment of his expectation; and if he believe what is thus told, he expects and he does accordingly. There is both a mental phenomenon here—that is, the expectation; and an outward movement—that is, the doing: and had the former not been in previous being and operation, the latter, it is undoubted, would not have taken place. But that is not to say we must look inwardly, and take accurate survey of the phenomenon, ere we act outwardly on the plain and palpable direction which has been given to us. The connexion between the inward and the outward will not less surely take effect, although we should not take metaphysic cognizance of the same—just as surely as the satellites of Jupiter would describe their mathematical courses, although no mathematical survey had ever been made of them. A plain man, in the circumstances we have now alleged, will feel no embarrassment. He is told what to hope, and where to go for it; and, without mystification or metaphysics, he hopes as he is told, and goes as he is bidden.

7. Now to me it appears quite obvious that Christianity, in its initial overtures to man, supplies the materials for just as distinct and intelligible an outset. We have already told how, by the very terms which it uses, it singles out every man as a special object for its invitations and its calls; so that each may proceed on its primary addresses to the world, as if they were made individually to himself. And then if the question be put, In what way shall he respond to these addresses? I would say, just by doing the very first injunctions of performance which it mixes up with the very first announcements of promise. It promises eternal life, and it bids us take the way which leads to it. And our proper response to this is just to depend on the promise, and to do the bidding. There can be no mistake as to the promise—forgiveness to all who will through the blood of a satisfying atonement. There can be no mistake as to the bidding—repentance, and turning unto God, and doing works meet for repentance—ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well. There seems nothing wanting here but the plain understanding of a very plain thing. With but belief in the truth of the

message, we see not what should intervene to stay an immediate result, and that at the very first hearing, of a heart animated by the hope, and a hand directed to the obedience of the gospel. The New Testament presents every man with a view of heaven's door opened in the distance before him, and calls on every man to enter on the way of holiness which leads to it. We can imagine nothing more lucid than these direct and primary overtures from heaven to earth—so that if sounded forth upon the world by a trumpet of universal proclamation, it were anything rather than a trumpet which sounded uncertainly. Yet who will deny, since theologians have taken it up, and the haze of a thousand controversies has now gathered upon the question, that it is altogether beset with uncertainties. They have clouded, because they have overborne with their endless commentaries, what in itself is conspicuous as noon-day. Men's minds are lost in the perplexity of long and intricate argumentations, and are bewildered to find that path to heaven, of which, nevertheless, it may be said, that, as delineated and set before us in Scripture, a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein.

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

9. The first is, that although nothing can be more patent than those objective realities, by a faith in which it is that the simple Christian is practically set agoing, yet nothing at the same time may be more dark and puzzling to him than the description which an inquisitive theology has attempted to make of the subjective process. In Christianity, both the promise held forth and the direction given are as plain matters, as far as the understanding of them at least is concerned, as any parallel promise with its accompanying direction which can be specified in ordinary life. And yet there is no such case, however familiar, that, if subjected to the same treatment with that of the gospel, might not be involved, even as it has been, in most perplexing metaphysics. The child whom you call to approach you across the floor, and to receive from your hand the apple which you are holding forth to its view, is at no loss how to proceed in making out the acquisition which you intend for it. Yet the data, I contend, upon which it acts are not more obvious, more apprehensible, than the data set before us all by the gospel of Jesus Christ, and upon which we are required to go forth on our movement for that heaven which is placed with its open gate and its waving flag of invitation in the perspective before us. The

child is exclusively objective in its contemplations. All its regards are directed to outward things: the apple held out for its acceptance—the order to come for it—the path by which it moves towards the object its desires are set upon. It is altogether an objective influence which has set it agoing, and set it rightly agoing. Still, however, there is a real subjective process going on within the recesses of its little bosom, however unconscious it may be, or incapable of reflexly observing its order or its laws. Yet another may accurately describe the process, though it cannot; and among other things may remark, and justly remark, on the precedency of the child's faith to the child's obedience. It was faith, in fact, which gave movement and direction to its very first footstep, and which upheld it along the continuous path from its place of departure to its place of arrival. Yet for any practical object, it were of no earthly use to tell the child so; and it were still more preposterous to exact from it the certainty of having the faith, ere it did any of the plain things which it had been bidden do. But this is just the preposterous thing done by our speculatists and our system-framers in theology, to the man who, under the first invitations of religious earnestness, may be said to be yet in the infancy of his religious course. Instead of being plied with the broadly and conspicuously objective, he is perplexed among the subjective intricacies of a mental and metaphysical process. The assurances of pardon, the calls of repentance, are deafened as it were by immersion in the depth of inextricable subtleties; and between ministers and hearers, so great is the bewilderment as to verify the observation I have heard from my departed friend, Robert Hall—that the majority of evangelical ministers knew not how to lay down the gospel, so as that a man of plain and ordinary understanding should know how to take it up.

CHAPTER XII.

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

1. WE have already specified one check in the way of instant obedience. The antecedency of faith to obedience is one of the categories of our orthodox theology. Now this is very true; and

it follows therefrom, that the obedience of a Christian may prove he has the faith. But it does not follow that, ere he begin the obedience, he must know he has the faith. This last is the error which has misled many a plain and simple understanding. They think they must ascertain their mental state, and be satisfied of its rightness, ere they shall proceed on the plain inducements which the gospel sets before them. In this way their outset has been entangled with subtleties. Instead of directly acting on the objective realities presented to them in Scripture, they, under the idea that they must follow the theologian in his speculation on the subjective process, would first assure themselves that all is right within them, and just as he has described it; and thus, in fact, their immediate converse with the objective is broken. It is only when in contact with the calls, and truths, and promises of the gospel, that the machinery of their moral system, operated upon by the appropriate power thus brought to bear on it, is kept rightly and prosperously agoing. But when, instead of looking to the gospel, the man looks in a reflex or metaphysical direction to the working of this inner mechanism, the mind slips, as it were, and is separated from those moral forces, which can only act upon it when the objects of revelation are present to the thoughts. Hence a very sore and fruitless harassment, to be delivered from which there seems no other method than just a return by the mind from the subjective to the objective contemplation—a reopening of the mental eye to the object which is presented from without—a reopening of the mental ear to the voice which addresses it from without—a surrender of the whole man to the proper effect of the Bible's own sayings—the bringing of Scripture and the mind together again, when the one will in fact work its proper influence on the other, whether we in theory can speculate rightly or not on the influence or on the order of that mental history to which it gives rise.

2. We now proceed to the other check which a misconceived or misapplied orthodoxy lays upon instant obedience: and that is the dread of legality which it has inspired. Men have been so much told of the danger of self-righteousness, that, lest they should incur it, they are fearful of putting their hand to any work of righteousness at all. This, perhaps, is one of the worst effects that has resulted from the controversy of Protestants with the Church of Rome. In their opposition to the doctrine of merit, they have been led to look suspiciously and hardly at

every one thing wherewith merit might be associated : and they have communicated this jealousy far and wide, so as deeply to have impregnated the popular mind with it. Men have been told so strenuously, that to seek a justification by works is the high road to perdition, that they are positively afraid of works altogether. The direct authority of Christ and His apostles in their favour is overborne by the dead weight of these representations against them. Men are afraid to meddle with what theologians of great name and authority in the Church have so stickled at. There is at least a conflict in their minds between the direct urgency of Scripture on the one hand, and, on the other, the discouragements and caveats of orthodoxy. Amid these counteractive forces the man is brought to a dead stand ; and, instead of entering with confidence or alacrity on the activities of the Christian life, we find all his energy expended on the right adjustment of the doctrines—leaving to duties a very subordinate place, perhaps an insignificance or even a nullity in the system of his religious contemplations.

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

tianity. This again unsettles all; and, instead of acting as men confident of heaven and confident of the way that leads to it, we run as uncertainly, we fight as one that beateth the air.

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

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

5. This surely would have been a sore perversion, and yet we behold it exemplified every day. It is the very perversion of which at this hour we complain, as having mystified and so

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

the dread of that legality against which theologians of greatest name and authority in the Church have launched so many fulminations. Men are fearful, lest by putting their hands to anything, they should be found in the wrong track of seeking to establish a title to heaven by exertions or services of their own; and so, to escape the condemnation of endeavouring after a right, they hold it safest to refrain from endeavouring after all righteousness.

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

7. Let the initial biddings of Christianity then stand discharged of this legal imagination altogether. A man of a duteous and docile spirit will simply obey them without ever thinking of founding aught in the shape of a right, or a meritorious righteousness thereupon. He merely acts as he is told; and it never enters into his conceptions that he is building up a title to heaven by his conformities to the will of the Saviour. It is very hard that his conscientious and childlike services

should have the burden of this controversy laid upon them, or that systematic theology should lay its chilling restraints on one ready as he is to welcome the deliverance which Christianity announces, and at once to comply with the demands which Christianity prefers. It is most unfortunate that because Popery founded merit on its pilgrimages, and penances, and self-appointed tasks, we, by way of keeping at the greatest possible distance from its errors, must be fearful even of the moral reformation of Christianity, lest merit, too, should be associated therewith. This comes of the contests of partisanship. With the senseless and superstitious observances of Popery, there has been connected the doctrine of a merit in good works. Both the observances themselves, and their associated merit, deserve to be alike exploded. And it is further true that merit in the sight of God, or on the standard of His perfect and unchangeable law, should be associated with no human observances whatever—even those of a religion as pure and fervent, or of a morality as noble as any of which the species is capable: and so, as both their associated merit and the superstitious follies of other days have been alike exploded—the proscription, I will not say avowedly, but effectually though tacitly, is extended to both terms of the conjunction—that is, both to their associated merit and to the essential doings themselves of Christianity, whether these be the doings of its first outset, or of its progressive course. It is right that all sense of merit should be alike disjoined from both—that is, both from the superadded performances of the Romish Church, and from the essential obedience of the gospel. But it follows not, because the Romish services may be given up along with the merit, that the gospel obedience must also be given up along with the merit. Yet practically, in many instances, this is as good as done. Men have become fearful, not of superstitious works only, but of all works together. A chill and motionless apathy has seized upon them. There has been so much said of the danger of legality, that, to shun the danger, there is a very prevalent impression of its being safer to have nothing to do with aught which might involve them in it; and so they will not even seek, lest this should land them in self-seeking they will not try to be righteous, because of the horror which they have been taught to feel at self-righteousness.

8. It is with the greatest satisfaction and pleasure that I observe a confirmation of these views in the following sentences

from Jonathan Edwards :—“ It is quite a wrong notion that some entertain, that the more they do, the more they shall depend on it ; whereas the reverse is true—the more they do, or the more thorough they are in seeking, the less will they be likely to rest in their doings, and the sooner will they see the vanity of all that they do. So that persons will exceedingly miss, if ever they neglect to do any duty either to God or man, whether it be any duty of religion, justice, or charity, under the notion of its exposing them to trust in their own righteousness. It is very true that it is a common thing for persons, when they seek salvation, to trust in the pains they take ; but yet, commonly, those that go on in a more slight way, trust a great deal more securely to their outward services than he that is pressing into the kingdom of God does to his earnestness. Men’s slackness in religion, and their trust in their own righteousness, do strengthen and establish one another. Their trust in what they have done and what they now do, stills them into a slothful rest and ease, and hinders their being sensible of their need of raising up themselves and pressing forward. And, on the other hand, their negligence tends so to benumb them, and keep them in such ignorance of themselves, that the most miserable refugees are stupidly rested in as safe. Therefore we see, that when persons have been going on for a long time in such a way, and God afterwards comes more thoroughly to awaken them, and stir them to be in good earnest, He shakes all their old foundations, and rouses them out of their old resting-places, so that they cannot quiet themselves with those things that formerly kept them secure.”

CHAPTER XIII.

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

1. WE do fear that with many serious professors of our faith, even the men of deepest earnestness among them, there is a want of perception as to the use and necessity of, and the consequent want of a practical impulse to the work of obedience. They know that they are justified by the righteousness of Christ ;

and well have they been told from evangelical pulpits, often have they read in the pages of evangelical authorship, of the utter vanity for justification of any righteousness of their own. After this they do not perfectly understand what their own personal virtue, their own personal character or conduct has to do in the matter of their salvation. They do not fully see the good of it, or the object of it. They hear so much of the finished work of Christ, that they do not clearly discern, nor can they rightly tell, what work is left for themselves to do. They have been so accustomed to regard Christ as the Captain, and as the sole Author and Finisher of their salvation, that they are at a loss how to fit in with this undoubted doctrine of Christianity, the equally undoubted precept of Christianity—"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And we are not sure that the controversies of churchmen have at all cleared up, we rather fear that on these questions they have served to mystify the understandings of men, who can very exactly see what the end or what the motive of obedience is, under the economy of—"Do this, and live;" but do not see with the same distinctness of vision what the end or what the motive to obedience, under the economy of—"Believe, and live." Ever since the period of the Reformation, when Protestants and Papists took their respective sides, and the doctrine of salvation by faith was placed in array against the doctrine of salvation by works—ever since then the argumentations of a learned theology have multiplied upon our hands; yet we are uncertain whether, instead of casting light upon the subject, they have not left a deeper haze upon it than before. Such, we doubt not, has been the effect on many a mind. There has been so much said on the danger of trusting to works, that men are positively afraid of meddling with them at all. They have been told that to believe is all in all; but often they have not been told, by a trumpet giving forth no uncertain sound upon the subject—often have they not been told what that thing is which they have plainly and practically to go about. The minds of men, we greatly fear, are both bedimmed and benumbed upon the question, so that, in consequence, a stealthy and secret Antinomianism has been creeping over the Church, and is positively gaining ground amongst us. It would appear as if their very orthodoxy had spell-bound both the preachers and the hearers—the one at a loss what to say, and the other what to do, in the matter. It is a miserable thing when men are thus left to strive so uncertainly, and to fight as

one who beateth the air, instead of being set on a plain path, along which they might clearly and confidently go forward, with the delightful assurance that their labour is not in vain in the Lord; and that every footstep they take brings them so much nearer to the prize of a high calling.

2. This is a sore evil. It is very hard that because Luther denounced so strenuously—and most rightfully to be sure on his part—the will-worship, the penances, the self-imposed drudgeries of the Popish superstition, that the lesson thus given forth by him should have been so exaggerated, or so perverted and misapplied, as that an incubus should have somehow or other been laid by it on the work, the actually prescribed work and busy warfare of our own practical Christianity—a work and a warfare urged with such force, and fulness, and freedom, from the mouth of Christ and His Apostles, and throughout all the writings of the New Testament. It is true that we are there most clearly and authoritatively told, that the works of men, be they ceremonial or be they moral, are of no possible avail for justification before God, or for helping, by ever so little, to build up a legal right to the rewards of eternity; and that for this object the righteousness of Christ, the everlasting righteousness which He hath brought in, is all in all. But the work of man, or his own personal righteousness, though utterly worthless for this end, the end of establishing his right to a place and a position in the paradise above, might be so indispensable to another end, that, unless he abound in such works—unless he make good such a personal righteousness, he can have no part, no lot in that glorious inheritance—an inheritance which Christ, and Christ alone, hath purchased; but which, without the preparation of a new heart and a new life, no professed follower of Christ can by any possibility enjoy. And, accordingly, who can mistake the breathing and living earnestness of all the Apostles and first teachers of Christianity, for the upright walk of their followers, and for all the graces and virtues of their new obedience? This new obedience—this incessant diligence, and for the object, too, of being found without spot and blameless on the future day of reckoning—this constant abounding in the work of the Lord, and this abounding in it more and more—this busy engagement both of heart and of hand with a prescribed task—this laying up of treasure in heaven, and not most assuredly by our ceasing from service, but by the renouncement of one service for another—the service of Mammon, or of the world, for the service of

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

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

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

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

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

5. Your first positive reason, then, for urging upon your hearers the practice and busy cultivation in their own persons of all righteousness, is that, in so doing, you are just bidding them do what God himself bids, and so are but declaring what, as a faithful pastor of His will, you are bound to do wholly and without any reservation, declaring the counsel of God. Under the first covenant, commonly called the covenant of works, God bade men do His will, and do all righteousness; and we find that, under the second covenant, commonly called the covenant of grace, He bids them just do the very same things. What He bade them then, He bids them still. There is just as loud a trumpet-call to obedience under the new dispensation as under the old. It is true that one object of our obedience under the latter was to earn thereby a right, a legal and challengeable right, to a blissful immortality; and that this object is now

utterly fallen from, and never can be attained by means of any obedience of our own, however unremitting and however strenuous. Then obedience was rendered because of the judicial right which it earned to a something in return for it; now obedience is rendered, not because of any judicial challenge which it entitles us to prefer, but simply because God wills it, and because it is right. To obey God's will is in itself indeed the supreme, though not the only rectitude which enters into the composition of virtue. But we ask which is the purer virtue, which the higher and better style of obedience?—whether to obey simply in order to please God, or to obey in order to obtain from Him the payment of a stipulated reward?—whether because of the return which it brings, or simply because of its own rightness? Let us look upwardly to God himself in heaven, and consider what is the nature or what the character of virtue there. He worketh righteousness, we are told, but His is not the work of a hireling. It is not for a remuneration that He is virtuous, but because prompted thereto by the inherent and spontaneous virtuousness of His own nature. Now the great, the terminating object of Christianity, is to restore in us the lost image of the Divinity. It is to make us like unto God. Most assuredly it is not to absolve us from the obligations of duty; and, as much now as before the fall of Adam, is it the indispensable propriety of all who are admitted into the presence of God in heaven, that they be as they ought, and do as they ought.

6. It is a sad perversion of Christianity, when, in virtue of a misconception regarding the high functions ascribed to faith in the New Testament, works are held to be superseded, or men would slacken the inducements, which still remain as binding as ever, to a life of strenuous and aspiring virtue. This comes of the controversies which have laid too disproportionate a stress on one part of theology, so that other parts of it have been disposed of with but a slight and passing notice—if not blinked and kept out of view altogether. It is indeed a high office which belongs to faith, that it appropriates the righteousness of Christ—to which alone, and not in the very least degree to our own righteousness, heaven, with all its blessedness, is judicially awarded. But beside the judicial right to heaven, there must be a personal meetness for its exercises and its joys. In regard to this meetness, it says that greater than faith is charity; and so we are told that, after having received the promises, there is a busy course of preparation, which is fulfilled by the perfecting

our holiness in the fear of God; and that if not the first, which was to make atonement for us, at least the final purpose of Christ's death is, that He might purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Most true, most importantly true, that we are justified by faith; but alike true, and as importantly true, that we are judged by works. And if a like prominency be not given to both these propositions, it is just because there has arisen in the Church a human theology, not after the model or according to the proportions of Scripture. The wrath of man, it is said, worketh not the righteousness of God; and it would seem, too, as if the controversies of man have not worked, in the minds even of the evangelical and the orthodox, have not worked a full and perfect impress without distortion and without mutilation of the truth of God.

7. And after all, what is heaven but a place of holiness; and wherein does its happiness specifically and essentially lie but in the exercise of good and holy affections? Its pleasures are but the pleasures of virtue, of love to God and love to the family of God—those copious principles of all good works, be they the works of piety or the works of heartfelt, exuberant, ever-breathing benevolence. The character of man, whether in his original or renovated nature, is essentially the same with that of God; and his capacity for happiness, nay, the very happiness itself, is the same with that of God. And thus it is that in heaven all are righteous, because the habitation of the immediate presence of that God over all who loveth righteousness; and thus too it is that nothing sinful can enter there, because the same presiding and ever-present God hateth iniquity. He rejoices there in the midst of His own family, but there is a family likeness which pervades all the members of it, and without which they could not be reckoned, and could not be admitted among His children, because not created, or not after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. That the expectant or the possessor of such a heaven has nothing to do with virtue, is in truth a most egregious paralogism, or contradiction in terms. He has everything to do with it. It is his business, his vocation, the grand concern of his life here, the very element hereafter of his immortal well-being. It is true that this virtue of his has nought to do with his right to heaven; it does not purchase heaven for him, but it prepares him for its joys and its exalted services. The right, whether of entry or possession, is no achievement of ours, but is the fruit of that everlasting righteousness which Christ hath

brought in, even He who, in thus magnifying the law, hath magnified the Lawgiver, and by the obedience unto death which made it honourable, hath vindicated the honours of that Sovereign against whom we have rebelled, but who now, through the consecrated way of His Son's mediatorship, invites, and will accept of our returning allegiance. If we obey the call, we renounce the unfruitful works of darkness, and forthwith enter on the service of the living and true God—in other words, we enter on the course of our moral and spiritual education, on the true work of our pupilage and preparation for eternity, that we might be qualified for the companies of the celestials, and for taking part in the employments of that heaven where the servants of God for ever serve Him.

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

Scripture tells of justification; have faith in this, and rejoice. But Scripture also tells of sanctification; have faith in this too, and forthwith enter on the busy prosecution of it. If you do not, there is no reality whatever in your faith. It is not faith, but fancy, which occupies the breast, and practises its delusions on the inner man. If this state be persisted in by any, he will go to the grave with a lie in his right hand, and perish amid the infatuations of a sadly misunderstood and sadly misapplied evangelism.

9. But more than this. If there have been provision made for the one, there is just as express provision made for the other—we mean for the personal as well as for the imputed righteousness. If for the imputed righteousness, which is our justification, there have been instituted a vicarious suffering and a vicarious service by Christ Jesus the Son of God; for the personal righteousness, which is our sanctification, there has been instituted the work of regeneration, carried into effect by the Spirit of God, and taking sure fulfilment in the new obedience of every real Christian. The effect of the Spirit working in him is to set him a working. He prays for strength to work, and he works accordingly; and thus his life is a continued effort, a continued aspiration, nay, a continued actual and historical progress in the prescribed holiness of the gospel. This in fact is the grand design, the terminating object of Christianity—arrived at by a series of means, having the moral and spiritual perfection of every genuine disciple for its result or its landing-place. Before the effusion of this heavenly influence upon man, there behoved to be a humiliation and a sacrifice, and a burial and a resurrection, and, finally, an ascension—that at last the Holy Spirit may be given after that Christ had been glorified. And in keeping with this we are told that Christ died, in order to purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. Justification, then, the fruit of Christ's obedience unto death, is not the end of a sinner's Christianity, it is but the mean to an end, and that end is his sanctification. To neglect this then, is to live in neglect of the great design for the accomplishment of which the economy of the gospel was set up in the world. It is to frustrate or defeat its conclusion, and so to stamp a mockery on all the antecedent steps which ought to have led to it. And, accordingly, we read of every wilful sinner, not only that he does despite unto the Spirit of grace, but that he tramples under foot the Son of God, by his counting the blood of the covenant an

unholy thing. Never then was there a more grievous misunderstanding of the dispensation under which we sit than those have fallen into—a very numerous class, we fear—who have come under the delusion, that, somehow or other, faith without works is to save them; and so look askance at the preacher who tells them that they must cease to do evil and learn to do well. Instead of which they like a great deal better if he just keep harping on the phrases of a cabalistic orthodoxy, which is altogether in word, and not at all in power. Keep therefore—for the distempers of the Church require it—keep the repentance of the gospel as fully and broadly in view as the faith of the gospel—the doctrine of a sinner's regeneration as much as the doctrine of his reconciliation—the office of the Spirit to renew as much as the office of the High-Priest to atone and to intercede for him;—in a word, the indispensable preparation for heaven as much as the sure and rejoicing prospect of heaven, that the new life might emerge with the new hope, and that they who look for the coming glory might well understand it to be a glory only in reserve for every man who worketh good, a glory only realized after a patient continuance in well-doing.

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

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

11. We have distinct Scripture for this reaction of obedience upon faith. The action of faith upon obedience is more palpable; and it is therefore less necessary to allege our quotations in support of it, though we might repeat this one decisive sentence from Holy Writ—even that faith worketh by love, and purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world. But the converse

between these two elements does not stop here ; for the obedience tells back upon the faith, and in virtue of this its reflex influence, amply repays the obligation, "If a man keep my sayings, to him will I manifest myself."—"To him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God." Let your works be, not those of penance and mortification, but works of righteousness and charity, and then shall your light break forth as the morning. The Reformers have demolished the former works, and made noble demonstration of their vanity ; but we fear that, as the controversy thickened, a withering influence has been cast upon all works, and men have looked hard at them, as having at best an ambiguous and questionable place in Christianity. There is all the difference in the world between the free, fearless, urgent, and unqualified manner in which the apostles press home the observance of them, and the feeble, tremulous, hesitating testimony in their favour given by many of our modern evangelicals, who beset their every exhortation to practise with so many cautions and adjustments, we could almost say apologies, that it falls with uncertain sound upon the hearer—so that, instead of abounding in the work of the Lord, because knowing that his labour is not in vain, he, as if lost in the mists of an artificial theology, is bereft of all confidence and all comfort in the way of obedience. Faith and works have been placed in a sort of hostile attitude, like two rivals, jealous and distrustful of each other. It was most assuredly not so in the first days of the Christian religion, when faith, on the instant of its formation, called out, "Lord, what willest thou me to do?" and zealous of good works, rejoiced in the teeming progeny of which it was the fountain. A man's faith was known by his works, and by works his faith was perfected.

12. On the whole, then, it appears a great desideratum, that good works, inclusive both of acts and of principles—that personal Christianity, as characterizing both the inner and the outer man of a disciple—in short, that virtue, made up of the duties which man owes both to God and to his neighbour—that his state of moral rightness, taking both the moral and the right, not in the mere civil, or social, or earthly, but taking it in the most sacred and comprehensive sense of the term ;—we affirm it to be a great desideratum, that this grand constituent of a living, and personal, and real Christianity should be reinstated, should be restored to the place which it undoubtedly has in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, but which it has not in the

popular mind of Christendom. Whatever should be done for this momentous object, the precious doctrine of justification by the righteousness of Christ must be left intact and inviolable. This righteousness is not the part only, but the whole, the single and entire ground of our meritorious acceptance with God. To harmonize, or rather to interweave with this precious doctrine, the absolute need of obedience and personal goodness on the part of man, we have often felt it to be a most available consideration, that in Christ, and for the sake of His righteousness, we not only have acceptance for our persons, but acceptance for our services. Every act of obedience by which we give up our own will to God's will may be regarded as an act of self-denial, or what the Bible terms a spiritual sacrifice; and we there read of our spiritual sacrifices being acceptable to God by Jesus Christ our Lord. Could we only, then, adopt and proceed upon this view, the acceptableness of our obedience in the sight of God, so far from conflicting with the doctrine that the righteousness of Christ is our alone justifying righteousness, would form part and parcel of it. Let us just conceive that He beheld not ourselves only, but our services, in the face of His Anointed, then might we recognise as true, both that these services were indispensable and that the incense of Christ's righteousness gave all their merit to them. This sentiment gleams forth occasionally in the commentaries of Luther, and presents human obedience in such a form as to cause thereby no infringement on orthodoxy, but rather to bind it up with the doctrine of justification by faith alone. The righteousness of Christ is all in all for our justification. Apart from this, there is no merit either in our prayers or in our performances; and if there be an ingredient of merit which goes up along with them for the acceptance of God, that ingredient is exclusively and wholly the merits of Christ's obedience, neither in aught changed nor in the least added to by any obedience of our own. Still we read in the book of Revelation, that there is an incense which ascends to the throne with the prayers of saints, and the same incense ascends to the throne with the performances of saints—at all times well-pleasing to God when offered in the name of Christ, acceptable to the Father through the Son. Such are the performances which should be urged to the uttermost, with all force and with all freedom, on the disciples of the Saviour. Sure we are that the apostles did so, and so ought the ministers of Christ in the present day, in greater fulness of detail than they are now accus-

tomed to, with greater closeness of application to familiar and everyday life, and with far less restraint than many of them feel from the freezing influences of an ill-understood orthodoxy. The works of superstition and will-worship, denounced with so warrantable a vehemence by the Reformers, ought not to be confounded by us, as I fear they often are, with the works of that eternal and immutable law which Christ came not to destroy, but to establish. The discredit laid by them upon the former should not be laid upon us by the latter also. The works enjoined by the Church of Rome for pacifying the conscience were indeed vain and unprofitable. The conscience can be pacified aright and purified only by the blood of Christ, after which the believer turns him not from all works, not from those works of charity, and justice, and obedience to the Divine will, which are of everlasting obligation, but only from dead works, and that to serve the living and the true God, to serve Him not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.

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

less in themselves. The works which Scripture enjoins have just as little part in our justification as the former ; but God has willed them, and so far from worthless, they are indispensable, both to our present religious wellbeing and to our future heaven—nay, in the day of judgment we shall be recompensed according to them ; and, so far from being to be spoken of in such terms of depreciation as would almost exclude them from Christianity, it forms the very end or great terminating design of Christianity, that the law of God should again be re-established in its ascendancy over man, and he be made to run with alacrity and delight in the way of all the commandments. Salvation is not of works but by grace, yet salvation is to works ; and for the very purpose of making this good is man created the workmanship of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Salvation is not of or from works, but it is to works. If it do not begin with works, it ends with them ; or rather, I should say, it does not begin from works, but no sooner does it exist, even in its most embryo form, than there commences a stirring, and a working, and a busy movement away from sin and towards righteousness—so that it may be said to begin with works, or, in other words, that our works are coeval with Christianity in the order of time, though not prior to our Christianity in the order of cause and effect ; while, on the other hand, Christianity, from the earliest or most rudimental and incipient stage of it, exerts a most powerful causal influence both on our history and habits—a mighty impellent, and this from its very outset, to all good works. Faith, even when it exists but as a grain of mustard-seed, is a working faith, and proceeds on the question which Paul asked at the moment of his conversion, “ Lord, what wilt thou me to do ? ” And what he thus exemplified himself he expected of others also ; and so he went about teaching everywhere, among his first lessons you will observe, that men should repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance : and thus let the Christianity which you teach be, from its commencement even to its full and final establishment, of a thoroughly practical character—an active, diligent, ever-watchful, ever-doing religion. Go forth on the battle against the Hydra of Antinomianism, that subtle and deep-seated delusion which operates so powerfully and extensively, we fear, throughout the popular mind in all Christian lands. Enter on an unsparing warfare against it. Let not the trumpet, from first to last, give forth any uncertain sound, but make distinct, and audible, and open pro-

clamation against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men : and all this without offence or injury to the prerogatives of Christ's righteousness, which is the all in all of our justification. By this, and by this alone, hath He redeemed us ; but the high design of that mediatorial economy over which He presides is to regenerate also ; and it is only when thus born again, and by our growth as new creatures in Him, or, in other words, it is only when we make progress in sanctification, that He sees in us of the travail of His soul, and is satisfied.

SUBJECT-MATTER OF CHRISTIANITY.

PART III.

ON THE EXTENT OF THE GOSPEL REMEDY.

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

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

The subject on which we now enter involves in it the leading peculiarities of Calvinism;—not but that the articles already discussed form part and parcel of the Calvinistic system of theology; but then they are the articles of other creeds as well as of ours. The doctrine of justification by faith alone—of a personal and moral, as distinct from that mystical change which has been termed baptismal regeneration; and furthermore, of the indispensable agency of the Holy Spirit, in the work both of our conversion at the first, and of our progressive sanctification afterwards,—these are tenets of Calvinism, no doubt; but then they are not distinctive of Calvinism, for they are equally professed in the churches of other denominations, where Calvinism is repudiated and disowned. We are not sure, however, but that the *total* corruption of human nature—a corruption so entire as to imply the utter powerlessness of man for his own conversion, insomuch that, apart from and anterior to the opera-

tion of God's Spirit, he can contribute nothing even to the first movements of a saving change upon himself: we are not sure but that the doctrine of man's inability for even the least co-operation, and that at the earliest outset of this great transition in his moral and spiritual history—we are not sure but that to such an extent as this, the extent of the complete and the absolute, the doctrine of human corruption may be held as peculiar to Calvinism. We do not see how, if the work of the Spirit be the all in all of our regeneration, to the utter exclusion of all contingency from the self-determining will of man having had any part in it—we do not see how, after the admission of a corruption and a helplessness so entire as this, leaving the work of conversion in every instance wholly to that Spirit who bloweth where He listeth, and on whom He listeth—we do not see how, after this, the tenet can be refused, that the extent of the gospel salvation, or the number on whom it shall take effect, must be limited by the sovereign pleasure and purpose of God. But the inconsistencies of Churches in their admission of one doctrine and their refusal of others, however closely or necessarily implied by it, belong rather to the literature of the subject than to the subject itself; and let us therefore, without any further reference to the history of this theology, enter at once upon the matter of it, seeking our way to the high topics of predestination, and election, and particular redemption, and the perseverance of the saints, through such disclosures as we can find to have been made either by the light of nature or by the light of revelation.

For just as in what we termed the great initial doctrine of Christianity, viz., the moral depravation of our race, we had the concurrent testimonies both of observation and Scripture, so, even in those transcendental themes which have now been announced by us, it will be found that the conclusions of human science and the statements of the Bible, have alike to do with them; and as in our treatment of the first and introductory doctrine, viz., the corruption of our nature, we gave first the findings of experience, and then the testimonies of holy writ, so now, and on our present subject, we shall address ourselves first to the views opened up by the mental philosophy, and then to such depositions as might be found regarding it in the oracles of God. This was Edwards's order, and it will be ours. I may here state that my convictions are as entire as his were on the side of a rigid and absolute predestination. I do not know

in what extent he held that the theology of a Church was vitiated and defective which either disowned this tenet or was silent regarding it. The two questions are obviously not the same—the truth of the doctrine, and its necessity, whether for being admitted as the article of a Church's creed, or for the saving faith of a private Christian. I have no doubt in my own mind that Calvinism is true—even to the full amount of those peculiarities by which it differs from other Churches; but there is another question, In how far Calvinists might agree to differ from them? and I confess myself more intent upon this question than even upon the truth of Calvinism, and more intent still on protecting the business both of our pulpits and of private Christians from being injured and perverted, as I fear it often has been, by a misunderstood and misapplied Calvinism. Meanwhile, let us address ourselves to the doctrine of philosophical necessity, as being preliminary in science to what in theology is the counterpart or cognate doctrine of predestination. It will be found that the mental and moral philosophy, as well as natural theology, bear a part in this argument on both sides of the question. Let us take up each of these in succession, and then proceed to the scriptural evidence upon the subject.

CHAPTER I.

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

(ARGUMENT TAKEN FROM THE NATURE OF THE MIND.)

1. BEFORE entering upon the discussion, it occurs to us to state, that if we may judge both from the present and the past, there seems little prospect of a specific settlement upon this question, which bears every appearance of remaining a *questio vexata* till the end of time. If we look back upon its history, we shall find a very powerful array of names on both sides—as Leibnitz, and Hume, and Lord Kames, and Jonathan Edwards, and perhaps Dr. Thomas Brown; and these about countervailed in authority, and greatly more than countervailed in numbers, by Samuel Clarke, and Butler and Locke, and Reid and Stewart, with almost all the divines of any eminence in the Church of

England; while in Europe the progress of speculation, as far as influenced by the transcendentalism of Germany, seems in favour of what has been termed the metaphysical liberty of the human will, as opposed to the doctrine of Edwards and Leibnitz. Coleridge would certainly take away from this doctrine its firmest support if he could make good his affirmation, that the events called volitions or determinations of the will are marked by this singularity, that they do not, like all the other events that we know of, lie within the category of cause and effect—thus giving rise to a difference of understanding which seems of all others the most hopeless, a difference in first principles; and therefore beyond the possibility of adjustment by any process of reasoning. In these circumstances, there seems as little hope of their coming to one and the same mind, as that two men shall ever come to one and the same place, who have set out on their respective journeys with their backs to each other. The difference looks almost an organic one, a difference of conformation between minds differently constituted. When one party in an intellectual warfare profess to base their argument on principles clear to themselves, and the other party deny these principles, the two must be wholly out of sight from each other, nor can there be aught like sympathy of a common understanding betwixt them. It is unavoidable, indeed, but that the former of these must regard the other as altogether wrapped from the view of ordinary men in a cloud of unintelligible mysticism. On which side the mysticism lies we shall not at present say, but certain it is that there is a deep and subtle misunderstanding betwixt them, and all the more aggravated by the introduction of a moral element into the question—the one body of controversialists contending that the doctrine of their opponents is subversive of all the ethical distinctions between right and wrong; and the other vindicating their tenet of necessity against the charge, affirming on grounds which are clearly felt by themselves, and which are certainly capable of being presented to others in the terms of a sufficiently lucid and clear statement, that the whole system of morality, its duties, its responsibilities, with the awards of merit and condemnation respectively due to virtue and vice, remain as entire as ever, if not rather placed by this hypothesis of theirs on a firmer basis of reason and principle than before. Still, however, they have not been able to quell the indignancy of men against what is very generally conceived to be both an infidel and an immoral speculation. And so the conscience, as well as

the consciousness of many, are enlisted in opposition to the views which, nevertheless, I shall attempt to advocate, so as to clear our way through the perplexities and perils of such an argument as best we can. I frankly confess that I am not able to discard from my mind the convictions of about half a century—convictions first received from the perusal of an infidel author, Godwin on Political Justice, but afterwards, and before I left the Divinity Hall, confirmed by Edwards, who, I think, has succeeded not only in rationalizing, but in moralizing and evangelizing the whole of this argument. The views which I received from him have remained with me ever since, or rather ripened into a fuller assurance, not only of their truth, but of their perfect safety, nay, positive wholesome influence, on the minds both of ministers and of private Christians. In addition to the silent operation of my own thoughts, my convictions have been still further matured and fortified by a perusal of the writings of Leibnitz and Dr. Williams.

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

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

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

In the treatment of such a question our own Calvinism behoved to come under review ; and few things would rejoice me more, than a wise and well-weighed deliverance, pointing out in how far a diversity of creeds may consist with an essential unity of faith.

4. It is not required that ere we enter upon this argument we should investigate the nature of Causation, whether we shall adopt the popular view simply as it stands, or that view as modified by the theory of Professor Robison, Dr. Thomas Brown, and others—the reasoning that is commonly employed on the side of necessity, if good and valid under the one hypothesis, seems equally good and valid under the other. Both parties seem alike to admit the constancy of nature, as being a history of innumerable progressions, and where the contiguous events, in each of the separate trains, stand related the first with the second, or the second with the first, by the tie of invariableness. Let A and B be two such events, it is enough for us if it be granted on all hands, that when A takes place, it will certainly be followed up by B ; or that when B is observed, we might certainly infer that A had gone before it. All we demand is an invariable succession between these two terms, whatever might be said of the intervening power, real or imaginary, which, as a sort of cementing principle, is conceived to be necessary for the purpose of binding them together. If the connexion be only invariable, that is sufficient for the purpose of the Necessitarians. The distinction between a simple and a causal accompaniment is equally recognised on either side of the controversy respecting cause and effect. The coincidence between the pointing of the shadow on a sun-dial and the striking of a clock, is never confounded with the connexion between the former and the sun's position in the firmament, or between the latter and the state immediately before it of the mechanism in the timepiece. Whatever shadowy or metaphysical speculations may have arisen on the subject of power, or of efficient principles, or of unseen ligaments and agencies, under any other name, which are conceived to fasten together the two terms of a sequence, or to run along and concatenate all the terms of a progression—the Necessitarian seeks for no other concession than the invariableness, or the certainty wherewith these terms succeed the one to the other. His only postulate to begin with, is, that there do occur throughout nature innumerable sequences, when a given antecedent is uniformly followed by one and the same consequent, and the given

consequent is as uniformly preceded by one and the same antecedent. This is all the closeness, and all the constancy of connexion between the terms, which he at all seeks or cares for in the construction of his argument, an argument not in the least affected by any speculation as to the *modus* of the connexion. We think, indeed, that there has been felt a most unnecessary and uncalled for alarm on the speculations both of Hume and Thomas Brown on the doctrine of Causation; for grant but the invariableness of nature's sequences, and this forms a sufficient foundation on which, in every instance of a formerly observed sequence, to predict its consequent whenever the antecedent shall again occur, or to infer its antecedent whenever the consequent shall have come under notice. There is no danger, therefore, to the cause of Theism, from a speculation which has proved obnoxious to many, and given great uneasiness to the minds of the pious. If one of these regular sequences in nature be a forthgoing of skill and power on the part of a designing mind as the prior term, and the adaptation of parts to an end as the posterior term—then the inference of a human wisdom and power from a workmanship, competent to one of our own species, is not more sure than the inference of a Divine wisdom and power, and we may add goodness, from the countless beneficial adaptations that bespeak to reason's ear the agency of a God. We shall therefore disembarass ourselves of that subtle speculation regarding cause and effect altogether. To introduce it into the question between the liberty and the necessity of human actions, would subserve no other purpose than that of mystification. It were laying a most unnecessary servitude on the subject of our present discussion; and the controvertists on both sides should feel thankful for being relieved from the obligation of entertaining an argument that has really nothing to do with the point at issue.

5. It is of importance to remark, at our entrance upon this subject, that the doctrine of Necessity is held to obtain universally throughout the material world. We may regard it as the universal faith, both of the learned and the unlearned, that the same antecedents are followed by the same consequents throughout inanimate nature in all her departments. Let but the volitions of the Deity, and those of creatures endowed with life and the faculty of choice, be kept out of view, and then I should imagine that, by the unexpected agreement of all parties, it would be fully conceded to us, that in the whole universe besides,

there was "no caprice, no contingency, and nothing uncaused; and for every change or event which takes place in the material world, a reason could be found in some antecedent, to which one thoroughly acquainted with the powers and processes of nature could refer, as the proximate cause of the phenomenon in question. Even when the proper, that is the strictly causal antecedent, could not be assigned, there is no imagination on that account that it does not exist. It is conceived to be not the less certain, though not yet ascertained, perhaps even not ascertainable. In the presence of a crowd of accessories, it may often be difficult to fasten on the precise element, or the precise combination which has given rise to some observed result; and the great object of experiments, in chemistry and physiology, and generally the more complex sciences, is to detect and eliminate the real antecedent of any event or appearance in nature, viewed as a consequent—so as to distinguish essentials from accessories, or the causal from the casual, in the processes of the material world. There are certain of the simpler sciences, where, as in astronomy and mechanics, fewer agencies are concerned, and where the difficulty is less either in predicting, under given circumstances, what is to follow, or inferring, in given circumstances, what it was that had preceded them. It is thus that one can rigidly compute the movements, even the aberrations of a planet in the firmament—where the deflecting and disturbing forces concerned in the operation are few and measurable, with far greater ease than he could compute the seemingly wayward and fitful movements of a particle, be it of dust along the road at the mercy of every passing breeze, or in a stream of water, where the thousand countless and unseen impulses which come in the way of each atom in the assemblage, are far beyond the cognizance, and still more beyond the calculations of the observer. This, however, does not in the least relax or unsettle the conviction that the particle is just as much the subject of a strict and unfailing necessity as is the planet—so that the path of the one, however untraceable by us, is as much under the guidance of an absolute law, or as much a thing of absolute determination, as is the path of the other. There is no difference in this respect between the atoms and the masses of our material system. Both are conceived of by all as lying within the domain of a rigorous and adamant necessity. Whether in the terrestrial physics, where we have often to do with atoms, or in the celestial physics, where we have to do with masses,

the operations in both are reckoned on as equally certain—the only difference between them being that they are not equally ascertainable.

6. In the more minute and complicated operations of matter, we admit the very same precise and rigid necessity that obtains in the movements of the planetary system, even though it is not a necessity that is so ascertainable by us. Take the motion of a fluid, for example; confine your attention but to the velocity and the direction of one of its single particles in a stream of running water. There is no calculus that can enable us to trace its path in space, even as we trace the path of a planet in the firmament. It is the subject of forces more various, and which, in the precise degree of their intensity and their direction, are altogether unknown to us. We are not aware of the many impulses to which it is liable; and from our ignorance of these, we are wholly unable to predict the many fits and fluctuations which this particle is destined to undergo; yet no one doubts that a power, in every way as sure as destiny, overrules every inch of its progress—that there is nought of the random or the fortuitous in any of its movements—that every stop or turn or acceleration which it receives is the precise result of the various influences wherewith it is beset, and to the operation of which it is subjected. There is no start either of caprice or of contingency in the journeyings of this minute atom, from the point of its departure at the fountainhead to the point of its arrival at the waters of the mighty ocean; and even when it has commingled with these, and become the sport of elements, in the vastness and variety of which it is now lost to all human observation—when at one time wafted along by the breeze, and at another hurried forward in the current, and at another intercepted by the rock, against which it is dashed among the spray, and driven back upon some new voyage among the fathomless mysteries of the deep,—why, to track this continuous path were to describe the adventures of an atom; yet in no one point along this line of continuity was it ever abandoned by those forces which guided it through all its windings, and gave precise direction to every step of a progress which to us is unsearchable. And the same may be affirmed of every particle of dust which is blown along the road; of every atom that eddies, or unites, or effervesces, among the combinations of chemistry; of every individual in that innumerable army of vapours which ascend to the upper regions of our atmosphere, and there are marshalled

into clouds, and are thence precipitated in showers, and some of which enter into composition with the growing plant, and are detained and elaborated and compounded there among the juices of vegetation. You will see how utterly impossible it is for man to pursue the course of one such particle through all its mazes; yet in every footstep of the untraceable way there is a certainty, though it be not ascertainable. There is a determination by existing forces which operate at the time, though we cannot determine it. There is even in these inaccessible departments an unfaltering constancy in nature, though the precise order of this constancy is unknowable by us. In a word, the unconquerable faith, whether instinctive or acquired, whether anterior to or the fruit of experience, which man has in nature's uniformity, reaches to all the hidden places where that uniformity cannot be the subject of our particular observation. There is at least apprehended by us a strict and unvarying succession throughout all the processes of materialism. Apart from the phenomena of animal life, apart from the fancy and the waywardness which are ascribed to the volitions of those creatures who are capable of choice, the doctrine of Necessity is universally admitted, and is held, without exception, to obtain over the whole field of matter, in all its manifold varieties, in all its busy circulations.

7. The understanding of man would be revolted by the opposite doctrine, which were felt to be the denial of an axiom. The axiom is often expressed thus, that there is no effect without a cause. But this puts it into a form which might be well objected to, on the ground of its making it but an identical proposition—the one term being so related to the other as necessarily to imply that other, insomuch, that to affirm the separate and solitary existence of either were to involve a logical contradiction. The one were no cause but for the effect to which it had given birth; the other were no effect but for the cause from which it had originated. Now, what we mean to affirm as the ground of our reasoning, is not a logical, but an experimental truth; and so, instead of saying that there is no effect without a cause, we should say that there is no event without a cause—a proposition this which, though we have termed it an experimental one, is held universally among men, and is as much the object of their axiomatic faith as is the former proposition. It is true that, even in this form, it cannot be said to have been taught by experience, for it is the object of every man's con-

viction, from the first outset of his understanding. But, though not taught by experience, it can be tested by experience, and therefore we call it an experimental truth; not learned by us in the school of experience, but carried by us into that school, and certainly not contradicted by any of the lessons which are given there. There is none who believes not from infancy, that the same antecedent is not always followed up by one and the same consequent, and that the same consequent always takes rise in one and the same antecedent; or, in other words, whether because predisposed by instinct, or tutored thereto by experience, there is among all men a universal faith in the constancy of nature, or, which is the same thing, in the invariableness of nature's sequences. The understanding of man would revolt from the opposite doctrine. That there should be any one event in the kingdom of nature which started of its own accord into being, and originated in no one necessity which preceded it, were a proposition felt to be as violent as any of those paralogisms which involve, not a contradiction to truth merely, but a contradiction in terms—as that there should be an effect without a cause, a consequent without an antecedent—a fact that germinated in nothing, and was alike destitute of a link that connected it with anything which went before, or with anything which came after it. All our habits of inquiry are grounded on the opposite conviction. We take up with no one event as isolated; and our whole philosophy, employed as it is in the investigation of causes, is one continued asseveration on our part of the doctrine of Necessity, at least in reference to the world of matter. It is with this instinctive faith that we commence the life and the labours of our intellect; and accorded to as it is by all subsequent experience, it has banished the imagination of contingencies from the universe.

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

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

the laws which its Creator hath established, the moral or the mental world would become the sport of innumerable contingencies, which even Omnipotence did not overrule; and so from the government of the Eternal would be wrested the best and the fairest territory which belongs to Him.

9. The historian of human affairs, if he do not admit the doctrine of necessity, at least proceeds upon it, though it may be unconsciously. He cannot, in fact, construct his narrative without employing the language of causation. His is a narrative of sequences, and he cannot proceed in it a single footstep without recognising the causal influence of one event upon another; nor does the intermixture of human volitions with the series, or rather as constituting parts of it, lead him in the least to relax this treatment of his subject, as if there did not run throughout a strict and continuous dependence of the consequent upon the antecedent, of the posterior upon the prior, although the choice and determinations of men form the chief materials of his history. He does not on this account exchange the language of causation for the language of contingency; but in his account of the deliberations and doings, whether of assembled or individual men, he as much reasons on the influence of the past upon the future as would the describer of any natural phenomenon. And accordingly, in the discharge of his vocation, he is sure to tell what the moving considerations were which swayed the counsels of the sovereign, or led to the resolves of the senate-house, or decided the minister in favour of his own policy, or led the warrior to adopt his plan of operations. Whatever the mental analyst might argue, the historian at least does not so conduct his narrative, as if he conceived of human volitions that they lay without the category of cause and effect. They form, in fact, the great steps or turning-points on which there hinges either the biography of individuals, or the history of nations. Yet who ever thinks that either of these proceeds at random, or that there is not a concatenation which runs throughout the whole of human affairs, whether in the life of a single man, or in the progress of society from generation to generation? and it makes nothing against this that we find it a far greater difficulty to assign the courses of man on the stage of history, than to assign the courses of a planet in the firmament. We can even predict the latter; but who could ever, with a full sense of infallibility, predict the course which mind is to take, or the volition which it will form in given circum-

stances? There is nothing, however, in this consideration which makes against the doctrine of necessity, any more than against the doctrine of necessity in terrestrial physics, where, from the greater complexity of the movements and of the forces concerned in them, we find it more difficult to calculate on the velocity and direction of the movements which are taking place below, than on the velocity and direction of those great bodies that roll in the upper regions of space. Yet we never once think of the untraceable movements that they are less certain in themselves, though not ascertainable by us. We cannot always foretell the course of a material atom, from our ignorance of all the forces by which it is beset; and neither can we always foretell the courses, either of the individual or of the collective mind, from the very same cause—our ignorance of all the influences which are brought to bear upon it, and the exceeding difficulty or rather impossibility of calculating on the precise force and tendency of any of these influences. But though we should not for this reason be able to assign what, under certain specified conditions, will be the distinct and individual evolutions of our human nature—yet notwithstanding this, we ascribe laws to human nature, and indeed can speak as confidently and currently of the laws of human nature, as we do of the laws of hydrostatics and hydraulics—laws which determine the place and the path of every particle of water, however much these may elude any possible calculation of ours. It is relative not to the thing itself, but to our ignorance of the thing, when we speak of the uncertainty that hangs over the movements, whether of matter or of mind. And even this uncertainty is giving way in the progress of observation and science. The more that we do know of our nature, the more correctly can we anticipate both the conduct of individual men, and those more ostensible changes which take their rise in the passions or the politics of general society. And in truth all reasoning on human affairs proceeds on the supposition that humanity is the subject of certain invariable sequences—that it has its processes which may be foretold, and its successions which imply a causal dependence of that which follows on that which precedes it. There could, in fact, be neither a mental nor a political philosophy without this. And if it is because the changes of matter proceed in a certain wonted order, that there can be a philosophy of matter—how, without the same wonted order, an order which the metaphysical liberty ascribed to the human will would utterly

destroy—how can there be any such thing as a philosophy of mind?

10. It is on the strength of such considerations as these that the doctrine of necessity has been extended from the processes of the material to those of the mental world. The various steps which make up a process in mechanics, or in vegetation, or in chemistry, proceed, it is allowed on all hands, by an order of strict and undeviating necessity; and the same, by the advocates of that doctrine which now engages our attention, is predicated of those various steps which make up a process of human agency. When man deliberates, he is the subject of certain laws of suggestion; when he inclines, he is the subject of certain laws of pathology; and when he rejects, or when he prefers, still it is by the balancing of certain moral forces that have each a precise direction and intensity given to them from the circumstances by which he is surrounded, taken in conjunction with the peculiar nature or character of the subject mind upon which these operate. It is by such a balance between the strength of so many desires, and the strength of conscience, that the volition is at length formed, and the word of command given forth to the instruments of human activity; and so every movement of this willing, and living, and spontaneous creature, the necessary result of certain antecedent influences, is held to be as rigorously and mathematically sure as are the courses or the aberrations of every planet and of every particle. It is held, and you will admit most plausibly, that there is as little of the uncaused in the phenomena of mind as in the phenomena of matter. And if there be a necessary relation between a cause and its effect—if, in the one department as in the other, every antecedent has its invariable consequent—if that faith which man has in the constancy of nature have never been known to deceive him when he investigates the processes of the world that is without, and if the world that is within has also its processes and its laws, or is the befitting subject for a philosophy at all, insomuch that the same instinctive faith in the constancy of nature follows us into our investigations of the laws and processes of humanity—how can we escape the conclusion, that, just as in the one so in the other, there is a past history, every particular of which was fixed and realized by the pre-ordinations of that nature, the uniformity of whose laws extends over the whole domain of existence, or rather of that God by whom the laws of nature were established, and there is also a future his-

tory that is alike sure, and has its very minutest passages alike fixed and unalterable?

11. The response which is given to this affirmation of a fixed necessity in the doings of man, is that there can be no such necessity, when I have the consciousness that I can do what I please. This universal feeling of liberty, it is said, is worth a thousand arguments; and with this I stand exonerated from the task of unravelling all the metaphysics and the subtleties, by which it is attempted to darken what is resistlessly and overwhelmingly felt by all to be the truth. It is of importance to attend a little closely to what has been termed the instinctive sense, which every man has of his own free agency. There can be no doubt of such a sense being really in existence; and you make an appeal to the consciousness of every breast on the moment that you advert to it. When one says that everything is a matter of necessity, I can instantly meet him with this most intimate conviction, that I can do either one thing or another, just as I will. Now the advocates of the philosophical necessity fully concede such a feeling; and it will concentrate your regards more on the process by which volitions and actions are connected together, if we just inquire for a moment how it is that they dispose of it.

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

the controversialists, the affirmation holds good—that I can do as I please. It is an affirmation which you may be surprised to hear is fully and cordially admitted by the Necessitarians themselves; and the question still recurs, How, in consistency with their tenet, can they possibly dispose of it?

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

14. In every voluntary performance of man, the act has an invariable antecedent, even the volition which went immediately before it; and the doing as you please just expresses, that according to the volition so is the act—according to the antecedent so is the consequent. This is fully given up by the advocates of necessity; and, according to them, it is this—it is the doing as he pleases that constitutes the whole of man's liberty—the whole of that which has been called the sovereignty or the control which a man has over his own actions. The most strenuous assertor of liberty in a commonwealth can imagine no higher liberty than just the liberty of doing what we please; and that which alone is liberty in politics, that and nothing else is held by the Necessitarians to be liberty both in philosophy and in fact. Let us strain our faculties to the uttermost, and we shall find it impossible to conceive of any other liberty than this. What other or what higher liberty is it possible that any man can please to have than just the liberty of doing what he pleases? If, in order to his making good the doing of a thing, a man has only to say, "Sic volo," that is surely all the lordship and all the liberty which heart can wish. There is another sort of liberty which our antagonists talk of, and which in argument they contend for; but which, if you attempt to figure in your minds as something distinct from the power or liberty of doing what you please, you will find to be utterly inconceivable. How-

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

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

15. We fully concede, then, to the defenders of the metaphysical liberty, that within certain limits we can do as we please. But this still leaves the question untouched and undecided upon, Why is it that we so please? We may both admit that sequence by which it is that the act stands related as a consequent to the volition as its antecedent, and at the same time view this volition as the consequent to some other antecedent which went before it. It is not necessary, for our doctrine, to refuse the power which there is in the human will to overrule, by its determinations, all the doings of human activity. The deeds of the outer man are strictly and subordinately dependent on the desires of the inner man; but then these desires are just as strictly and subordinately dependent on certain earlier antecedents in the train of causation—else they come forth uncaused. They rise into being in a way that checks a faith as strong and as universal as that which we have in axioms, even the faith that every event hath had a cause by which both its nature and its existence have been determined. When this is announced, it seems to have all the force and certainty of an axiom, and in this general form is admitted with the most unhesitating confidence by every understanding. Now it is in exception to this unanimous

and instinctive persuasion of our species, that those events which are denominated volitions should be regarded as the spontaneous and accidental things that are without descent, and have no progenitor whatever in the order of causation. They come unlooked for by Him whose intelligence can penetrate all other futurity but this; and after they have made their transition from the future to the present or the past—uncaused things as they are, and springing up at random, as they have done from the depths of contingency—there can no explanation of their origin be given, even by that Infinite Spirit who can so accurately philosophize the events of all other history. They would indeed be the monsters of our universe; and because of them the moral world, ever teeming with shapeless and causeless progenies, would move in some headlong way of its own, till, in the course of ages, it had mocked all the anticipations, and wildered away from all the controlling forces of that Eternal Spirit by whom it was emanated.

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

17. The specific object of the inquiry, you will remark, is the cause of that particular volition which preceded and gave rise to a certain given act. If, as the defenders of the metaphysical liberty affirm—if this volition has sprung from the self-determining power of the will, then it is the will that must have determined it. Instead of looking for the cause of this volition in something out of the will, they would have us to look for that cause in the will itself, and in the exercise of its own self-determining power—so that the will not only gave rise to the action, it would appear, but also to the volition that immediately preceded the action. But if so, it must have been by an act of the will that preceded the volition which the will has given rise to. In the exercise of its self-determining power, it must have

determined not merely that this must be the action which shall be performed, but that this must be the volition which shall go before it. To talk of the will determining without an act of determination, or of its choosing without an act of choice, or of its willing without that particular forthgoing of itself which we call a volition—this at best is but an unintelligible mystery; so that if the volition which comes directly before the action arises not from something out of the will, but from the will itself, it must have arisen from another and a distinct volition antecedent to itself, and the mind hath not only pleased what it shall do, but it hath pleased what it shall please. On the system of the Necessitarians, one volition is all which is requisite in any given action; but this self-determining power forces us to recur to at least two volitions—one of which is the immediate parent, as it were, of the action; and another of which is the immediate parent of that volition which is contiguous to the action, and is properly its grandfather.

18. But this retrogression of the acts of the will does not stop here. If the first volition in the order of ascent, because not an uncaused thing, required an account to be given of its existence, the same is every way as applicable to the second as to the first. To make escape from the absurdity of admitting a thing uncaused for the explanation of the first volition, recourse is had to a self-determining power, which conducts us to a predecessor volition that went before it. But it were equally absurd to affirm of this predecessor that it is uncaused; and we reiterate of it, therefore, what we said of the first, that it too must have had its origin, either in something out of the will or in the will itself. If in something out of the will, this is verily all which the friends of philosophical necessity contend for; but if in the will itself, if in the self-determining power of this faculty—then, as no faculty can determine without a determination, recourse must be had to another specific act of the will, to a third volition in the order of ascent, giving rise to the second, and that again to the first, and that ultimately to the action—which we hold to be completely entitled to the appellation of voluntary, if but one act of the will preceded it, but for which they deem it indispensable that there should be a succession of at least three distinct volitions, each proceeding from and determined by the one that went before it. Each voluntary act, it would appear, must not only have a father in one volition, but a grandfather in another, and a great-grandfather in a third. We think that all which enters

into the popular conception of human liberty, is, that within certain limits a man can do as he pleases; but to satisfy the metaphysical conception, he must not only please what he shall do, but he must please what he shall please—nay, must please what he shall please that he shall please. Not only must he please that he should take the apple, but he must please that he should please that he should please that he should take the apple.

19. These sturdy Necessitarians, however, nothing appalled, do not stop here, but return to the charge. They feel no becoming reverence even for this venerable grandfather, but proceed forthwith, and without ceremony, to ask him to give an account of himself. They consider him in every way as fair a subject for their inquisition as any of his posterity, and so put the question without aught of delicacy or reserve, What brought him there? and how is it that they see him standing where he is, within the field of their contemplation? It were a strange answer for him to make, that he came there uncaused; and that although the posterior volitions could look upward to a something which gave them birth, yet that to him, the great master volition, belonged the property of being self-originated, and therefore the privilege of being suffered to pass without any further reckoning. These pertinacious combatants will not be put off in any such manner; and so on him, too, they just reiterate the very argument which they employed on one and all of his successors. He is either an uncaused thing, or, like all the rest, he came into being in virtue of a cause either without the will or in the will. If without the will, this is all that the Necessitarians contend for—even that the will is determined to each and every of its separate acts by an influence exterior to itself; but if in the will, and by dint of its self-determining power, then it would appear that he, instead of being the last in the order of ascent, has just sprung from another of his own likeness; and so every single voluntary act which man performs must at this rate require an infinite series of volitions ere it can come into accomplishment. There is nothing in the system of philosophical necessity which at all infringes on the popular, and, we believe, the only real notion of liberty which is ever entertained—even the power which every man has, within certain limits, of doing what he pleases. This may be fully conceded by those who still affirm, that like as the act of doing springs from the act of pleasing, so the act of pleasing springs from a something anterior to

itself. But the system of metaphysical liberty, on the other hand, would make the act of pleasing spring either from an anterior act of pleasing or spring from nothing at all. The only alternative with them is, either an infinite succession of acts of the will preceding every action, or an act of the will that comes of itself unbidden, and without any parentage whatever in the order of successive nature. There is no consciousness of the first, seeing that when any object of desire is presented, and there is a will to have it, the volition thus called forth springs immediately into being on the sight of the object; and which one volition, we hold, enough to determine the action of stretching forth our hand to lay hold of it. From the second term of the alternative, again, there is the revolt of all human sense and human experience. We familiarly admit a causality in will, as in every other department of nature. We should hold it indeed a monstrous exception to the harmonies of our universe, if there was any one department in it from which causality was banished; and so it is, that feeling both the first and the second terms of the alternative to be inadmissible, there is felt to be no other recourse than to that system by which the moral is likened to the material world, in having its laws under which all the subordinate phenomena are sure, and all the sequences invariable; and that though, as in many departments of external nature, so minute and so multiplied are the influences by which the will is beset, that the precise direction it shall take in every instance may elude the sagacity of man, yet that each single volition, however wayward to appearance, is most certain in itself, while by us perhaps not at all ascertainable.

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

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

presented ; but the choice was fixed upon the sour apple, when the fruit and the argument together were brought into operation.

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

CHAPTER II.

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

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

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

2. After all, there is a delusion on this topic somewhat akin to that which we have already adverted to, in regard to the very general feeling of liberty which obtains throughout the species. When we come to examine what this feeling really is, we shall find that there is nought of repugnancy whatever in it to the doctrine of philosophical necessity, and that the power of doing what we please, harmonizes to the full with the pleasure or the volition being in itself the consequent of something that went before it. In like manner, when we come to examine closely what that is on which the designations of virtue and vice do rest—what that is which actually calls forth the judgment that we pass, or the feeling that we entertain, either of the one or the other, we shall find that the judgment or feeling rests and terminates in an object which leaves the question of necessity untouched, and an object which is not affected by the determination that Necessitarians pass upon this question. Necessity, you may say, implies force; but go to an unsophisticated peasant, who is just as vivid and correct in all his moral perceptions as the most accomplished philosopher, and in his estimation, the only force that exonerates from the guilt of a cruel or a fraudulent action, is a force that operates against the will, and not that force which powerfully influences the will to

be either fraudulent or cruel. I will venture to say, that whenever necessity is complained against, as charging criminality on a man for that which he cannot help, there is always in the mind the subtle imagination of a physical necessity. There is obscurely figured to the eye of the observer, a poor struggling ill-fated criminal, who would be righteous if he could, but who, in spite of every inclination and of every effort to the contrary, is forced to succumb under a helpless necessity that compels him to be wicked. There is always a certain undefined fancy on the part of this moral objector to the doctrine of Necessity, that the will is against the appliances of vice—whereas, in fact, the will is on the side of these appliances. And so far from the necessity that we contend for—so far from the moral necessity being held in the common estimation of plain and unsophisticated men, over whom the seductions and the perversities of a philosophical system have had no power—so far from the moral necessity being held by such as an extenuation, the more, in fact, that this necessity is enhanced, the more is the wickedness felt to be aggravated. For let there be two murderers, the one of whom could with far more difficulty be turned from his design of this horrid perpetration than the other. Let me be told of a thirst for blood twice more ravenous—of a delight and a satisfaction in the agonies of his wounded victim twice more savage and unrelenting—of a heart doubly steeled against the consideration of a slaughtered father and his distracted family—of a desperado who outruns his fellow in this, that on him the voice, whether of pity or of principle, falls with but half the energy; or that he, in virtue of more fell and fierce propensities, springs upon his prey, with twice the reckless glee, or twice the infuriated appetite, after both the treasure and the life of an unwary passenger. You will readily admit the double likelihood of a frightful and appalling perpetration from him on the event of your falling into his hand, or, what is wholly tantamount to this, a surer and stronger necessity;—yet just because a necessity, not that overbears his moral system by a force from without, but a necessity wherewith all the principles of his moral system are in willing coalescence, is he in your eyes the greater and the fouler monster of the two. There is nought in such a necessity as we plead for, that should either blunt the moral feeling, or at all deafen the indignant energy of the moral voice. Every aggravation of that necessity, in virtue of which a man becomes more wilfully a thief or a murderer than before, just

unfolds to my view a turpitude still more base, a villany still more execrable. And in accordance with the general feeling of society, whether the doctrine of necessity be in your head or not, you pronounce of him who is under the greater moral necessity to do evil, that he is the greater reprobate, and that to him most rightfully belongs the more emphatic condemnation.

3. And, on the other hand, you will perceive, that in proportion to the very strength of the moral necessity under which a man is to be virtuous, you enhance the admiration of his character. If there be such a recoil from falsehood in the bosom of the Godhead that He cannot lie, it is the energy of that recoil which gives Him the stronger claim upon your reverence for His truth. If the terrors even of death will not force a man to forfeit his integrity and honour, there must be a greater certainty or a greater necessity for uprightness in him, than in the man of feebler and laxer principles. But it is just this necessity which so many would conceive of as annihilating the virtue, that exalts it the more, and sheds over it an air of prouder chivalry. The terror of disgrace or of punishment that forced him to do honourably against his will, this is a necessity that would put all the honours of rectitude to flight. But the necessity that enlisted the will upon its side, and got firm and forcible possession of all its workings and of all its tendencies—the necessity in virtue of which a man could not deviate from truth and honour by a single hair-breadth, without his fine sense of morality being agonized thereby to intolerable wretchedness—the necessity under which a man must acquit himself of every high and honourable obligation, or do the utmost violence to all the feelings and principles of his own righteous nature—this is not the physical necessity which would inflict a death-blow upon virtue; but it is a necessity which, in proportion to its strength, and most of all when the strength is such as to make it irresistible, would elevate virtue into the noble and the chivalrous and the godlike.

4. The virtuousness of a good, or the viciousness of a bad disposition, lies in the nature and not in the cause of it. We read its moral characteristics in itself, and not in its origin. We gather them not from the antecedents whence it sprung, but from its own lineaments on the tablet of a character spread out before us as a thing of objective contemplation. It is true, that ere we can form our moral estimate of an action, we look to the

volition which gave it birth. We have this one ascent to make, but no more; nor are we required to trace our upward way any further along the pedigree of remoter causes. The moral rightness or wrongness of a disposition is not a question of genealogy, but a thing of immediate observation or perusal—in the nature of the disposition itself, and not in the causes whence it took its rise. Had there been two Eternal Manichean principles of good and evil, we should have known how to denominate and how to appreciate each, from the characteristics that stood palpably before us; nor should we have needed for this to grope and to penetrate among the viewless and primeval depths of the self-existent and the uncreated. Whatever necessity may be involved in the idea of self-existence, it is a necessity which does not obliterate the attributes of morality, but enhances them to the uttermost. The impossibility of sinning in God is the perfection of His holiness. And even with man; would he be less, or would he be more virtuous—would he be the subject of a lower or of a higher moral reckoning, if you could count at all times on his goodness and truth with as firm assurance as you would on the constancy of nature? On the other hand, would a desperado in wickedness be the less, or would he be the more obnoxious in your eyes, because lorded over by the malignant necessity of a nature fully set in him to do that which is evil? Would an irresistible propensity such as this be sustained as a palliative or plea in any court of justice; or rather, would not the general voice of society denounce the unhappy criminal who was under its power as all the fitter subject for the very highest of its punishments? There is a dogma of fatalism that would abrogate the distinctions between right and wrong; but there is a philosophical necessity that abjures the withering and gloomy speculation, and which, though sure as fatalism, yet with its grim and desolate and dreary scepticism, has no fellowship.

5. And here we shall have recourse again to the more precise, though prosaic argument of Edwards, who, though not the first that entered on the field of this philosophy, was the first that entered it with the might and the prowess of a conqueror, and has made it all his own. His is far the highest name which the New World has to boast of; and if aught can enhance our reverence for the achievement by which he distanced so immeasurably all the speculations of all the schools in Europe, it must be that it was an achievement consecrated by the deepest sense of religion, and performed by a man who, almost unconscious of

science, or at least unambitious of all its honours, was prompted to the task which he fulfilled so admirably, by his devotedness to that cause which, as a Christian minister, he felt to be the dearest and the best. There is indeed a wide contrast between the unlettered people among whom he laboured as a pastor, and the philosophers with whom, as an author, he held converse; and something most touchingly beautiful in the adaptation that he made of himself to both—giving rise to a corresponding contrast between the plain ministrations of his Sabbath, and the profound musings and inspirations of his solitude. His book on the Freedom of the Will, with a homeliness of style that represents the worth and the simplicity of his private life—by the fine staple of its thoughts, and the whole texture of its wondrous argument, is an undying testimony to the superiority and unrivalled strength of his metaphysical talents. Never was there a happier combination of great power with great piety; and were it not for the higher examples, and the surpassing volume wherewith Heaven has directly furnished us, I would hold it as the brightest eulogy both on the character and the genius of any clergyman, that he copied the virtues and had imbibed the theology of Edwards.

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

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

“If the essence of virtuousness or commendableness, and of

viciousness or fault, does not lie in the nature of the dispositions or acts of mind, which are said to be our virtue or our fault, but in their cause, then it is certain it lies nowhere at all. Thus, for instance, if the vice of a *vicious* act of will lies not in the nature of the act but the cause, so that its being of a bad nature will not make it at all our fault, unless it arises from some faulty determination of ours, as its cause, or something in us that is our fault—then, for the same reason, neither can the viciousness of that cause lie in the nature of the thing itself, but in *its* cause: that evil determination of ours is not our fault, merely because it is of a bad nature, unless it arises from some cause in us that is our fault. And when we are come to this higher cause, still the reason of the thing holds good; though this cause be of a bad nature, yet we are not at all to blame on that account, unless it arises from something faulty in us. Nor yet can blameworthiness lie in the nature of *this* cause, but in the cause of *that*. And thus we must drive faultiness back from step to step, from a lower cause to a higher, *in infinitum*: and that is, thoroughly to banish it from the world, and to allow it no possibility of existence anywhere in the universality of things. On these principles, vice, or moral evil, cannot consist in anything that is an *effect*; because *fault* does not consist in the nature of things, but in their cause; as well as because effects are necessary, being unavoidably connected with their cause: therefore the cause only is to blame. And so it follows, that faultiness can lie *only in that cause*, which is a *cause only*, and no effect of anything. Nor yet can it lie in this; for then it must lie in the nature of the thing itself; not in its being from any determination of ours, nor anything faulty in us which is the cause, nor indeed from any cause at all; for, by the supposition, it is no effect, and *has no cause*. And thus, he that will maintain it is not the nature of habits or acts of will that makes them virtuous or faulty, but the cause, must immediately run himself out of his own assertion; and, in maintaining it, will insensibly contradict and deny it.

“This is certain, that if effects are vicious and faulty, not from their nature, or from anything inherent in them, but because they are from a bad cause, it must be on account of the *badness* of the cause: a bad effect in the will must be bad because the cause is *bad*, or *of an evil nature*, or *has badness* as a quality inherent in it: and a *good* effect in the will must be *good*, by reason of the *goodness* of the cause, or its being *of a*

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

6. There is something quite irresistible, I apprehend, in this argument of his on the virtuousness of any disposition or act of the will, lying either in the nature or in the cause of it. If in the nature of it, then our object is gained. Let but its nature be given, and then we have its moral character—whatever question may be started as to its cause, or as to the way in which it originated. But if you will have the virtuousness of the thing in question to lie in its cause, and not in its nature, let us even go up to that cause, and put the inquiry—Wherein does its virtuousness lie? Either surely in the nature or in the cause of it. If in the nature of it, still the Necessitarian has his point secured—which is, that a thing may be virtuous without respect to its cause, and therefore virtuous, although for that cause we must recur to an antecedent necessity. If still, however, his antagonist will not rest at this stage of the argument, he may be pursued in the very same way, from step to step, even *ad infinitum*. He will have a race to run which never can be terminated, or can

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

terminate only in this way—that either virtuousness is banished from the world ; or if admitted, as the Necessitarian I am sure does most zealously and cordially, it will at length be found to lie in a something because of its nature, and irrespective of its cause. We admit of one step in the order of ascent. There is nought of the virtuous in the mere deed of the hand ; but in the deed as arising from, and coupled with, that disposition of the mind from which it emanated. But after you have come to this disposition, it appears as little necessary to mount any higher, in order to secure for an act of moral rectitude the character of virtuous, as in a former argument, it was necessary to mount any higher, in order to secure for it the character of voluntary.

7. It must not be disguised, however, that, at this stage of the argument, it is more difficult to bring the sympathy or the conviction of men along with us. Many there are who can follow the demonstration, that man might be a voluntary and yet a necessary agent, but are not able to comprehend how man might be a necessary and yet a moral agent. Dugald Stewart speaks of the argument which would reconcile the doctrine of philosophical necessity with the moral character of actions, as a subtle and shadowy reasoning ; and further affirms, that among the proselytes who have been gained to the first part of the creed, there is not one in a hundred who will subscribe to the second. He greatly exaggerates the number ; but it must be admitted, that there are some who have been made proselytes to the doctrine of philosophical necessity in itself, yet remain at a loss to perceive how, under such a system, vice can be still the proper object of condemnation and punishment, or virtue the proper object of reward and moral approbation. We believe, however, that in the vast majority of instances, the difficulties, even of the latter demonstration, are not felt to be unconquerable ; and that when a strenuous attention is given to it, not only has it proved satisfactory in itself to profound thinkers, but that so far from being of the subtle and shadowy character which Mr. Stewart has affixed to it, it makes out clearly and convincingly of this dogma, even in its moral aspect and bearings, that it neither conflicts with the principles of our nature nor with the universal sense of mankind.

8. And there is one very serious misconception involved in this assertion by Mr. Stewart, if he mean by it, that for every hundred who have been converted to the truth of the doctrine, there is not one who retains the conviction any longer of his

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

9. Let our ultimate resort then be to the genuine and universal feeling of our species. Let us observe how it is that the moral judgment or emotion arises in the heart of an unlettered peasant, when a deed, whether of virtue or vice, is presented to his observation—a deed prompted by the will to do what is morally right, or to do what is morally evil. We hold it to be the undoubted and unexcepted fact, that his moral feeling, whether of approval on the one side, or of condemnation on the other, arises immediately on his contemplation of the object thus placed in his view, and without any regard whatever to the antecedent train of causation that went before it. He does not look beyond that which stands in direct exhibition before him, nor, for the making out of his moral estimate, which he does most promptly and most powerfully at the moment, does he hold it necessary to investigate into the priorities of that series at all,

which has terminated at length in the display of worth or of wickedness that he is now looking at with his eyes. He is unconscious of the whole argument about necessity on the one hand, or contingency on the other. It matters not to him how that controversy is decided. The truth is, that our feelings and our judgments of the morality of any act or disposition are not affected by any determination which philosophers shall make respecting the remote and anterior processes which have given birth to it. In other words, grant but a will, we do not say forced against its own inclinations to that which is good or evil, but bent with all its inclinations either to the one or the other; and without any question of—How it came to be so bent, or what hath so bent it? you pronounce immediately upon it—either as the will of a virtuous man, or the will of a reprobate. The sense of these moral distinctions arises immediately on the view of the object—affected only by the nature of that object, without regard being had to its cause. Such is the universal fact; and it affords as broad and as solid a basis for the moral distinctions to rest upon, as do any of the ultimate feelings or perceptions of the mind. I cannot say why it is that a black colour impresses its particular sensation on the retina, and a white colour another and an opposite sensation: I cannot explain how it is, but I know from my own consciousness and the unexcepted observation of all my fellows, that so it is. And in like manner, I cannot tell in any other way, but that such is the constitution of my nature, why a deed of unequivocal villany lights up such a quick and instant indignancy in my heart; or a deed of an opposite character my as quick and instant admiration. I am only sure that it does so, and does so without any process of inquiry on my part into that order of causation which preceded the phenomena that are under my contemplation. At least, the inquiry goes no further than to ascertain, that in each of the actions, the will of the heart was in sympathy with the work of the hand, or rather was the impellent thereto. After this the controvertists on the theme of man's free agency may settle their own questions as best they may; but meanwhile, every plain man has enough to call forth both his clearest judgments and his most vivid emotions of morality, in the act of simply regarding the characters which are submitted to him as things of objective contemplation; and so to ascertain, not how they were originated, but what they are in themselves. The judgments given forth on such a contemplation as this, are as

much to be relied on as are any of our simple and ultimate perceptions in the other departments of truth. We cannot overturn the distinctions between right and wrong, as based on these judgments, without pouring a darkness and a distrust into all the original principles of our nature, and so opening the way to universal scepticism.

10. I regret that at present I can expatiate no further on the reconcilableness of the doctrine of necessity with all the wonted and received distinctions that obtain among mankind between the morally good and the morally evil. By far the most conclusive piece of reasoning on this single topic that I ever met with has been compressed by Edwards within half an hour's reading in an appendix at the end of his book on the "Freedom of the Will." I will not answer for your understanding of this masterly argument without having beforehand perused and pondered well the views and arguments of the book itself; and so having become habituated to that peculiar language in which he unites the plainest of all styles with the profoundest of all dialectics. The history of this appendix is curious. It has only been subjoined to the later editions of his work, and did not accompany the first impression of it. Several copies of this impression found their way into this country, and created a prodigious sensation among the members of a school then in all its glory—I mean the metaphysical school of our northern metropolis, whereof Hume, and Smith, and Lord Kames, and several others among the more conspicuous infidels or demi-infidels of that day, were the most distinguished members. They triumphed in the book of Edwards, as that which set a conclusive seal on their own principles, and upon which they might build, as upon an impregnable basis, the moral scepticism by which the distinction between vice and virtue, with all the corollaries of a Judge and of a judgment-seat, and of all the responsibilities to a moral Governor that flow from it, might be most effectually overthrown. Dr. Erskine of Edinburgh, the correspondent of Edwards, gave him the timely information of what was going on; and to prepare him more effectually for the extinction of the impending mischief, sent him a copy of Hume's "Essay on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion." The reply from America came in an ordinary post-letter to Dr. Erskine, I believe without any view on the part of the great American philosopher and theologian to the publication of it; but Dr. Erskine saw its value, and properly determined on its publication, and that im-

mediately, though in a separate form. It was in the original pamphlet, presented by Dr. Erskine to one of his personal friends, where I first met with this very powerful and precious argumentation—the importance of whose object can only be equalled by the triumphant success of its execution; and as by it he may be said to have completed the philosophy of this subject, it now properly appears as an appendix to the larger work.

11. I will give you no further extracts than merely the three first paragraphs as a specimen of the whole. But I would only apprise you of the length to which his victory is carried—even to that of demonstrating that the system of philosophical necessity is the only one respecting the will that is at all consistent with those moral distinctions which it is alleged to have overthrown—that, in fact, every other system opposite to, or different from this, involves in it the very mischief wherewith his own has been charged:—“The intimations you have given me of the use which has by some been made of what I have written on the Freedom of the Will, &c., to vindicate what is said on the subject of liberty and necessity, by the author of the Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion, has occasioned my reading this author’s Essay on that subject with particular care and attention. And I think it must be evident to every one that has read both his Essay and my Inquiry, that our schemes are exceedingly different from each other. The wide difference appears particularly in the following things.

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

“I find that some are apt to think, that in that kind of moral necessity of men’s volitions, which I suppose to be universal, at least some degree of liberty is denied; that though it

be true I allow a sort of liberty, yet those who maintain a self-determining power in the will, and a liberty of contingency and indifference, hold a higher sort of freedom than I do: but I think this is certainly a great mistake.

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

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

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

13. There are some, then, who associate with the doctrine of necessity a helpless acquiescence in all moral depravity and disorder, and who regard it as a death-blow to every practical expedient for the amelioration of our species. A little reflection will convince you that this is indeed a most strange and unwarrantable perversion to make of the system. It is by the instrumentality of means that any desired effect is produced, whether in the world of matter or of mind. And, we would ask, where is the discouragement to the use and the application of means on that principle which affirms the certainty of the relation that obtains between the antecedents and the consequents of that world which is the theatre of all our experiments and of all our devices ? I am aware of nothing that should more paralyze our hopes and our efforts towards any

* Edwards on the Freedom of the Will. Part iv. Sect. 15.

specified result than the whole doctrine of contingencies ; and nothing again that gives such a significancy and an encouragement to these efforts as the doctrine of a strict causality—by which it is made sure that, on the combination of certain elements, a certain result is to ensue. We should never feel induced to put these elements together, if that causal influence which, by the doctrine of necessity, we are led to ascribe to them, were exposed at every unknown and unforeseen turn to the breaking forth of some random contingency which should reverse every former experience, and defeat every present anticipation. It is the constancy of nature that gives such confidence to the experimental philosopher in the manipulations of chemistry. And it is just the same constancy in the world of mind, or because of the doctrine of necessity realized there also, that we enter with any comfort or confidence on the management of human nature. It is because of this that in our treatment of the human spirit, we ply all those various elements of hope, and fear, and conscience, and a sense of interest, and everything else that we have found to be of efficacy in leading our fellows on to the determinations of prudence and of virtue. The metaphysical liberty of the schools would stamp an insanity on these processes, whether of a refined policy or of an earnest and moral persuasion, to which the doctrine of necessity, and it alone, restores a consistency and a meaning. In every attempt to mould a human creature to your purposes, you bring together certain elements for the production of certain effects ; and surely there is nought to discourage this attempt, but the contrary, when told—as we are by the system which we have advocated—that these elements have a precise and determinate operation. It is because of a doctrine of necessity in the vegetable world, because of a strict dependence there between the antecedents and the consequents, that the nurseryman enters with rational expectation on the task of training a tree ; and without this doctrine of necessity in the moral world, there would be neither rationality nor hope in the training of a human creature, when plying all those devices by which he may be effectually nursed to the habits of piety and virtue. Under this system there is the same busy play of passions, and interests, and reactions between man and man as before ; and the lover of virtue will pour into this busy effervescence all those ingredients that might temper the mighty fermentation, and turn it in the direction of principle and the public weal.

The world will move as before; and the only difference between the Necessitarian and other men will be, that confident as he is of a strict affinity between means and their ends—between causes and their consequents—between things present, even in the moral world, and the futurities that are to emerge out of them—he will address himself to the management of these things with all the more intense and hopeful interest than his fellows. And in every walk, whether of business, or of politics, or of philanthropy—he, on the very principles of his school, will be the most persevering of all and the most practical of all.

14. It is an utter misconception of the whole subject, if it be thought that vice will not meet as effectually with its checks and its resistances under this system as under the one that is opposed to it. When the outrages of human wantonness and mischief meet with their legal correction—when cruelty finds its chastisement in the execrations of an indignant public—when the outbreakings of depravity are restrained by a sense of decency and honour—when the rival forces of light and darkness stand in battle array against each other, and the friends of truth and virtue and religion combine in firm and determined phalanx to uphold the interests of righteousness in the world;—there is nought in all this which the doctrine of necessity supersedes, for in truth they, one and all of them, are the evolutions of that necessity which balances and binds together the actual economy of things. The world exhibits under this doctrine of necessity the same busy game of passion and principles and manifold feelings and interests as before; and virtue has the same encouragements, and vice the same, and in every way as effectual, correctives as before. If ever the individual necessity under which one man lies to be wicked shall be pleaded in mitigation of his crimes, there will be some other necessity with the man he has injured, or the state whose laws he has broken, or the public whose feelings he has outraged, that shall be as ready as before to meet and to overmatch it. You may have heard the story of a certain fierce and fiery countryman of our own—all in a flame with the nationality of his feelings, and most painfully alive to every reflection that could be construed into the prejudice or disgrace of his beloved Scotland. He happened to sit down to table with a company of gentlemen abroad, one of whom was remarkable for his antipathy to Scotland, and took every opportunity of pouring forth his ridicule and his raillery against it. Aware of his propensity, and also of the presence of our daunt-

less adventurer, he gave intimation of his peculiar and besetting foible, and hoped that if any Scotchman was present, he should be forgiven for the invincible tendency, and more particularly after the glass had circulated, to discharge his jests and invectives upon Scotland. This was not enough, however, for our choleric and high-minded compatriot; and he thought it in every way as fair that, as one member of the party had craved its indulgence for his one necessity, he should crave its indulgence for another, and accordingly made it known as his invincible propensity, and more especially after the glass had circulated, that when he heard any person open his mouth against Scotchmen or Scotland, he could not help the propensity that seized him to kick him down stairs. It so turned out that this second necessity most effectually overruled the first one; and from this example of the reaction that obtains even among the grosser elements of the moral system, you may perceive how, in the rivalry of those powers and principles which make up the mechanism of a spiritual economy, the grand purposes of a moral administration may at length be worked out, and the stability of a wise and righteous government be upholden.

15. And it is a strangely mistaken view of the doctrine of necessity, that there is aught in it which should blunt the earnestness and the energy of him who, anxious for the virtue of children, or of pupils, or of friends, lifts in their hearing his admonitory voice. You must all be sensible that the necessity of which I speak is not that which withstands moral suasion, but that which gives effect to it—not that which abrogates the law, whereby the moral earnestness of one man finds way, by the vehicle of his expressed words, into the heart of another, and often bears him on to some great and lofty determination; but is in fact a necessity constituted by the laws of human nature, and whereof the power of one man's persuasion over another man's purposes and acts is one of the most important. Were such a necessity as this done away, and a fitful and fluctuating contingency substituted in its place, we should be left without one rational incitement to operate upon any of our fellows, just as there would be an end to all physical experiment were there an abolition of the constancy of nature. The steersman would abandon the pilotage of his vessel were there no dependence between the direction of its course and the position of the helm. And the moral steersman—the Mentor, let us say, of a youthful generation—the man who, from some high station of ascendancy,

could bear down with effect upon their purposes, and give that inspiring touch which might kindle within them the high and honourable resolves of principle—he might well, without the doctrine of necessity, without a sure dependence of the consequents which take place in the moral world, or the antecedents which go before them—he might well give up in despair the application of that antecedent wisdom and eloquence and fervour which, if brought to bear in time on the susceptibilities of the juvenile spirit, might have arrested many a hurrying course of dissipation, and reclaimed many a wanderer to the paths of immortality and honour. It is just because he knows of an influence that, however mixed and modified by other influences, cannot be altogether lost—it is just, and even without any formal recognition of necessity, because he really believes that it is the causal, and not the contingent, which bears, after all, the supremacy over the desires and the doings of man, as well as over that external world by which he is surrounded—it is just because, even while speculatively perhaps a strenuous advocate for the metaphysical liberty, he is, in truth, a practical Necessitarian, that he comes forth with any attempt whatever over the passions and the purposes of other minds than his own. The Necessitarian, of all men, ought to be the most zealous of educationists. It is he who, chiefest among his fellows, should ply with all assiduity every engine of ascendancy over the human spirit—it is he who should knock most unceasingly at the door of every conscience, and summon all the powers of friendship and eloquence and wisdom to a holy warfare against that moral evil which so desolates the world.

16. We can afford to say little more on this part of our subject. I have already directed your attention to the distinction which obtains between one kind of necessity and another. Both are alike absolute and certain, and the distinction between them is founded altogether on the kind of subject upon which it is that the necessity hath its fulfilment. The results of chemistry are just as certain and necessary as those of mechanics; but there is a difference in the forces by which this necessity is accomplished—and therefore it is, that when you aim at a chemical and not a mechanical result, you make use of different instruments, and address yourselves differently to the task. The doctrine of necessity does not liken a man to a machine, in the common sense that you affix to the latter term. Each has its own proper constitution; and after the doctrine of necessity is

admitted, the distinction founded upon this remains, so that each is practically managed according to its own constitution as before. A man is differently treated from a machine, not because of a strict necessity in the processes of the one, and of the metaphysical liberty which throws into a state of looseness and uncertainty all the processes of the other, but simply because of the difference that obtains between the one and the other in regard to the respective springs and principles of their mechanism. It is on this account, and on this only, that you treat the one as a moral being, and the other as a piece of unconscious mechanism. And here it occurs to me to say, in illustration of the two kinds of necessity, that if I wanted a clock to go faster, I could accomplish this object in two ways: I could either keep up a continued pressure upon its handle from without, or I could shorten the pendulum, and then leave it to its own swing and natural influence on the wheelwork of the inner mechanism. In the former way, or by the application of an external force, I would be evidently doing violence to the mechanism of the clock—I would be overbearing what may be called its natural methods and principles of operation—I would be forgetting the kind of treatment that is due to such a piece of machinery, and the proper way in which it ought to be addressed. By simply shortening the pendulum I leave all the operations of its mechanism entire—I pay respect to the constitution of the machine. The weights continue to operate as before, and the motion is communicated from one wheel to another as before; and the pendulum, now quickened in its vibrations, regulates the velocity of the whole movement as before; and the index on the dial-plate, not impelled by a force from without, but sweetly and naturally, as it were, constrained by the old and familiar influence from within, is now made to revolve with accuracy, and to accomplish the purposes of its formation.

17. It is thus that you may come to comprehend the difference between one kind of necessity and another, when brought to bear on a human mechanism. I could conceive a human being haunted, and at all times overborne by a mechanical impulse from without, and so constrained to walk in a path of uprightness, and forced with his hands, and other instruments of motion, to deeds of generosity; and I know that this is the degrading conception which many have of the system of necessity. But there is another and a more excellent way. Instead of a mechanical influence bearing upon me from without, there is an

influence that might address itself to the springs and natural workings of the machinery within. The understanding may be enlightened, the conscience may be urged by the suggestions of principle, the heart may be awakened to kind and generous emotions, the inner man may be set on its free process of deliberation—and we make use of the term freedom, because to whatever the will listeth the faculty of attention within may turn itself, and the faculty of action without may conform. In the whole of this procedure, he is addressed, not as a machine, but as a man. The reason deliberates, the judgment decides, the conscience admonishes, the will determines, and the executive power carries forward the determination to accomplishment; but in every step of the operation, it is still the mechanism of the human spirit that has been at work, and the distinction between it and a machine lies in the kind of mechanism, and not in a laxer dependence with the one than the other between the steps of the respective processes. Man feels, and deliberates, and acts, and wills as a man; but all-sovereign, and spontaneous, and self-moving as he looks, even he walks in that sure and un-deviating path to which he has been carried and constrained by the principles of his nature.

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

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

CHAPTER III.

ON PREDESTINATION.

1. THERE is nought that contributes more to the soundness of one's philosophy than an accurate perception of the limit between the known and the unknown, or rather, between the knowable and the unknowable. Let the human mind put forth its uttermost strength of investigation, and still beyond the field of its widest and most extended survey there will lie mysteries, which, in the present order of things, and with the present order of its faculties, it never can resolve, and questions in which it will lose itself among the intricate and interminable mazes. There is immediately about it a region of light, and, ulterior to this, a region of inaccessible darkness. Now we deem it a most useful, as it is one of the highest achievements of intellect, to trace the line of separation between the two regions. It is almost a compensation to us for our exclusion from that territory against which we are hopelessly barred, if we can assign the length and the breadth, and lay down the circumference of that territory over which we are permitted to expatiate. He would be of preternatural faculties who should transcend this barrier; but if it be indeed a barrier that can neither be forced

nor surmounted by any of the children of humanity, then the next and greatest achievement were to discover the boundary of our possible knowledge, seeing that we cannot discover the truths which lie on the other side of it; it were to tell the loftiest flight of which humanity is capable, or to trace that line of demarcation, along which the philosopher of mind might say to all his fellows, Thus far they can go, but no farther. Now this might be done long before all the possibilities of human discovery are realized, just as the coast of any island might be surveyed, or the borders of any territory be delineated, before its interior has been thoroughly explored. It is thus that the sound and masterly speculations of Lord Bacon on the limits of human discovery preceded the actual discoveries which, within that limit, were made by Sir Isaac Newton, who sometimes trod, however, upon the margin that had been assigned by his great predecessor, and even, as in some of his Queries, made a darkling and a fruitless effort beyond it. It offers a solace to the mortification which we feel as we look towards the dimness and the distance of those heights which are inaccessible, or of that great expanse where all is obscure and fathomless, when made to know what is the loftiest summit which the spirit of man can attain, or what the extreme margin of those journeyings which it is able for. The adventurous voyager may have swept the barrier which might be termed the *ne plus ultra* of discovery, and yet have left within that barrier enough of still unexplored geography, and enough of the materials of every science for the exercise and discovery of many centuries to come; and so it is in the territory of human thought. The confines of this territory admit of being delineated long before the contents of it have been thoroughly ascertained. But still it is good to have an eye upon the confines to know what that is which is the end and the perfection of human knowledge, and to look towards its supreme altitudes, even before that we have reached them. It at once restrains and regulates the ambition of the human spirit when it is thus enabled to define the outskirts of its own acquirements; and if, on the one hand, it be humiliating to learn that beyond the circle of visible things there is a vast and interminable region, which, under our existing economy, shall ever remain to our species a land of mystery and silence, it carries a certain mastery, over the actual and the hopeful province of human thought, if, while told of the infinite number of truths which we can never know, we are at the same time made to

know the limit which marks off and encloses all the possibilities of the human understanding.

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

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

require for its completion, and more especially when dealing with the objections of adversaries, an extensive induction of the phenomena of our nature. Not that we are to confound the moral faculty which takes cognizance of the *quid oportet* with the observational, which takes cognizance of the *quid est*; but when a question arises as to what the decisions of the moral sense really are, and what the objects of these decisions, then we are clearly employed on a matter of observation. Now to these phenomena, the phenomena of moral judgment and feeling, we have access, both by the eye of consciousness, or of internal observation, when directed towards our own minds, or the eye of observation directed outwardly to the manifested emotions and judgments of our fellow-men. And as the fruit of such an induction, we affirm, that in the only moral judgments which are ever felt, the object which is in the mind's eye is an action to which man has been prompted by his will, and that the only kind of necessity which prevents this judgment from being formed is that which compels the action against the will. Grant but the fact that the will is on the side of the action, and the moral sense needs no more, and seeks no more, to make up its estimate. It looks upwardly but one step to see whether the action had a volition for its antecedent; but it is in the nature of that volition, and not in its cause, that it reads, and reads immediately, the character, whether of moral worth or of moral turpitude, which the action bears. That man be a befitting object for moral approbation or moral blame, it demands for him no other liberty than the liberty of doing what he pleases. If there be only the one sequence of a volition and an act, this is enough, either for the admiration it holds to be due to virtue, or the vivid disapproval that is due to vice; nor does it regard as necessary that anterior progression, made up of many terms and many sequences, wherewith the liberty of a self-determining power would usher in every separate doing in the history of man. And even after the argument for the truth of necessity has overpowered one's convictions, the unabated resentment he still feels in his own heart against the villany of another—the remorse which in spite of himself embitters the sense that he has of his own worthlessness—the consciousness of a more profound admiration for the character of him who is compelled, not by a force that is without, but by the necessities of a nature within that painfully and powerfully recoils from all which is criminal and base; and, on the other hand, a keener and more contemptuous

loathing for the worthlessness of him who has been driven thereto, not by the strong hand of an external compulsion, but by the strong bias of his own inherent depravities—all these go to satisfy at least our own minds that the same action may combine the two characteristics of being at once necessary and moral, and that after the doctrine of Necessity has been established, the distinctions of morality remain in every way as stable as are the laws of that constitution which God hath given to us.

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

5. But there ought to be a distinction made here. On passing to the theology of this question, we shall be brought into converse with even greater and more impracticable difficulties than before. But by this very movement, we shall receive a large accession to our proofs; and so to the stability and force of our argument on the whole. There is no incompatibility in these things. It has been well said, that the more we enlarge the diameter or sphere of light, the more, too, do we enlarge the circumambient darkness—so that with a wider field of light on which to expatiate, we shall have a more extended border of unexplored territory than ever; or, which is the same thing, a greater number of unresolved, nay, of unresolvable questions to grapple with. It is thus that along the margin of his wider and larger discoveries, there is none who has planted so many queries, or, which is tantamount to this, so many confessions of ignorance, as Sir Isaac Newton—no impeachment this, at the same time, on the clearness and certainty of those actual, those glorious additions, which were made by him to the stock of human

knowledge. It is on experience such as his, that the modesty of true science is founded—the experience that in proportion as we enlarge the magnitude, so also we enlarge the boundaries of the *terra cognita*, and come thus more largely into contact with the vast and fathomless ulterior, which stretches in darkling recesses to the regions of infinity. It is thus, as will be found, we believe, in every instance, that, whenever a right philosophy and a right principle go hand in hand, every new accession of truth brings a fresh argument along with it, for a more deep-felt humility than before. And it is thus, too, that in the higher orders of intelligence in very proportion to their larger vision, is their profounder and more prostrate adoration of Him who sitteth on the throne, till the highest archangels—they who occupy the summits of created being—hide their faces under their wings, in the view of that Infinite Mind, who alone embraces all truth and comprehends all.

6. Let us not wonder, then, if in passing onward from the merely human science to the theology of our present question, we shall meet both with new proofs and with new difficulties, so as at once to confirm us still more in the truth of the doctrine, and yet add to the number of those unresolved mysteries which follow in its train. Indeed, we no sooner enter within the threshold of this higher department, than there occurs one general consideration, which is altogether on the side of that necessity in the world of mind for which we have been contending. It is clear, that were there no such necessity in the world of matter—did it not in every instance take a precise direction from the laws and the forces which the Deity hath established over it—were there any of its phenomena, whereof no other account could be given, than that they sprung from a random contingency, in virtue of which another set of phenomena might have as readily occurred as the actual ones;—then, at this rate, the world of inanimate things would drift uncontrollably away from the authority of its God; nor would it be any longer His will that overruled the condition and the history of the universe which He formed. Now it is the very same with the world of mind, should there be introduced within its confines, not the liberty of doing according to our volitions, for this is palpably in exercise with every creature who lives and has a will, but that metaphysical liberty of the schoolmen, by which the volitions themselves are strangely regarded as events that have no progenitor, no antecedent influence to which they can be traced,

and in which they have originated. If this class of events, if the movements of intelligent and animated nature, can be referred to no moving forces directed by and dependent upon Him, of whom we have been taught to believe, that He hath ordained the mechanism of the spiritual world, and presides over all the evolutions of it—if, amid the diversity of the operations by which we are surrounded, those of the will and of the mind form an exception to the doctrine that it is God who worketh all in all—then, by far the most dignified and interesting of all His creations is wrested from the dominion of Him who gave it birth. Let matter be passive and obedient as it may, yet if essential to the constitution of mind, that it shall be left to its own fitful and undirected waywardness, and so to wander without the limits of His power and His prescience—then is the very best of nature's domain abandoned to the misrule of an anarchy the most wild and wanton and wavering. Things grow up in it from the dark womb of nonentity, which Omnipotence did not summon into being, and which Omniscience could not foretell; and in the most emphatic sense of the term might it be said, that there is a universe without a Lord—an empire without an Imperial Sovereign to overrule its destinies.

7. Both the power and the prescience of God are involved in this question. It seems strange that the Creator of all should not be the governor of all; or that the universe which proceeded from His hands should have been so constituted in any of its departments, as to have an independent history of its own, placed beyond the sovereignty and the control of Him who gave it birth. But so it would be on the hypothesis of a self-determining power in any of the creatures. Their movements at least would proceed at random, because under the dominion of a wild and lawless contingency, which indeed is no dominion at all, but the anarchy of a chaos. At this rate, events would come forth uncaused from the womb of nonentity, to which Omnipotence did not give birth, and which Omniscience could not foresee. But indeed these attributes would be misnamed, or have no place in the nature of God, who could not be said to have either all power or all knowledge, amid millions and millions more of volitions, springing up every day in the world of living and intelligent beings; and of which no other account can be given, than that they originated in veriest caprice and waywardness, incapable from their very nature of being traced any further back in the order of causation. And what is the territory of creation which should

thus be wrested from the management of its Creator? Brute and unconscious materialism would still remain under His sway. All that took place in the physics, whether of the heaven above or the earth below, might, so far at least as they were beyond the intromission and inroad of creatures who had a will, still be the invariable result of the properties and the powers wherewith God had endowed them. But on the system of the metaphysical liberty of human actions, these are the effects not of the properties or powers wherewith God has endowed His creature man—for they come forth uncaused, or at least can be traced no higher than to an inherent and independent power in man himself. Who does not see, that, on this supposition, there would be wrested from the grasp and governance of the Almighty, far the most dignified and interesting portion of His works? He would be the Almighty no longer; and whatever sovereignty remained to Him over other territories in nature, at least the moral world, under the mercy of a whole host of petty but yet spontaneous and self-regulating forces, would drift uncontrollably away from Him.

8. This consideration is greatly strengthened when we take a view of the actual constitution of our world, the history of which is made up of sequences; and where events, instead of standing alone, are so closely linked and implicated together, that on the minutest incident there often hinges a big and busy progression, reaching onward to future ages, and affecting the state and character of nations for many centuries to come. Such concatenations, it is quite palpable, do obtain in the moral as well as the material world—or when the determinations of voluntary agents are concerned, as well as in that other great department of nature, where all the results are made good by the evolutions of a sure and unerring mechanism. It is possible, nay frequent, that on a hasty utterance on what some would call a random emotion, on a choice in the form of a wanton and wayward caprice of one individual, consequences of the utmost moment both to himself and others, are often made to turn. The whole of human life, the occurrences of every single day, supply ample materials for the illustration of this matter. On the volitions of men, countless in multitude, and acting with infinite variety of influences on each other, the history of every nation and every family is suspended—and this by innumerable trains of causation, where the minute and the momentous are so intermingled, that, on the slightest

change in some term of the series, a new train of events would have arisen, and the world have presented a different aspect from that in which it now stands before us. It is obvious of such a world, that if each human volition were not a certainty, but a contingency, it would drift uncontrollably away from God. A mighty host of petty but independent forces, which Himself had brought into existence, would wrest from His hand the sovereignty of His own creation, which, abandoned to its own spontaneous evolutions, and placed beyond the reach of Him who alone can regulate all, and control all, would, instead of a goodly and well-ordered universe, lapse into an inextricable chaos. Without a providence so universal and pervading as that which numbers the hairs of our head and determines the fall of every sparrow to the ground, all would be anarchy and wild misrule; and the Lord of heaven and earth would be a helpless looker on, in the midst, if not of those self-derived, yet of those self-directing elements which He himself had summoned into being.

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

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

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

ledge. It is thus that from this question, too, Necessitarians fetch another accession to their argument. If God knew beforehand all that shall take place in His own universe, then all, they contend, must take place necessarily; or if they do not, then is the Deity ignorant of many, and these the most interesting, futurities of His own creation. Under this system, the Creator is represented as waiting on the uncertain determinations of the creature—unable to descry the coming evolutions in the history at least of the moral world, till the sovereign man has thrown light upon it by those self-deciding acts of which he is regarded as the sole originator.

11. And here it occurs to us to say, that there are some who quarrel with our doctrine in its present form, but profess that they would be quite reconciled to it would we but adopt a different nomenclature, by substituting certainty for necessity. We should not object to this change. Grant but a certainty as absolute in the mental as in the material world, and we require no more. Enough for us if it be conceded, that in like manner as every planet and every particle shall have their definite progress throughout all futurity, and have their definite place in every point of it—so every society, and every individual of living creatures, have their place and progress equally sure throughout all past, and will have throughout all future ages. All we desire to have granted is, that the mental world proceeds according to regularities and invariable successions of its own, just as the material does. And perhaps it were better to be rid of the term Necessity altogether in connexion with this subject, as it is ever suggesting the idea of compulsion, and of a compulsion too against the will, which latter conception is in no way involved with our doctrine, that the will itself, like every other element or agency of nature, is the subject of laws and processes of its own, so as to be within the universal category of cause and effect. If it be only admitted that volitions are things of such certainty as that they are not things of contingency, we are willing to forego the assertion that they are things of necessity. The substance of our doctrine would not be in the least affected by this change of phraseology; and we should gladly make surrender of a name that misleads others into a false or injurious imagination of our principle—as if deliberation and choice, and the dictates of conscience, and the considerations of wisdom, were all overborne by the impulses of a blind and mechanical necessity; whereas all the functions and

all the prerogatives of a living percipient, rational, and spontaneous creature, are preserved entire under a system which simply affirms regularity of procedure in each class of beings, but amply secures the distinction between them by ascribing to each its own properties and its own powers.

12. But it is for philosophy thus to reason on the powers and properties of the creature; and, apart from the consideration of God, she educes the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. Theology rests her argument mainly on the powers and prerogatives of the Creator; and she educes her doctrine in another form, and under another title, even Predestination. The former grounds the certainty for which it pleads on the universal constancy of nature, or on the regimen of cause and effect, which governs all its processes; the latter grounds the certainty of all things on the sovereignty of God in all things, and so bears respect to the decrees of the Almighty, and to the sureness of their fulfilment—a fulfilment carried into effect either by the direct operation of the Almighty's will, or by the evolutions of that mechanism ordained by God when He set up the mundane system, and endowed it with all its properties and laws. It is one and the same doctrine in different aspects, or with different relations—in the one viewed with relation to nature, in the other with relation to God. By the latter we are involved in higher speculations, from which it will be found that it is at length our best wisdom to retire; and it truly concerns us to know what is the limit of our safe and profitable inquiries. Nevertheless, there is a certain way along which the philosophers and theologians have a common ground to walk upon. They, to a great extent, can avail themselves of the same arguments; and, in the management of difficulties, or in combating the objections of adversaries, there is much of the reasoning that is common to both.

13. More particularly in disposing of the moral objection, as if the doctrine, whether of necessity or predestination, took away all distinction between virtue and vice, and made either the praise of the one or the condemnation and punishment of the other alike unreasonable—this objection is met on either ground by the considerations already stated in the course of our previous argument. If the virtuousness of an act, or rather of a disposition, lies in its nature and not in its cause, then let the cause be what it may, the nature remaining the same, our moral estimate will be the same; and our feelings, whether of blame or approval, wherewith we regard it, will also be the same. If the

moral quality of any disposition lie in the nature and not in the cause of it, then the disposition to injustice or cruelty, or any sort of wickedness, will ever remain the object of our blame and condemnation in whatever way it may have originated, or whatever be the antecedents in the previous order of causation from which it may have sprung. These antecedents can be traced a certain way back by the observant sagacity of men who have made a study of the human character and of human affairs, and generally are traced no farther back by those who, confining their treatment of the question to one purely of science, regard it in no other aspect than as the doctrine of philosophical necessity. And certain it is, that, let our discoveries be what they may of those prior influences which have given birth to a moral disposition, our estimate of the disposition itself, whether it be in the form of a judgment or of a sensibility, remains unaffected by it. But our theologians carry their investigation farther back than do our men of science. They recognise Him who is the cause of causes; and, viewing our question in its higher aspect as the doctrine of predestination, they ever bear in their contemplations a reference to Him who ordains all or controls all. But most assuredly there is nothing in this higher, this ulterior ascent, made by theologians, which can at all modify, or far less reverse, that law of our moral sensibilities in virtue of which a disposition is pronounced upon as morally good or evil, according to the nature and not according to the cause of it; and therefore, although carried up to Him of whom it is said, that He hath made all things for Himself—why, even the wicked for the day of evil—our sense of the wickedness, our sense of the evil, will remain unaffected. And thus, though it be said of God that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, this blunts not the edge of that indignation wherewith we regard the haughty and unfeeling tyrant, who issued from his barbaric throne another and another oppressive mandate against the weeping families of Israel. The narrative may leave in deeper enigma than ever the character of God; but most unquestionably there is nothing either to suspend or to repeal the law of man's moral nature, which gives the same response as before to the exhibition of a despot's pride and a despot's cruelty—alike abhorring his character, and alike rejoicing in his fall.

14. And predestination is on the same vantage-ground with philosophical necessity, in repelling that other objection which has been preferred against the doctrine, as if it chilled and

superseded all the activities of human life, and made the adoption or the prosecution of means for the attainment of any end to be altogether useless. It looks very plausible to say, that if all have been thus settled, and made sure in the counsels of eternity, where lies the conceivable motive to any exertion on our part, or why struggle against an adamantine necessity or adamantine decree, in virtue of which all is fixed and all is irreversible? There might be reason in this, if the necessity were made good, or the decree carried into effect, irrespective of all that took place anterior to its fulfilment, nay, and causally essential to its fulfilment. A Turkish predestination, which isolates every event whether in nature or history, and regards it as the object of a separate decree made fast in heaven, and therefore sure to take place as if by an iron fatality, independent of all that was doing or could be done upon earth—such a predestination as this is wholly dissimilar, either to the philosophical necessity or the Christian predestination, which contemplates every event as the result of a process, or as the term of a series, every prior term of which must be made good, else the event in question would not be made good. The amount of my earthly fortune may have been fixed and ascertained from all eternity; but this without dissolving the alliance which in general obtains between industry and care on the one hand, and the accumulation of wealth upon the other; and so the law holds just as true under the system of our predestination as any other—that, in order to realize a fortune, there must be a previous and persevering habit of diligence and economy and prudent calculation. The character of my child, and so his everlasting condition, may have been already recorded in the book of destiny, but this without breaking up the connexion which obtains between the education of youth and the habits or principles of manhood; and so, with or without the doctrine of predestination, the same practical impulse lies upon me for the right training and discipline of my family. We have no doubt that the exact produce of the next year's harvest has not only been foreknown by the Supreme Intelligence, but has been ordained by the Supreme Power of our universe; and yet it is a harvest depending on moral as well as physical elements—not only on the successions of the coming weather, but on the agency of human hands, on the skill, and industry, and busy appliances of an active, and toilsome, and persevering agriculture. Let the preordinations but extend to the means as well as to the end; and then that

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

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

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

16. When our modern astronomy first made its wondrous revelations, the difficulty was to understand how, in the inconceivable speed of our planet, as it wheeled its rapid flight among the orbs of immensity, puny man, instead of being hurled from off its surface, could maintain his footing and prosecute his daily movements with as great ease and safety as if the earth were at rest. The explanation is now perfectly understood; but there is a kindred difficulty, admitting of a kindred explanation, in the subject before us, when, in viewing the magnificent cycles of the spiritual economy, we feel at a loss to conceive what the part and what the agency which man can sustain amid these mysteries

of a predestinating God, whose lofty administration begins with the decrees of the past, and reaches to the fulfilments of the coming eternity. Nevertheless man has a place to stand in; and a path and a performance are assigned in the Bible for Zion's humble wayfarers, things to be believed and things to be done, of which, if they rightly acquit themselves, they shall never fall.

17. Before I proceed to consider the informations of Scripture on this high topic of Predestination, let me hope that even now the unquelled difficulties of some may have been set at rest. Even although the sublimer mysteries of that transcendental region on which we can but enter a certain way, although these should still be shrouded, and always may on the side of death, in all their wonted obscurity, from the eye of your intellect, I trust that this will not embarrass the course of that daily walk by which you are guided to every object that is desirable in this world, and which, if persevered in under the direction of an urgent and obvious principle, will at length conduct you to the light and liberty of heaven. Some of you perhaps may have caught a new glimpse of this recondite speculation, and can perceive how it is that the great Eternal Spirit may sit enthroned over the moral world, and guide it onward through all its transitions to its final destinies with as firm and unfaltering a hand as He wheels the planets in the firmament; and yet that this entire and unexpected supremacy on the part of God leaves to man all those activities which either prudence would enjoin, or the prospect of some distant and ulterior good would inspire him with. This will be enough for him who does not want to push his philosophy, or his theology either, beyond the outskirts of accessible truth. He is satisfied if he find that this doctrine, whether of Necessity or Predestination, neither overshadows the characteristics and distinctions of morality, nor should repress the generous ambition of him who, fired with the love of virtue, or the prospect of that blooming paradise where virtue flourishes in immortal vigour, sets himself, and with all the energies of a high and holy determination, on that career opened up in the gospel, and which leads to glory, immortality, and honour. He sees enough in the little sphere that is around him for the guidance of his present history, and enough, too, of assurance, that as he moves onward in the career of an imperishable spirit, this light will grow and gather upon his path—that the day is coming when the mystery of God will at length be finished, and break out into open manifestation. Meanwhile, and amid all the ob-

curity which rests on the primitive decree and the ultimate destination which belong to him, he is content to find that there is a clearness in the present duties, and along the immediate links of that chain which is lost at either extremity, both in the eternity behind and the eternity before him; and while he postpones the lofty speculation on the origin of evil as wholly unresolvable at this moment by his understanding, he is content to think, that if he gives his will to the plain and practical directions of Christianity, he will reach those shores of light and blessedness where he shall know even as he is known.

18. And here, though yet perhaps it be somewhat premature, I cannot avoid making one allusion to the characteristics of our Scottish Theology—more profound and speculative, certainly, than that of our sister kingdom, and tinged throughout all its articles with the metaphysical genius of our nation. We have long thought of philosophical necessity, that it furnished the best clue to the theoretical difficulties of its creed, while, if rightly understood, it should leave the practical energy of its ministers, and of their ministrations in the cause of righteousness, wholly unimpaired. It is a doctrine, at the same time, about which, however attached to it, I feel no intolerance; and have occasionally met with the best of men, especially on the other side of the Tweed, who shrink from it with antipathy almost nervous, and that certainly partakes much more of the sensitive than of the rational. There are many, even the saintliest and most devoted among the clergymen of England, who talk with the sincerest horror of our gloomy and repulsive Calvinism. You perhaps recollect how yourselves felt when eyeing with dismay some erudite and enormous folio, whose scowling frontispiece gave, in the costume and gravity of other days, the representation of him who penned it—a man who grappled with whole libraries, and then bequeathed some mighty tomes of his own by which to enlarge the stock and overgrowth of our body of divinity. With somewhat of this kind of dismay our northern theology is regarded, and this awful predestination is emphatically denounced as far the harshest and most offensive feature which belongs to it. I should have deemed it so too, had it not been for my thorough conviction that it left the offers of mercy, and the calls to righteousness, and all the motives and all the urgencies to a life of virtue, on the very footing in which it found them; and as to any other mischief of the doctrine itself, I think that the

best proof upon this and upon any other topic is an experimental one, whenever we are able to find it. Ere I can admit the charge of our national doctrine being hostile to the great interests of virtue, I must first inquire into the state of our national character at the same time when that doctrine was most zealously professed by our people, and most faithfully preached in our pulpits. We know not a broader and a stronger experimental basis on which to try this question, than a whole nation of Calvinists. And if it be true that the theology of our pulpits is fitted to shed a withering blight on all the moralities of the human character, what is the explanation which can be offered, if it be found, notwithstanding an influence so baleful, that Scotland, at the time when that theology most flourished and prevailed, lifted throughout all her parishes, so erect a front among the nations of Christendom—not for the intelligence alone, but for the worth and practical virtues of her population?

19. There are many who can tastefully admire the loveliness of a cultivated scene, but have neither taste nor skill for the coarse operations of husbandry; and there are many who can gaze with delight on the beauties of a moral landscape, while they utterly nauseate the principle which sustains them. Let not the deep and didactic theology of our land be exchanged for one more slender than itself, if on its basis the charities and the integrities and the sobrieties of its people are upholden; nor let us think lightly of that culture which yields an efflorescence so precious as that of a virtuous and well-trained peasantry.

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

to the people. Least of all, will the figment of an apostolic succession be of aught avail against the chilling influences of a jejune and lifeless ministration.

21. Before proceeding to consider the scriptural testimonies upon this subject, let me assure you that the purpose of my argument for these few days has not been so much to school you into the belief of our dogma, as to prove that, with all the weight of an evidence in its favour, which I deem to be utterly resistless, and employed though it has been to assail the moral system, and to overturn it, yet it leaves that system, whether viewed as a system of practical ethics or practical Christianity, in an attitude as entire and impregnable as before, with all its obligations unimpaired, and all its motives as fresh and operative as ever for the observance of it. Let the doctrine of Philosophical Necessity, or, theologically speaking, the doctrine of Predestination, be as firmly established as it may, there is nothing in it which should efface that distinction between good and evil that stands so clearly engraven on the character of man, and nothing in it to deafen the energy of that voice by which the homage of our immediate admiration is rendered to virtue, and the quick indignancy of our execration and contempt is rendered as immediately to vice. My anxiety is to prove that both ethical science and practical Christianity stand on a basis as secure, even in conjunction with the doctrine of Necessity or Predestination, as in conjunction with the doctrine that is opposed to it; and that under this system the whole economy of our moral feelings and moral judgments is every way as fully and busily in play. I do not want so much to satisfy you of the truth of the doctrine, as to satisfy you, that even though admitted to be true, there is nothing in it of that withering influence which sceptics on the one hand, and the advocates of the metaphysical liberty on the other, have chosen to ascribe to it; and that still under the regimen of this universal causation, virtue remains a plant as beautiful and immortal as before—and vice that thing of utter loathsomeness, against which the wise and the good will never cease to maintain their unsparing and implacable warfare. There is just as little in this doctrine to annul the distinction between virtue and vice in character, as to annul the difference between beauty and deformity in landscape. There is nought whatever in it to paralyze the energies of man; and the various objects of his desire and preference stand, both to himself and to each other, in the very relation which they had before. And so we have

seen a sturdy Predestinarian, the champion of a necessity as absolute and irreversible as fatalism, yet, in perfect consistency with his own principles, the most aspiring and practical of men, plying his assiduous labours along the career of a progressive excellence; and, under the energies of a moral ambition the most untired and unquenchable, moving onward from one habit and acquirement to another, till his holiness has ripened him for heaven, and heaven, that is never opened but for the entrance of holiness, welcomes him to her immortal habitations. "Without holiness no man shall see God.

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

of purity and principle to which he has been preferred, and for the now brightening prospect that lies before him.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SCRIPTURAL NOTICES OF PREDESTINATION.

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

2. Our first observation is, that throughout the Bible there is ascribed to God not merely the universal creation, but the universal government and disposal of all things:—"Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things" (Rom. xi. 36). "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" (Lam. iii. 37.) This is the clear assertion of a supremacy in the moral world. Men are the instruments. Whatever cometh to pass because men did it, or men gave the order for it, cometh to pass at the bidding of the Almighty. "He hath

done whatsoever he hath pleased" (Psalm cxv. 3). And that this pleasure extends to, or rather takes a more special direction to, and interest in, the acts of living and willing creatures, we are told in Phil. ii. 13—"For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." "I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Cor. xv. 10). The passages which are most to our purpose are those where God is represented as acting in and through men—as when the psalmist prays against being made the reproach of the foolish; and, when he was made their reproach, says, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it" (Psalm xxxix. 9). We have the same lesson in the direct history of David, when Shimei cursed him, and he acquiesced, because he looked on this as coming from the Lord, who made use of this evil man as His instrument; for that the Lord had said unto him, Curse David, the Lord had bidden him. There are many other testimonies to the same effect: see Isa. xlvi. 10, 11; 2 Sam. xvii. 14; Isa. xiv. 26, 27. The affirmation of Eph. i. 11, that God worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, carries in it the doctrine of Predestination, and in terms, too, which stand clear of all controversy. We are told in language too plain for the disputations of philology, that all things are worked by God, all events are brought about by Him, because His will and His counsel extend to everything—marking a sovereignty as absolute, and an agency as unexcepted and entire, in the things of the mental as in those of the material world. In like manner, we read in Prov. xix. 21, that the devices of a man's heart are many, but that the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Now these devices of man relate, in the general, to acts and purposes of his own, or to what he should determine, and what he should do in given circumstances. Nevertheless, and however he shall determine and do, it is the counsel of the Lord which always comes to pass; yet not always in opposition to man—for his counsels and wishes too, have often their fulfilment, and such a fulfilment as must be at one with the counsel of the Lord which ever stands. In other words, God not only prevails over man when opposed to him, but He must overrule all his volitions and doings universally. If everything falls out according to the will of God, then, whenever an event is the result of man's purposes and doings, these purposes and doings must have been controlled by the Almighty—nay, are the very steps by which He accomplishes His pleasure.

3. But, secondly, this foreknowledge, and, of consequence, this preordination and control of the Divinity over human affairs, and so over human volitions, is strikingly evinced in the prophecies of Scripture. It is not of these, as an evidence for the truth of our religion, that we now speak—seeing that the events predicted, so remote from all calculation, and depending on such a number of unseen incidents and forces, were utterly beyond the reach of all natural prescience ; but it is of this prescience, as a token of their certainty, or that they were the objects of a knowledge anterior to themselves, and thus of a power anterior to themselves, and which gave birth to their fulfilment. It greatly enhances the proof, when we find that it is the moral world which is the great theatre of almost all the prophecies. The revolutions which take place there, the victories of one nation, the judgments to be inflicted on another—and these not in the form of earthquakes or inundations, though sometimes of pestilences and famines, and of which the agencies are material ; but far oftener in the form of wars, the fruits of men's policy or ambition, and the issue of which, as dependent on the resolves of many thousand heads and the movement of many thousand arms, implies the operation of countless mental agencies, all of which are foreseen, and therefore all of them controlled. It is difficult to make the best selection out from such a multitude of prophecies, all illustrative of the truth of this observation. Take, as an example, the prophecies respecting Cyrus in parts of the forty-fifth and forty-sixth chapters of Isaiah ; or that respecting Nebuchadnezzar, as given by Jeremiah (xxvii. 4-8). There is, no doubt, a foretelling of pestilence and famine, but just as confidently a foretelling of defeats and victories ; and not only so, but an express claim, on the part of the Almighty, of as thorough a control, by His great power and outstretched arm, over man and beast, as over all the inanimate things of creation ; and this, not only in that He made them, but in that He directs and disposes of them at pleasur—giving the earth to whom he saw meet ;—a distribution this which implies the subordination of myriads of wills to the Governor of all, the wills of those rulers and their subject hosts, by whom these various countries of the world have been won in war, and by whom they continue to be occupied. “ And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant ; and all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come ; and then many nations and great

kings shall serve themselves of him." See to the same effect another manifestation of the same sort in Ezek. xxx. 24, 25. But we can allege nought more striking than our Saviour's prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, unless it be the predictions relative to the place and time of His own birth, and the circumstances of His death and burial, turning, as they did, on the minutest incidents; but proving that the humours and impulses of the human spirit were as much in view of the Divine intelligence, and as much under the control of the Divine power, as are the elements of the material world. This the actual presentation of the two following verses will impress more clearly than any description of ours can, as marking how it is that the doings of man take their rise in the counsel and predetermination of God:—"For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done" (Acts iv. 27, 28). "But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled" (Acts iii. 18). "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt. xvi. 21). "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts ii. 23).

4. In these last quotations, we have examples of the prophecy of evil; and if the foreknowledge of an event imply the necessity of that event, it would seem to warrant the assertion, that if evil be prophesied, this implies that evil has been predestinated. Now, with most minds, it is this which forms the great stumblingblock in the way of their receiving the doctrine of predestination. They shrink from the conclusion which it seems to involve, that it would make God the author of evil, even of moral evil—of the wickedness, for instance, of those who crucified the Saviour, an event which took place by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. Before that we enter on the direct and immediate testimonies for this said doctrine, and in order to its establishment as one of the articles of our theology, let us inquire if there be any averments of the word of God which connect His sovereignty, whether in the way of permission or appointment, with any of the evil that has ever occurred in his-

tory, or that exists anywhere in the world. We have, then, in the first place, Isa. xlv. 7—"I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil. I the Lord do all these these things." And again, "Out of the mouth of the most High proceedeth not evil and good?" (Lam. iii. 38.) And again, "Shall the trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?" (Amos iii. 6.) Further, Matt. xviii. 7—"Wo unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh." We are told in this passage that there is a need-be for offences—a need-be, it would appear, for temptations to moral evil—a necessity still deep and mysterious to us, for it is not explained, here and nowhere else in the Bible; but without an explanation, we are expressly told that necessity there is for a seducing influence on the part of some men, the tendency of which, and often the effect of which, is to lure other men into the ways of disobedience and destruction. The reason, or the principle of a dispensation so profoundly enigmatical, has in it all the difficulty and all the darkness wherewith the question of the origin of evil is encompassed. There is a need-be—thus much we are told, and it is most important information coming from the mouth of the Son of God—a need-be, both for offences and for the consequent wo which they bring upon the world, and most of all upon him by whom the offence cometh. We know by our own observation, the existence of evil; and we know from this telling of our Saviour, that there is a necessity for its existence—and, indeed, but for such a necessity, it would have been as much beyond the possibility of our comprehension why an all-powerful but at the same time all-wise and all-good God should have permitted evil, as why He should have created or ordained it. It is well for man to know the limitation of his own faculties, and be prepared, with all the docility of his own conscious ignorance—like the scholar who is sensible that he has everything to learn—for the lessons of an authoritative revelation. On this principle we not only read, but receive simply as it is written the announcement, that "the Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. xvi. 4); and more especially when told that there is a purpose served by the evil passions of humanity, as in the following sentence, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee," and in so far as it does not contribute to this end, the remainder or excess of that wrath shalt thou re-

strain (Ps. lxxvi. 10). Regarding this subserviency of evil to good, we are favoured with a sort of alleviating glimpse, though very far from a full manifestation, in the history of Joseph, who, in converse with his brethren, said, that "As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (Gen. i. 20). We are sensible that this does not resolve the general problem; but when thus expressly told of this particular instance or passage in the world's history, that evil was permitted or brought to pass by the Almighty, and that for the production of a general good—is it for us to deny the possibility or even the likelihood that what is thus true of evil particular, may also hold true of evil universal? In my utter ignorance and utter incompetency to pronounce on this question, I recoil not from any of the informations which our well-accredited Scripture sets before me. When God says that He hardened the heart of Pharaoh, we take the statement plainly as it is given, and can have no doubt either as to the fact or the purpose of the fact, a purpose which—reaching beyond what is declared to distant and unknown consequences, far beyond my powers of vision—may, for aught I know, be consistent with the perfection of a Being possessed of the highest wisdom and the highest moral excellence. The narrative is given thus:—"And the Lord said to Moses, Go in unto Pharaoh; for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I might show thee my signs before him;" and here follows the immediate and declared though not the whole purpose—"and that thou mightest tell in the ears of thy son, and of thy son's son, what things I have wrought in Egypt, and my signs which I have done among them; that ye may know that I am the Lord" (Exod. x. 1, 2). It is thus lessoned and thus prepared by these palpable informations of the Bible, that I would have you to enter on the study of what it discloses and tells respecting the doctrine of predestination.

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

are some friendly to the doctrine, who imagine it as being of such an absolute and unconditional quality, that it supersedes human effort, and makes human character an element of utter insignificance in regard to aught like a bearing on eternity. On the other hand, we are told by those adverse to the doctrine, that predestination is based upon character and that all which it amounts to is God's previous decree, or as when He promulgates His law, His declaration to bestow everlasting life upon the good—leaving it for man to work out this condition on the strength of his own free agency. We cannot imagine a testimony more fitted than that we have now given, and this by one and the same utterance, to rectify both of these misconceptions. On the one hand, we read here of predestination, that, so far from annulling the condition, it confers upon it the same irreversible certainty which it does on the ultimate fulfilment. They who are predestinated to eternal glory in the heavens, are as much predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Saviour. To make sure of the one predestination, we must make alike sure of the other—there being as much of a fixedness, of a settled ordination, in the means as in the end—so as to make it very sure, that if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of His; and very necessary, nay indispensable, that we should walk in the steps of Him whom God hath set forth as our example, and that the same mind should be in us which was also in Christ Jesus. On the other hand, it is clear, and from this passage, that, instead of the predestination being founded on the character, the character is founded on the predestination; and that the necessity of our anterior holiness, ere the happiness of eternity can be ours, so far from impairing the sovereignty of God, when rightly understood, has just the effect to confirm and to extend it. We can allege no place in Scripture more decisive than this for the twofold purpose, both of proving the doctrine, and of proving that it is a doctrine according to virtue and to all godliness. But again, Eph. i. 5—"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." From the preceding context here, we have a remarkable confirmation of the lesson given forth in the last quoted verses. "He hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world," marking the eternity of the ordination; but ordination to what? not only to an inheritance in heaven as the children of God, but to an essential and personal qualification for heaven, even "that we should be holy and without blame

before him in love." Before leaving these instances, let me refer you to Luke xxii. 22, (*ἄρισμμένον*,) where the word occurs without the preposition, and so means determined, without expressing that it was so determined beforehand.

6. Another word that meets us in the course of these investigations is *πρόγνωσις*, as in Rom. viii. 29, already quoted—Whom he did foreknow, them also he predestinated. Our opponents would have it, that all whom He foreknew would be penitent, or virtuous, or obedient, them He did predestinate to eternal life—thus subordinating the decrees of God to the doings of men. But unfortunately for their view, the predestination here is a predestination in the first instance to the character of saints, ere they should be translated to the glory of the inheritance of saints, so as very clearly to subordinate the doings and the moral state of men to the preordination of God. And in regard to foreknowledge, it has been well remarked, that to be known of God, is often synonymous in Scripture with being loved by Him; as when, in the first psalm, it is said, that He knoweth the way of the righteous. He owneth their way, He approves of it, and the righteous themselves are the objects of His affectionate recognition; whereas He seeth the wicked afar off, marking them to be outcasts from His favour, to be the aliens from and the enemies of God. For some examples of the term *knowledge* being used in the sense of affection, see John x. 14, where Christ says, "I know my sheep;" and 2 Tim. ii. 19, where we read, that "God knoweth them that are his." In counterpart to these instances, where "to know" is equivalent to own with complacency and regard, we are told in Ps. cxxxviii. 6, that the Lord "knoweth the proud afar off." Many other such instances might be given; but let us satisfy ourselves with the three following, which stand in more immediate relation to our doctrine:—Rom. xi. 2, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." These people are afterwards designated the "remnant according to the election of grace," or were the objects of God's electing love, and so were not only foreknown in the bare intellectual sense of the term, but were predestinated also. Then we have 1 Peter i. 2, corroborating the explanation now given—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father." But here I cannot refrain the lengthening out of this quotation, because of another precious testimony to this our doctrine being altogether on the side of all moral excellence—"Elect, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth"—an election carried

into effect by that Spirit whose fruit is in all righteousness, and goodness, and truth. The last example we shall give is taken from the same chapter, (1 Pet. i. 20), where, speaking of Christ as a sacrifice, it is said, that "Verily he was fore-ordained (*προεγνωσμένον*) before the foundation of the world." This marks at least how much our translators understood the foreknowledge to be identical with the predestination;—not but that we regard this foreknowledge, even in its intellectual sense alone, as being decisive of the certainty of an event, and alike decisive on the principle of God being the Sovereign of all, of its having been decreed in heaven.

7. The next word that we shall notice is *πρόθεσις*, which, even without the preposition, illustrates its own meaning in the following instance, 1 Thess. v. 9—"For God hath not appointed (*ἔθετο*) us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Pet. ii. 8—"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." Then, with the preposition, and when there is a more direct bearing upon our doctrine, the appointment becomes a determination beforehand, which seems the very signification of the word *purpose*. For examples of this, take Rom. viii. 28—"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (*κατὰ πρόθεσιν*). Then we have Rom. ix. 11—"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God (*πρόθεσις τοῦ Θεοῦ*) according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Yet let us here note, however, that though the election be not of works, yet it is an election to works. The primary fountain-head is election, and not works; but works form the invariable result of an election to everlasting life—and so the predestinated are chosen to be holy and without blame before God in love; and the chosen are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ. If the question relate to the first original cause of our eternal blessedness, it is of God, who showeth mercy, and not of man who willeth or runneth; but it is not the less true, that God worketh in every such man both to will and to do, and that every such waiteth on the Lord for strength to run, and not be weary: and the consequence is, that he so runs as to obtain the eternal life, even that eternal life to which he has been chosen before the foundation of the world.

8. There are words of another class, nearly connected with

the subject, and of very frequent occurrence in Scripture. Ἐκλογή is used to denote election to an office, as in 1 Sam. x. 24; John vi. 70—"Have not I chosen you twelve?" (ἐξελεξαμένους;) see also Deut. iv. 37. But the following relate more closely to election unto life: Matt. xx. 16—"Many be called, but few chosen" (ἐκλεκτοί); Rom. xi. 7—"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election (ἐκλογή) hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." This is a very decisive verse against those who contend for a national to the exclusion of an individual predestination. We have no doubt that the main design of the Apostle, throughout the whole of this reasoning, was to vindicate the calling of the Gentiles, or their admission along with the Jews to an equal participation in the blessings of the gospel. But though this was his chief purpose, and he has made it manifest that by a national election there was a division of Israelites from Gentiles—yet when our adversaries would maintain that there is nothing more than this, the further subdivision of these Israelites, between those of the election and those who were blinded, is fatal to their argument. I would have you to mark the next testimony, as being particularly strong and clear upon this point, 2 Thess. ii. 13—"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." The word for "chosen" here is ἐίλετο: He hath taken you—selected, segregated, separated, from the mass. The first antecedent, as it were, in the process of their salvation, is the assumption of them by God—the first term, if we may so speak, of the series; but the intermediate terms are not unnoticed. Nor even here, where the doctrine is propounded in the most absolute form, do we find that on that account the conditional is excluded; and we may learn from the means here specified—the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth—for carrying the purpose of God into effect, that the repentance and faith of the elect are in every way as indispensable as the bliss of their eternity is sure. We have a similar progression conjoined with the first purpose and predestination of God, and emanating therefrom, in the verses already quoted from the Romans—"Moreover, whom did he predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." In connexion with this term, see Titus i. 1; Eph. i. 4; Matt. xxiv. 22; Mark xiii. 20,

22, 27; Luke xviii. 7; Rom. viii. 33; Col. iii. 12; 2 Tim. ii. 10; Rom. ix. 11. This last is a very decisive testimony as to the origin or first cause of election. It comes of God, and not of man. Its fountainhead is not man's character or work, but God's purpose—hence termed, in Rom. xi. 5, “the election of grace;” and they who are its objects are called the elect of God. This last expression is in full harmony and keeping with what Christ says in John vi. 37, 39. The only other testimony I shall quote here is in Acts xiii. 48—“As many as were ordained (*τεταγμένοι*) to eternal life, believed.” To evade the force of this testimony, the Arminians would say,—As many as were disposed to eternal life believed. Even though this interpretation were admitted, we should still appeal to this verse in evidence of our doctrine. We do not refuse that it is through the medium of man's dispositions that he attains to faith, and reaches at last his destination of eternal blessedness—receiving as the end of his faith the salvation of his soul. But we look upward to the cause of these dispositions, or of this disposedness on the part of man; and we can refer it to nothing but the good pleasure of God. And accordingly, the verb is here given in the passive form, representing man as operated upon; for who in fact has made him to differ, and what has he that he did not receive? It is the hand of God who works in man both to will and to do; and His own people receive the disposition which leads to faith—the faith which leads to life eternal.

9. But this last observation prepares the way for another class of Scripture proofs, with a few of which we shall conclude this part of our demonstration. The decree, the purpose that such men shall be saved, may be referred to the past eternity. The steps which lead to and are preparatory for this salvation, may be looked upon as performed in time, and many of them along the course of their history in the world; and more especially that great step which is denominated conversion, and by which men pass from death unto life, from the state of condemnation to the state of acceptance with God. Now, if not only at the passing of the decree God stood alone, but at conversion, which may well be regarded as the execution of the decree, God does all, and man nothing but as an instrument in His hands—this may well be regarded as a corroborative, nay, in itself as a decisive proof in favour of our doctrine. How little, or rather how absolutely nothing, man can do in this transition may be gathered from the following verses—1 Cor. ii. 14; iii. 5, 7;

John vi. 44; Rom. viii. 7, 8. Contrast these with the following passages, in which God is represented as the sole efficient in the great work of our translation from a state of nature to a state of salvation—Ezek. xxxvi. 26; John iii. 5. This testimony has a twofold force in it, seeing it both tells what man cannot do without the Spirit, and what he can be made to do by the Spirit. Eph. ii. 10—this, too, is a very pregnant verse, representing those who are saved as, in respect to their new habit and state, the created, or the workmanship of God, so as to be now made capable of good works—which works, so far from being superseded by any preordination, He hath ordained beforehand that we should walk in them. Here God's strict and absolute predestination set forth in His decrees, and man's busy performance of all his duties, so far from conflicting with each other, are most thoroughly at one. See further Eph. i. 19; and again, though already quoted, Phil. ii. 13.

10. After reading the various passages wherein the predestinations of God are associated with the blessings and beatitudes of eternity, thus falling in with the statement of the Apostle James, that "every good and perfect gift cometh from above," theologians are apt to shrink from the contemplation of such an entire and absolute sovereignty on the part of the Supreme Being, as might lead to the conclusion, that without His appointment—though many would rather say without His permission—no event, of whatever character, could have happened, be it good or evil, and no being, whether righteous or wicked, could have been made such as he is—though many would rather say, could have been left to become such as he is—but because God in His pleasure, and according to His power, willed it to be so. We confess no fellowship with the difficulties, or the sensitive recoil, of these theologians; and whether the information of Scripture be to the effect that evil, physical or moral, obtains in this universe of God by His ordination, or by His sufferance, we are ready to abide by that information simply and literally as it is set before us. We have already given testimonies in regard to the present evil that obtains in the world as connected with the appointment and agency of God; and for ourselves we shrink not from these, but take them as there set before us. As little do we shrink from similar testimonies bearing on the future and final condition of those whom God hath not elected to life everlasting. On a subject far too unwieldy for the comprehension or the grasp of my puny intellect, I feel that it is not for me to

question or to resist the statements of an authoritative revelation ; neither will I be dislodged by any semblance of harshness or severity, from my conviction both of the perfect goodness and perfect intelligence of God. They are but ephemeral passages in the history of this world, itself but a speck in the universe of being, to which my observation extends ; and yet even in these brief and partial evolutions, I can perceive, as in the case already quoted of Joseph and his brethren, the subserviency of evil to good. And is it for me to say, in the multitude of unknown relations around me, of distant and unknown consequences before me, that the same will not be realized in the great scale of eternity ? On the whole of our doctrine, therefore, even in its most mysterious, and, as many would say, its most repulsive form—we mean the form of reprobation, we shall be guided by the few, for they are but few testimonies of Scripture. Even these afford but glimpses of the doctrine, or incidental bearings upon it, rather than naked and absolute statements of the doctrine itself ; yet they cannot, in my view, be evaded without a disingenuous treatment of the plain sense of Scripture—1 Thess. v. 9, “ For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by Jesus Christ ; ” whence the inference is, that all who are not appointed to salvation are appointed to wrath. The great bulk even of our orthodox theologians would rather view and express the matter in this way, that those who are not saved are simply left to their own natural inheritance as the children of wrath, and are therefore let alone. 1 Peter ii. 8—“ Them which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.” This, too, the adversaries, and also the modifiers of our doctrine, would try to get the better of by restricting the appointment to the consequences of disobedience, viewing the disobedience itself as the act solely of the creature. Jude 4—“ For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men,” &c. And so of this passage, too, both they who deny, and they who blink our doctrine in the form of reprobation, will tell us that these ungodly were of old ordained not to their ungodliness, but, being ungodly, they were ordained to the condemnation that follows it. I shall give one testimony more, and that perhaps the most difficult of all to be disposed of, by those who, in the handling of this argument, would soften the representations of Scripture down to the standard of their own conceptions and their own taste : Rom. ix. 18—“ Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”

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

CHAPTER V.

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

1. WE now confess that our own views, both of the general and the Christian philosophy, would lead us to desist entirely

from any further speculation, at least as far as the object is to vindicate the Deity, or to theorize at all on His purposes and ways. We have long admired the aphorism of Butler and should ever like to proceed on it, that, on every theme in theology, it greatly more concerns us to know man's part in it than God's part in it; and this not merely because of a near practical and personal interest in the former, but because of its lying more within our reach, and therefore presenting us with a clearer and more accessible, and so more legitimate topic for the exercise of our limited faculties. For ourselves, then, we feel no demand, and have almost no curiosity, respecting the attempts of those more daring transcendentalists who have ventured on the depths and mysteries of that arduous doctrine, in the consideration of which we have been engaged so long. We are satisfied with the final deliverance of Paul on the interrogations of those who sought in his time to arraign the inscrutable policy of Heaven:—Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Who art thou, O creature of a day, and whose vision extends but a little way around in the vastness of immensity—who art thou that would seek to pronounce or even to probe into the counsels of the Eternal, and He the Creator and the Sovereign of all worlds? We are not ashamed to say, for we hold it accordant with all that is soundest and best in science, that the statements of Scripture are quite enough for us, and that we should like to stop where it stops. And yet there are certain plausibilities, certain conjectures of profound and ingenious men, who have at least attempted a deeper fetch than others among the arcana of the subject, and which I should like to place before you, not to regale the curiosity or imagination, but for the sake of certain practical uses, which even an unproved, if only not a disproved hypothesis, might subserve in theology. The men whom I have chiefly in view are Leibnitz and Dr. Williams, and perhaps more cautious than either, Jonathan Edwards—all friendly to revelation, and who were prompted to their enterprise chiefly, we believe, by a desire to alleviate those sensations of revolt which the naked statements of Scripture have awakened in many a bosom; and to vindicate the Deity from the infidel charge of having been the author of sin, or the direct and efficient cause of moral evil.

2. The first of these devices, for we can view it in no other light than as a device of speculation, not unlikely, however, and not capable of being overthrown at the hands of adversaries,

which had its first origin with the schoolmen of the Middle Ages, is what they term the privative character of evil, whereby it is meant to affirm that evil—moral evil is chiefly intended—is not a thing of positive character or agency at all, but a mere negation. This, however, had best be illustrated by examples. Cold is deemed by the greater number of those philosophers who have to do with the physical sciences, as a mere negation. According to this view of it, cold is not to be regarded as a thing of positive or direct efficiency, but as implying no more than the absence of heat. Heat and cold are not conceived of as two distinct and positive agents, endowed with adverse and opposite properties to each other; but that heat is the only agent, and that cold, not a thing of efficiency but of deficiency, is the mere want of heat. Popularly, we may speak of heat and cold, and conceive of them as two contrary forces; but properly and philosophically there is but one force, and that is heat, while cold is only the weakness or the want of heat. Along the scale of temperature, there is a point of separation between what we should deem to be heat and what we should deem to be cold, which we therefore distinguish from each other, and give these respective names to them. The point at which, when rising to the higher temperature, we should pronounce it warm, or when sinking to the lower temperature, we should pronounce it cold, is regulated by the natural heat of our own bodies. If a substance of higher temperature than ours be applied to us, we gain heat from it, and feel it to be warm—if a substance of lower temperature than our own, we part with our heat to it, and feel it to be cold. At this rate, heat and cold but indicate greater and less degrees of heat; nor are these feelings of ours of any force or avail against the doctrine that there is a universal caloric which pervades all things, and which more or less resides everywhere; or should there be anywhere an entire and absolute zero, still this but indicates a total negation of heat, and is not incompatible with the assertion, that no such thing as an affirmative or substantive cold exists in the universe.

3. Analogous to these views of heat and cold, are the views given forth of moral good and moral evil—and this for the service of our present argument. Sin is held to be a mere negation; and even to be wicked in the highest degree, is only to be lowest in the scale of character. Extreme depravity is but the extreme destitution of all that is good—not the opposite of virtue, but the utter and entire want of it. There is more of likelihood

in this speculation than may appear at first sight; so that instead of a mere scholastic conception, it can often be held forth in the light of a practical and living reality. The worst characteristics of our nature can be described by negatives—as ungodliness, impiety, irreligion, injustice, insensibility, heartlessness, and being without natural affection. There is neither vice nor virtue in the mere love of self; but the very perfection of social virtue lies in a love of our neighbour equal to the love of self—so that to love our neighbour as ourselves, were the highest fulfilment of the second great commandment of the law. We have only to imagine successive deductions from the strength of this positive and good affection, so as to effect successive depravations on the character of man, plunging it deeper and deeper in moral evil, till the last and lowest extremity of wickedness, the moral zero, were reached, by the utter extinction of this right and good principle from the bosom. It is thus that the inhumanity—a negation—of the most inhuman monster on earth could be realized. The man who, to possess himself of his father's wealth, could plunge a dagger into his bosom, would rather have dispensed with the crime, if without it he could have attained his object. The enormity here does not lie in the love of the money; for one can imagine an equal love of it in it the heart of another, but in whose heart there was all the strength of filial regard which kept it effectually in check—in which case the stronger his love to the money was, the stronger did it prove the counteractive force of the good and the right affection to be, the greater in fact the ascendancy and power of the virtuous principle within him. The vice lies in the weakness of this principle; and it is consummated, and brought as it were to its acme or maximum, by the utter want of it. We believe that many, perhaps all the phenomena of human wickedness, admit of explanation upon this theory—that moral evil is not the active and efficient adversary, but the negation of moral good; and that just as in the scale of physical temperature, every successive descent marks not, philosophically speaking, the increase of cold, but the diminution of heat, till we arrive at the natural zero, or what would popularly be called the greatest possible cold, but which is only the state of least possible heat, or rather the utter privation of it, because then its last remainders have disappeared; so in the moral scale of temperature, if such an image and expression be allowed to us, the moral zero, or greatest possible vice, is but the least possible, or rather the entire privation of virtue. We

cannot tarry now at the work of giving all the requisite explanations, by which the difficulties in the way of this hypothesis, startling, we admit, on the first announcement, might be at least greatly mitigated, if not wholly done away. Before you pass on to a sentence of summary rejection, I would have you to consider how frequently, even in our own language, the worst attributes of guilt are described by such negative prepositions as the *a privativum* in Greek; and in Greek itself there cannot be a more frequent and familiar phenomenon. In the catalogue, for example, of those monstrous vices which are presented to us with such frightful detail in the first chapter of the Romans, how often are they described by negatives, as *γονεῦσιν ἀπειθεῖς*, disobedient to parents; and then follow in the next verse *ἀσυνέτους, ἀσυνθέτους, ἀσπύργους, ἀσπόνδους, ἀνελεήμονας*, rendered into English—without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. The negative character of these various properties is nearly preserved throughout in our own translation; while in the original, this unvaried reiteration of the *a privativum* is at least in keeping with, if it do not confirm, the scholastic idea of the privative character of evil. There is a great deal more in the hypothesis than many would at first sight allow; and beside the phenomena of language, there is much to be gathered in support of it from the phenomena of real character and life, from the *ipsa corpora*, if we may so speak, of the question now before us.

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

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

stance, is the gradation of goodness carried downwards, so that the greater degree of what is evil is but the less degree of what is good. The policy of such a system of things may be to us inscrutable, but still it is of a piece with that variety which, so far as we have access to know, forms throughout, among the different classes of being, in their different degrees both of magnitude and quality, a reigning characteristic of the universe of God.

5. And the same idea is supported by other analogies. We should not say of the sun that he is the author or cause of darkness—the proper cause of night, for example, being the interposed earth between us and the sun, to whom, in fact, we owe that even our thickest darkness is somewhat alleviated. Even at midnight we have the benefit of his reflected light; and so also is there a secondary influence from those on whom the grace of God hath directly operated, and which tends somewhat to temper and elevate and refine the character of others who are around them; so that, in spite of the disruption which has taken place between God and the world, or that screen of interception by which the Creator is separated from the rebellious family of man, still, from His own peculiar people, from those whom He has selected as the children of light, shining like lights in the world, there does proceed an influence which tends to mitigate the moral depravity, or, as it may be termed, the moral darkness of our earth—depravity and darkness, or darkness, whether in the moral or natural sense of the word, being alike viewed as negations. Whatever, then, is of negation, is altogether of man; whatever raises man above this negation, by however so little, comes altogether from God. He chooses so to raise them in greater or less degrees; and of this we might not be able to give an absolute explanation, but we can at least say, that it falls in with a universal analogy. In descending beneath the surface of the ocean, there is such a gradation of light, each stratum absorbing so much of the sun's rays, so that with every descent the light lessens, or the darkness is aggravated, till at length it is said to become total and entire, without the least alleviation at the bottom of every deep sea. It is not the sun which causes this profound darkness, but the absorbing medium through which it passes; and neither, is it contended, is it the great moral and spiritual luminary, the Sun of Righteousness above, who is the cause of the wickedness below—which wickedness is conceived to lie not, any more than darkness, in aught that is positive or efficient, but in the low degree, and at length,

when aggravated to the uttermost, in the entire privation of all goodness.

6. But the most plausible, perhaps the most effective, illustration of any, yielding at least the semblance, I could almost say the probability, of a vindication for the existence of evil, is that which is taken from the *vis inertiae* of matter. Some contend for this as an essential property of matter; and, for aught we know, it may be so. We often hear of moral and mathematical and logical necessities being alleged as so many limitations to the power of the Deity, which should rather be spoken of as impossibilities because they are contradictions, than as impossibilities beyond even the reach of Omnipotence, as if any attribute of the Godhead were thereby infringed upon. The impossibility lies in the thing itself, and not in any defect or limitation on the part of the Deity, insomuch that we hold it an incorrect way of putting it, to say that God cannot make a thing to be and not to be at the same time, or that he cannot change the properties of figures or numbers, so as, for example, to cause that two and three shall be equal to seven, or three angles of a rectilinear triangle to be greater or less than two right angles. And there is one such necessity or impossibility which, so far from attaching defect or infirmity to God, forms an evidence of highest perfection, even of a truth so inflexible that He cannot lie. Now, for anything we can say, there might be physical as well as moral necessities, more than we are able to assign, though we might imagine some of them. For God to make a being equal to Himself, might just be as great an impossibility as it were to lessen and impair any of His attributes. There are perfections of His which might be incommunicable to another, so as that in the act of creating there should be a necessity for beings inferior to Himself; and yet creation, with all the essential defects and infirmities which come along with it, be a glory and a blessedness notwithstanding. And so in the creation of matter, its *vis inertiae*, as essential to the very being and constitution of such a substance, might form the necessary condition of its existence—not an active property, but a thing of entire passiveness. It supplied Leibnitz with one of his happiest illustrations.—A laden vessel will be borne down the river with a slowness proportional to the burden which it carries. But this slowness does not proceed from without, but from within. So far from the slowness in its motion being caused by the stream, the stream is the cause of all the velocity which there is in the motion; or, in

other words, the velocity cometh from the stream, and the slowness from the cargo. Now this illustration of Leibnitz is throughout the argument of Dr. Williams. His reasoning proceeds wholly on the idea of what may be termed a moral *vis inertiae*, or, as he calls it, the essential defectibility of the creature. All virtue in man, be it great or little, cometh, according to this view of it, from the grace that is above, just as all motion in the vessel, be it quick or slow, cometh from an impulse that is without. Vice is but the defect of virtue, just as slowness is the defect of velocity; and vice in its greatest possible aggravation is but the total want of virtue, corresponding to rest, which is but the total want of motion: and so God is not the cause or author of sin, any more than the stream on which the vessel moves is the cause of slowness. Whatever is given by the stream adds motion to the vessel—whatever cometh from God adds virtue to the creature. The slowness arises from the essential *vis inertiae* of the dead matter—the sin arises from the essential defectibility of the created though living agent. It is thus that our ingenious transcendentalists make their escape from the revolting conception that God is the author of sin. He is the author and dispenser, they allege, of nothing but grace, the alleviator and antagonist of sin. And all for which He is reponsible is, that He dispenses variously, observing the same rule or method of gradation here which is discernible everywhere, or throughout the universe at large. It is thus they can avoid the offensive imputation of God being the originator of moral evil. They can express it otherwise, and thus soften what might else be a harsh and offensive representation. They speak of God permitting evil, but not ordaining it. They speak of His withholding grace from some, which He bestows on others, but never of any positive operation by Him that tendeth to evil. It is true that He has positively willed the creation into existence; and thus, with all its necessary defects and disorders, hath He given birth to an infinite and overpassing blessedness. All the blessedness and all the virtue proceed from Himself; all the misery and all the sins, or privatively speaking, all the shortcomings, proceed from the essential defectibility of the creature.

7. This hypothesis is in good keeping with Leibnitz's speculation on the optimism of our universe. It might, according to him, be the best possible, notwithstanding the evil that is implicated therewith; and as such was selected amongst all the other conceivable forms of a creation, not because of its evil, but

because of its greatest possible good, or because yielding the greatest possible amount of virtue and happiness. This he represents as the motive on which the Deity gave birth to our actual world, not because of the evil necessarily and by the constitution of the creature bound up with it, but because of all schemes for an order of created beings it was the best that could have been determined on. He would thence conclude, that God did not create our world because of its evil, but, in harmony with the perfect benevolence and all the other high characteristics of Deity, because of its greatest good. He created our universe because of the greatest good that was in it, and not because of the evil that was in it. The end of God in creation was not that evil should exist, but the greatest possible good. This was the direct object; the evil is the incidental accompaniment—not in being because desired of God, but owing to the essential defectibility of the creature, or to what Leibnitz and others have termed its defective receptivity. All, then, which was positive in the will of God when He made the world had respect to the good that was in it, its greatest possible good, and not to the evil. He formed it *because* it was good, and *though* it was evil. It was the good and not the evil which formed the moving impulse in the heart of the Deity when He determined to create our universe. He so determined *because* of the greatest good that was in it, and *although* there was evil in it—which evil, for aught we know, could not have been detached from our present complex system of things without a reduction of happiness and virtue on the whole. He created our world for the sake of its good, and notwithstanding its evil; and only permitting the evil because of its subserviency, from the relations and consequences of things, to the greatest amount of good. Now it is that for the sake of which, and not that notwithstanding which, He created the universe, which fixes and determines the motive of the Deity in creation, and that alone, therefore, which forms the indication or exponent of the Divine character. It is on the strength of such ingenious, but as they appear to us at the same time such forcible and substantial considerations, that Leibnitz grounded his reconciliation of the all-perfect character of God with the existence and origin of evil. Nothing can be regarded as properly the emanation of His will, but the good that is in the universe—a universe which He willed into being because of its greatest good, or because the best of all possible universes; and not because of its evil, the necessity for which can be no more

detached from the creature than its *vis inertiae* from matter. And thus He did not properly produce, He but permitted evil—the permission, and not the thing permitted, being the proper object of the Divine determination.

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

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

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

CHAPTER VI.

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

1. ACCORDING to those doctrines which neither reason nor Scripture will permit us to doubt, but which both compel us to believe, the decrees of God in the eternity that is past, respect-

ing the final destinies of men, must have their sure and irreversible fulfilment in the eternity that is to come. Between these two extremes, the beginning and end of the chain, there is a series of events which link together the first and the last by a sure and unbroken concatenation; but not more sure than is the connexion which subsists between each single link and the one either before or behind which is immediately contiguous to it. The connexion between the first and the last of this mighty progression—a progression made up of sequences, which takes its commencement in the viewless depths of the eternity that is behind, and has its ultimate landing-place in the alike viewless depths of the eternity before us—this connexion between the beginning and the ending, sure and irreversible though it be, is not more sure than the connexion between the terms close to each other, of the intermediate sequences, is sure. It is somewhere along this line, losing itself, at least to our observation, in that darkness of the unknown and the infinite on both sides of us, that man has his place assigned to him in this world, and his part to perform in it. He does not see far in either direction, though he may see a little way in both of them. He has no access to the book of life that is up in heaven, so as to ascertain, by an act of direct inspection, whether his name has been inscribed there from all eternity. And the like darkness rests on the everlasting futurity whither he is going. He can only have access, at least, by direct and immediate observation, to such terms or such sequences as those among which he himself is implicated at the point of time which he now occupies, or throughout the course of his history in the world. It is with these sequences, and with that part, that brief intermediate part of the vast progression along which he is at present moving, that he has proximately and personally to do. It is among these in fact that lie what with him are the matters on hand. It is true that he occupies a narrow space, and that his is but a little day; yet let us not forget, that through and within the sphere of his own personal doings and personal duties, there runs the chain of his own destiny, and that at this part of the chain the connexions are as unalterably sure as is the connexion between the primary decree and the ultimate destination. Let us study then what these connexions are; and see what influence or effect the view of them is fitted to have on the practice and the prospects of men.

2. Of the successions, then, which compose this mighty train

that begins with the first purposes of the uncreated mind, and ends with man's ultimate destination, let us select a few of those of which, at least one term, if not both, has its place in the life that now is, or among the doings of our present history in the world. The one that immediately occurs to us we give in the words of a most distinct scriptural affirmation—"He that seeketh findeth." The prior term of this succession has obviously its place here, and at this moment indeed might be set about, whether as the consequent to a prior term, call it the moral suasion which comes before it—or as the antecedent to a posterior term, to the promised fulfilment, to the finding which the Bible states, (and what better authority can we have for a statement?) the finding which is to come after it—and this, too, in an instance where both terms might have their realization on this side of death. We could not say this of a prayer for eternal life—a prayer, the fulfilment of which has its place in the regions of immortality; but we could say it of a prayer for the favour of God, which might be obtained now; and which, when obtained, is the sure guarantee for all blessings, whether for time or for eternity. But let us specify rather the very blessing which our Saviour had in view when He made the gracious utterance, that "he who seeketh findeth." Your Father who is in heaven, He saith, will give the Holy Spirit to them who ask it—which, if not itself the inheritance of the saints, is at least the earnest of that inheritance. Let us no longer hear then of this predestination, that it overlays and might well set aside all human exertion; for, do what we may, all is already settled and made sure in the counsels of eternity: nor we can break the chain which indissolubly binds the decrees of the far distant past with the destinations of the alike distant future, and makes such a fixture of our everlasting state as we cannot possibly reverse in any way. The beginning and the ending are all settled and made sure—this first and last in the chain of destiny, if you like so to call it—but not more settled, not more sure, than is the connexion throughout between the contiguous links of the chain; and one of these connexions is just that which we have announced—"He who seeketh findeth." This truly is our matter on hand. The links within our reach, and in the midst of which we have been cast, composing that part of the chain which runs through our personal history in the world—these are what we have immediately to do with. Some delight in expatiating over a wider range, and casting an eye of speculation over the ulterior

spaces ; and on this domain, on these high fields of the transcendental theology, we hold the Calvinists to be right, when affirming the certainty, the irreversible certainty, of the connexion which obtains between the decrees of the past and the fulfilments of the future eternity ; but not more certain than the intermediate connexions on which we are called to lay our hand, and be fellow-workers with God in the high office of making them good. More particularly does it hold of the connexion here affirmed between the seeking and the finding. Heaven and earth shall pass away sooner than can this connexion, or indeed any of God's words, pass away. But let me not only prize this connexion, let me proceed upon it—ask till I receive, seek till I find, knock till the door be opened to me.

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

4. But not only is there connexion between two things, both

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

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE GOSPEL

1. I CANNOT but think that the doctrine of Particular Redemption has been expounded by many of its defenders in such a way as to give an unfortunate aspect to the Christian dispensation. As often treated, we hold it to be a most unpractical and useless

theory, and not easy to be vindicated, without the infliction of an unnatural violence on many passages of Scripture. The comparison which has been instituted, and in a somewhat arithmetical style, too, between the quantity of suffering which entered into the atonement and the number of those who shall be saved, is, to say the least of it, a very uncalled for, besides being an untasteful speculation. But far its worst effect is, that it acts as a drag and a deduction from the freeness of the gospel. Its ministers are made to feel the chilling influence of a limitation upon their warrant. If Christ died only for the elect, and not for all, they are puzzled to understand how they should proceed with the calls and invitations of the gospel. They feel themselves disabled from addressing them to all; and this, in their utter ignorance of the elect and the reprobate individually, seems tantamount to their being disabled from addressing them to any. If the efficacy of Christ's blood be only commensurate to the salvation of a chosen few, how can they expatiate on the virtue and peace-speaking power of that blood in the hearing of the general multitude; and more especially, as might lead all or any of that multitude to venture their reliance upon it. It is thus that the bearers of heaven's welcome and heaven's goodwill to the whole human race, have had a sore embarrassment laid on the very outset of their undertaking. In the execution of what might be thought their very obvious task, they have got entangled with speculative difficulties. A topic has been fetched from the high and hidden counsels of God wherewith to mystify the plainly prescribed conduct of man. And a message so constructed, as that it might circulate round the globe, and by which the blessings of the upper sanctuary are made as accessible to one and all of the species, as the light, or the air, or any of the cheap and common bounties of nature, has now, since its wings of diffusiveness and glory have been clipped by the hands of controversialists, shrunk and shrivelled into the dimensions of their own narrow sectarianism.

2. There must be a sad misunderstanding somewhere. The commission put into our hands is to go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; and the announcement sounded forth on the world from heaven's vault was, Peace on earth, goodwill to men. There is no freezing limitation here, but a largeness and munificence of mercy boundless as space, free and open as the expanse of the firmament. We hope, therefore, the gospel, the real gospel, is as unlike the views of some of its

interpreters as creation in all its boundlessness and beauty is unlike to the paltry scheme of some wretched scholastic in the Middle Ages. The middle age of science and civilisation is now terminated; but Christianity also had its middle age, and this, perhaps, is not yet fully terminated. There is still a remainder of the old spell, even the spell of human authority, and by which a certain cramp or confinement has been laid on the genius of Christianity. We cannot doubt that the time of its complete emancipation is coming, when it shall break loose from the imprisonment in which it is held; but meanwhile there is, as it were, a stricture upon it not yet wholly removed, and in virtue of which the largeness and liberality of heaven's own purposes have been made to descend in partial and scanty droppings through the strainers of an artificial theology, instead of falling, as they ought, in a universal shower upon the world.

3. We hope you may now understand that there is nothing in the doctrine of Predestination which should at all limit the universality of the gospel offer; and that in spite of that doctrine it is still this offer, honestly and affectionately urged on the one side upon each and upon every man, and received on the other in the very sense and the character in which it is propounded—that is the great practical engine of all the success which Christianity meets with in the world. It is at this stepping-stone where the transition is made from condemnation to pardon, from sin unto righteousness. The names and number of the saved may have been in the view, nay, even in the design and destination of God from all eternity; and still the destination is carried into effect, not by means of a gospel addressed partially and exclusively to them, but by means of a gospel addressed generally to all. A partial gospel in fact could not have achieved the conversion of the elect. It is not in the act of looking to the gospel as intended solely for the benefit of themselves, but in the act of looking to it as intended for the benefit of all who will, that they are prevailed on to venture upon its assurances both the hopes and the preparations of their eternity. It is not on having had their names presented to them as written in the book of life, but on having had the calls and invitations of the gospel presented to them as written in the book of revelation, that they were translated from darkness into marvellous light—a light which shines equally around all, but with this difference, that whereas they opened, the others shut their eyes against it. Their conversion hinged not upon their belief of any decree made by

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

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

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

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

5. We ought therefore to proceed on the obvious representations which Scripture gives of the Deity, and these beheld in their own immediate light, untinged by the dogma of Predes-

tion. God waiting to be gracious—God not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance—God swearing by Himself that He has no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that all should come unto Him and live—God beseeching men to enter into reconciliation, and this not as elect, but simply and generally as men and sinners;—these are the attitudes in which the Father of the human family sets Himself forth unto the world—these the terms in which He speaks to us from heaven. Now what we affirm, what we zealously affirm, is, that the gospel is not adequately rendered, if the full and natural force of these exhibitions be not brought to bear on the hearts of all men. It is a distorted gospel, if through any doctrinal medium whatever, the spectacle of a God beckoning their return to forgiveness be at all darkened or transformed. Any charm which there is in Christianity to recall or to regenerate some, lies in those of its overtures which are so framed as to hold out the offered friendship of God unto all. We strip our religion of its moral efficacy if we do not so represent it. It is not a limited, it is a universal offer in the gospel, which is the instrument of every particular conversion. This is not superseded by the system of necessity. The same God who makes the manifested good-will of one man an instrument for gaining the confidence and affection of another towards him, makes His own manifested good-will the instrument for gaining the confidence and affection of sinners unto Himself; and it is an instrument, we repeat, which may be brought to bear upon all. It is an open manifestation on which every man is invited to look, and in which all have an equal warrant to trust and to rejoice. All that necessity does is to make sure the concatenation between antecedents and their consequents, between means and their ends; and this it does whatever the antecedents and whatever the consequents are. There is nothing, therefore, in necessity, or to substitute the theological term, there is nothing in predestination, which hinders the antecedent in the work of conversion from being the general offer of pardon to all men, and the consequent from being the repose of a confiding acceptance on the part of all or of any who are willing to enter on the path of reconciliation. The index to this path is lifted up in the sight of all. The bidding to walk in this path is addressed unto all. The Sun of righteousness hath arisen for the general behoof of human spirits, just as much as the sun of nature hath arisen for the general behoof of human eyes. We can imagine so violent a perversity

as that of shutting one's eyes against the light of day, and so walking wilfully, in darkness. And we are not left to imagine, for we see it exemplified of thousands, that they shut the eyes of their understanding against the light of the gospel, and so walk wilfully in spiritual darkness. He who doeth evil cometh not unto the light, says our Saviour. It is because of our own perversity, it is because of our own resistance, if we do not obtain the pardon of the gospel. We have it for the taking. The book of revelation is open to us, and we may read our welcome there, even in the very passages where the elect read it for they have no more access than others to the book of destiny. The demonstration held forth in the gospel is that of a God not only commanding but even beseeching His strayed creatures to return unto Him. If one man be carried by this demonstration and another resist it, it is not because the external demonstration has been differently given to the two men, but because it has been differently received by them. God, in the gospel of Jesus Christ, holds forth the very same overtures to both; and the only distinction is, that it is not responded to in the same way by both. The command on both to believe is alike imperative. The entreaty for both to return is alike importunate. The love wherewith God loved the world so as to send His only-begotten Son into it, ought to be urged on both these inhabitants of the world—in the very same style of entreaty and unreserved assurance—and that for the purpose of awakening in them the same confidence, and calling forth the same gratitude for the goodwill from heaven thus manifested to the one just as it is to the other. We are aware that there may be and often is a difference in the result, but the cause of this must be looked for inwardly, to a difference between the men, and not outwardly, to the application that has been brought to bear upon them. The application is a free pardon held out for acceptance to them both—the assurance of God's readiness in Christ Jesus to forgive, coupled with the call of repentance to them both—the declaration of a blood that cleanseth from all sin, and that will most assuredly cleanse them from their sin if they will only put their trust in it, made equally to them both—the proclamation of an open way of access, towards which our very first movement will cause joy in heaven, and God Himself—like the father in the parable—to meet them with the encouragements of His parental welcome, lifted up in the hearing of both, a longing affection on the part of their Creator, lifted up in such touching expressions

as—Oh that they would remember the things which belong to their peace! and, Oh that there were a heart in them to keep my commandments!—this, we say, pointedly and with the same force of moral earnestness addressed to them both. Such is the outward engine made to play on the hearts of each; and that minister is untrue to his commission who does not bear it indiscriminately round, and cause it to operate with equal freeness and importunity at every door. We are aware that the effect within will not be the same, but the application from without ought to be the same; and that theologian has wildered himself among speculations which he knows not how to manage, and which therefore as too high for him he had better let alone, who suffers his views on necessity, on predestination, on the sovereignty of Divine grace, or the decrees of a past eternity, to embarrass the plain work that has been put into his hands, which is to make full tender of the mercy of God in Christ to all who will; and an equally full tender of the strength from on high, by which he might perfect the indispensable repentance of the gospel to all who will.

6. There is nothing in the doctrine of necessity to set aside this process. The doctrine of a strict causation in the process of conversion does not discourage, surely it should rather animate our diligence in plying the particular and the proximate cause of this great event in the history of the human spirit, whatever the cause may be. In other words, it is no less our part under the system of necessity than under any other system which may be specified, to bring the word of God's testimony to bear on the hearts and the consciences of men—even that word which is addressed equally unto all, and which contains in it both the promise and the power to save every one who receives it. In as far, then, as man's part in the transaction is concerned, all is clear—it being the obvious duty of the minister to bring the message of the gospel alike to every man, and the as obvious duty of every man to prize that message as worthy of his special acceptance, and to proceed upon its truth. But we are told that this cannot be done without a special interposition on the part of God—that it is both His grace which imparts to the word all its efficacy, and which opens the heart of man to receive it. We admit this, yet we see nothing in it to embarrass, but everything in it to guide and to encourage man. His part remains still an obvious and a plain one; and he may address himself to the work of Christianity with as great alertness, and still greater

hopefulness than before. This indispensable grace is given most willingly and most liberally to our prayers. And on the authority of the one saying, that he who seeketh findeth, we may rest assured of the gospel and of all its blessings, that they are placed within the reach of every man who embarks in good earnest in the enterprise, with a heart of desire and with hands of diligence. It is a cruel perversity, if such clear, and withal such important simplicities as these, should have a darkening shroud thrown over them by an ill-understood speculation; or if any clergyman shall, among the rigidities of his formal and well-argued system, forego those topics which, when urged with apostolic simplicity and fervour, have been the mighty instruments for the conversion of human spirits in all ages.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY LECTURES.

LECTURE I.*

ON THE TRINITY.

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

* The following Lectures remained to be remodelled and embodied in the Institutes; of which, according to the arrangement announced in the Introduction, they should have formed the close.—*Ed.*

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

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

own grosser element that we speak, and conceive, and argue of the other. To theorize on an unknown world within the limits of materialism, is not so extravagant as to theorize on mind existing apart from matter. We can have no idea of it. It is beyond the comprehension of all our faculties, and it makes it all the more baffling, all the more hopelessly transcendental, when it is to the infinite and the eternal mind that we are lifting our regards, and that with a view to seize on the mysteries of His constitution and His being. The subject altogether eludes our grasp, and, on every attempt to lay hold of it, constantly withdraws into deeper retirement than before, lost in the dark recesses of the everlasting behind, or lost in the viewless immensity of the space that is around us. The subject is that of all others which revelation might well monopolize, for we have not only no anterior knowledge, we have not even one anterior imagination of it, wherewith to confront her. It is a subject profoundly situated among the depths and the difficulties of a region unknown; and should one, fresh from that region, and the bearer of satisfactory credentials, come fraught with the revelation of its secrets, never was it more distinctly the part of reason reverently to listen and reverently to acquiesce.

Yet to reason belongs a prerogative notwithstanding. On the facts of any distant and unexplored region, it yields itself up with all passiveness to the lessons of any competent informer; but there are incredibilities which no evidence whatever can force upon its convictions. It will not submit, for example, to the report of any mathematical, or moral, or logical falsity, though, brought to us from the most distant places of the universe, they lie beyond the utmost possibility of its observation. In spite of every contrary demonstration would it maintain as a certainty that nowhere is falsehood a virtue; or that nowhere do the three angles of a rectilinear triangle amount to more or less than two right angles; or that nowhere is it possible for a thing to be and not to be at the same time; or finally, that nowhere could three individuals make up a unity which shall be the same in all respects with each of the three viewed severally and apart, or that one individual can be resolved into three unities, each of which shall be the same in all respects with the individual into which they all enter. The most zealous Trinitarian affirms of the triune God that He is not the Father, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; neither is He the Son, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; neither is He the

Holy Ghost, He is the one God, consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. This is a very general statement, we allow; nor do we think that Scripture warrants a more special description of the Trinity; and most surely if Scripture do not, reason ought not. But general as it is, it enables the orthodox to propound their article, and to propound it in terms which involve no arithmetical contradiction.

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

And now it may occur to the minds of some, if a subject which can only be treated with so much generality and reserve, can, after all, be essential to the system of religion. Can there be any practical necessity for touching frequently, or touching at all, on a theme which seems quite unsafe to meddle with, or on which, should we venture too far, though ever so little a way, we are sure to express ourselves wrong, or in language without meaning? We have often heard of Christianity, that, in as far as it is essential to be known, it is a revelation of plain things for plain and popular understandings. Can this arduous and lofty speculation be included among those plain things? and if not, how comes the doctrine of the Trinity to be ranked by all the orthodox Churches as a fundamental article of the faith? Surely a doctrine which requires to be touched with so tender and delicate a hand is not for everyday usage; and, instead of being cherished, it may be thought, as a topic of fond and ever-

recurring contemplation, the disposition should be rather to retire from it with a certain sense of fearfulness, lest, by giving it too close or serious entertainment, we should venture beyond our depths, and so get into some deadly and irrecoverable error. How can a doctrine be turned to any practical purpose which, to avoid the risk of misstatement, must be expressed in language of obscurest generality, and which, neither by the light of reason nor the light of Scripture, we can brighten into any degree of greater distinctness? There is something here which requires explanation; and we trust that, by discriminating aright among the things which differ, you will be led to perceive that all which is plain in this doctrine is of vital importance, and that all which is of vital importance is plain. There is a part which the light of Scripture luminously shines upon, and which the humblest of our peasantry understand; and there is a part which shades off into the dark unknown, a margin of dimness and mystery, on which there sitteth an impenetrable haze—the attempt to disperse which, by human explanations, has only deepened it the more, for it has only raised the dust of controversy by which to aggravate the natural and inherent obscurity of the subject.

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

But there is another proposition equally distinct, and in itself equally intelligible—it is, that God is one. Viewed apart from all the other sayings, there is nought obscure surely in this particular saying. There is a comprehensible meaning in each of the four propositions, that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that God is one. We say there is a lucid and comprehensible meaning in each of them when viewed in their individuality. Each conveys a sense which the common sense of the people can easily apprehend or lay hold of. In as far as those scriptural informations are concerned, there is not one of them which in itself is chargeable with being either mystic or meaningless. There is not one of those sayings a dark saying; and whatever darkness may arise out of our attempts to compare or to combine or to form a scheme out of them, in each deliverance, singly, of Scripture, there is a plain averment not to be mistaken by the plainest understanding.

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Now it is manifest that the mode of exposition must be conformed to the style of the document ; and this conformity demands that the inductive method, invariably, should be used for gleanings the sense of Scripture. While employing all the common and well-known means proper for ascertaining the grammatical sense of ancient writers, each single passage of the inspired volume, like a single phenomenon of nature, is to be interrogated for its evidence, without any solicitude for the fate of a pre-conceived theory, and without asking, how is this evidence to be reconciled with that derived from other quarters ? for it is remembered that the revelation we are studying is a partial discovery of facts, which could not be more than imperfectly made known. Whoever has not yet fully satisfied himself that the Scriptures throughout were “given by inspiration of God,” should lose no time in determining that doubt ; but if it be determined, then it is a flagrant inconsistency not to confide in the principle that the Bible is everywhere truly consistent with itself, whether or not we have the means of tracing its agreements. And while this principle is adhered to, no sentiment or fact plainly contained in the words, need be refused or contorted on account of its apparent incongruity with systematic divinity.

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

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

We admit of the separate propositions out of which the doctrine of the Trinity has been made to arise—we admit that they instantly present the semblance of an inconsistency, such as instantly to suggest a sense of the difficulty which there is in doing that inconsistency away. We wonder not that it has acted as a provocative to speculation, and that men have been lured by it to the arduous enterprise of finding out a ligament by which to

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

unite those puzzling contrarieties. But let it ever be remembered, that in the four individual statements there is no puzzle, and that while that which human controversy has fastened upon is obscure, what Scripture announces is unambiguous and plain. We have already stated how the doctrine may be protected from the imputation of an arithmetical falsity; and, meanwhile, it is of the utmost importance to remark, that amid all the perplexity which attaches to the composition of the sayings into a general harmony, there are distinct and decided convictions impressed on every even the commonest understanding, by the sayings themselves. And so in reply to the question, whether this doctrine, dark and unintelligible as it confessedly is, might not in all propriety be dispensed with, we would ask if the plain and peremptory sayings of Scripture are to be expunged, because we have failed in our attempts to make a harmony out of them? These sayings, as far as they go, do tell the plain Christian what he both sees to be intelligible and feels to be important. They tell him that the Father is God, and that Christ is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. There is no misunderstanding and no mystery when he looks singly to any of these propositions. They also tell him that God is one, and there is as little misunderstanding or mystery in this. It is when he attempts to harmonize the last with the three first, that the mysteriousness begins; and because he cannot frame a symphony out of so many elementary propositions, all most clearly and unequivocally stated in Scripture, is he therefore to discard the propositions themselves? Is he to cast away from him the clearest Scripture truths conveyed in the most lucid and decisive Scripture testimonies, because he cannot weave them together into a lucid and comprehensive harmony? Is he to shut his eyes against the individual truths of which Scripture has told him, because he cannot find the unseen ligaments of which Scripture has not told him? Be assured this were as unsound in theology as in philosophy to refuse the evidence of the senses for so many facts or phenomena, because you cannot detect the cementing principle which binds together, and so explains their seeming contrariety. The Divinity of Christ does not rest on the adjustment of any Trinitarian speculation, it rests on the many scriptural attestations that Christ is God. The Divinity of the Spirit does not rest on such adjustment either: it rests on the attestations of Scripture to the Holy Spirit being God. The oneness of the Deity does not come forth as a corollary from the argumentations of the schoolmen, it comes

directly, though not more directly than the Godhead of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost, from the plain announcements of the Bible that God is one. Remember, ever hold in remembrance, that our not being able to see through the complexities of human speculation is no reason that we should turn our eyes from the simplicities of Scripture.

When thus made to perceive in what quarter the clearness and in what quarter the obscurity lies, you will the better appreciate the remark of Dr. Lardner, "that obscure doctrines ought not to be made necessary to salvation," and that "therefore the commonly received doctrine of the Trinity," as obscure, "should not be made a necessary article of a Christian's faith." Now, you will observe, that it is not alone the scholastic doctrine of the Trinity which he wants to get quit of, but also of the elementary propositions out of which it has been framed. And what we have to say upon it is this: whatever obscurity may rest on the doctrine in its general and comprehensive form, there is none whatever in the separate Scripture sayings that enter into the construction of it. What obscurity is there, for example, in the statement, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; or in John's undisputed affirmation that Christ is God; or in Paul's, that Christ is God blessed for ever; or in the evident implication of the Spirit distinct from the Father, in that He was sent from the Father; or in the property of omniscience ascribed to Him, in that He guides to all truth, and searches all things, even the deep things of God? Under the guise of pleading for the removal of a mere metaphysical dogma from the Church's creed, they would expunge from the charter of our faith many of its most unambiguous testimonies. They would obliterate Bible passages that minister not a shadowy impression, but plain and palpable convictions to the general multitude of Christendom—convictions that require no aid from the explanations or the terms of an artificial theology, but which, in virtue of honesty and simple faith in the reading of their Bibles, are deeply and solidly established in the hearts of our peasantry. The reconciling principle which harmonizes the Trinity with the unity of the Godhead, neither they, nor the profoundest scholars in theology, understand; but the elementary scriptural propositions out of which this article has been framed they do understand. When looking to the simplicities of the doctrine, they make a substantial appropriation of truths in which they rejoice, that Christ is God, that the Holy Spirit is God;

when looking at the difficulties of the doctrine, they are visited with a sense of mysteriousness, and they reverently adore.

We could have tolerated that Socinians and Arians had quarrelled with the phraseology of Athanasius, had it but thrown them back on the simplicities of Scripture. But these they have laboured with all their might to sophisticate or to expunge, and along with them all that was most valuable or dear in the faith of our cottage patriarchs. It is an utter misconception, though never sufficiently exposed, that the doctrine of the Trinity is one of those scholastic subtleties which might safely be dispensed with without endangering aught that is substantial or of practical effect in the faith of Christians. Glad as the tidings are to the heart of the humble Christian, that to him a Saviour is born, to him it is most gladdening and most elevating of all when told that that Saviour is God. Precious as the announcement is that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, it enhances, and to an inconceivable amount, all his feelings of security, when told that it was the blood of a Divine sacrifice. Never does he feel so safe under the canopy of the appointed mediatorship as when he thinks that the offended justice of the Divine Lawgiver has been met and satisfied by the expiation made through the death of a Divine High-Priest; and never does he so feel the law to be of awful and inviolable sacredness, as when he thinks of the costly atonement that was devised for the reparation of its outraged dignity. This sense of the Divinity of Christ enhances the sacredness of all his religious contemplations. It aggravates to his view the worthlessness of sin, and gives a deeper reverence for the truth and holiness of the Godhead.

We have already endeavoured to make it palpable to you, that the doctrine of the Trinity may be regarded as a complex or rather comprehensive proposition, made out of certain elementary propositions contained in Scripture, and that all the obscurity charged upon the complex is not chargeable on the elementary propositions. Scripture on the strength of its credentials, which we suppose to have been previously examined and accredited, is entitled to demand our belief for one and all of its statements, after which men may choose to exercise themselves in finding out, if they can, the vinculum between the statements, or the principle upon which they might vindicate the consistency which there is between them. Now, in this latter enterprize there may be the utmost difficulty, while there is no difficulty in a simple apprehension of each of the simple propositions which Scripture has offered upon

this subject. This distinction has not been adverted to, and what is the consequence? They who would expunge from the system of our fundamental articles, the doctrine, the complex and comprehensive doctrine of the Trinity, would expunge along with it the most distinct and authoritative testimonies that are anywhere to be found within the four corners of the Bible. At the most, their dissatisfaction with the article as framed by Athanasius should have thrown them back on the simple affirmations of Scripture, respecting, on the one hand, the unity of God, and on the other, the Divinity of the Father, the Divinity of the Son, and the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. But instead of this, they would not only cancel from the formulas of our Established Churches the article of Athanasius, they would cancel, or at least explain away from the great original charter of the faith of all Churches, its most distinct and unequivocal averments. They would not only discard the scholastic and artificial compend of the orthodox, but they would discard the scriptural propositions that enter into the compend, and on the evidence for which propositions we now proceed to lay before you a few general observations.

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

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

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

these distinct and categorical statements. There is in fact an evidence interwoven with the whole of Scripture, and which cannot be discarded without the whole texture and the staple of the book of revelation being changed—a multiple probability to displace which we have not only to establish the adulteration of one or two or three texts, but have to pile as many hundreds of unlikelihoods on each other, and to imagine the concurrence of at least this number of perverse accidents on the multitude of texts scattered over the whole surface of the record, and so transforming every one of them, as to make each speak a language different from what it did originally, when it told us, whether expressly or by implication, that Christ is God. There is in this way a cumulative proof all-powerful in point of general effect, the strength of which is accurately felt by an ordinary if an honest reader, however difficult it may be to make a strict or scientific exhibition of its value.

It would require a very protracted lecture of itself simply to read all the passages in Scripture which make for the Divinity of Christ, each of which may not come up to a round and absolute assertion of the doctrine, but all of which compose a cumulative evidence in its favour that is quite irresistible, and which cannot be destroyed without the supposition of such a number of concurrent changes in the sacred text, all too in one direction, the overwhelming improbability of which by the doctrine of chances is quite beyond computation. I will not pretend to give an arithmetical statement of the amount of the unlikelihood that such numerous transformations should have been effected on the innumerable copies of Scripture which have come down to us from distant ages, and which mainly agree with all or at least the vast majority of passages upon this subject in our authorized version. Let me first present a few of these from the New Testament, as to come forward with them all is out of the question:—"They shall call his name Immanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us."—"No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son."—"The Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath."—Jesus went to the temple of God, and he said, "My house shall be called a house of prayer."—"What think ye of Christ? how doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said to my Lord?"—"Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."—"Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—"Have ye

not read in the book of Moses, how, in the bush, God spake to him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?"—"Prepare ye the way of the Lord; make his paths straight."—"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord."—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."—"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."—"The Jews sought to kill him, because he said that God was his Father, making himself equal with God."—"Whatsoever things the Father doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise."—"As the Father, so the Son quickeneth whom he will."—"All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father."—"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."—"Before Abraham was, I am."—"I and my Father are one."—"The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God."—"The Father is in me, and I in him."—"He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."—"If I depart, I will send the Comforter to you."—"All mine are thine, and thine are mine."—"He breathed on them, and said to them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost."—"Thomas answered and said to him, My Lord and my God! Jesus saith, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed."—"Lord, thou knowest all things."—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."—"Ye are in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."—"Christ is over all, God blessed for ever."—"We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; for it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God; so then, every one of us shall give account of himself to God."—"Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."—"Base things of the world hath God chosen, that no flesh should glory in his presence."—"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."—"Christ is the image of God."—"For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me; and he said, My strength is made perfect in weakness; I glory in mine infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—"God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts."—"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit."—"God created all things by Jesus Christ."—"Christ Jesus, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God."—"By him were all things created, that are in

heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist."—"In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."—"Which is the head of all principality and power."—"In singleness of heart, fearing God, for ye serve the Lord Christ."—"Now God himself, and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you."—"Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work."—"This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour."—"God was manifest in the flesh."—"Looking for the glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."—"By whom also God made the worlds, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power."—"Let all the angels of God worship him."—"To the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever. Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thy hands; they shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."—"For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house; for every house is builded by some one, but he that built all things is God."—"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."—"We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ."—"This is the true God and eternal life."—"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."—"I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."—"I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore. Amen."—"Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever."—"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings."—"His name is called the Word of God; and he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords."

We speak not of those quotations in which express assertion is made of the Divinity of Christ; but we ask, if it be not the

general effect of them all put together to throw the halo of a divine sacredness around Him? Do they not altogether compose a celestial radiance, and enthrone Him who is the subject of them in celestial supremacy? Do they at all comport with the state or character of a being placed at that infinite distance of inferiority at which the most exalted of creatures stands in relation to the Creator? Is He not represented as sitting in high imperial state over angels as well as men; the head not of certain orders only, but the head of all principality and power? Are not the Father and the Son represented as alike the hearers, and represented as alike the answerers of prayer? Is there not an interchange, is there not a participation betwixt them, of the like superlative titles, of the like high and glorious sovereignty? Will any man say that as the effect of these scriptural exhibitions we have just given, he feels a limitation imposed on the spiritual homage he should render to the Saviour; or is it really his honest impression, on the whole, that there is danger of yielding too high a reverence to Christ, or of casting himself into too lowly obeisance before Him? Are they not rather fitted to call up the aspirations of the heart towards an object of infinite and illimitable majesty? Would the name of Christ, if a creature, have been so enshrined as it is in the New Testament among the epithets and the honours of Deity; or rather—framed as the whole economy is by a Being jealous of His name, and who will not share the glories of it with another—is it not the distinctly announced lesson of all these passages, that Christ is one with the Father, that Christ is God?

We think that a still more forcible impression to the same effect is produced by the appropriate passages of the Old Testament. We know not how it is, but we think that in the records of the elder dispensation there is often to be met a richness of evangelical sentiment not surpassed in any of the more explicit statements or more distinct reasonings of the New Testament. We appeal to the force and fulness of Isaiah on the doctrine of the atonement; and in the book of Psalms to its spiritual religion, etherealized, as it were, above all the grossness of Judaism. The spirit of prophecy, we are told, is the testimony of Jesus; and in the ancient descriptions of this personage in whom the law and the prophets had alike their termination, we meet with as emphatic testimonies to the dignity and divinity of the Saviour as any that the Apostles ever penned. We have often said that we felt a peculiar interest when recognising the

truths and the substance of Christianity under the drapery of the Mosaic ritual, and there is something analogous to this when we behold the doctrines of our faith set as it were in the oriental beauties of Hebrew diction and Hebrew poesy. Whatever obscurity may be charged on the figurative language of the seers of the Old Testament, there is nothing to obscure but everything to enhance our conception of the high dignity of the Saviour in the representations which they have given of it; and distinctly as we read of the Godhead of Christ in the New Testament, we shall meet with much not to weaken but to confirm our belief in the things that are written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning Him.

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

“In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.”

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

* The evidence relative to the Angel of the Covenant, discussed in reading the Text-book, will be found in the Notes on Hill’s Lectures in Divinity, Book III. Chap. v., in this volume. See *Contents*.—Ed.

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

There is one consideration on the Divinity of Christ which we hold to be of great argumentative force, and which even Scripture criticism, though all-triumphant on the side of orthodoxy, does not supersede; for even a victorious criticism, however it may succeed in defending the truth, yet, by the very multitude of its explanations, may enfeeble the impression of it. The very agitation of the controversy may leave a mistiness even on a question which itself is decided, and decided with a power of reasoning that can no longer be gainsaid, and yet the student may arise from the discussion with a sense of the truth not half so fresh and vigorous as is felt by a simple peasant on his first perusal of the passages which hold it. It may with all safety be affirmed to be the general understanding, whether right or wrong, that by the Arian or the Socinian hypothesis a violence is done to the obvious meaning of Scripture, and that any natural or unsophisticated reader cannot in a plain way hold converse

with his Bible without an impression on his spirit, that according to its testimonies Christ is God. Now we ask whether, under a system so abhorrent to idolatry as both the Jewish and the Christian, the phraseology would have been so constructed, or the doctrine of the Saviour's person been couched in such terms as might have misled the bulk of Christians to the deification of the creature, if Christ have indeed been created? Seeing that there is such a harmony in hundreds of passages on the side of the Divine nature of Christ, would there not, to neutralize their mischief, have been somewhere in the record an explicit and earnest disavowal of the blasphemy, if blasphemy indeed it is? Would our Saviour have tolerated the "My Lord and my God" that fell from the lips of Thomas? or lent, in the presence of all the apostles, the sanction of His silence to a sacrilegious delusion? There was no want of promptitude on His part in rebuking the errors of His disciples; and the "Get thee behind me, Satan," which He addressed to Peter, would have been launched with still greater emphasis and force on the head of Thomas had he then been offering to a creature the homage that is due to the Creator. He quarrelled with the one apostle who refused to hear of His approaching death, that universal fatality of man, because He knew it was a humiliation that awaited Him. He quarrelled not with the other apostle who attributed to Him the name and the titles of a God, because He knew that it was an exaltation which belonged to Him. Would the Scriptures have so teemed with the evidences of His divinity; or rather, would the semblance of such evidence have been permitted so to overspread the sacred record, had he stood at that immeasurable descent of inferiority at which even the highest of creatures stands in relation to his God? Remember that He is a God jealous of His honour—that He will not give to another the glory of His name—that in the history of his dealings with the people of Israel, vengeance ever followed in the train of idolatry—that it was a crime which fastened the brand of extermination on the guilty nations who were before them. The great object in the separation of the Church from the world, which commenced with Abraham, was to keep alive on the earth the faith and the worship of one God, the infinite Jehovah, who stands aloof from all participation in the frailties or imperfections of any created thing. It is an infinite misplacing when the creature usurps the place of the Creator. The interval, the mighty interval, between them is guarded throughout with implacable jealousy; and would

there have been, we repeat, such a mingling of works and attributes, such a merging and mutual transference of Divine names and Divine honours between the Father and the Son, such a free interchange of titles and high ascriptions—would Christ have been called the man who was His fellow, or the incommunicable name of Jehovah been given to Him, had not Christ been God?

LECTURE II.

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

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

and high consideration of the messenger, will our despite or our heedless indifference to the message be resented as all the deeper affront, all the deadlier provocation.

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

them—He calls on one and all of the world's generations to turn unto God.

Now had this been but the doing of an angel, or the word of an angel, still it would have formed an impressive call upon the world. "The word thus spoken would have been steadfast, and our disobedience thereto received a just recompense of reward." But there is the "How much more?"—the evident stress laid in the Bible on the circumstance that the author and the messenger of our salvation is He whom all the angels of God worshipped. It is on this that the apostle argues both for the greatness of the salvation and for the danger of neglecting it. That God himself should have moved from heaven on this enterprise of the world's recovery—that He should have veiled His glory in a tabernacle of flesh, and exchanged the bliss and the greatness of heaven for a life of persecution and penury among earth's lowly habitations—that after deeds and sufferings of unknown magnitude, which required the strength of an infinite and everlasting God to atone for the infinite evil of sin and make satisfaction for the penalties of an outraged law, He should turn Him to the world He had saved, and invite the return of one and all to the blessedness from which they had wandered, it is the world's defiance to such a call that sets the conclusive seal upon its impenitency, leaving uncanceled the guilt of a broken law, and superadding thereto the provocation of a rejected gospel. It is the Godhead of Christ which gives such emphasis to the question of the apostle—"How can they escape?" It is the described glory of the Saviour's person in the first chapter of the Hebrews on which he argues the greatness of the salvation at the commencement of the second chapter, and pronounces the inevitable doom of those who put it away from them. The greatness of the message is linked in his argument with the greatness of the messenger, as if to slight the condescension of so great a Saviour was the worst affront that could be rendered to Heaven's high majesty. In other words, it is the Divinity of Christ which arms the overtures of the gospel with the challenging power that belongs to them on the respect and entertainment of the world. It is this which gives the rejection of them a character of such fearful impiety; and represented though it has been as but a scholastic and speculative dogma, of no account save in the eyes of angry theologians, there is none which, wielded aright in the pulpit, so efficiently tells on the consciences of the plainest of the people. They would be all

alive to a communication of grace and benignity sent them from the king; but tenfold alive to it should the king bring it to their doors. They may do honour to the message when told that God in heaven is the sender of it; they will listen more reverently still, and with feelings of deeper reverence, when told that God manifest in the flesh is the bearer of it.

Amid the heaviness and the haze of this nether world, we have no adequate sense and no adequate sensibility of the guilt of that moral hardihood implied in our adverse or even our indifferent reception of the message thus brought to us. It is unfelt on earth, but deeply felt, we doubt not, and fully appreciated in heaven. In the pure breast of the immortals there, there will be clear perception of the wrong, and a profound and powerful sense of its enormity. They, on the one hand, witness of the King of glory, before whom they cast their crowns in lowly obeisance, that in pity to a fallen world He, by a mystery in jurisprudence, took their sins upon Himself, and bore the desert, the disgrace, and the burden of all their iniquities; and, on the other hand, they witness the thankless unconcern and apathy of the world back again. An offence like this, even against one of their own number, they might have resented as foul ingratitude; but offence as it is against the grace and the condescension of heaven's Sovereign, it speaks such prostrate lethargy of feeling, or such resolute defiance to heaven's calls, as in either way makes salvation hopeless, and would seem to lay an impossibility in the way of that world's restoration on which the personal importunities, nay a personal visit from God himself, have been utterly thrown away. Well may the question in these circumstances be put—"How can they escape?" but you will perceive that it is just the article we have so long been labouring to expound which arms the question with all its point and all its energy. It is the Godhead of Christ which here forms the emphatic argument; or, in other words, instead of a barren dogma, it is either the mightiest engine of persuasion, to force the compliance of human spirits with the gospel, or, if resisted, to furnish the ground of their most overwhelming condemnation.

The Divinity of Christ, when theorized upon beyond the limits of Scripture and of just speculation, becomes, under this treatment, one of the impracticable subtleties of the schoolmen. Yet when received with docility and in faith as the Bible announces it, it forms one of those impressive simplicities of the gospel which bear with greatest effect on the hearts and consciences of the

people. We cannot imagine a more powerful consideration to be urged from the pulpit in behalf of the overtures of reconciliation than that God himself not only framed them, but brought them down in person to the world; and, after all, should the overtures be rejected, we have no adequate expression for the fulness and the force of that resistless justice which will issue forth in the blast of the judgment-seat on the heads of those who spurned this proffered grace away from them. He who is to preside over the solemnities of that awful day will wipe His hands of the blood of those who have brought upon themselves all the wretchedness and the horrors of their undone eternity. He who now goes forth from heaven to judge them, Himself went forth on the errand to seek and to save them. In pity to their lost condition, He bowed down His head to the sacrifice, and with a voice full of humanity, implored them to flee from that coming wrath now to be relentlessly discharged on those who, in the day of their peace, despised the calls and the opportunities of mercy. Here they are beseeched by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—there He will look upon them with an altered countenance. In proportion to the height of that majesty from which He stooped to save them, will be the reaction of His vengeance on those who have put that majesty to scorn. Their first blow was struck at the sceptre of Heaven's authority when they broke the commandment of God their Lawgiver. Their second was struck at the sceptre of Heaven's clemency when they refused the invitation of God their Saviour. Their provocation of God in the law was tenfold aggravated by their provocation of God in the gospel; and when He who Himself did bleed in expiation for their sins, now takes cognizance of the unrepentant sinners, they will be left without a speech and without an argument.

You will now, I trust, understand how this great topic of the Divinity of Christ is not merely a thing of polemic but a thing of pulpit theology, enhancing as it does the efficacy of all the plainest lessons in the gospel. When the terminating object is to prove a doctrine, there is necessarily much of controversy and of recondite argument. But when the object is to ply a doctrine for a practical effect, we know of none that can be wielded with greater power, or that has in it more the force of a touching demonstration. And here, while I am on the use of hortatory weapons or hortatory arguments, let me, though not wholly related to the subject, advert to the use you might make in your sermons of the gospel being an alternative dispensation. Hold

out a free and a full declaration of forgiveness to all; but make them understand that if the declaration is not listened to, or is not cared for, there is a consequent accumulated wrath that will be left on the heads of those who rejected it. Urge in all its welcome and all its universality the message of reconciliation; but give them to know that in very proportion to the grace which prompted it, will be the weight and severity of their condemnation who have put it away from them. There is acceptance, the amplest and the kindest acceptance to all who will, but on that special account a more peremptory and hopeless exclusion to all who will not. The strength and urgency of these considerations, plain as they are, are inconceivably heightened by the dignity of the Saviour, and fearfully will it be found to aggravate the penalties of their coming vengeance, that, in rejecting the proffers of Jesus Christ, they have rejected the proffers of a God. There is not one of those arguments by which we urge the compliance of men with the overtures of Christianity to which the Divinity of Christ does not add indefinite momentum and force. It makes the condescension of His visit infinite. It makes the dignity of the expiation infinite. It exalts into the high rank of infinite the homage done by it to the authority of the law. It enhances, and that to an infinite degree, all the obligations of the sinner to gratitude and trust and obedience. In virtue of this article, the whole staple as it were of Christian doctrine and sentiment becomes of Divine quality—a quality that would be throughout attenuated by the denial of the Godhead of Christ. The whole transaction of man's recovery gathers thence a more august sacredness, at once enshrining in more awful reverence the holiness of the Lawgiver, and affixing a deeper stigma on the infinite turpitude of moral evil. The Godhead that appears in the majesty of the law is met by the Godhead that appears in the mercy of the gospel; and the honours of the Divine authority, outraged as it has been by the defiance of a rebellious world, have been fully upheld by the honour of a Divine atonement.

We often make use of the term *infinite* as a mere vocable, and there is a sort of argumentative jangle on the articles of Christ's Divinity and Atonement that we have no taste for. We allude to those who found upon the one a kind of arithmetical demonstration for the certainty or necessity of the other, talking, for example, of the sin of a finite creature as being nevertheless infinite, because committed against an infinite God, and that an

infinite sin called for an infinite sacrifice, such a sacrifice in short as angels could not render, and so called for the interposition of a Divine Saviour. It is thus that proceeding from the one truth they would, as if by algebraic evolution, bring out the other, when they might have satisfaction on both at first hand, by an immediate derivation of both from the statements of the Bible. There may, for aught we can tell, be deep-laid necessities unknown to us, and in virtue of which there could have been no atonement without the sacrifice by death of the incarnate God. But this is a subject on which we would repress every anterior imagination of our own. We should rather abstain from pronouncing beforehand on the connexion between those articles of our faith, yet now that both are revealed, we cannot be insensible to the lustre and effect which the one sheds upon the other, and how it deepens on the heart of a believer the whole moral impress of the doctrine of the atonement, when he knows of that atonement having been rendered by a Divine personage.

To understand how this should be, let me ask you to imagine the effect, if told of any limitation on the power or wisdom or goodness or other perfections of the Deity. We believe that it would shake, and shake fundamentally, the whole system of your religious sentiments and feelings. It is our impression that if the thought of any confinement or deficiency in the Divine attributes were admitted, it would destroy that which enters essentially into our idea of a God;—not that we can comprehend infinity, or thus to speak, can go round and round it, so as to enclose it within the capacity of our imagination. This we may not, this we cannot overtake, yet still infinity be an indispensable constituent in our notion of the Supreme Being. We cannot reach the conception of infinity, yet we attach that conception to God by the very sense on our spirits that He is unsearchable. We must have room as it were in our meditations of God for endless and indefinite outgoings. Were we arrested by the information of a boundary beyond which the power or presence of God did not extend, we should feel revolted by the sense of a painful incompatibility. Our very notions of the eternal and infinite and uncreated mind would seem to be subverted by it. To lay a check on the immensity of the Divine Being, for example, or sets bounds to His knowledge, or be able to conceive either a wisdom more profound or a holiness more spotless, or a goodness more sincere and exuberant than His, were painfully oppressive to every notion we have formed of the all-perfect and

illimitable God. We cannot imagine otherwise of God than that He is co-extensive with space and co-eternal with duration ; and as little can we imagine otherwise of Him than as a being of immeasurable greatness in all the attributes, whether of natural power or of moral excellence, that belong to Him. In short, we should feel it to be as unnatural violence, the setting of bounds to any of His attributes, as the setting of bounds to the immensity that is filled by Him. He is absolutely without limits. To Him the question of degrees is inapplicable. He is circumscribed by no boundaries—all powerful, all wise, all holy ; having in His nature the fulness of every perfection, an infinite goodness, an infinite glory.

Now the doctrine of a Divine atonement harmonizes with this the natural infinity of His character and of His ways, with the infinite dignity of His law, the infinite recoil of His righteous and holy nature from moral evil. I should feel as if a breach had been made on my conceptions of God's perfect sanctity and truth, did I believe that a sin against the Creator could be expiated by the sufferings of a creature. I should be visited by a certain sense of descent and of degradation in the system of the Divine government, could I think that an outrage upon His authority by any being whom He had made, were commensurately atoned for by any possible reparation on the part of any other being whom He had made. By the Divinity of Christ I feel as if an unbroken sacredness were upheld throughout the whole extent both of the natural and the Christian theology. When I look at the outrage of the violated law, and think of its precepts consecrated by the Divine authority, I can see no adequate reparation anywhere, save when I look at the gospel of Jesus Christ, and think of its pardon consecrated by a Divine atonement. It seems the only expedient within the compass of natural or revealed truth by which the transgressors of the law can be taken into acceptance, while the law itself is magnified and made honourable ; or by which sinners can be admitted into the presence of God's unspotted sanctuary, and yet sin be stigmatized as exceeding sinful.

On the whole, you may rest assured that without a sense of the Divinity of Christ on the part of the people, every lesson you can deliver, whether of confidence in the efficacy of His atonement, or of gratitude for His services, will be immeasurably extenuated. By detaching the sentiment of Christ's Divinity, you would take all the force and the spirit out of them. This doc-

trine strengthens and impregnates the whole of practical Christianity; and whether it be the trust or the gratitude or the obedience of the gospel that you are urging, they can only be urged with effect along with the belief that Jesus Christ, the author and the finisher of the gospel, is God.

LECTURE III.

ON THE UNION OF THE DIVINE AND HUMAN NATURE IN CHRIST.

WITHOUT attempting any impracticable subtleties upon this question, there is much of patent and most impressive instruction to be gathered from the fact as it simply stands recorded of the incarnation of our Saviour. It is a question on which, in the hands of our scholastics, there is to be met with much of the recondite, and, I may add also, much of the revolting. Under their management the subject has fallen into discredit, being regarded as a barren article, of a dry and barren formulary. It has not been presented as a topic of vivid and affecting interest, or as one that might be made to stand forth in a beauteous and engaging aspect to the notice of the contemplative. When announced as part of the creed of the orthodox, it awakens no sensibility, and the statement of it as a proposition is felt to be in every way as hard and repulsive as the statement of an equation in algebra. It is viewed but as a cold and withering abstraction, which calls forth no response from the sentimental part of our nature; and in point of character and effect, we can imagine no two things to stand so widely asunder as do this position when set forth as the dictum of an intolerant theology, and this same position when seen in certain other lights and revelations which such a theology would disdain to look upon.

The first palpable effect then of Christ's incarnation is, that it has afforded to the world a vivid representation of the Godhead. It has thrown, if I may so express it, an archway of communication over that dark, that mysterious interval, which separates the realms of sense and of spirit from each other. It has brought the character of the Divinity within the observation and ken of the human senses, and it forms indeed a mighty revelation when God, before essentially invisible, thus effloresces upon our view in the form, and the features, and the aspect, and very lineaments

of a man. The doctrine of the Saviour's incarnation has been termed by Mr. Hall that mystic ladder which conducts man to the abode of the Eternal. Placed as we are in the midst of a carnal system, and holding converse with all that is external and apart from ourselves, by no other organs than the eye and the ear, the abstract, the immaterial God, though not far from any one of us, stood at the distance of infinity from mortal vision. What a marvellous approximation to the infirmities of our state, that this distance has been overcome! The characteristics of the unseen God, before shrouded in concealment unfathomable, now stand forth in picture to the world, seen in visible expression on the human countenance, heard in the accents of the human voice, exemplified in the doings of the human history. In the person of God manifest in the flesh—of Him who, we are taught to believe, is the Deity embodied, we obtain, not by verbal statement but by sensible exhibition, the discovery of God; for He, we are told, is the very brightness of His Father's glory, the express image of His person. It is this sight of the Deity, when thus shrined as it were in the framework of materialism, that gives to the doctrine of Christ's incarnation its surpassing interest, and enables me, when trying to form or to consolidate my apprehensions of God, to substitute in place of the shadowy metaphysical abstractions of schoolmen, the light and the lustre of an ocular demonstration.

But this appearance of the Godhead in human form has done more than dissipate a metaphysical obscurity, it has given manifestation and distinctness to the moral characteristics of the Deity. When we think of a Being so transcendently above us, and of whom we read that His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts, we might have feared that in virtue of this infinite distance, there was also an infinite dissimilarity, and so that all the analogies between God and man were interrupted. We might have felt as if justice in God was something different from justice in man, or kindness in God something different from kindness in man, or as if such was the total disparity of the Divine and the human nature that the moral perfection of the Deity was something as unlike in kind as it is in degree to the moral perfection of one of our own species. There is certainly much countenance given to this imagination in the representations and the statements of our academic theism, where the Deity is set forth as a sort of cold and desolate abstraction, with a nature wholly impassive, His love being without sen-

sibility, His hatred of moral evil being without emotion, and so reduced, as it were, to an immense physical energy, He is left with nought that we can distinctly apprehend but the naked attributes of intelligence and power. Not so when the character of the Godhead burst upon the observation of the world in the face of Jesus Christ, when it thus came forth into living and distinct personality; and it is now made palpable to all that the virtues of the Divinity are specifically and in kind the virtues of the perfect man. By having assumed the brotherhood of our nature, He hath made us to feel our affinity, our kindredness with God. The incarnation of the Saviour hath done more for this than all the descriptions or demonstrations of academic theism. We can now make a study of the Godhead. He who hath seen the Son hath seen the Father; and we now behold in graphic outline and detail, the graces and the glories by which that perfect Exemplar of all morality and all sacredness was irradiated. There is no mistaking the predominant, the perpetual aim of that personage who went about doing good continually—who, in the spirit of untired and exuberant kindness, expiated over the face of the land on which, from the first moment of His alighting, He had met with nothing but hardship and ingratitude. We read the compassion of the Godhead in the tears which fell at the tomb of Lazarus. We see a still more picturesque exhibition of it in the Saviour's weeping over the city of Jerusalem, when saddened and overwhelmed at the thought of its approaching desolation; and in the tremendous certainty and greatness of that desolation we have further insight into the character of the Deity. We there see that even the strength of His infinite compassion did not do away with the dispensation of His vindictive justice on those who had persisted in rejecting its calls till the day of their peace was over. And we know not a more impressive manifestation of the Godhead, than is blended in this one exhibition of the Saviour, when, like a tender parent, He wept over the approaching fatality, which yet, as a righteous and inflexible Governor, He could not or would not recall. It tells us the dread certainty of coming wrath; but it also tells us in this our accepted time, the kindness and honesty of the present invitations. We can no longer misunderstand the character of the unseen God, when thus visibly portrayed in one of our own species. What we read of the meekness and gentleness of the Son, we transfer to the Father; and all the passages of tenderness and beauty in the

history of His life, strengthen our felt affinity and felt confidence towards God. Altogether, the effect of the representation is to soften or do away the terror and the mystery of Heaven's throne. The fellow-feelings of the humanity but represent or picture forth the tender regards of the Godhead towards us. We look at the aspect of Christ the Mediator, and we thence take the assurance that God is still bending in compassion over us—that God is still waiting to be gracious.

We fear that this great use of the incarnation of Christ is not sufficiently attended to. By this great approximation to the perceptions and faculties of our nature, we are brought, as it were, within sight of the Deity. On the tablet of humanity we may read the lineaments of the Godhead, and certainly in no way have we been so impressively told that the greatest of all beings is also the kindest and the gentlest and the best.

But there is another, I had almost said a greater, use of the incarnation. It not only affords the nearest and most impressive demonstration of what God's character is, it also gives the nearest and most effectual demonstration of what our character ought to be. In the teaching of Jesus Christ we see morality in precept; but in the person and history of Jesus Christ we see it in picture. If the use we have already spoken to of the incarnation make it profitable for doctrine, the use we are now speaking to makes it eminently profitable for instruction in righteousness. The discovery made of what virtue is in God is an inestimable benefit, and only equalled by the display which it hath made of what virtue should be in ourselves. The example of morality is in some respects as much better than a commandment or a code, as a model is better than a description;—at all events, it gives a clear representation, and makes far more palpable to us than language possibly can the finer graces and delicacies of human conduct. The one stands in somewhat the same relation to the other that the concrete does to the abstract. The one presents us with virtue described, the other with virtue embodied; or, the former with the sayings that we have to keep, the latter with the doings that we have to copy. Our imitation of the Saviour, our conformity to the image of Christ, our walking as He walked, it is in looking to the incarnation that we practise these; and this doctrine, so far from a jejune and merely scholastic article, frowning intolerantly upon us from the pages of a Confession, is rich in all the details of practice, and expands into an infinity of most beautiful applications to the whole life and character of

man. And then, this descent of the Godhead amongst the familiarities of human converse, how it dignifies the whole state of humanity, how it impregnates with sacredness even the minutest proprieties of behaviour, how it stamps a character of religiousness on all the duties and all the occasions of our history. Jesus Christ, by the assumption of our nature, hath brought down heaven to earth, and did so that He might bring up earth to heaven. He hath animated the terrestrial moralities of our terrestrial condition with the breath and spirit of the upper sanctuary, and hath thereby shown that our condition, humble as it is, admits an impress upon it of a celestial character, and so of being elevated to celestial glory. When I see in the person of Jesus Christ how the everyday virtues and commonest occasions of life were throughout impregnated with the very spirit of the Divinity, I think I can better understand, when told to resemble Him, what it is to be filled with the whole fulness of God. And here let me instance with what admirable effect this doctrine may be brought to bear on the great and mischievous popular delusion, of which you will have more experience when you come to be personally engaged with the work of the pulpit and the work of parishes. You will then find an obstinate and deep-rooted prejudice against the full exposition of certain virtues by the minister, and the equally full exposure of certain vices. There is toleration for a sermon on the duties of the Sabbath, but there is no such toleration for a sermon on any of the weekday duties. The truth is, that with these latter there stands associated the feeling or the imagination of a certain taint of earthliness. The business of the pulpit is held to be secularized by any allusions to the business of common life, though introduced for no other purpose than the Christian regulation of it. A minister has more or less to notice this prejudice in expounding the duties of the second table, which, though delivered by the same Lawgiver and enforced by the same sanctions, are held as of inferior sacredness to the duties of the first table. Although the lessons he delivered should be substantially the same with those which Scripture has given, yet if they relate, for example, to the gains of unlawful merchandise, to the neglect and idleness of unfaithful workmen, to the low duplicities or frauds currently practised, it may be, in violation of common honesty, he comes in collision with a certain sense of dissociation on the part of his hearers, or perhaps of the ridiculous, grounded on the felt incongruity of such topics with the character of a place and of a day

consecrated to themes not of week-day but of heavenly contemplation. This dissociation in the minds of the people, of common life from Christianity, is a sore evil, nor can a more effectual argument be brought into the rebuke and the resistance of it than our Saviour's incarnation. He seasoned with the heavenly all the footsteps of His life on earth, and in these steps we are required to walk. There is not an occasion in the history of man which does not admit of highest sacredness, as there is none in which the question may not be put—In what way would the incarnate Saviour have met the exigencies by which now I am surrounded? This consideration ennobles all and sanctifies all. The minister surely may well descend to preach that which the Saviour descended to exemplify; nor should man disdain to be told, in all fidelity and minuteness, of that which sat as a grace or a propriety on the character of the incarnate God.

But this doctrine may not only be employed as a corrective to this popular delusion, there is also a certain philosophical delusion which it is alike fitted to rectify. A prevalent imagination among academic, and, I suspect too, among Christian theologians, is, that in matter there is something radically and essentially evil; that the spirit is confined and crippled in all its energies in virtue of the material presence which encloses it; that by being implicated with the carnal system there is a weight and incumbrance laid upon its faculties, and that when it escapes thence by death, then, and only then, it will expatiate in the freedom and the buoyancy of its emancipated powers. There is much, we hold, in the doctrine of our Saviour's incarnation that is fitted to qualify those imaginations. There was, in the first instance, a sublime homage done to materialism by the Godhead consenting to hold occupancy in a tabernacle of flesh; and then, when we think of the identical body that suffered on the cross being borne up by the Saviour to heaven, it suggests the probability that this arraigned and vilified matter may somehow consist with the economy and constitution of the immortal state of existence. The probability, in our estimation, rises into certainty when we advert to the resurrection of the body, and to the description given of that future economy which is to supersede the present one—even the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. It is sin, and sin alone, which has tainted and vitiated matter; and we hold that if this deadly virus were abstracted, this would restore to it all

its worth and all its loveliness, as in its first and beauteous evolution, when, expanded into a goodly creation, the morning stars sang together for joy, and God himself rejoiced over it, because He saw it to be all very good. We are not, I trust, giving way to a spirit of adventurous speculation, but only confronting, by the palpable revelations of the gospel, the withering representations of our academic theism, in whose heaven of disembodied spirits, where cold and meagre and evanescent spectres dwell in some unknown and incomprehensible mode of existence, there is not one object on which the human hopes or the human sympathies can fasten. They have stripped heaven of all its sensible attractions, and by a device of figurative interpretation, wherewith to nullify the obvious meanings of the New Testament, they have contended that there is no music there, no sights and sounds of beauty there, no human face divine, or joys of human companionship maintained by the interchange of looks and audible voices, and held in material dwelling-places. We argue not for the bowers of a Mahometan paradise, for the heaven of Christians is an abode of unspotted holiness; but we do argue for the kindly sympathies, and the personal recognitions, and all those charities of home and of friendship, by the prospect of which the apostle thought it not unworthy to comfort the heart of his disciples. In the languor of man's faith, we cannot afford a less vivid or impressive representation of a future immortality than is actually given of it in the New Testament; and metaphysicians or theists of any sort have no right to desolate our heaven of its attractions, or to set it forth in terms less warm and endearing than is actually done in the book of God's revelation.

The subject which now engages us is not really so useless, so inapplicable a speculation, as many may apprehend it. It is a very great matter to understand that the change from earth to heaven is not so transcendental, so mysterious a change, as, I am sure, the generality of Christians conceive, who imagine the difference to be as wide and distant as the difference between matter and spirit, between one mode of existence familiarly known to us and another mode utterly beyond our experience, and therefore wholly incomprehensible. I hold it of practical importance that it should be understood how the dissimilarity between earth and heaven is just as great and as small as the dissimilarity between sin and righteousness; or, in other words, if moral evil were wholly discharged from the present constitution

tion of things, and perfect virtue substituted in its place, on this single difference, without discarding materialism at all, there turns the difference between earth and heaven. Conceive all the men who are now on the face of our world to be renovated into a state of absolute purity and piety and kindness, and then let the elixir of immortality be poured into their condition, this alone, without any upward movement from the ground we tread upon to the eternal regions above us, this alone were a mighty approximation to the actual heaven of the New Testament. And so the obvious conclusion is, that to prepare for such a heaven, the great change to be aspired after is a change upon the character. It tells us that we commence our heaven here by entering on the cultivation of heaven's virtues; and that instead of being only admitted into its blessedness after death, we may admit it now into our hearts and into our homes.

There is one connexion or application of the doctrine of the very highest character in point of importance and effect, which we have not adverted to. It is affirmed in Scripture of the incarnation, that it was an essential step to the atonement. This we have on purpose omitted, partly because we wish to confine ourselves to those views which, however legitimate, have been seldom entertained or thought of, and partly because this subserviency of the human nature of Christ to the expiation upon the cross, is a frequent topic of the scholastic or controversial theology; and so, as if by a look from the head of Medusa, has been stiffened thereby into the hardness and frigidity of stone. We wanted to keep ourselves through the whole of our exposition on ground that had not been entered upon by this withering influence; and we trust that from the specimens given, however feebly or imperfectly exhibited, you may at least be led to imagine how possible it is that there may be tracts in divinity over which the questions of polemic intolerance has spread an arid and a repulsive aspect, but which, nevertheless, are capable of being enlivened into richness and sentiment and beauty. You will here be reminded of an affirmation in your text-book, that the many fierce and frivolous questions which have been agitated on this subject have overshadowed the real worth and interest of the doctrine—have spread, if I may so express myself, a thick umbrageous covering over it; not such a covering as to have embowered it in myrtle, but as to have beset it with loathsome weeds and lacerating thorns. We hope that theology may at length emerge in native dignity and grace out of the accumu-

lated rubbish of many generations, and, invested in all the honours which properly and originally belong to her, be again throned in her rightful supremacy as queen of the sciences.

LECTURE IV.

ON THE DOCTRINE OF THE SPIRIT.

THERE are two aspects wholly distinct from each other in which this doctrine may be regarded. The first respects the place which it holds in the physical constitution of the Deity; the second respects the offices and the relation of the Spirit to ourselves. We mean at present to make no express announcement of the personality or even the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, and far less to affirm His mode of derivation from the Father and the Son, or to assign His order in the Trinity. These latter topics belong all to the *physique* of the question. I would at present restrict myself exclusively to the *morale* of the question—the moral relation in which the Holy Spirit stands to us, and the moral obligations or regards that we owe to Him back again. It is not that I hold the proposition to be of no moment that the Spirit is God, for when taken up instanter, as it generally is by every plain and honest reader of the Bible, it will be found to enhance, and that to an indefinite degree, every moral lesson which stands at all associated with the subject. It is during the critical and laborious establishment of the truth that its moral influence is so utterly unfelt; or in other words, however expedient or even indispensable for the silencing of gainsayers the argumentation may be, it, under this treatment, is of no proper efficacy in the pulpit; and I want to exhibit what the other treatment is which it should receive at your hands, that your people may be religiously the better of it.

But let me here premise that the Spirit acts upon the mind mediately, and not immediately. He acts by the Word, and in His whole operation on the heart and understanding of men there may be no contravention to the laws of our known philosophy. You will perhaps recollect our doctrine on the consistency between the efficacy of prayer and the stability of visible nature.*

* See Select Works, vol. iii. p. 617; vol. v. p. 432.

Now this may be exemplified in the fulfilment of prayer for the Spirit of God, as well as of prayer for the recovery of health, or protection from danger, or any other blessing which the Almighty ever bestows in answer to the requests of His children. The responsive touch may be given far behind the curtain of our farthest possible observation—far behind all that ever could or ever can be discovered of the metaphysical processes of the human spirit; so that, without violation to a single law or sequence of the mental philosophy, might the Spirit be blowing where He listeth, and making His distinct conquests of regeneration by the ascendancy which belongs to Him over the consciences and the understandings of men. We believe that this can be done not in opposition to secondary causes, but by means of them; and could it be shown how effectually it may be done without derangement to any of the ordinary processes in the mechanism of man's moral and intellectual constitution, it might soften, perhaps subdue, the antipathy felt by men of science towards the doctrine of this Divine and supernatural agency. And if there be repugnance felt to the agency of the great and the good Spirit on the mind of man, there is a still more implacable repugnance to the agency of evil spirits, and to the whole doctrine of temptations on the part of a subtle and malignant adversary. Now we have sometimes thought it might appease this repugnance to have it understood, that as the Spirit of God does not act but by the intervention of the word, so the spirit which worketh in the children of disobedience does not act but by the intervention of the world; that whether under the one or the other influence, we never come into the direct or personal converse with either of these unseen agents, but that each acts behind an intermedium as it were, whose operation upon us is in perfect accordancy with all that is known respecting the processes of the human spirit, or the pathology of man's sentient nature. It is thus that we may be even as Scripture represents us, the real subjects of a contest between the powers of light and of darkness, and yet with the powers themselves we may never once come into sensible or immediate contact—but only in the first case with the Word, which the one plies, but without contravening the established processes of human thought; and only in the second case with the world, which the other plies, but without contravening the established processes of human appetite or human affection. The one wields His element, the Bible, it being termed in Scripture "the sword of the Spirit;" the other

wields his element, the world, it being termed in Scripture "the kingdom of Satan," or which is the same thing, he being there termed the god of this world. With neither the one nor the other of these invisible agents may we come into sensible contact, we being sensible of nothing but the elements which they employ—with the general suasions of the Bible, or the corrupt seductions of the world. Nevertheless the destiny of our species may indeed be suspended on an actual conflict, a strenuous competition between the Spirit that worketh in the children of light, and the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience; and we, though insensible to the power or the presence of either, and conscious of nothing but the natural influence of the word, or the natural influence of the world, may yet be the subjects of an unseen warfare betwixt unseen potentates, each striving, thus to speak, in a war of ambition for the moral ascendancy over us.

Thus far, then, the revelation of the Spirit is far from being effete in respect of practical efficacy. Without one thought of the relation which it bears to the physical constitution of the Deity, here is one obvious use to which all that is plain in the revelation of the Spirit may be turned. He is made known to us as the great agent both of light to the understanding and of moral impression upon the heart, though it be through the lessons and informations of the Bible, and these alone, that His influence is exerted. There is not an unlettered peasant who can misunderstand the application of such a truth, which is, that to his instant perusal of the Scriptures he should add instant prayer for that Spirit who gives them all their weight and all their efficacy. We believe that on this simple habit has turned the illumination and the consequent blissful eternity of thousands who never once attempted any adjustment in their minds on the complex and comprehensive proportion of the Trinity, and were utter strangers to all the controversies it has raised. The simple proposition, that the Spirit is God, they could scarcely miss, shining as it does in its own obviousness from the pages of Scripture on every honest and direct understanding. It is your part to be acquainted with the polemics of every doctrine in theology; but it is indispensable to your usefulness as ministers that you know how to separate that which is polemical from that which is practical. There is often discovered the utmost want of tact and of judiciousness when the scholastic is introduced into the pulpit instead of the scriptural. The business of a polemic, to which you may never once be called, is wholly dif-

ferent from the business of a pastor, to which you are called weekly, when, without one term or one argument of controversy, you might make textual and forcible exposition of the truth that the Holy Spirit is the effectual teacher and sanctifier of men, and that the Holy Spirit is given to them who ask it.

But there is another revelation concerning the Spirit, of very great account in the matters of practical Christianity,—we mean the personal regards that we owe to Him; and when the Scripture tells us of these, it is difficult to avoid the notion of His own distinct personality. We are there bidden to resist not the Spirit, to grieve not the Spirit, to provoke Him not lest He should be led to abandon us, as on that occasion when God said —“My Spirit shall not always strive with the children of men.” There is a process or economy made known to us in Scripture, of which I cannot help thinking that a vast deal more might be made, both in argument from the pulpit and in effect on the consciences of men. It may be termed the ordinary method of procedure by which the Spirit deals with those upon whom He operates. He is represented as being personally moved or affected by their entertainment of Him, just as a human teacher is, either by the docility on the one hand, or on the other by the intractableness of his pupil. We feel that if this particular view were more realized and more acted on, it would have a mighty operation in spiriting on the business of one’s moral and religious cultivation. If even the faintest and feeblest intimations from this heavenly Agent were but respectfully attended to and faithfully proceeded on, this would be followed up by the light of larger and clearer intimations, agreeably to the saying, That to him who hath, more shall be given. If the duties which He now impresses on the conscience were all diligently turned into conduct, there would on the back of this be an increasing manifestation agreeably to that other saying, That the Holy Ghost is given to them who obey Him. Remember all the while that you are not sensible of any direct converse with Himself, all the light that He gives being given through the word, wherewith alone you have immediately to do; and all the monitions to which He gives utterance being whispered through the organ of conscience, that ear of the inner man—so that in obeying Him, you are just obeying the voice of conscience, or, as Dr. Smith, in his Theory of Moral Sentiments, calls it, of the Judge within the breast. A growing moral sensibility, a growing moral clearness, a growing strength of principle and purpose—all of which

are so many palpable phenomena in the mind of him who hath embarked with all holy determination on the course of virtue, these may seem but the result of laws wherewith the feelings and faculties of our nature alone have to do. But we are taught by revelation to believe in an invisible agent, who, through the medium of these feelings and faculties, follows up our former acts of obedience by that richest of all rewards, the moral reward of a more abundant strength, and a more abundant manifestation for future and larger acts of obedience; and so causes the path of the just to be like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

We may here observe how completely, under this view, the faith and morality of the gospel are intermingled with each other, so that they grow with each other's growth, and strengthen with each other's strength. The Spirit is both the revealer of truth to the mind, though it be only the doctrine and information of the Bible, and the bestower of the disposition and the power of obedience, though it be obedience only to the lessons of the Bible. But if we resist one influence, He, in withdrawing Himself, may withdraw all His other influences; if we shut our heart against His sanctifying power, He may withhold from us His illuminating power; and conversely, in proportion to the fidelity of our obedience and the duteousness of our conformities to what He tells us we ought to do, may He shed the manifestation of a clearer and more convincing evidence on what He tells us we ought to believe. It is thus that there is established, by the intervention of the Spirit, a connexion between obedience and discernment on the one hand, between sin and spiritual darkness on the other. Therefore it is, that when people complain of desertion, or melancholy, or spiritual blindness, I would set them to their duties; and therefore also it is, that at the very outset of a man's inquiries, I would bid him be diligent in doing all which conscience told him to be right, in avoiding all which conscience told him to be wrong. You will here be reminded of those passages where a reciprocal influence is affirmed between the mind and the heart, God judicially giving up to evil affections those who liked not to retain Him in their knowledge, and on the other hand, promising the manifestations of light and truth to those who keep His sayings. If any man is willing to do God's will, he shall know of Christ's doctrine whether it be of God:—"And to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God." "Is not this the fast that I

have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning; the glory of the Lord shall be thy rearward." We hold these testimonies to be exceeding precious. They moralize the whole of Christianity. They completely do away the fancied discrepancy between faith and works. Instead of a discrepancy, they establish a firm dependence between them; and in this intervention of the Holy Spirit, as we have now explained it, we perceive what the causal principle of this dependence is. We now understand how, if the faith animate to the performance of works, the works cast a reflex brightness, and give a firmer stability to the faith. Instead of faith discharging you from works, you, on this principle, have to work for your faith, or, at least, be assured that the iniquities of your conduct will unsettle the articles of your creed, and darken the whole field of your religious contemplations. We believe that there is a natural reaction between the moral and the intellectual, which may in part explain this. But in harmony therewith is the effect of the Spirit's operation. If you refuse to obey Him, He will refuse to enlighten you; and this provides another security for the indissoluble alliance between a right faith and a right obedience.

But it is in the process of man's moral and religious degeneracy that the doctrine of the Spirit acquires a mighty, I had almost said, a tremendous, importance. There are not more familiar facts and phenomena in our nature than the hardening of conscience, the decay of its moral light and moral sensibility, the tyranny of evil habits when fostered by indulgence, the growth of irreligion in the soul, and at length, its immovable unconcern, or even resolute defiance, either to the terrors of the law or the invitations of mercy. Now we dispute not that all these results are in strict accordance with the principles and the processes of the mental philosophy; yet this hinders not my belief in their being also the results of an influence that directs these processes, and gives the touch of an effective and overruling control at a higher place than the highest principles of this philosophy, or the first and farthest at all discoverable by human observation. In other words, I behold the agency of the Spirit, or rather, the withdrawal of His agency, in every step

of this melancholy declension. I can read in this progression to hopeless and irrecoverable apathy an experimental interpretation of such phrases as the Spirit being resisted, being grieved, being quenched, ceasing to strive, and at last abandoning to his own infatuation, and for ever, the man who has turned a deaf ear to his admonitions and his warnings. It is an argument of immense practical efficacy in the pulpit, and more especially when connected with the doctrine that the resistance of conscience is the resistance of Him who sends His impressive whispers to the heart through this organ of our moral economy—that the stifling of every good impression on the side of truth and seriousness is stifling the voice of the living and personal agent who prompted it. We cannot imagine a more impressive consideration wherewith to back the urgency of a sermon, and from the vantage-ground of any good feeling or good purpose that may have been awakened, to bring it upon the consciences of the people, that if they suffer these to go into dissipation, they do personal offence to one who is knocking at the door of their hearts, and may recede to a greater distance from their heedless or their contemptuous rejection of Him. In particular, the whole illusion of some future, perhaps some deathbed repentance, is completely broken up by the representation that we are now giving. They may be told, and with fearful emphasis, that by every week of delay they are speeding onward their moral and spiritual deterioration, and strengthening the barrier in the way of their recovery therefrom, till this recovery may at length become desperate, may actually amount to a moral impossibility. Their resistance of the Spirit may, even long before death, have been carried to the point of His final and everlasting separation. They may have provoked Him to the determination of letting them alone since they will have it so; and whatever the terrors of nature may extort in that dread hour of solemnity and alarm, He may refuse to mingle His alone effective influence with the fears and the agonies of their deathbed.

“Turn you at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. But because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me” (Prov. i. 23-28).

You may remember the use I made of a principle in natural theology, and by which I hold it to be demonstrable that all men, under every degree of religious or moral light, are the fit subjects for a judicial cognizance and reckoning at the bar of a righteous and almighty Governor. That principle was the obligation laid upon us by the faintest imagination of a God.* We arrive at the same conclusion from the argument which now engages us. It will be found in the great day of account that God is clear of the blood of all the families upon earth.†

And here we may advert to one of the testimonies which have been quoted in support of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit—that blasphemy against the Son of God may be forgiven, but that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost can never be forgiven. In all our discussions of the different questions in theology, we have ever rejoiced when, instead of a merely intellectual dogma, a topic, perhaps, of learned controversy, we could perceive any opening whatever by which it might be turned to an object of plain and practical application. This we have abundantly evinced in our treatment of the doctrine of predestination, and in our treatment of the incarnation of Christ; and now that the unpardonable sin has been adverted to, (in argument for the Divinity of the Holy Spirit,) we confess that far more important to us than its subserviency to this demonstration, and far more important to us than the gratification of any speculative curiosity in regard to the precise nature of this mysterious offence, do we hold that solution of the parable, which, while, in our estimation, it fully resolves the question, serves, over and above, the great purpose of an urgent and a moral influence on the consciences of men. Now this, we think, is gained by the theory that many years ago we ourselves proposed on this much-controverted topic—a theory in perfect accordance with all that we have now advanced, even that the sin against the Holy Ghost, instead of some great specific transgression which so many have tried to fix and ascertain, is just that continued resistance to the general calls of the gospel which at length determines Him to a final and everlasting abandonment of the man whom He has so long plied, but in vain, with His admonitions and His warnings.‡

Whether this shall be sustained as a valid explanation of the specific question or not, certain it is that there is much both of

* See Select Works, vol. v. p. 26.

† See Sermon on Gen. vi. 3, Select Works, vol. iv. p. 625.

‡ See Select Works, vol. iv. p. 606.

true and important principle involved in the explanation, and from which, I hope, it is evident that the scriptural doctrine of the Spirit can be made to subserve a most powerful and practical application to the consciences of men. Yet we have said nothing, you will observe, all the while, of the hypostatical place that He occupies in the system of the Godhead. We have even made no dogmatic or formal assertion of His Divinity, though ready, most abundantly, to admit that this enhances to an indefinite degree the influential weight of every lesson wherewith His name is at all associated. But I should like you to understand the moral richness and power even of those doctrines in Scripture which have given rise to so many tasteless and fatiguing controversies, and how well it is that you avoid these in the pulpit. Even in the Chair we are glad to make our escape from them, and to enjoy a breathing time from that logomachy, which though it relate to truths that, seen in the light of Scripture, have in them a greatness and an efficacy that their very mysteriousness perhaps serves more to enhance than to diminish, yet coming out as they have done from among the thickest of the Church's controversies, they, on that account, have gathered a certain repulsive obscurity, and that aggravated tenfold by their exposure for a long, dark, dreary millennium to all the crudities and barbarism of the Middle Ages.

LECTURE V.

ON THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MODE IN WHICH THEOLOGY SHOULD BE LEARNED AT THE HALL, AND THE MODE IN WHICH IT SHOULD BE TAUGHT FROM THE PULPIT.

ONE prime object of your studies here is to fix and ascertain what the doctrines of Christianity really are. For this purpose you have to take a comprehensive survey of the words of revelation—you have to compare Scripture with Scripture—you have to penetrate the meaning of obscure or doubtful texts—you have to reconcile apparent contrarieties, and from a crowd of kindred and consistent testimonies on any given topic, you have to elicit some general proposition as one of the articles of our faith. Perhaps ere the conclusion was fully made out, a long and laborious proof had to be gone through; and as the final

result of the process, you at length came to a thorough and well-grounded belief that the doctrine in question has the sure and authentic seal of Heaven's divine authority set upon it.

Now, though this be the way in which you have received your argumentative conviction of some certain truth in theology, it follows not that this is the very way in which you should deal it forth again among the people. The very utterance of your text will generally be enough for gaining their assent to the doctrine which it enunciates, or, at most, the concurrence of a few decisive testimonies from other parts of Scripture, will abundantly suffice in the way of argument. This is not because I look upon the people as less of reasonable beings than ourselves, and that therefore less of reasoning should serve them. But I would curtail the formal proof of a doctrine, that room might be left for an object ulterior to that, and in which the mere verifying of the proof terminates. The ultimatum of a proof is conviction, the end of what I have already called the first process. But beyond this there is a second process to stimulate and set forward, which should be the main object of every sermon. Now the danger of lengthening out the first process, is, that it may leave less than enough of room for the second process. And really there is no practical necessity for lengthening out the formal proof of a doctrine in the pulpit, in the same way that it is in the class-room; because, generally speaking, in the obviousness of the many Scripture testimonies, and the manifestation of the truth itself to the conscience, the people are abundantly possessed with what may be called the effective proof of it. It really is not half, it is not a tenth part the business of a sermon to establish any proposition in Christianity as a mere dogma, and leave it thus. Only imagine this done with the doctrine of the universal judgment, and that the preacher gave over, as if acquitted of his task, after that, by arguments from Scripture and arguments from reason, he had fully made out and settled it as the article of a creed. It would have been far better, we say, if instead of proving the doctrine at all, he had from the outset of his address proceeded upon the doctrine, or, at most, if he had taken up the length of the introduction on the statement of the truth with a few decisive testimonies in its favour, and then given the great bulk both of his strength and of his space, not to the establishment, but to the enforcement of the truth. It is an appalling doctrine, and fitted in the pulpit to be an effective weapon for the pulling down of strongholds. But what we say

is, that instead of first fabricating the weapon before the eyes of his people, or showing the process of its fabrication, he should proceed immediately to use it. Instead of a doctrine to be proved argumentatively, he should regard it as a doctrine to be instantly taken up and wielded executively. Knowing the terrors of the law, he should therewith persuade men. The awfulness of that coming day—the speed and certainty of its arrival—its searching examinations into the recesses of every heart, and the now unknown deeds of every history—its fearful exposures in the presence of an assembled world, calling down the awful sentence and the everlasting contempt which are to follow—these with powerful and urgent and awakening appeals to the consciences of your hearers, accompanied by entreaties to flee from the coming wrath, and the denunciations of a heavier doom on those who reject the offers of the gospel, should form the burden of every sermon on this article of our faith—not a formal demonstration of its truth like that given by a professor in his class-room, but a persuasion founded upon its truth, and by which the minister plies the hearts of his people with the calls and the considerations of practical earnestness. The proof of the doctrine being that which is chiefly exhibited in the one—the practical uses of the doctrine being that which is chiefly expounded and enforced in the other.

We say, that even in reference to the plainest and most unquestioned doctrines of religion, there is to be observed a difference of treatment between the congregation and the class-room; but there is a still wider difference to be observed when, from the generally admitted truths of the simply and purely didactic, you pass to the much agitated truths of the controversial theology. For the mere conviction of a general audience, either a lengthened formal proof or an elaborate vindication may be as little called for in a controverted doctrine as in those that are uncontroverted, there being often the same obviousness of Scripture testimony for the latter as for the former, and often the same or a superiorly vivid manifestation of the truth of them to the conscience. The Atonement is such a doctrine. The Divinity of our Saviour is another. Both these have passed through the fiercest conflict of the theological warfare, so that if in the pulpit a polemic discussion was superadded to the didactic or the scriptural derivation of them, that process were still more lengthened out whose terminating result after all were but the conviction of the understanding that the articles in question were

doctrinally true. This in itself is to be deprecated as an evil, seeing that it interdicts the space and liberty which the preacher otherwise might have for the outgoings of the second process, and there are special and distinct reasons besides, why, unless there be an obvious practical necessity, controversy should be refrained from in the pulpit. It may lead you to exchange the scriptural for the scholastic nomenclature, so that instead of propounding a doctrine in those words which were devised by God for the direct instruction of the teachable, you may propound it in those words which have been devised by men for putting down the heresies of the gainsayer. Now this last, however well adapted for its special object, is not adapted for the object of the pulpit, which is not so much to vindicate truth, as to bring men under its power. That language and that mode of putting which are best fitted for the one end, may not be the best fitted for the other end; and so under this translation from the style of a scriptural to that of a polemic theology, the proper work of the pulpit may suffer in efficiency. Moreover, the attention of the people is turned the wrong way. Instead of being led to entertain the message as announced directly to them by God, they are led to hold parley with men contending for their own interpretations, and engaged in debate on the terms of the message. The minister may triumph in the debate, and the people in kindred sympathy may triumph along with him. The controversy, to the satisfaction of all, may be settled; but to avail ourselves of a familiar phrase, what is held to be settled is often set by. There is a delusive feeling as if their concern with the matter was now ended, when in fact it ought to be only beginning. They may think it enough to have been made intellectually right, as it seems the great ado to bring about that—whereas, mainly and generally speaking, they were all intellectually right at the outset, and the great ado should be to make this intellectual rightness germinate into the morally right and the spiritually right. If this latter be not accomplished, the kingdom of God may have come to them in word, or come to them in reason, *ἐν τῷ λόγῳ* being significant of both; but it comes not *ἐν τῷ δύνάμει*, it comes not in power: and there is great hazard of such a result if the decision of the controversy be the achievement which they rest in. Just as in mathematics, the feat is perfected if you make out the proposition—so in theology, there is a subtle imagination, too, that you have reached the great and desirable ultimatum by making out the proposition. Now what is the end in

mathematics is but a mean in theology. The Christian revelation does not end with the intellect, but begins with it. The intellect is but a medium through which to reach the religious influence to the heart and the character, and its design is utterly frustrated and perverted by those who make orthodoxy the landing-place instead of the outset of their Christianity. Now we think it is the part of a sermon not to conduct the people to orthodoxy as a landing-place, but to start along with them from orthodoxy as the outset; and that therefore it may well keep clear of the controversies—they lying in the way of the first and not in the way of the second process. The truth is, that with very few exceptions indeed, the orthodoxy may with all safety be assumed and proceeded on, from the commencement of your address, or at most a statement, with a few of the best scriptural corroborations, will suffice to put the whole auditory intellectually right on the doctrine of the text. The great business should be to enforce the doctrine on the susceptibilities of their moral and practical nature; to present the truth in such connexions or with such applications as might best awaken the right and correspondent emotions in their heart; to make it bear on their own personal condition, so as that it shall powerfully tell on their feelings and purposes; to press it not so much upon their conviction by proofs, as to press it upon their consideration by the earnest representations which you make of its importance as well as of its verity; to conquer not the oppositions of heresy by argument for the doctrine, but to conquer by means of the doctrine itself, the indifference, and the irreligion, and the death-like torpor, and the earthly affections of the people who are before you.

It were the strong and universal feeling, we believe, that a preacher had not done enough with the doctrine of the universal judgment, who, instead of taking it up and wielding it as an engine of moral and practical influence, had merely reasoned it on the understandings of his people, and so put them in possession of it merely as a dogma. Yet we fear that there is no correspondent feeling to this in reference to another doctrine, we mean the Divinity of Christ. In regard to the latter, we doubt it to be the more prevalent impression, that our great concern is with the truth of the dogma, and not with its practical influences. The great ado is all about making out and settling the orthodoxy of the question. In as far as the one doctrine is concerned, that is, of the universal judgment, we do not make

the truth of the doctrine our resting-place, but carry it forward to its practical outgoings. In as far as the other doctrine is concerned, we are very apt to take up our resting-place in the truth of it, to stop there and terminate there. The only way in which I can explain this difference of treatment between the two doctrines, is, that the one has been much controverted and the other not. When the great point to be contended for is the truth of the doctrine, then let the point be gained, and the heart is satisfied. The one follows as naturally upon the other, as that repose should come after victory—and more particularly if it be victory at the close of a perilous and prolonged warfare. If *for* the acquisition of any object the mind had to go forth on the work of inquiry, and to fight its way through many obstacles, then *in* the acquisition of that object will it as naturally sink into a state of quiescence, as if it had now reached the ultimatum of its wishes, or gotten all it laboured and all it aspired after. We feel quite sure that the controversies have aggravated this tendency on the part of Christian students and inquiries to regard sound doctrine as the end, instead of being, what it in truth is, but the commencement of their labours. And in as far as they have this tendency, they lead to a pernicious deviation from the sense and the design of Scripture. When a doctrine is introduced there, it is for a moral and a practical effect. The ultimate design even of its most peculiar, and hence its most controverted revelations, is not to inform the understanding, but through the understanding to effect a salutary and transforming influence upon the character. The doctrine is not brought forward for its own sake, but for the sake of a something ulterior. The credenda are not the landing-place, they are only a stepping-stone to the agenda. And this is true of its most peculiar, or what has been styled the very highest of its doctrines. The Divinity of Christ, instead of being regularly chronicled in the Bible as one of the articles in a system of well-arranged orthodoxy, is brought forth not as the principle of a theory, but as a persuasion to moral conduct. It is employed by the Apostle as an argument to enforce the virtue of mutual condescension. With the exception perhaps of the first chapter of John, which, by the way, seems, in accordance with the historical account of its composition, to have been framed for the special object of presenting the Church with an authoritative manifesto against the heresies of the time, the Godhead of Christ is nowhere proposed in the shape of a mere dictatorial article, or as a naked

dogma for the understanding alone, and at one place it is introduced as an episode for the enforcement of a moral virtue. In this famous passage, the practical lesson occupies the station of principal, as the main or capital figure of the piece, and the doctrine on which so many would effervesce all their zeal, even to exhaustion, stands to it but in the relation of a subsidiary. The lesson is, "Let nothing be done through strife or wrangling, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" and the doctrine, (here noticed by the Apostle, not to the end that he may rectify the opinion of his disciples, but primarily and obviously to the end that he may rectify their conduct,) the doctrine for the enforcement of the lesson is, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 3-8). In these verses there is a collateral lesson for our faith; but the chief, the direct lesson, is a lesson of charity, which is greater than faith. Scripture is profitable for doctrine; but ulterior to this there is another end, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works.

You will understand that it is not our object to banish the didactic, nor yet wholly to banish the controversial theology from our pulpits. In reference to the former, there must be a statement of the truth expressed or implied in your text, and that, too, accompanied by enough of argument for gaining the intellectual assent of the hearers; and in reference to the latter I can imagine times and occasions when, to ward off some menacing heresy, the polemic arm must be lifted even in the house of God to quell the mischief, and the work of exposing it be the burden of many a Sabbath ministrations. Whatever the ulterior services of the truth may be, it is an indispensable preliminary that the people shall believe it. Until you have secured this vantage-ground nothing can be effected. But what we affirm is that without an extended demonstration, and without the full and finished controversial treatment which are proper here in the business of training students for all the services of the Church, you may, by a far shorter process, enlist the understandings of a

congregation on the side of all that is most important and influential in the truths of Christianity. In the vast majority of instances, that is done already before you have begun your sermon, or if not, a few suitable texts will suffice to recall the doctrine of the day to their conscience and memory, or to impress it on their convictions. It is not necessary to expend time in the establishment of a doctrine, if their minds be already established in the truth of it. And the plain reason why we grudge unnecessary time in arguing the truth of the doctrine, is, that really there is too much else to do with it. You have to urge the truth upon their consciences. You have to open a way for its influence upon their hearts. You have to address it to their hopes or their fears, or their purposes of obedience. If the doctrine, for example, be the Divinity of Christ, you may therefrom expatiate on the worth of the sacrifice, and so hush the alarms of a guilty bosom; or on the enormity of sin that called forth so costly an expiation, and so arouse from the slumbers of their conscience both the ungodly and the backslider; or on the weight of gratitude earned by this illustrious Sufferer, and so press on all who believe the devotedness of their whole lives to the Saviour who died for them; or on the power which inherently belongs to Him, of completing the redemption which He hath begun, and so animating their confidence in the sustaining and sanctifying influences of that grace by which He upholds His disciples in the work and the warfare of their practical Christianity; or, finally, on the danger of rejecting overtures brought to our world by a Divine messenger, and sealed by His blood, and so ground on the very magnitude of the condescension and the mercy a louder appeal of terror to all who shall despise it.

But on this topic I have dwelt longer than I anticipated. What I principally aimed at and had hoped to overtake, was another distinction between the exposition that is usually given of Christianity in the Hall, and the exposition that should be given of Christianity in the pulpit. Here it is propounded as a theory, with a view to your theoretical understanding of it; there, if I may use the expression, it is more practised as an art, with a view to a certain practical fulfilment. So to instruct men as to make them comprehend the scheme of Christianity is one sort of achievement; so to influence men as to make them personally and actually Christians, is another and a very different sort of achievement. The one is the proper achievement of a theo-

logical professor, the other the proper achievement of a Christian minister. Their objects are different, and corresponding to this they should go differently to work. In particular, they should begin differently. The dogmatic is essentially different from the hortatory, but not more so than the commencement and the order of your studies in the Hall should differ from the commencement and the order of your sermons in the pulpit.

Very generally, in the framing of a theological system, there is first an ascent made to the fountainhead of being, to the primal source as well as object of all religion. The outset is with mysterious and high speculations, and these not about the character alone, but the constitution of the Deity, where, in the prosecution of a sound and a scriptural path, it is difficult to clear one's way through the crudities and the ambitious imaginations of the men of all sects and of all ages. To guide the Christian scholar along this hazardous walk, among what may be called the heights and the transcendentals of his subject, there is need not of the light only of Biblical criticism, but of that sober and cautious philosophy which is observant of its own limits, and which knows how to separate between the findings of experience or Scripture, and the fancies of unauthorized speculation. After that the question of the Trinity has been laboriously scrutinized throughout the Bible in its original language, and brought safe through the manifold controversies of the Church in the condition of a leading article in our systematic divinity, the same process has to be repeated successively with the following articles, which are often made to come after each other in the chronological order of the history of the Divine administration. After this recondite speculation on His nature and constitution, there is another equally recondite on the purposes or decrees of a predestinating Deity, whence going forth, as it were, from the darkling recesses of a past eternity, this process of doctrinal exposition goes downward to the creation of the world, if not to the previous creation of angels and higher orders of intelligence, to the original innocence of our nature—to the law of God for the government of the human family—to the fall of man, the introduction of sin, the condemnation and moral ruin of our species—to the undertaking of the great Mediator, who bore in His own person the penalties of Heaven's outraged authority, that He might deliver us from the wrath of our offended Lawgiver, and so effect a reconciliation between God and a sinful world—to the repentance and the faith, the calls of which accompanied

those overtures of the gospel—to the special provision made for the sanctification of believers, so that they may be delivered from the tyranny of their present evil affections, as well as from the terrors of the wrath that is to come—to their progressive holiness here, and their triumphant preferment hereafter, among the joys and the exercises of heaven's high sanctuary; lastly, to the day of judgment, when this wondrous scheme shall have its full and final development, and all its mysteries shall be opened, to the endless, the irrecoverable distance of the good and the evil, the pains of the everlasting hell, the delights and the glories of a blissful immortality.

Now the whole of this progression may be gone through in right synthetic order, beginning with the decrees of the past, and ending with the destinations of the future eternity. Altogether, it may be a perfect theoretical exposition of the science; and we employ the term theoretical, not that it might imply aught of the doubtful or the imaginative in the account that has thus been rendered. Although designed a theory, it may be a just and solid theory notwithstanding, based throughout on the evidence of Scripture, and defensible in all its parts and positions against every opposing heresy. It may be a true exhibition of Christianity, and yet not the exhibition that should be made of it in the work of Christianization. But if this be a true exhibition, will not another and a different exhibition be a false one? No; and for this I have to entreat your consideration. In a complicated scheme of doctrine, you may change the whole aspect of the scheme; you may change the order and the apparent locality of all its parts simply by changing the point of view from which it is contemplated. Meanwhile the doctrine itself continues the same, and there is no change whatever upon it. The representation of the mundane system from the centre of the sun is not the same with the representation of the mundane system from the surface of a planet, yet it is the same mundane system notwithstanding. And the same is true of the scriptural, or, if you will, of the spiritual system; of all that part of the moral world which is accessible to us. It may be viewed from the highest and most commanding station of all, from the fountainhead of the Divine mind; and so beginning with the plans and purposes of the Deity, it may pass onward in historical order through the forthgoings of a Divine administration, having for its principle the will and authority of God, and for its subject the aggregate mass of our species; or it may be viewed from an-

other station—from the heart or the homestead of a single individual in that species, whether as sunk in the moral lethargy from which the calls of Christianity might arouse him, or as awakened to a sense of danger, and labouring to realize, in the asylum which Christianity has opened, a place of safety and of enlargement. What we affirm is, that the representation of Christianity, taken from the one station, is different from the representation of Christianity, taken from the other, and yet the thing viewed from both is one and the same Christianity. They differ not as one object does from another, but only as the scheme or projection of an object seen from one point differs from the scheme or projection of the same object seen from another point. The change is not in the truth, the only change is in the perspective. If the representation of the hortatory differs from the representation of the systematic theologian, it is just as one picture of the same landscape differs from another, because of the different sides from which they have been taken, and so different bearings in which the whole and every part stand to the eye of the spectator. It is thus that we may have two different representations of the same Christianity; and if the one is the proper representation to be given from the chair, the other is certainly the proper representation to be given from the pulpit.

The nearest approximation in Scripture to the first of these occurs in the eighth chapter of the Romans: "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate; whom he did predestinate, them he also called; whom he called, them he also justified; whom he justified, them he also glorified." Paul appears at this place in the character of a systematic theologian; but none was practically more successful than he in the work of the hortatory theologian, in acquitting himself of which he would begin not at the first step of the progression which I have now laid before you—not with God's foreknowledge or God's predestination, but at an intermediate step, with God's calling on all men everywhere to repent, and to do works meet for repentance. It was not so that Peter began: not most assuredly with a dissertation on the Trinity—not with the decrees of a predestinating God, but with other truths that came more nearly home to the personal interest of his hearers, and by which he might arouse them to an immediate practical movement, with the doctrine of a ready-offered forgiveness, and a promised regeneration to all who would, and, grounded upon these, with a call to "repent, and

be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and that they should receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." In whatever way you may receive the truths of Christianity here, this is the way for conducting the business of pulpits. You should first impress the consciences of men with the demonstration of sinfulness, even as Peter did: you should then exhibit the open door of an accepted Mediatorship, which all are invited to enter, and where they may be admitted to behold their offended Lawgiver in this most winning yet impressive attitude, God waiting to be gracious: and then the promised aids of grace and strength from on high might be made known to them, and intermingled with statements of doctrine as in the voice of a teacher, there should be an urgency, an imperative urgency, in the voice of a commander—"Turn to me, and I will pour out my Spirit upon you;" and there should be a constant enforcement of the new obedience of the gospel with as constant an appliance of the truths and the motives which constrain it; and one doctrine after another should be propounded as they are able to bear it, or as it admits of pertinent and practical application to the actual progress they have made in the moral history and moral experience of a believer; and while all Scripture should be expounded because all Scripture is profitable, it should never be forgotten that in Scripture doctrinal truth is continually brought forward as a stepping-stone to practical efficiency, and that the ultimate object of all its revelations is, that the man of God might be perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works.

There is just one distinction more between the systematic and the hortatory that I have time at present to notice, and which has been suggested by an expression made use of a little while ago. We said that in the systematic theology the administration of God is exhibited as it bears upon the mass of the species, or perhaps rather on two distinct masses, the children of light and the children of this world. It is thus made to assume in a great degree the character of a distant and general speculation. The sense of one's own personal interest is lost among those universalities of statement and doctrine, and theology altogether is in this way more regarded as a thing of intellectual entertainment than as a matter of individual concern. Now for a practical effect it is a mighty object so to shape the representation as to

isolate each of your hearers and make him feel that the matters wherewith you are charged are addressed distinctly and specifically to him. Now there are certain terms associated everywhere in the New Testament with God's overtures to the world, and which fully warrant this pointed, this personal direction of them to each individual; and the most important transition is made from the systematic to the hortatory, from the style of a professor in his chair to the style of a minister in his pulpit, when availing yourselves of these terms you pass from a mere general and didactic exhibition of the subject to such an application of it as might lead each individual to take it home to his own case and his own conscience. There is a fine example of this isolation of each hearer given by the apostle Peter, when he says—Repent every one of you; and by our Saviour when He says, Come to me all; or when He says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock, if any man open, I shall enter; or when He says, Whosoever cometh to me shall in no wise be cast out. Ministers still may, after these high examples, charge, or entreat, or hold out the encouragements of the gospel to each and every man within the reach of their voice; and thus the difference between the gospel in its generality and the gospel in its specific bearing on each individual of the great family of man, forms one capital distinction between the didactic and the hortatory management of the subject, between, in short, your present studies as collegians, and your future preparations as ministers of parishes.

LECTURE VI.

ON DIDACTIC AND CONTROVERSIAL THEOLOGY.

IT would prepare, we think, for a most important practical conclusion, did we distinguish aright between two mental processes, in one of which the truth in theology is the final term of the process, and in the other of which the same truth in theology is the initial term of the process. To exemplify our meaning, let us instance the doctrine of the Atonement. A process of criticism and comparison and reasoning may be instituted for the ultimate object of establishing the truth of that doctrine—such a process as was described by the author, and may yet be

described by every reader, of Magee's work upon this article of our faith. The process may have been altogether a successful one. Belief, and that too a right belief, may be the result of it. The object is gained—the *terminus ad quem* is reached—and the mind rests at the place where it terminates. The proposition is mastered and made over as another addition to the stock of our intellectual acquirements. We may settle into the repose of a conscious acquisition or achievement, when we arrive at the *quod erat demonstrandum* of a theological, just as we do after having arrived at the *quod erat demonstrandum* of a mathematical proposition. And the same process repeated with every other article of the creed might, in like manner, bring into your possession the whole of didactic theology. A general, an unspotted orthodoxy, may be the result of it; and you may have been schooled not merely into a zealous and attached disciple, but into one of the ablest and most accomplished of its champions.

Now while there is one process which ends with the belief in some truth of theology, there is another and a distinct process which begins with it, and it is truly a possible thing for one to have described the first and not so much as to have entered upon the second. Let us recur for illustration to the same doctrine of the atonement, the belief in which, we have already found, may have been the consummation of one mental process, but which, we shall now find, may also be the commencement of another mental process. That doctrine which the erudite theologian clears his way to by critical research, and, if necessary, by a lengthened polemic operation, when the errors and the sophistry of heretics have laid obstructions in his path—that same doctrine may shine in the immediate light of Scripture on the understanding of a peasant, and find instant entrance there so soon as he opens his eyes on the pages of inspiration. There may have been no process, at least of scholarship, anterior to his reception of the truth, and yet a most busy and important process after it. Instead of being the goal, it is to him the starting-post—not the landing-place at which he stops, but the point of departure which he moves from. His faith in this doctrine, in fact, may not only have ushered in a new train of emotions, but may have set him forth with impellent power on a course of activity that is quite interminable, having both brought a new sensation into his heart and thrown a guiding and governing light over the whole of his history. Instead of having occu-

pancy in his mind as in a reservoir, where lie, in a sort of quiescent deposition, all the truths and doctrines of Christianity, it has occupancy there as in a fountainhead or well of water, struck out in the heart of regenerated man, whose stream is holiness, and which springs up to life everlasting. A man whose only business is to prove the truth, ends with believing it; a man whose business is to proceed upon the truth, begins with believing it. It lies in the breast of the one in the shape of an inert and unproductive dogma; in the breast of the other it acts as the living and efficient principle, both of the new heart and the new history. There may be the same orthodoxy with both, but in very different positions, and so with a wholly different effect. The doctrine of the atonement, triumphantly argued out by the one, may have become his by intellectual seizure, and command the homage of this one faculty; the same doctrine, admitted from the outset by an act of simple but sure credence into the moral system of the other, may have obtained mastery there over all the feelings and faculties of his nature, working gratitude within, and strewing the whole of his outward path with the acts and the services of new obedience. The processes are distinct, and they have different and distinct terminations. The one ends where the other begins. In the first it ends with the right state of his creed; in the second with the right state of his character. The landing-place of the former, valorous and accomplished for the battles of the faith, may be a station of eminence in the Church upon earth; that of the latter is a place of eminence in heaven.

We mean not to say that both of these processes may not be realized by the same individual. But it is enough that they are separable and often separate, to justify our having adverted to the distinction between them, and to found thereupon our earnest advice that you endeavour to blend both and harmonize both. There is a delusion upon this subject, in virtue of which men sit down in full satisfaction with themselves, because now in the conscious and complacent possession of an orthodoxy to which they have won their way, whereas their having mastered the propositions of Christianity, may be truly of as little religious importance as their having mastered the propositions in conic sections. In both the theological and the mathematical exercises, the intellectual faculties may have been alike soundly and vigorously exercised—the taste and the talent for reasoning may have been alike gratified—the delights of prosperous study

and the triumphs of successful achievement may have alike rewarded the toils of this investigation, and you may thus have been conducted by a right pathway to the right dogmata of both the sciences; yet in both they may be merely scientific or secular acquisitions after all, and as little accompanied in the one as in the other by either the power or the feeling of sacredness. Of this there are examples innumerable in the history of the Church—sound and erudite theologians, champions, redoubted champions, of the leading articles in the evangelical system, yet without one particle in their hearts of the spirit or unction of evangelical piety. Be assured that one may combine in his own person the classic lore of Walton, and the argumentative power of Clarke, and the philosophic dignity of Butler, and the manly sense of Barrow, and the laborious erudition of Lardner, and the polemic strength of Warburton and Horsley, and the fine discrimination and subtlety of Campbell, and all these, too, enlisted on the side of rigid orthodoxy—and yet, with all his science and all his services in the cause, may have reached no further in Christianity than just to the end of the first process. In other words, his personal Christianity may not yet have been entered on; and while the Christian *savant* has reached only to the truth, the Christian peasant may have passed far beyond it, to the experience of its effects in transforming the character and hastening forward the preparations of eternity.

In contrasting the Christianity of an unlettered rustic with that of a profound scholar, you must not understand of the former, that, though he has not described the first process, there was therefore no anterior process, anterior we mean to his reception of the truth, described by him at all. It was not the scholar's process certainly, but there may have been a busy and a sustained exercise notwithstanding, made up of the workings of conscience, the prayers, and the Bible readings, of great moral earnestness, and at length the illuminations of that Spirit who opened his understanding to the word, and made him perceive its truth and the felt preciousness of its adaptations to the wants and the longings of his diseased nature. Neither must we imagine that, because his belief is not the result of a continuous reasoning, it is therefore a result without reason. It was both the semblance of evidence which drew his first attention to the gospel, and the increasing semblance of it which prolonged his attention, and at last the substance and the power of the most legitimate evidence that carried his convictions and made him a

believer. And after this great transition, the evidence multiplies and brightens every day with the growth of his experience; and all ignorant though he be of the antique lore connected with revelation, or with the import of any term in its original languages, yet in personal and spiritual contact as he is with the subject-matter of revelation, to him belongs a more intimate, I think a more solid, conviction of its truth, than that which follows in the train of the scholar's lengthened demonstration. It is not by immediate vision, but by a repeated inferential process of one or two steps, that he is made to perceive the truth, and, in fact, to obtain a more close and satisfactory view of it than is ever reached by many a party theologian. It is the more transcendental wisdom of the two, and it is of him that our Saviour speaks in the fervent ejaculation of—"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes."

We say not this to discourage your literary treatment of the Bible, or to forbid your drawing forth the sense of the book in the most scholar-like manner, so as by criticism and argument, and all the methods of research applicable to other authors, to come at the subject-matter of Christianity; but we would have you combine with this the plain daily exercise of reading Scripture in the way and with the spirit and purpose of any ordinary Christian. We would have you, along with your more scientific and strictly professional converse with the Sacred Volume, hold frequent and familiar converse with it in the English translation. In justice to the various advices which I have offered from time to time upon this subject, I must here refer to the one reigning principle which connects and harmonizes them. I have stated at length to you the reasons why all that is most important in revelation should be most accurately rendered in any of our popular versions; and that therefore, in reading the Bible which is in everybody's hands, you will not miss aught that is momentous either in the doctrine or the precepts of the gospel. When reading then for a practical object, you not only can read more of English in the same time than of Greek or Hebrew, but you read it with a mind disencumbered from every other object. There is no such partitioning of the attention between two things when engaged with the Bible in your own familiar, rather than in a foreign or a dead language. You are accustomed to think in English, and through the medium of English, therefore, you

have a shorter transition both to the thoughts of the Bible and to the feelings awakened by the thoughts. For the perfect description of the first process, I would have you to study, and with all profoundness, the original Scriptures. For your advancement in the second, I would have you to read, and with utmost moral earnestness, the translated Scriptures. I would have you, for the upholding and nurturing of your personal Christianity, partake in the same exercises with the humblest of your people. There will thus be the sympathy of a common work between you, and the sympathy of a common result from it. It may be of little avail to their Christianity, and I may add, of little avail to your own, that you have travelled your way to orthodoxy through the medium of polyglots. I should augur better both for your personal character, and your public ministrations, did I know of your frequent and affectionate converse with your pocket Bibles.

But while I hold the precautionary lesson which I have now given to be of the utmost importance when commencing the systematic study of the subject-matter of revelation, I must not forget the peculiar modification or change of aspect that the science assumes when it passes from a didactic theology to a controversial theology. I am aware of its being practically a most difficult thing, if not altogether impossible, to complete the didactic exposition of the subject without a reference to the oppositions of heresy, yet I would have you at least to conceive for a moment that the matter were managed in this way. Let us imagine a scholar in every way accomplished for the task, and in the act of drawing forth of it its system of doctrine, holding converse with the Bible alone. Let us imagine him to be even not aware of the existence of any controversies on the subject, and with all the requisite faculties of criticism and comparison and generalization, to bestow on the Bible his own original and independent treatment. We say, that were the articles of theology brought immediately forth by such a process of extraction from the original record, they would then be presented to us in pure didactic order fresh from Scripture, and offering to us so many generalities of statement, based, however, on the very statements and sayings of Scripture. This were didactic theology brought out by a didactic process in its simplest and purest style. But imagine the very same articles exposed to an indiscriminate host of theologians, and there meeting with the prejudice of one, the misconception of another, the rash ignorance

of a third, the resolute hostility of a fourth. Let the Christian Church be agitated with divisions of sentiment, with the arguings and redarguings of manifold controversy, then, although the orthodox should prevail, and the very same articles originally brought in pacific derivation from the Bible should survive the ordeal of debate, and be presented anew for the submission of the Christian world as the truths that had stood their ground amid the shock of adverse opinions, and triumphed in the conflict, we say of this *theologica polemica*, that though substantially the same with the *theologica didactica* that went before it, it will not be complexionally the same—that it will stand forth differently tinged to the eye of observers, and that they who have studied her lessons will be exposed to certain influences to which the simple derivation of the system from the Bible, though essentially the same system, would not have exposed them. We affirm of a theology directly educed from the words of God, that though not transmuted in doctrine, it will be transmuted in aspect and expression, and so in effect, when, though the same theology, it is reasserted and vindicated in opposition to the words of men. We affirm of the truth, that though unaltered in respect of its matter, it will have another face, and so may have another influence than at first, when, to the confirmatory argument by which to show what Scripture is for it, there is superadded this combative argument by which to silence what heretics and opponents say against it. We did not say in the precautionary lesson which we have just given, that the polemic theology was not true theology, although we warned you of a certain hurtful influence to which it might expose you, and bid you, for protection therefrom, habituate yourselves to the simple and earnest perusal of your Bibles. And neither now do we say that the polemic theology is not true theology, though, for the sake of your protection from certain other hurtful influences to which you are exposed by the study of it, we should bid you often recur to that simpler and earlier didactic theology which springs direct from the Bible, having Scripture theology for its phraseology and Scripture texts for its arguments.

The characteristics of the two theologies multiply upon observation; but let me not dismiss the matter at present without some specification.

When any doctrine, then, of the scriptural theology or the didactic theology, which is neither more or less than generalized Scripture, meets with the hostility of a gainsayer, he utters

his contradiction to it in his own language; he substitutes another doctrine in its place, and he couches it in his own phraseology. It is not enough that he be confronted by Scripture texts, or by the doctrine which he resists propounded in the terms of a purely didactic system, and therefore as nearly as possible in scriptural terms. He professes to understand the Scripture differently, and he advances a different statement in a nomenclature of his own. He has translated the Scripture proposition into another proposition, conveyed in terms which he himself has adopted, and he cannot be adequately met by the original proposition, but by a translated proposition too in terms opposite to his own. His translation of the doctrine, if judged to be erroneous, must be met, not by the original statement of Scripture, but by a counter-translation on the part of the orthodox. It is doubtless the rightful prerogative of every Christian to judge which is the better translation of the two; but it will be obvious to you, on reflection, that the translation of the heretic could not be met by the doctrine of which he treats, couched in the language of Scripture; it could only be met by another translation whose phraseology was adapted to the special object of neutralizing the phraseology of that error which the Church was labouring to extinguish. The language into which the heretic rendered his unscriptural doctrine could only be countervailed, not by the true doctrine expressed in scriptural language, for this he professes not to disown, but by the true doctrine rendered back into such a language as might nullify and displace the words along with the substance of the heresy. It could be put out in no other way. The mere affirmation of the scriptural doctrine in scriptural phrases would not put it out, for they would profess the utmost reverence for this affirmation, while at the same time they kept by their own. The only way in which their affirmation expressed in their language could be met was by a counter-affirmation, expressed in a different language, of express and unequivocal denial; and thus, while the same proposition was retained both in the didactic and the polemic theology, in passing from one to another, a translation was effected—the translation of the words adopted by God for the direct instruction of the teachable and the humble, into words adopted by men for putting down the heresies of the gainsayers.

It was this which at length gave rise to the expression of theological doctrine in other language than that of Scripture. It

originated not with the orthodox, but their opponents, laid upon them by others as a matter of practical necessity, and adopted, not for the purpose of saying better what the Bible had said before, but for the purpose of so saying it as to meet the unscriptural propositions which from time to time were advanced to notice in the Church under the guise and the profession of a reverence for Scripture. There occur innumerable instances in ecclesiastical history of orthodoxy fabricating anew its language, not for improving either on its own language or on the language of the Bible, but for the special object of instituting a test and a safeguard against the new-sprung articles of sectaries and innovators. One of the most striking proofs that can be given of this may be found in the origin and history of the term *ὁμοούσιον*, a word not scriptural, certainly, but the only word that could be devised for protecting the clearly scriptural doctrine of the Divinity of Christ from the subtle attempts of the Arians to dilute or do it away. "When the Catholics," says Bishop Bull in his work on the Trinity, "when the Catholics accused them of calling the Son of God a creature, they showed indignation; with this secret intentment that the Son of God was not a creature as other creatures; they were so mediately by the word, He immediately without the word. The *homoousia* was the only word that they could not reconcile to their heresy. Athanasius again testifies, and it is worthy of observation, that this trickery of the Arians hindered the design of the Nicene bishops of expressing their creed in Scripture terms only. Ambrosius strongly confirms what Athanasius says, namely, that the *homoousia* did so gravel the Arians. 'Lastly, they could even now use the word *homoousia* as well as the other terms, if they could find a way to pervert it. But when they saw themselves reduced to difficulty by this word, they utterly rejected it.' Athanasius produces many creeds or confessions of the Arians themselves to the same purpose, in which, though you may find any other Catholic term, you can never meet with the *homoousia*. They are all over indignation against it, and vainly bite the chain with which they are bound." This extract is from rather a loose and paraphrastic translation of Bull's work. The last sentence in his original Latin gives a still more striking representation of the purpose for which this special word was fixed upon:—"Itaque quod Ariomanitae tanto furore in homoousii vocem exarserint, in eo idem fecisse mihi videntur, quod rabidi solent canes; qui ad ferrea vincula, quibus constricti tenen-

tur, hirriunt eademque dentibus confringere frustra adnituntur." * You will thus see whence arose that transition from the scriptural language of a *theologia didactica* to the scholastic language of a *theologia elenctica*—the one formed by God for the direct instruction of the teachable, the other formed by men for the correction of the perverse.

On this ground we cannot sympathize with Mosheim in the lofty and unqualified contempt which he expresses even for the part taken by the orthodox in the controversies of that period. It was a part forced upon them by their antagonists, but for whose unscriptural deviations from the truth, theology might have remained to this hour in pure didactic form, resting on the groundwork and shrined in the phraseology of Scripture.

I may here take occasion to observe, that I agree with the author of the "Natural History of Enthusiasm," in looking on a good Church history as a very great desideratum. He says of Mosheim, that he gives but the mere husk of history; and of Milner, but some separated particles of pure farina. "Nevertheless," he observes, "that with all its great defects, Milner's 'Church History' is incomparably the best that has been compiled."

Now, if in the study of a didactic theology there is danger lest the mind should rest in a mere intellectual acquisition of the truth, there is an aggravated danger in the study of controversial theology. The doctrine as put by man for the repression of error may be in substance the same, but in expression and influence, it is not the same as the doctrine put by God for the inculcation of truth. When engaged with the one you may be separated from the other; and so from all those primary and direct influences which a message from God is fitted to have on the spirits of those who are the objects of it. We would therefore advise a constant recurrence to the didactic—a perpetual converse with Scripture, or with scriptural summaries—a frequent transition by the mind back again from the doctrine as couched in the language of controversy to the doctrine as couched in the *ipsissima verba* of inspiration. We recommend this habit, not alone for the sake of the wholesome effect upon your own personal Christianity, but for the sake of your pulpit ministrations we hold it indispensable. To an ordinary congregation it is the didactic alone that is generally of any interest or value, and seldom is the other of any service at all. There is

* See Bull's "Defensio Fidelis Nicænæ," Sec. II. chap. i. § 13.

no good done, but the opposite, by the pulpit refutation of errors which they never heard of, or the practical ascendancy of which would most effectually be anticipated by the direct enforcement and exposition of the truth. The *theologia elenctica* we hold to be at best but a necessary evil in the church, which will at length be superseded in times of greater light and of greater honesty—a temporary obstruction that will ultimately be removed in the way of full and immediate converse with the Bible—a din of earthly noises which will at length be overborne by the sound of God's own voice in the Scripture—a turbid and darkening atmosphere, which, when at length cleared away, will let down upon the agitated Church a direct and penetrating radiance from the lamp of revelation. Calvin, though himself among the sturdiest of polemics, mourned over the necessity that had compelled the church to an artificial and scholastic nomenclature for the utterance of its doctrines; and we think that by the following single observation he has outrun all his fellows in that prolific age of great theologians and reformers:—"Utinam," he says, "utinam sepulta essent nomina Trinitatis, ὁμοούσις, constaret modo haec inter omnes fides, Patrem Filium et Spiritum Sanctum esse unum Deum, nec tamen aut Filium esse Patrem, aut Spiritum Filium, sed proprietate quadam esse distinctos," &c.—"I wish that the names of the Trinity, of the *homoousia*, &c., were buried, should only this faith be established among all, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God, yet that the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinct from each other by some peculiarity." Turretin, who quotes this sentence, contends for the necessity of retaining the names—a necessity which we cannot refuse, though, with Calvin, we lament it. "But as it is often found," says Turretin, "that they who litigate more pertinaciously than others against the words, cherish a secret *virus*, and it is sufficiently evident that those new corrupters of religion condemn the words adopted by the ancients, for no other reason than that they are unwilling to receive the things designed by them, and, knowing that with the words they might abolish the doctrine also, we therefore did right in retaining them, and not only insist on their use being lawful, but also beneficial and necessary for repressing the pertinacity of heretics (*ad constringendam hereticorum pertinaciam*), and bringing them forth of their lurking places (*et ipsos ex latebris suis educendos*)."

But there is a brilliant perspective before us which we doubt

not will in time be realized. There seems both an intellectual and a moral convergency towards it. In as far as controversy originated in the spirit of a rash and unbridled speculation, this is a source which, with our now better philosophy and our now better understanding of the limit between the known and the unknown, is fast drying up; and there is, partly intellectual and partly moral, a profounder recognition of the authority of Scripture as paramount to all other authority, and perhaps on all sides a greater moral fairness in the interpretation of it. When these habits are consummated, controversy will cease, because the provocations to controversy will be done away. The *theologia elenctica*, after having accomplished a most important temporary service, will then be dispensed with. Its technology will fall into desuetude, because formed as it was for the special object of neutralizing the heresies which no longer exist, its employment will be uncalled for. God's own truths expressed in God's own language will form the universal creed of enlarged and harmonized and happy Christendom. Men's faith and their affections, when this intermediate and temporary apparatus is at length taken down, will come into more direct contact with Heaven's original revelation, and the spirit of good-will to man which prompted Heaven's message will be felt in all its freshness and power, when the uproar of controversy is stilled, and its harsh and jarring discords die away in everlasting silence. There will be system and generalization still, but founded on the generalizations of Scripture, and the doctrines in which many now terminate, as if they were the ultimate truths of the record, will be found themselves to be subordinate to the one and reigning expression of Heaven's kindness to the world by which the whole scheme of our redemption is pervaded.

"I'm apt to think the man
That could surround the sum of things, and spy
The heart of God and secrets of His empire,
Would speak but love—with him the bright result
Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,
And make one thing of all theology."—GAMBOLD.

END OF THE INSTITUTES.

NOTES

ON

HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY.

NOTES

ON

HILL'S LECTURES IN DIVINITY.

THE PRAYER.

THY throne, O God, is in the heavens, whence Thine eyes do behold, and Thine eyelids do try the children of men. Give us to feel the control of Thine omniscient eye. Give us to bear about in our heart a constant reference both to Thine authority and to Thy presence. May a sense of God and a principle of godliness have at all times a presiding influence over us ; and give us to experience the connexion which Thyself hath instituted between a single-hearted devotedness to Thy will and a clear understanding of Thy doctrine. May our eye be single, and then shall our whole body be full of light.

BEFORE entering on the text-book of the present session, and probably, if spared to another year, of the great part of the following session also, let me briefly state the reason why I have selected it from among all the other theological works with which I am acquainted. In the first place, then, I know of no treatise which professes to exhibit the whole range of theological doctrine, and does it in more of a *lucidus ordo* than the one that we have fixed upon. Now this is a great, perhaps the greatest, recommendation of a text-book. I am not sure if, for such a description of work, it is not of more importance that the various topics shall be presented in right succession, than that a right deliverance shall be given on each of the topics. He whose office it is to expound the text-book, is not restricted to the views or opinions of its author. He may extend, he may modify, he may even refute at pleasure. He may take up the subjects in the

very order in which they are presented, and yet on these subjects give nothing but his own independent decision. It is of mighty importance, however, to be under a safe and proper guidance as to the order. Any difference of opinion between the author and the expounder does not affect the benefit of this. It is well to be conducted along a right pathway by one who has traversed the region before, and that, too, along the best tracks for seeing it to advantage, even though he should look upon the scenery with different eyes from the predecessor whom he follows, and should describe the objects differently. Now this is precisely the advantage of a well-arranged text-book, like the one we are about to enter. We pledge not ourselves to an implicit adherence to all the arguments of the author. There will not often be a substantial, but often at least a complexional difference betwixt us. But we shall always walk together, though I do not promise that we shall be agreed.

It here occurs to me to say, that the faculty of classifying aright the obvious truths of a science, is not the same with the faculty of penetrating into the recondite truths of it. I think that Dr. Hill had the former faculty in a greater degree than the latter—the power of luminous and comprehensive arrangement among things patent and palpable, rather than the power of drawing from their obscurity those deep and hidden things which lie beneath the surface of observation. The power of distribution is one thing; the power of discernment is another. He who is perfect in the former, will say nothing that is not pertinent; he who lacks the latter power, will say nothing that is profound. Now we hold the former and not the latter to be the appropriate faculty for the construction of a text-book. Dr. Hill, we believe, could not, as Dr. Campbell did, with the eye of a lynx, have seen and subtilized his way into the sophistries of Hume. But, on the other hand, Dr. Campbell, it is our conjecture, could not have composed a text-book. Both, however, we apprehend to be high faculties, and a great practical service to the study of theology has been rendered by the appearance of the work before us. Had the order of the appearance of these two men on the stage of time been inverted, and had Campbell but adopted Hill as his text-book, we should have had the benefit of a glorious combination; the framework of symmetry and of just proportion which the one had erected, varied by the genius and the acumen and the unnumbered felicities of thought and expression, and altogether the *vis animi* which the other might have

infused into it. We hold it another argument in favour of our peculiar method, that in this way such combinations may frequently be realized—that the defects of one man may thus be supplemented by the characteristics of another, and instead of the efficacy of theological instruction being limited by the personal qualities of the teacher alone, you have the advantage of these in compound application, with all that is most excellent and powerful in the theologians of other days.

But before we set foot within the limits of our text-book, we have still another remark to bestow upon it. There is a pervading defect which even Campbell, I fear, would not have supplemented—a certain frigidity about it which the doctrines whereof it treats ought to have quickened into warmth and animation—the want of a *sal evangelicum*, even though it be an evangelical system of truth which is ably and on the whole correctly expounded. Even this, however, has not repelled me from the choice of my text-book. The substance of Christianity is there, although not impregnated with the full force and vitality of Christian sentiment. We have the whole orthodoxy of the subject although not the feeling of it, and perhaps the appropriate and the warrantable feeling might have been nauseated as fanaticism by himself and by hundreds in the Church along with him. It is, I fear, a possible thing to have the letter of orthodoxy without its spirit; and I would certainly say of the Christianity in these volumes, that taking in all which is implied in the term, it offers not a full or a fair transcript of the Christianity of the New Testament.

We are aware of the vindication which may here be offered, and that is, that a lectureship from the chair of theology professes only to make an intellectual exposition of the subject; that it meddles not with the heart or with the personal sensibilities, but addresses itself to the understanding alone. There is something in this, we will admit, though not so much in our estimate as to justify the degree of coldness which we think is characteristic of the work, and far less its indifference on those parts of the system which stand connected with the formation of character, and with the high interests and feelings of personal Christianity. But we gladly accept of the vindication thus far. Though it may not satisfy us as to the work, it ought at least to silence all the adverse judgments of censoriousness in regard to its author. We know not, on the one hand, a more tremendous presumption than that involved in any confident utterance of

one man on the denied or the doubtful Christianity of another; but, on the other hand, we must not, in charity to individuals, forget the importance or the truth of this general lesson, that nothing can be more fatal than the state of a mind attached to a form of sound words without the feeling or the faith of them; that it is indeed a most wretched thing to have no other concern about orthodoxy than how to argument it; and I really know no preaching more unproductive than the mere didactic exposition of a system, however faultless, if along with it there be no urgency of personal application—no practical earnestness.

BOOK I.

EVIDENCES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

INTRODUCTORY DISCOURSE.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near to Thee, O God, under a deep sense of dependence on Thy will. Thou hast preserved us to the light of another day. Thou hast lengthened out to us the season of grace. We are still in the land of living men—the land of hope and of opportunity, and throughout all the families of which Thy beseeching voice may be heard. May we no longer resist the overtures of reconciliation. To-day, while it is called to-day, may we harden not our hearts, nor aggravate the final doom of our impenitency by the neglect of so great a salvation, or by withstanding the calls and the invitations of the gospel.

I assume, says Dr. Hill, as the groundwork of every religious system, those two great doctrines, that “God is, and that He is a rewarder of those that diligently seek Him.”* I take the first opportunity of the term *reward* having occurred of adverting to a prejudice which, I think, has done fatal and extensive injury in theology. The term *reward* stands associated in our minds with merit, and one of the strongest points of our established orthodoxy is altogether to renounce and abjure it. On the same principle we feel jealous of the term *condition*, and are often extremely sensitive lest the doctrine of absolute or unconditional grace should be thereby infringed upon. I am quite certain

* Hill's Lectures, second edition, vol. i. p. 2.

that a misapplied orthodoxy has often in this way operated as a drag on the activities of the Christian life, and more especially laid a very heavy servitude or obstruction on the outset of practical Christianity. We shall often recur to this unfortunate influence with a view to expose it, and shall have our first opportunity for doing so when we come to that part of our course where we shall treat of the bearing which the dogmatic has upon the hortatory theology.

Meanwhile, let me just offer to your notice the distinction between a condition of merit and a condition of connexion. The former is unorthodox, by which I invariably mean unscriptural; but as to the latter, the whole scheme and business of Christianity are full of them. No obedience, no doings or seekings of ours can vest us with a legal or a rightful claim to reward; yet that very obedience may be a stepping-stone to the acquisition of the benefit in question. The movement of the disciples to Jerusalem after the resurrection gave them no title to the endowments of Pentecost, and so was not a condition of merit on which they were obtained; but made as it was at the bidding of the Saviour, who commanded them there to go, and to wait till they should receive power from on high, it was a condition of connexion. In like manner, no seeking on our part may give a claim in jurisprudence to the finding of what we seek. The one may not be connected with the other as the work is with the wages, yet the one is connected with the other as the cause is with the consequence. And what we complain of is, that the apprehension lest orthodoxy should be violated by our proposing to enter on the former process often acts as a dead weight on the energy and spirit wherewith we should embark all our diligence and zeal on the latter process. "Seek and ye shall find," is a plain direction, and the effect of our compliance therewith is plainly told us in Scripture. Let us lay upon it no encumbrance whatever, but instantly seek, that in the finding we may obtain the proper and natural reward.

In regard to the books which are recommended at the close of this and the succeeding lectures, I hold this part of our textbook to be extremely valuable; and, without disputing the soundness of the recommendation as there given, the very extension of our theological authorship since, the vast multiplication of works on this, as on all other subjects, may render some choice necessary. In spite, then, of the sterling value of certain publications which have made their appearance since these lists

were made, I should rather, on the whole, incline to abridge them. The old in many instances have been superseded by new and better works, and really the immense multiplication even of good books makes the work of selection quite imperative. There is no overtaking what has been written, and written well, upon the subject of your profession; and to save a most hurtful waste and expenditure of effort, I would rather confine you, if possible, to what has been written best upon it. On this principle, I would discard Abernethy as being really one of the most meagre performances I ever read. The same thing cannot be said of Cudworth, who, besides the marvellous erudition wherewith he investigates the state of opinion among the ancients, evinces under this the strength of a mind that can take its own vigorous, and original, and independent view of the subject. I should be well enough pleased to know that some three or four amongst you had made a conquest of his Intellectual System, yet speaking as I do to the generality of the class, I would not have them to grapple with it. It appears to me of vastly little consequence what the respective shades of theism and metaphysics were among the philosophers of Greece; whether Empedocles, for example, held or not the pre-existence of souls, and which were the sages who affirmed and who denied the transmigration of them. There must a deal of this learning fall at length into oblivion and desuetude: the world has not room for it and the daily accumulating treasures of modern authorship together. An immense power and prodigality of scholarship I do admit have been exhibited by Cudworth; yet in respect of pertinent and sound argument on natural theology and metaphysics, I hold Butler, and Edwards, and Paley to be far beyond him.

There is one matter on which I hold him and Lord Kames to be alike wrong, though in different ways—I mean the doctrine of philosophical necessity: Cudworth denying it on the ground that it abolishes all moral distinctions, and Kames admitting it, although inclined, I fear, to put up in some degree with this consequence. Leibnitz has, I think, soundly affirmed, and Edwards incontrovertibly argued, that the consequence does not follow. But, apart from any errors on this topic, I would say of Cudworth in the general, that the whole style of speculation and argument in which he indulges is now wellnigh become obsolete, and I for one have certainly no wish to retain it. The same remark applies in great part to the Boyle lectureship, which, though it has given rise to many valuable treatises, is

very much overrun with a sort of verbal metaphysics that is now generally, and, I think, justly exploded. It is deeply infused with the *a priori* reasoning of Dr. Samuel Clarke.

On the whole, the only books in this course that I would press upon your perusal, are Butler's Analogy and Dr. Paley's Natural Theology.

BOOK I.—CHAP. II.

AUTHENTICITY AND GENUINENESS OF THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE PRAYER.

O GOD, do Thou aid us in our feeble attempts to ascertain Thy will for our salvation. Give us to approach with solemn reverence the Book of Thy counsel, and to examine both the contents and the credentials thereof with all that attention and moral earnestness which so high an investigation demands. We rejoice that the lights of science and of scholarship rest so abundantly on the question, and we further pray for the light of Thy Spirit in our hearts, that the Word of God may come to us with power, and that we may be transformed by its saving and sanctifying influences into new creatures in Jesus Christ our Lord. Be with us for His sake.—Amen.

There is a very important remark which is exceedingly well put by Turretin* on this subject, and by which he exhibits in a striking light the difference in point of authority and respect between the Apocrypha of the Old Testament and those books of the New Testament on which a doubt or question has been raised. The Christian Church received the books of the Old Testament all at once, after they had obtained undoubted authority, and an authority confirmed by Christ and His apostles, who, if they had observed aught of excess or defect in the Jewish canon of their day, would have pointed it out to their disciples, even as our Saviour exposed their blind adherence to the traditions of the elders, while He never once intimated a complaint against their Scriptures, to which he, on the other hand, and His disciples after Him, frequently made respectful appeals. This is quite decisive to us in regard to the present canon of the Old Testament, besides which it should be observed, that though

* See Turretin's *Compendium Theologiae Didactico-Elencticae*, Locus ii. sect. 4.

some few books of the New Testament were disputed by certain of the churches, (or by a certain part, therefore, it may be said of the Christian Church,) in the compact Jewish Church there was no dispute in regard to the present Apocrypha, but a universal sentiment as well as practice that it should be excluded from the canon; and you would do well, ere you suffered a difference of opinion in regard to the controverted books of the New Testament to sway your opinion on the matter, to consider what in all likelihood that difference arose from. You know that the apostles were scattered widely abroad in the preaching of the gospel, and that the churches which they established were far asunder from each other. In some cases, then, it is not to be wondered at if an apostolic communication—an epistle received first by some isolated or remote church in the first instance, should be longer than the rest of finding its way to the notice and acceptance of the Church universal. In which case, what does the non-reception of these writings in certain of the churches amount to? It just marks the length of time that the information and the evidence connected with these writings took in travelling to them. They held out, in the case of certain of the pieces of the New Testament which made their first appearance at a great distance from themselves, till the satisfactory proofs arrived in weight and abundance enough to overcome their hesitation; for in those days (and it is a great security to us) there was an excess of caution upon this subject, and the proofs at length did come, when the whole Christian Church settled down with the adoption of our present canon in all its parts. A New Testament book is not the less genuine because longer of being received by one church than another, any more than an event in France is the less true because longer of being heard of in America than in England.

BOOK I.—CHAP. IV.

DIRECT OR EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.—MIRACLES.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art the source of light and of life, and it is Thine inspiration which giveth understanding. In Thy light may we clearly see light.

and give us to behold in all Thy dealings, both with the Church and the world, the overruling providence, the great and consistent plan of a Being who has some great purpose to serve in the march of history and of human affairs. We bless Thee for the preservation of Thy holy Word, and for the transmission both of its contents and credentials to these latter ends of the world. May it dwell in us richly in all wisdom, and amid all the perplexities of life may we ever find it a light to our feet, and a lamp to our paths.

You perfectly understand how I would be disposed to settle the matter of the evidence of miracles. A miracle I hold to be a good, perhaps the very highest of all presumptions. I would demur at receiving it as an absolute proof of the fact that he who works it has a commission from God, or that he has a conclusive and altogether incontrovertible claim to be entertained and listened to as His messenger. Anterior to your special acquaintance with the particulars of the communication where-with he is charged, your proper attitude is to listen to him, in the first instance, as you would to the accredited ambassador of a prince; but I can imagine the substance of the message to be such as to nullify all the evidence that lay in the first and outward credentials, even as I can imagine of an earthly ambassador, that after having obtained acceptance and belief, on the ground of producing the usual seal of the commission from his superior, the overtures may be so utterly at variance with all that is certainly known of the character and policy of his king, as even to countervail the otherwise irresistible proof of their genuineness. Such a case as this can certainly be conceived, and I shall endeavour to dispose of it in my lecture on Thursday, when I propose to consider the ligament which connects the truth or authority of the doctrine with the fact of the miracle under whose sanction the doctrine is promulgated. I would scarcely call a proof absolute, if liable to be set aside by aught that might transpire on any subsequent examination. Should a professed revelation given under the cover of a miracle proclaim a law, for example, whose enactments reversed all the articles of the decalogue, or should it affirm as truths certain propositions which I know experimentally or mathematically to be false, this would place me in some sort of strange and wildering dilemma, and I should certainly feel that if it did not upset the authority given by the miracle, at the very least it would completely neutralize it.

We admit it as very unlikely that such a supposition should

ever be realized, and just in proportion to the unlikelihood is the strength of the presumption or probability on the side of the miracle as being the evidence of a Divine interposition. But whether we agree with Marsh, in thinking that such an incongruity can never happen, or with other theologians who think it possible, but who, if asked to state the numerical deduction which this probability would make from certainty, would themselves be startled by the affirmation, that once in a thousand times the monstrous imagination might be verified. I say, whichever of the two opinions you adopt, the question practically would terminate and be resolved in the very same way. If, because certain of the miracle, you are certain that he who wrought it is from God, the obligation to attend to its overtures is altogether unqualified, and the obligation is not sensibly attenuated, even if, because certain of the miracle, you are not absolutely but within a small fraction of being certain that it is the pledge of God being with the performer of it. In either case, the obligation to give the message a hearing is clear, and unequivocal, and imperative; and heedlessness to the subject-matter of the testimony, after such an exhibition as this, would stamp, either on the one supposition or the other, the condemnation of resolved impiety on him who was guilty of it.

When there is a clear unequivocal miracle on the side of a professed message from heaven, on the one supposition either the certainty is so absolute, or on the other supposition, the presumption is so great, as to convict of a criminal indifference to God him who is chargeable with a contemptuous disregard of it. "If I had not done these works, they had not had sin." Still it speaks in favour of the second supposition, that when the allegation was made by the enemies of our Saviour, that He cast out devils by the prince of devils, our Saviour did not refuse to entertain it as if standing on the absolute and incontrovertible nature of miraculous evidence. He takes it up and replies to it; and it is instructive to observe that He fetches a reply from the nature of the doctrine which He promulgated, or in other words, that He meets the objection against the outward credentials of the message wherewith he was charged, with an argument drawn from the inward contents of it. If Satan were divided against himself, his kingdom could not stand.

The miracles, then, stamped a condemnation on those who refused to listen to the message, and we may well add, that they perform the same function still. The sound and admirable, and

even in the mere literary sense of the word, the attractive authorship of England on the Christian side of the deistical controversy, will be a witness against the infidelity or even the practical irreligion of those who had the means of consulting it, and being convinced thereby of the reality of the Christian miracles. Their habitual inattention to a book accompanied with such credentials—credentials which, had they been at the pains to unravel and to examine them, would have laid open the most satisfactory proofs of the divinity that accompanied it—this will stamp on their unbelief its decisive and most righteous condemnation. But it follows not that this is the only channel through which we can arrive at a certainty of the Bible being a Divine revelation, or that it is universally requisite that men should study the historical evidences of Christianity ere they can attain a rational conviction of the truth of Christianity, thus leaving to a vast majority of the population no other faith than the faith of passive credulity, of habit, and hereditary prejudice. We have already seen how much can be argumentatively done by the internal contents of the message. We have already seen how they may have enough of argumentative power to neutralize the objections taken against the miracles. But they have more than this. They have that whereon to rear a positive argument in behalf of the truth. We can gather from the examination of them not merely the absence of all such marks as might indicate an evil or a deceitful spirit to have had to do with the miracles by which the book was ushered into the world; but we might gather from the examination of them such positive marks of a good and a great spirit, such evidences of a profound acquaintance with the heart of man, along with such decisive indications both of the purity of its lessons and their power to transform sinful man into a holy and heavenly aspirant after all that is good, as fully to convince the reader that the book which he is reading emanated from one who is incapable of deceiving; that it came therefore from the source whence throughout all its pages it professes to have come, even from the fountain of light and truth, the pure and high sanctuary of God.

BOOK I.—CHAP. V.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE PRAYER.

TEACH us, O God, to acknowledge Thee in all our ways, and to lean not on our own understandings. May we not place our confidence in the wisdom of intellect. Teach us the higher wisdom of piety. In our study of the mental relations and dependencies, may we not overlook the relation of the thing that is formed to Him who hath formed it, the absolute and entire dependence of the creature on the Creator. We pray for the simple manifestation to our eyes of the simple truths of Thy Bible, and as it tells of heaven and hell, of time and eternity, of sin and the Saviour, may we apprehend as we ought, may we feel as we ought.

I am not sure that the description of the raising of Lazarus, given by Dr. Hill in this chapter, is altogether a happy or a successful effort on the part of our author. However much he may have been warranted to feel as he expressed, yet it follows not that his expression of these feelings should create a full or adequate sympathy in the mind of his readers. And so what we ourselves feel or perceive in our own direct attentive perusal of the narrative, may far exceed aught that we can catch by reflection from the description here before us. I feel this to be one of the least satisfactory passages in our text-book, when viewed in the light of an argument. It seems more an exertion of fine writing than of fine analysis, and I think bears the mark of having passed through the pulpit before it was turned into a prelection from the chair. I dispute not that the traits of character and the circumstantiality of the incidents in this chapter, will give the discerning reader a warm and living character of reality to the whole on his own perusal of it, however inadequately the impression may in this instance have been handled as it were by the intermediate person, who, acting the part of an expounder, stands between the Scripture and his own intelligence or feeling.

“Before leaving the circumstances of the miracle, I would observe, that however ably such objections as I have mentioned may be answered, there is much caution to be used in stating them to a Christian assembly. It is very improper to communicate to the people all the extravagant frivolous conceits that have been broached by the enemies of Christianity. The objection may remain with them after they have forgotten the answer, and

their faith may be shaken by finding that it has received so many attacks."—Vol. i. p. 134.

This is a very sound and judicious advice, and I am not sure but I would carry it further than is done in the text-book. I am not only not fond of perplexing the minds of the people by these minuter difficulties, but I doubt if the literary or argumentative evidence is a befitting topic for the pulpit at all. The tendency of the youthful preacher, when warm from the Hall, is to prepare and to preach sermons on the leading topics of the deistical controversy, and sometimes even to come forth with the demonstrations, the merely academic demonstrations, of natural theology. It is not stripping the expositions of the pulpit of evidence, and of sufficient evidence, even though the historical argument, or indeed any formal argument whatever, should form no part of them. If, as we believe, the main credentials of Christianity lie in its substance and contents, then you, in the simple unfolding of these contents, are in fact presenting them with the credentials, although you never offer them to their notice as credentials, but simply as truths, which do in fact carry the belief by their own manifestation to the consciences of the people. In making demonstration of their guilt, in making proposal to them of the offered remedy, in representing the danger of those who reject the Saviour, in urging the duty of those who have embraced Him—when thus employed, you are dealing with what I would call the great elements of preaching, and it is a mistake, that because not formally descanting on the evidence, you are therefore labouring to form a Christianity among your people without evidence. In the language of the Apostle, what you thus preach can commend itself to every man's conscience, and the resulting faith is neither the faith of imagination nor of servile compliance with authority, but a faith which has a substantial and vindicable ground of evidence to rest upon, and not the less substantial and vindicable, though not one word about the vindication ever passes betwixt you and the people whom you are the instrument of Christianizing.

The most striking example of the inapplicable introduction of an academic subject into the pulpit that I remember to have heard of, occurred many years ago in the west of Scotland, when a preacher, on receiving a presentation to a country parish, preached his first and customary sermon previous to the moderation of the call. The people were not, even from the first, very much prepossessed in his favour, and he unfortunately did not

make ground amongst them by this earliest exhibition of his gifts, he having selected for the topic of his pulpit demonstration the immateriality of the soul. This had the effect of ripening and confirming their disinclination into a violent antipathy, which carried them so far, that they lodged with the Presbytery a formal complaint against him, containing a series of heavy charges, where, among other articles of their indictment, they alleged that he told them the soul was immaterial, which, according to their version of it, was tantamount to telling them that it was not material whether they had souls or no.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VI.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY.—PROPHECY.

THE PRAYER.

THY throne, O God, is in the heavens, and Thy footstool upon earth ; and the ways of Thy providence, conducted though they be with perfect wisdom, are to us unsearchable. But we rejoice that though clouds and darkness are round about Thee, Thou hast given an assurance of Thy goodwill to the children of men, and hast made discovery in the gospel of Thy Son, of the blended love and holiness of Thy nature. We desire to read Thy character in the work of our redemption, and we bless Thy name, that by truth and mercy having met together there, and righteousness and peace having entered into fellowship, Thou canst at once be a just God and a Saviour.

There is one thing here worth the adverting to. The multiplication of the evidence, the number of its different kinds, if all made out, certainly enhances, and that at a rate far more prodigious than the generality of people are aware of, the whole strength of the argument for Christianity. If the probability on the side of the Christian religion, from its miracles alone, be as a thousand to one, and from its prophecies alone, be also as a thousand to one, the coincidence of both gives the assurance of a million to one that Christianity is true. But, on the other hand, you will remark that this multitude of evidence thus laid claim to, makes the case all the more vulnerable. Should some glaring misprophecy, for example, annihilate that branch of the evidence, it would effect a greater mischief to the cause than the mere detraction of one part of the argument—it, in fact, would reach a general blow to the religion itself. It would have the

same effect, for instance, on the argument from miracles, that the occurrence of a something immoral or false in the substance of the revelation would have. Such a thing would not only weaken or destroy the internal evidence, it would, as we have already seen, nullify all the external evidence together. And the mischief that could be done by the inculcation of what we know to be a false doctrine, or felt to be a false principle of morality, would certainly be incurred also by the deliverance of what we saw turned out to be a false prophecy. So that the same diversity of evidence, which, if all made out, strengthens inconceivably the case, before it is made out puts that case on the proportionally greater hazard of a fearful precariousness. It is a strong presumption in favour of Christianity, that the hazard is so fearlessly incurred. There is a striking contrast here between the simple unembarrassed manner of all Scripture when touching either on its miracles or prophecies, or precepts and principles, and the anxious explanations of the Alcoran on the subject of its own want of miraculous evidence. To hazard the ordeal of such a multiple examination, and come out untouched, or rather vindicated in all the branches of it—to make so wide and open an exposure as it does of itself, throwing itself abroad over the wide domain both of nature and of history, and making itself liable to be confronted at all hands with authors innumerable, and along such a lapse, too, of many generations—to begin its narrative with the commencement of the world, and shoot forward its predictions to the end of it, and yet to have sustained such a marvellous accordancy both with the certainties of the past and the gradual developments of the future, there is certainly in all this a most impressive general consideration on the side both of the Jewish and Christian revelations, which if they have incurred a thousandfold risk by varying and multiplying their pretensions as they have done, by substantiating these pretensions come forth with greatly more than a thousandfold strength of vindicated authority in consequence.

But there is more than this. Not only does the case gain prodigiously by this complication of its evidences when a distinct argument is gathered from each of its branches, there is in some of these separate branches, looked at singly, an immense accumulation of proof just from the number of distinct contingencies that must meet in order to make out the evidence in question. Nowhere is this more remarkable than in the evidence of prophecy. Take, for example, this single prophecy of the birth of our

Saviour at Bethlehem—what a prodigious evidence arises merely from the two parts of place and time! That the birth should have taken place anywhere in Judea of a person who might substantiate the claims of a Divine messenger was in itself a very hazardous position. But how the hazard is multiplied by the mere specification of the town—multiplied at least a hundred-fold should you only suppose the hundred towns or villages in the whole country! And, in like manner, there was risk in the prediction of such a personage within five hundred years from the time of its utterance, but the risk is augmented at least five hundredfold by the venturing on a particular year for the fulfilment of this event. The combination of the two gives immense force of evidence to both when they are thus found together. And then just think of the many contingencies that meet together, all of them beyond the reach of the possibility of human forethought, and each of them necessary to the determination of the birth at the place where it happened. The politics of a distant government had a share in this accomplishment. It hinged on a decree from Cæsar Augustus; and when one recollects that the providence of God in the affairs of the world was thus concerned, it seems strongly to mark a common origin for the providence and for the prophecy. The multiple evidence of combination is brought out with astonishing force when a circumstantial prophecy quadrates with a narrative alike circumstantial. Take, for example, the account of our Saviour's crucifixion, and though there were only ten circumstances of the narrative in the New Testament that tallied with the pre-intimations of the Old, what a mighty product of evidence may be grounded upon this! Let any man express in numbers the improbability that without inspiration any one should know, five hundred years before it happened, of the death that the teacher of the new revelation was to undergo, of the vinegar that was to be administered to Him, of the partition of His vesture by lot, of the mockery that was to assail Him on all sides, nevertheless of the honourable burial that He was to receive, and finally, of some wondrous enlargement that, after all this deep humiliation, was to come upon Him and upon His cause, with a number of nicer circumstances, which, in very proportion to their nicety, enhance to an incalculable amount the force of the argument. If there be ten thousand chances against one human being knowing of a single circumstance such as any of these respecting another at the distance of half a millennium, what a vast multiplication

of chances against his knowing them all! What an evidence is thus afforded for the preternatural communications of a higher intelligence than his own—what a miracle of knowledge is thus exhibited—what a hopeless superiority over all the anticipations of human sagacity or skill—what a palpable demonstration that here must have been the suggestion of Him who knoweth the end from the beginning, here must have been the omniscience of a God!

We hold that the sound mode of proposing an argument is to rest it, in the first instance, on the primary and direct prophecies, and then, after having propped the revelation upon this branch of the prophecy alone, with the other evidence, whether miraculous or internal, which is to confirm and support it, to accept of its informations as to secondary or special prophecies, and then prosecute an inquiry into these. We can abundantly afford to give up or to postpone the evidence of the secondary prophecies at the outset of our investigation into the subject, after which, having learned from revelation itself whether there be other prophecies that had a double sense and a double fulfilment, they would come afterwards as the next, and we have no doubt you would feel it a most interesting topic of inquiry. We hold this to be a more cautious, and wiser, and sounder management of the case than to come forth *ab initio* with any strenuous assertion on the subject of double prophecies, though the innumerable harmonies exhibited by these between the old and the new dispensations must serve afterwards to throw an augmented and a confirmatory light over the whole, and irresistibly, we believe, to impress the conviction of the one scheme and the one great pervading spirit that unfolds and animates the whole series of these revelations.

Proceeding, then, in this order, we would take the information of Paul as to the typical nature of the ceremonies and the ritual observances of Judaism. It is needless to inquire in how far we might have guessed this from the analogy between the rites of the Old and the doctrines of the New Testament. Any conjecture is superseded by the information accredited by the evidence of the direct prophecies, and all the other evidences in behalf of Christianity; and if, proceeding on this information, you enter on the study of the topic, I promise you a most pleasing walk of investigation, and one in which I am persuaded you will find a number of recondite symphonies that go irresistibly to impress, and that without fancy or fanaticism at all, the operations of a high and hidden wisdom in the construction of the symbolical

apparatus which so beautifully embodied and at length so luminously effloresced in the truths of a doctrinal and spiritual religion. You will remember that Moses constructed the tabernacle according to the pattern showed him in the Mount, and no one will suppose that it was caprice or contingency which dictated this. And we are told by Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews—a part of Scripture worthy of your profoundest attention—that the tabernacle and the vessels were the patterns of things in the heavens, and as such they must form a befitting representation of these things. I will not enter into particulars, but sure I am that between the sacrifices of Judaism and the great sacrifice made for the sins of the world—between the scape-goat who carried the sins of the people into the wilderness, where there was no more mention made of them, and the deliverance effected by Him who bare our transgressions, and on whom God laid the iniquity of us all—between the entrance of the high-priest into the Holiest of all, the innermost sanctuary of the temple, and the entrance made by our great Forerunner into the sanctuary of heaven, the pavilion of the residence of the Most High—between the burning of incense within the house at the time when the people in the outer court were at their prayers, and the doctrine of the Saviour's merits to perfume the supplications of the faithful, and make them rise with acceptance to the throne;—between these peculiarities of Judaism, I say, and a number of their counterparts in Christianity, that might be specified, there is such a resemblance as would, on the one hand, impress on the intelligent worshipper of the old dispensation the sense and spirit of the enlightened dispensation that came after it; and as, on the other hand, affords a most delightful contemplation to the saints and Christian students of the present day, when they recognise the precious and peculiar truths of the Christian religion under the dress and the drapery of Judaism.

Without entering on the general and philosophic consideration of analogy, and why it may be expected to run through all the dispensations of God, and to impress upon them all the one character of wisdom and general goodness which belongs to Him; without adducing this, I say, in vindication of the typical character of the Mosaic ritual, there is at least one obvious subserviency that is gained by such an institution. It goes to identify the two religions of Judaism and Christianity, in as far as the essential views which they served to impress of the Divinity are concerned. The one differs from the other but only in degree

and not in kind, as a full-grown man differs from a babe, or the expansion of any natural organization differs from the rudimental germ which contains all the parts and characteristics that enter into the coming development. More particularly would the sacrifices impress on the Jewish worshippers of these days both the justice and the placability of God—His hatred of sin, yet His readiness, by a fixed and consecrated way of access, to take the sinner back into acceptance. The book of Psalms may be regarded as a phenomenon strikingly illustrative of this, and proving most satisfactorily that the essential spirit and principles of Christianity entered into the mental exercises and experiences of the worshipper of that age; while, on the other hand, the perfect congeniality and taste wherewith even the most enlightened Christians of the present time trace the accordancies, whether more palpable or more delicate, that subsist between the two religions, cannot fail, even previous to any investigation or any personal finding of our own upon the subject, to prepossess us at least with the likelihood of their being a real groundwork in the actual state of the case for these types and double prophecies, at least worthy of our respectful examination.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VII.

PREDICTIONS DELIVERED BY JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art the high and the Holy One who inhabitest the precincts of eternity, yet Thou hast respect to the children of men, Thou despisest not the work of Thine own hands, and Thou lovest to dwell with him who is of a devout and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the devout one. We rejoice that Thou hast softened the awe of Thy greatness by the enduring representations which Thou hast given of Thy good-will even to the guiltiest of us all; and we desire to learn of Thee, O God, in that message of offered reconciliation which Thou hast sent into the world. Do Thou assist our efforts to seek after Thee, if haply we may find Thee.

There is certainly much of the gratuitous often in the interpretations which men attempt to give of prophecy; and, more especially, when they try to find a definite meaning in some

palpable and familiar thing for an expression of obscure generalities. It is not to be wondered that this should often fail in the hand of mere human expounders, particularly before that additional light has been cast upon prophecy which its fulfilment is invariably sure to reflect on the prediction to which it corresponds. But I would have you to remark here, that however false, and sometimes ludicrous, the particular failures may be, still, speaking of it as a general style of interpretation, it is sanctioned here by the example of the Saviour. Nothing could, I believe, be more susceptible of a wrong and mistaken application than a phrase so vague as "the abomination of desolation;" but how emphatically expressive it is, after all, of the very thing to which our Saviour hath applied it—the standards of the Roman army, held in particular detestation by the Jews because of the idolatrous devices which surmounted them, and which, preceding, as they did, the furious and merciless host of conquerors, could not have been more graphically rendered by any other description than "the abomination that maketh desolate."

We have no doubt in our own minds, that in the destruction of Jerusalem is typified the end of the world, and so that he who utters the prophecy respecting it uttered a prophecy with a double sense, not thereby, as Davidson says, admitting a license to gratuitous fancy in the interpretation of it, but, in fact, as requiring a twofold truth in the fulfilment of it, multiplying the chances against this more complex accomplishment, and so making it all the more decisive of the inspiration from which it emanated. Certain it is, that having respect only to the first of the fulfilments, and counting it but as a single prophecy, the minute and marvellous coincidence in so many continuous circumstances between the solemn prediction of the Prophet, who wept over the calamities which He foretold, and the appalling narrative of the historian, gives a more decided character of prophetic truth to the whole than is perhaps to be met with in all other examples, striking as they are, whether in the Old or New Testament. And the evidence grounded on this is most assuredly not diluted—is not affected at all, in fact, by the circumstance of their having another and ulterior fulfilment still in reserve. We who live between the two may well regard the one as the pledge of the other, and when not the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, the end of the Jewish dispensation, but the antitype to this, the real end of the world approaches, they who read and understand the signs of the times, and observe the higher, but still the corresponding tokens

which shall usher in the destruction of our present system, will, we have no doubt, from the very chapters which relate to the destruction of Jerusalem, be emphatically warned of what is before them, and learn with deeper impression than ever the necessity of betaking themselves to the only place of refuge, of fleeing from the wrath that is to come. The double sense of the prophecy will not embarrass the prospect—it will, in fact, impress it the more upon their fears or their hopes, when, over and above the verbal prophecy, the harmony of the two great events, one completed and the other in progress, will serve still more powerfully to impress that the same providence and power which gave such awful reality to the one, will be manifested in a like dread accomplishment of both.

We are aware of the argument on which they who would restrict every prophecy to a single sense might explain the general character of exaggeration that runs through the prediction, and which seems to exalt it above the dimensions, as it were, of the first or literal fulfilment. They might hold that this is due altogether to the symbolic language of prophecy, the language employed to describe beforehand the event in question, not because it symbolizes any event beyond it, but simply because, in the proper and peculiar nomenclature of the subject, it describes beforehand the one, and the only one thing which the prophecy has to do with. It is thus that, though no literal earthquakes had happened anterior to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet we are to hold the prophecy respecting it as exhausted if there happened political revolutions, of which earthquakes in prophetic language are the symbol; or if there was no personal coming of the Son of man, still we have nothing more to look for in connexion with this prophecy, seeing that it is but a way of expressing any great or signal dispensation; or, if the sun and moon were not literally darkened, nor did the stars fall, yet we are to count on no higher and further accomplishment than we have had already, because the sun and the moon but represent, in well-known prophetic phrase, the civil and ecclesiastical polity of a people, and the falling of the stars from heaven but the degradation of those upper dignities and powers which had long been fixed in the political hemisphere. In spite, however, of these explanations, the opinion abides with us, and, we believe, with every plain reader of the New Testament. On the particular subject of this prophecy I have not heard it remarked, but I think, would you read the twenty-fourth

and twenty-fifth chapters *in continuo*, you could not resist the impression of a continuity of subject, illustrated, first, by the predicted historical event, and the parable in evident connexion therewith; secondly, by another parable, the moral of which is almost identically in the same words with the moral of the prophecy—"Watch ye, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour when the Son of man cometh;" thirdly, by still another parable, where the fate of the unprofitable servant is represented in terms of precise similarity with the fate of the evil servant in the short parable appended to the prophecy; and, last of all, by what everybody understands to be a description of the literal day of judgment, ushered in by the act of the Son of man coming in His glory, the very expression made use of in the prophecy where it is said—"They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory." There is, in fact, a progressive expansion of light in these successive representations of the same great and ultimate event, beginning with the prophecy of the destruction at hand, and going forward from one exposition of the matter to another, till it terminates with the direct announcement of that far mightier desolation which is to take place at the end of our world.

BOOK I.—CHAP. VIII.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thee, O God, for the confirmation Thou hast given of all our hopes of immortality by having raised Jesus from the dead. We desire to see in His resurrection the strongest evidence and exemplification of the doctrine that we shall rise also. Give us to live by the powers of a world to come, to feel the littleness of time and the greatness of eternity, to make use of this world not as a resting-place but as a road; and may every new day, every rising morn, discern our growing meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I before hinted at the doctrinal importance of certain historical steps in the great process and work of our redemption by Jesus Christ. The death, the decease to be accomplished at Jerusalem—that high topic of celestial converse between the Saviour and His visitors from heaven on the mount of transfiguration—this

death, I say, the chief of those sufferings that were among the big and the mysterious things which angels desired to look into, we may be sure that it was not merely as an event, a naked though a great and an interesting event, they deemed it as so worthy of their regard; but because of its being an event charged with principle, because there was in it a manifestation of the character of the Godhead, because there hung upon it a deep and difficult question of jurisprudence, on the determination of which both the hopes of our outcast species and the dignity of Heaven's high government were suspended. It is the doctrine of that death being an atonement which gives the alone adequate explanation even of the historical circumstances that stood associated with it, of the deep agony in the garden, of the prospective shrinking felt and experienced in the anticipation of it by Him who, with all the energies of His own inherent Divinity to sustain Him, nevertheless stood appalled at the view of His approaching desertion—of the darkness, and the earthquake, and the rending of the veil, and the resurrection of men from their graves, and the solemn annunciation given with His last breath—that it was finished. It peculiarly comports with the character of the Christian dispensation that its doctrines, just like its evidences, should be thus embodied in facts. And passing on from the fact of the death to the fact of the resurrection, you will find, in like manner, that sentiment, and principle, and doctrinal truth may be educed from it. He is said to have been raised by the power of the Father, thereby testifying His acceptance of the propitiation that had been made for the sins of the world, opening as it were with His own hand the prison door, and so signifying that the penalties which He undertook of the broken law had been fully borne, representing by symbol and by action the perfect sufficiency of that redemption on which every man is invited to rest all his dependence and all his hopes. I feel quite assured that your pulpit demonstrations on these high topics will become greatly more effective by your following of Scripture in the exhibitions which you give of them; and if, instead of confining yourselves to the abstract employment of setting forth in mere argument the articles of theology, you set them forth even as the Bible does, embodied in narrative, and pictured, as it were, in the successive steps of a real and living history. For, pursue the history farther, and you will still find it to be animated by principle, and to speak in deeds the most vital and substantial of these truths which enter into the creed

of a disciple. When He rose to the Father's right hand, we are not merely told by this of His office as intercessor and of His mediatorial employment there in adding the incense of His merits to the supplications of His followers, but, connecting His entrance into heaven with the egress thence of the Spirit upon earth, we have the whole economy of man's restoration firmly and substantially, because historically, set forth in a series of acts, or by one great action, each evolution of the same inseparably connected with all that went before it, and so proving in its own peculiar way that man's justification must be followed up by his sanctification—that not a creature can be reconciled without being regenerated, else Christ is of none effect to him. I would bid you mark well the explanation which Peter gives of the phenomenon of the first great effusion of the Holy Spirit after the resurrection. This, he says to the multitude, is the promise of the Father to you and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call; enabling you to refute from a single verse the whole of that meagre imagination advocated by Benson and others, as if the ministration of the Holy Spirit were confined to the first ages of Christianity, and the whole effect of these ministrations was the power of working miracles—a power which in a single generation or two wholly disappeared, as if the dispensation in fact of the Holy Ghost formed no permanent part of the economy of the Christian Church, and the descent of His influences on every believer did not form as indispensable a part of his Christianity as the acceptance of the offered forgiveness through the blood of Him who died the just for the unjust. I hold in greatest value the doctrinal declarations of the Bible; but be assured that what may be termed the doctrinal facts of the Bible are not to be overlooked by you, and by teaching as it were even as Scripture itself does the abstract truths in the history, you are enabled to render them in a way highly impressive not merely to the popular, but I would say to all understandings.

BOOK I.—CHAP. IX.—SECT. IV.

MEASURE OF EFFECT PRODUCED BY THE MEANS EMPLOYED IN PROPAGATING THE
GOSPEL—OBJECTIONS DRAWN FROM IT—ANSWERS.

THE PRAYER.

THOU hast not left Thyself, O God, without a witness in the world ; for Thy word is nigh to us, even that Word which Thou hast exalted above all Thy name. We bless Thee that when our Saviour left the world, He left this precious legacy behind Him, and hath given us both the Scripture that we may read, and the Spirit to illuminate that Scripture. We would place ourselves under the teaching that He hath ordained, and of which He said it was more than an equivalent for His own personal presence upon earth. We would peruse assiduously the sacred record which has been transmitted to us, and we would pray assiduously for that Spirit which is given to us, and who alone can open our understandings to understand it.

This first reply to the set of objections stated in vol. i. p. 290 of our text-book, is perfectly sufficient of itself, and might have superseded the following ones, though they too, particularly the second and third, are in themselves exceedingly pertinent and powerful. But confining our attention at present to the first, you will not fail to perceive in the objection, on the one hand, and in the redarguing by which it is met, what I call a fair characteristic exemplification of the respective arguments by which the two causes are propped, of Deism, and Christianity. They exhibit just the difference between the presumptuous and the experimental. The objection proceeds on our supposed previous knowledge of the counsels of Heaven. The vindication proceeds on our actual knowledge of what took place on earth. The one is prompted by our imagination of what is best suited to the policy of God's high administration, the other has proceeded from the solid materials of the experience that we have had in the matters daily and familiarly acted on earth's lowly platform. In this part of the controversy, hypothesis and history stand contrasted with each other ; and it is just this contrast, I think, which marks throughout the one side and the other of this momentous question. Were it a question of science, there would not be the hesitation of one moment on which side the preference was due, and all I labour to establish is, that the principle of the decision is the same in a question of theology, to convince

you that we—reasoning on what we know of human nature, and what we observe of the characteristic differences between the true and the false in the testimony of men—are in truth the experimentalists, and that they, obtruding into mysteries beyond the ken of our faculties, are in truth the theorists. This difference will at length come to be more felt and recognised, so as to save the labour of a formal and lengthened refutation to many an infidel argument which has met with serious entertainment in other days. It is thus, I think, that much of the deistical controversy will at length be superseded and become obsolete as having had its day, but which is now forgotten, or only remembered as part of the literature of the subject. This is beginning to be verified even of Gibbon's secondary causes, which, though grounded on affirmations respecting man and the things of man, are felt to be quite overborne by the direct force of the historical testimony, and therefore much more verified of such arguments as the one now before us, where the same historical evidence is now brought to bear, and is felt to overbear instantly all the unauthorized fancies of infidels respecting the things of God. Observe that these questions imply an expectation that while human works admit of preparation, the works of God will be done instantly.

The great objects of the Divine administration are arrived at by slow but lengthened and magnificent progressions. The kingdom of grace differs not in this respect from what we observe in the kingdoms of providence and nature. Along the march of history we find that many centuries have elapsed in bringing onward the progress of knowledge and civilisation in the arts, and one cannot say that they are yet perfected. That mighty God who presides over the mighty cycles and periods of astronomy, and with whom a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years, is not to be measured by the impatience of man, or by any human standard of calculation whatever. We have evidently got on a field where Deists have nought but the gratuitous and the conjectural to oppose to us; and I do think it quite enough to plead the argument of Butler, so as to remove or silence the positive objection without attempting any positive solution, which is really attempted, in the fourth reply, thereby imparting so far the shadowy and hypothetical character to the reasoning of the Christian advocates that belongs in this instance to the reasoning of the infidel.

I look on this fourth reply as unsatisfactory, not only from the

presumptuous attempt to give a positive and peremptory solution of the objection in question—an objection that would be far better placed *hors de combat* by the analogical argument or even by the *argumentum ab ignorantia*, but because there is really much, I think, of false and mistaken principle in this whole paragraph on the subject of the propagation of Christianity, and on what that really and experimentally is which insures success to the missionary enterprise. I hold it to be both doctrinally and experimentally untrue, that a preparatory civilisation is necessary ere the human mind be in a state of readiness for the reception of the gospel of Jesus Christ. I do not believe that this was the sentiment of Paul, who professed himself a debtor both to the barbarian and the Greek; and it is furthermore a sentiment belied by the actual history of Christianization from the first ages of our faith down to the present day. It is a great question, because connected with the power of the internal evidence, and because on its settlement there depends another and a most momentous question, whether a man's Christianity is originated by the power of a historical argument operating on the ordinary faculties of his understanding, or whether it originates in the manifestation of its own truth brought home to the understanding and the heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit. The way in which this question is decided serves in my apprehension to mark the difference between a meagre and a vital substantial theology, and we cannot help being struck with observing how much the deliverance of our author is at one with that of men who, however accomplished in general literature, are not certainly the best informed on those matters which peculiarly and professionally belong to the subject of Christianity.

We have often said of an experiment that it may be as instructive by its failure as by its success. There was an attempt made by the Quakers some twenty years ago, to institute a process of mere civilisation and general instruction among the Indians of North America. It was much lauded by the Edinburgh Reviewers, both for its principle and for the success which was said to have attended it, and I have no doubt was greatly more congenial to the taste of many, because of its freedom from the hateful ingredient of evangelism. A scheme which looked at once to be rational and hopeful, had much to recommend it in the eyes of those who nauseate the whole enterprise of our missionaries, and in an age when experience is deified as the test of truth, certainly ought to have fixed upon it the regard of all who

at once were zealous in philanthropy, and enlarged and enlightened in philosophy. But the truth is, that for many years we have heard nothing of this adventure. In my own mind it augured ill, that notwithstanding all my inquiries, I could obtain no information respecting it till very lately. We have been assured by a respectable clergyman in the Western States of America, that it issued in no permanent result whatever.—(Edinburgh Review, vol. viii. p. 445; xv. p. 498.)

But a still more egregious mistake on the subject of missions and missionaries, was committed in their notice of another body of Christians—I mean the Moravians. They have now been at work for about a hundred years, and none more cordial and unanimous than they in declaring that the great instrument of their success, even among the most wild and unlettered savages, is the adaptation to their consciences of all that is most peculiar, and what the mere *savant* would designate as most mysterious in the doctrines of Christianity. The truth is, that they at one time attempted the other way of it, the way of gradual and rational preparation, set forth in the text-book, and most egregiously failed. Their present peculiar mode, the success of which has now become so palpable to all the world, they experimentally felt their way to; and it is their own public avowal, that when they first come into contact with barbarians, it is among the very earliest of their initial measures to preach Christ to them, and Him crucified. In other words, they just proceed with them as all other missionaries do; and the reason why they and not the others stand forth as the objects of a popular and sentimental admiration, is, that they have had time to work up a more striking and conspicuous result. The Christianity which they have, by their faithful and peculiar teaching, been the instruments of depositing in the heart of their converts, has now fully effloresced upon their visible history, and being sufficiently numerous to assemble in villages, the exhibition has at length become broad enough to strike the general eye, and to draw forth a tribute of eloquent admiration and delight even from the authors of sentimental journeys. The most striking example of this which occurs to us is that of Lichtenstein, who breaks forth into a strain of impassioned but of very ignorant admiration, when in his travels through South Africa he paid a visit to a Moravian establishment and who infected his reviewer with a kindred spirit of admiration.—(Edinburgh Review, vol. xxi. pp. 64, 65.)

Now, the truth is, that the Moravians, on the one hand, just go as fanatically to work as these arraigned missionaries; and the missionaries, on the other hand, just follow up their Christian instruction with instruction in the arts and decencies of life, and speed forward their converts in civilisation and scholarship as fast as the Moravians do. The only difference between them is, that the one set started earlier than the other. Both had a season of endurance to undergo in the obloquy of men hostile to the truth as it is in Jesus, and animated by strong antipathies against all the peculiarities of our faith. In the case of the Moravians the cloud of misapprehension has more fully broken away. But the day of vindication is approaching for the others also, who, in their turn, will experience the verity of the saying—that wisdom is justified of all her children.

Though I hold the controversy originated by Gibbon on the subject of secondary causes to be ephemeral, yet there are certain of the books which it called forth still worthy of perusal by the student of divinity. Watson's "Apology for the New Testament" is one of these; but I feel far more earnest in recommending to you the work of Sir David Dalrymple, Lord Hailes, entitled "An Inquiry into the Secondary Causes of Mr. Gibbon." It is the work of one extensively read both in Christian antiquities and in the contemporary classical literature of the first ages of the Church; and just as I would have you to read Warburton's "Juliana," so would I have you read both the work I now advert to, and also another by the same author, entitled "The Remains of Christian Antiquity," that you may see how the materials and the informations of remote history are converted into argument, and that, too, in the hands of one who, to extensive reading and laborious research, joined the habit of calm and dispassionate, but withal sound legal judgment, much exercised as that of this eminent jurist was on questions of documentary evidence. They are not voluminous, either of the works which I now recommend; and I do think, irrespective of the importance of the specific question that called forth one, if not both of them, they are calculated to do you most essential service, by introducing you to at least a specimen of that erudition which, after all, furnishes every historical argument connected with Christianity its first and best materials.

BOOK II.—CHAP. II.

PECULIAR DOCTRINES OF CHRISTIANITY.—FAITH.

THE PRAYER.

WE would draw near to Thee, O God, not with the fear of terror, but with the fear of deepest reverence. We bless Thy name that Thou hast provided a place of escape from the terrors of that law which we have violated, even amid the immunities and the privileges of that gospel which Thou freely proposest to the guiltiest of us all. May we enter into its peace, and may we come under its powerful and its purifying influences. Give us to combine the security of the Christian faith with the diligence of the Christian practice, that while we walk before Thee without fear, we may walk before Thee in righteousness and holiness all the days of our lives. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

“Such is the nature of that influence which the Scriptures represent the Spirit of God as exerting upon every true Christian. The immediate effect of that influence is called in Scripture ‘faith’—a word which, according to its etymology, *πίστις*, denotes a firm persuasion of truth, but which, in the Scripture sense of the word, comprehends all the sentiments and affections which naturally arise from a firm persuasion of the truth of Christianity,” &c.—Vol. i. pp. 357, 358.

There is something I suspect metaphysically wrong in this. I would not make these sentiments and affections enter as constituents into the faith. I would rather make them the tests of its reality. I would take the assertion absolutely and without modification or restriction, that by faith we are saved, which may be verified without prejudice to the other saying, that wanting these sentiments and affections we cannot be saved; but that not because these sentiments and affections form ingredients of the faith, and only because they are necessary and natural fruits of that faith when genuine. And this observation I would not limit to the gratitude and the obedience, but extend it to the trust also. In other words, I do not think that trusting in God or in Christ for your own salvation makes a component part of faith; but I think that faith really conceived in the overtures of the gospel, rightly understood, would induce that trust. If I witness the semblance of a faith or the profession of it without the sentiments or affections of thankfulness and submission and

reliance, instead of pronouncing on it as a wrong kind of faith, I should feel disposed to question its reality. I am not fond of admitting in faith anything more than the intellectual act of believing, or of viewing it in any other light than as a simple credence of the truths of revelation, in as far as these truths are or may be known to us. It makes nothing against this view that the devils are said to believe and tremble. They may have believed in the reality of the gospel salvation, but they could not believe in it as a salvation addressed to them, or which they were called personally to have any share in. Men believing in the reality of the same salvation, behoved to believe in it as a matter to the benefit of which they were invited, and in all the privileges and immunities of which they had a full warrant to rejoice. So that while the faith of the devil left him trembling as before, the faith, and the faith alone of the man, leads him to trust, and to be thankful, and to obey. Yet I would ascribe these posterior habits and affections to the faith singly. It is true, a man may, under delusion, have a false confidence and a false joy, without the purity or new obedience of the gospel. But I would even say of this, that it is ascribable to a want of truth and integrity in his faith. The faith which he has, or which he thinks himself to have, is not a whole faith in the whole testimony. He may prefer those parts of the Bible which speak to him of pardon, and on these he may like to fasten his attention, to the exclusion of other parts; but the reality of that man's faith even in those parts which he does like must be very questionable, who wilfully shuts his eyes or resists the impression of other parts which he does not like; and still I would suspect not the quality but the existence of the man's faith, in the declaration that God is in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, who proceeds not on the declaration, that unless ye repent ye shall all likewise perish. This whole matter falls more properly to be treated in that department of our course which is comprehended in the text-book under the title of Induction of particular questions in theology; but meanwhile, I would have you to understand that it is a highly important thing for the settlement of some momentous notions, and for clearing away certain puzzling obscurities that are apt to gather around them, to distinguish between the consequent effects of faith and the constituent parts of it.

I would not say that a man had a real faith in anything which he would not stake his personal safety or interest upon.

It is not enough to evince a faith in any proposition whatever, that we do not question it, and that it even falls in with our established habits of conception upon the subject. There is scarcely a reader of history who does not know it to be the unqualified tradition from ancient times, that Great Britain was invaded by Julius Cæsar, and who does not believe, or rather who does not think he believes, in the reality of that invasion. Yet if he could possibly be brought to the test by any such proposal as that of hazarding his whole personal fortune on the truth of it, the truth to be decisively ascertained through some new channel of evidence that had just been opened up, I am not sure but there are many who never till now felt a doubt upon the subject that would not demur to the proposal, in which case I would say of this event, that though it had all along formed one of his historical imaginings, it had never been a sure and absolute and firmly established article of his creed. And I would say the same of a historical faith in Christianity. If a personal interest be not staked upon it, I would doubt not the kind but the actual reality of the faith. And the very circumstance of one's personal Christianity so often not coming in the train of the historical, but coming so often, if not universally, in the train of the experimental faith, is to me one proof more of what I have frequently had occasion to assert in opposition to our text-book, that an acquaintance with the historical evidences of Christianity is not the natural foundation of a persuasion of its truth, but that that persuasion cometh far more surely, and therefore far more efficiently, out of the converse which the mind holds with the internal contents of this revelation, and not with its outward credentials—that is, cometh far more surely in train of the internal than of the external evidences.

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This mistake*—that is, that faith is the procuring cause of our salvation—is so very deleterious, and has such extensive influence on the mental habitude of Christians, that I shall make it the special subject of my lecture on Thursday. Let me only state at present, that as under the legal economy the great aim was to work up the requisite condition of obedience, so as to obtain the rewards of the law, under the evangelical economy the great aim is to work up the requisite condition of faith so as to obtain the rewards of obedience. In this respect the two

* See vol. i. p. 360.

economies seem to be alike, that each requires the making out of a condition ; and in as far as the idea of merit is associated with conditions, certain it is, that in opposition to the whole spirit of the New Testament, men may be led to the allegation of a merit for that faith, of which, nevertheless, the Apostle said that it excluded all boasting, that it magnified the Redeemer as all in all, and reduced man's part to that of a simple receiver from the bounty of another, a simple dependent not on his own righteousness, but on the righteousness of another.

There is a great tendency on the part of evangelical writers to look upon good works as merely the signs or the evidences of our salvation. This is giving them greatly too low a place. The sign is an inferior matter to the thing signified ; and if by virtue being a sign of our salvation, it be meant that salvation is something different from and higher than the virtue itself, then is the virtue of man looked upon as an inferior consideration to the safety of man, and salvation is degraded into a something agreeable to his selfish or animal nature. It never can be too much insisted on, that man's re-established or regenerated virtue is not a symptom of his salvation, it is the very essence of it. Salvation is but the restoration of man's spiritual health, and this health lies in the harmony of well-poised affections, in the well-conditionedness of a mind where principle is throned in undisputed supremacy over all the inclinations and appetites of nature, in the rightly attuned mechanism of a heart where the love of God, both for His excellence and for His kindness, has supreme ascendancy over all the desires of the inner and all the doings of the outer man. This if entered upon and in progress now, is the beginning of heaven, whose kingdom is not, lo here ! or, lo there ! for that kingdom is within us, and this, after it hath reached perfection and been freed from every grosser alloy in the realms above, is just a moral heaven to which we shall be translated, consisting, as it does, of the love and the likeness of God, under whose new economy, therefore, good works, or the virtues which they indicate, instead of having the mere secondary rank of the tokens of salvation, have in fact the primary rank of being the constituent parts of salvation.

It is often asked what room is there for works in the evangelical system, after they have been superseded as a meritorious condition of salvation by the imputed righteousness of Christ. It is forgotten that higher far than that legal value of virtue by which it purchases from the Lawgiver the right to heaven's

rewards, is that moral value of it by which it recommends itself to the moral taste of the Divinity, and peoples heaven with a congenial society. Generally speaking, and as the families of earth are constituted, the right of a child to maintenance in its father's house does not depend on the degree of virtue or of moral accomplishment which belongs to it. Here, then, just as in the evangelical system, which dissociates virtue from any place in the title to heaven, is virtue dissociated from any title to a place in the privileges which naturally attach to every member of the family. Yet who would put the question, Of what value after this is the moral worth of children? Who does not see that precisely on the difference between their moral worth and their moral worthlessness, it turns whether the dwelling-place on earth shall resemble a little heaven, or be an epitome of pandemonium? And the same of the real heaven where God has His especial dwelling. He loves virtue for its own sake, in a far higher degree than He loves it because of the rightful property He has in the service and obedience of His own creatures. The material world can render Him no moral, no rational service; yet because of the loveliness which He himself had impressed upon it at the creation, He rejoiced over it as very good. And so of the moral world, apart altogether from the virtue which spreads and multiplies there, being the property and the allegiance which are due to Himself, there is a higher delight on the part of God in the beauties of the mind, in the charms of that moral scenery which is spread around Him in heaven, where nothing that defileth can enter in, the love which His own children bear to Himself and His honour, in the graces of that character over which the principle of duty has supreme sway, in the worth and the fellowship of all those good affections which compose a moral beauty, and which circulate a moral gladness throughout the upper sanctuary. These are properties which all remain to human virtue, after that, under the evangelical system, virtue has lost the power which it at one time had, of earning a right to the inheritance above, the property in fact of beautifying that inheritance, and of yielding the only happiness which essentially belongs to it, of commencing our heaven here, and of expanding it in a finished and full-grown perfection hereafter.

BOOK II.—CHAP. III.

CHRISTIANITY OF INFINITE IMPORTANCE.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise and true God. Do Thou establish within us a perpetual and practical sense of Thyself. Put Thy fear into our hearts that we may not depart from Thee; and may the authority of Thy will be of constant and hourly effect in overruling all the wayward propensities of a frail and an evil nature. Give us to cherish a habitual trust in the merits of the Saviour, so that we may live under a habitual sense of our reconciliation with God; and give us to experience the truth of the saying, that they who receive Thy Son by believing on His name, receive along with Him power to walk as Thy children.

There is a process often adverted to in the New Testament, and which history and the experience of our nature go to confirm, the reaction between the understanding and the heart, in virtue of which, when the one is corrupted the other is darkened when the one is purified and guarded, the other is enlightened, and enlarged. One can see a natural connexion and a natural influence in these things. In proportion as the intellect loses its clear sense and knowledge of a God, we are not to wonder that the moral dispositions undergo a depravation; and, on the other hand, when vicious propensities lord it over us, they, by disinclining us to the thought of God, and so drawing away our attention from Him, do naturally, and, as of course, land us in an oblivion, and at length, an ignorance of the character of the Deity. The world underwent this headlong process of degeneracy from one age to another, and along the footsteps of its history we may mark the reciprocal influence of a darkened understanding upon the affections, and of corrupt affections back again in thickening still more the clouds of misconception and ignorance that beset the understanding. And what is true of the history of the world is true of the history of an individual. It is a law of our nature most important to be adverted to, that on moral and religious subjects the understanding and the will should so reciprocate upon each other; the depraving effect, on the one hand, of false views respecting the Divinity, the darken-

ing effect, on the other, of those moral perversities by which the heart and character are distempered. We believe the matter can be accounted for philosophically, but it serves most strikingly to mark the accordancy between the processes of grace and those of nature, that in Scripture the very reciprocation between the understanding and the will is spoken of as a judicial infliction on the part of God. Because they wanted gratitude their foolish heart was darkened. On the other hand, because they retained not God in their knowledge, which proceeded from their not liking to retain Him, they were given over to vile affections and to a reprobate mind. The same process is exemplified under the Christian economy; and it serves most strikingly to mark how essentially this religion of faith is also a religion of virtue. A right belief has a moralizing influence ascribed to it—faith purifying the heart, working by love, overcoming the world. On the other hand, a right morale, whether in regard to principle or performance, is stated to have a most favourable reflex influence in the confirming and the enlightening of our faith. If any man is willing to do the will of God, he shall know of His doctrine whether it be of God. If any man keep my sayings, to Him will I manifest myself. The Holy Ghost, that great agent both of light to the understanding and of strength to the principles, is given to them who obey Him. By doing that which conscience tells us to be wrong, there is a resistance given to this great agent, and He, grieved, or provoked, or quenched thereby, may withdraw Himself from the mind that He would else have made the subject of His revelations and His influence, and thus—you will find it important that it should be adverted to when called on for advice relating to the experimental Christianity of your hearers—there is, on the one hand, a connexion between disobedience and spiritual darkness, and on the other, a reverse connexion between obedience and spiritual discernment. He who hath to him shall be given, from him who hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

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The consideration here stated* is of powerful effect in preaching—I mean the enhancement of men's guilt by their rejection of the gospel. The more freely, in fact, that you ply them with the overtures of reconciliation, the more forcibly may you expatiate on the awful consequence of their non-compliance with

* Vol. i. pp. 394, 395.

them. The tenderness of the one argument and the terror of the other are in exact proportion; for the more earnest and affectionate the kindness has been which presses the mercy of the New Testament on their acceptance, the more emphatic will be the condemnation of those who have stood their ground against the touching demonstrations of a forbearance which they have trampled on, of a long-suffering and a goodness which they have despised.

To the people whom you address, the gospel should be held forth as an alternative dispensation. They, on the one hand, should be plied with the language of entreaty; nor can you, from the terms in which this message of peace to the world is couched and conveyed, exceed your commission as its ministers, by urging the proposals of full and unconditional forgiveness on the entertainment of all and the acceptance of all. There is great charm and efficacy in the isolating or individualizing of your hearers, so as instead of casting the matter generally abroad, to press it personally home on every conscience, and, if possible, bringing it closely into application to the hopes and the fears of every bosom. This you are fully warranted to do by the terms in which the message of the gospel is conceived—by words, for example, of such universal, and at the same time of such pointed and specific application, as “whosoever,” and “all,” and “any,” and “every,” being associated with the calls and invitations of the New Testament. You stand on prodigiously high vantage-ground when you beseech them to be reconciled, when you tell them of this most impressive attitude on the part of God, if it were only reflected on—God waiting to be gracious—when you assure them, in the very terms of His own protestation and His oath, that He has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn to Him and live, and is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But after having urged and exhibited this argument to the utmost, there still remains in the treasury of Divine truth another, and that, with spirits of a certain mould, a still more overwhelming argument. The one argument, in fact, just serves to whet and to temper or bestow a finer edge upon the other. In very proportion to the tenderness of those slighted calls will be the tremendous severity of that reaction which you shall bring upon yourselves if you turn away from them. If the gospel be not the savour of life unto life, it will be tenfold more the savour of death unto death. There are Scripture expressions

which indicate an awful reaction of this sort; and, give notice, that whatever provocation there may be in the violated law, there is far deeper provocation felt in the neglected gospel. There are some such intimations given to us by the phrase of "treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath," if we despise the long-suffering of God; and that other phrase, full of emphasis and terror, "the wrath of the Lamb," making us to understand that no anger burns more fiercely than the anger of slighted tenderness, no vengeance is more overwhelming than the vengeance of an outraged and rejected mercy.

BOOK II.—CHAP. VI.

CONTROVERSIES OCCASIONED BY THE SCRIPTURE SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

THOU reignest in majesty, O God, over the universe which Thou hast made, with power unlimited, with wisdom unerring, with goodness inexhaustible, and, above all, with a tender mercy which rejoices over all Thy works, and in the midst of all Thine attributes. We bless Thy name for the gospel of Jesus Christ, in which we behold the radiance and the harmony of all the perfections of Thy nature. Give us to behold Thy glory in the face of Thy Son; and may we experience both the peace and the purifying influence of Thy salvation, which proclaims Thee at once to be a just God and a Saviour.

It was not science, but science falsely so called—it was not philosophy, but vain philosophy, which the apostle denounces in his writing. It was not the philosophy whose great, and it may be said whose only question to her disciples is, What findest thou? for such a philosophy as this is in strict accordance with the faith whose only question to her disciples is, What readest thou? Both the one and the other have the utmost respect for that boundary which separates the known from the unknown, the one never venturing beyond the limits of experience, so as to be wise above that which is written in the volume of accessible nature; and the other never venturing beyond the limits of revelation, so as to be wise above that which is written in the volume of Scripture. We do not think that, had the Baconian philosophy been known and proceeded on in the days of Paul, he

would have stigmatized it as a vain philosophy; and when we look back to the ages that most abounded with theological controversy, as being also signalized by the most glaring transgression of all her maxims, we cannot but look onwards with high anticipation when we think of the juster and more modest philosophy of our own day, as the token of another era in theological science, when the vain and the useless and the imaginative questions that agitated the Church in other days shall be suffered to sleep in the shades from which they had been conjured, and all the dogmata of our profession shall be the results of an enlightened criticism employed on the sayings of Scripture, and of enlightened system founded on the generalities of Scripture.

And we believe it will be found that what was true of ancient is also true of modern heresy. It proceeds on the fancied competency of reason to entertain questions which lie without her boundaries. It proceeds on a preference for the fancies of speculation over the findings of experience—for any hypothesis by man on a subject beyond the scope of his faculties, I would call a fancy of speculation; whereas any testimony in the Bible of a messenger who had proved his credentials from heaven I would call a finding of his experience. On this principle, I have long been struck, not with the daring temerity alone but with the illiterateness of Socinianism, fully as much with its want of philosophic consistency and strength as with the want of a firm scriptural basis on which it might stand, so as, in fact, to confer on it the aspect rather of a piece of meagre sentimentalism, than of a formidable system that had aught like profound scholarship or solid argument to sustain it.

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The distinction between the business of preaching and that of students in divinity is very well stated in our text-book.* It is right that you should become acquainted with the controversies of the Church, and know both how to vindicate and how to state the propositions of a sound theology, so as to neutralize the reasonings of those who oppose them, and to substitute in the place of their statements such counter-statements as might serve the purpose of a precise and effective testimony against them. But ever remember, that the direct purposes of conviction and comfort and edification are best served in a general audience by the original statements of Scripture, and by your simple and natural attempts to enforce these, without reference at all to the

* See vol. i. p. 440.

sophistry or even to the existence of the errors which stand opposed to them; so that the proper work of the pulpit might even be best and most efficiently discharged although from one end of the year to another not one sermon had been in the least tinctured with the phraseology or flavour of a polemic theology. It were laying a most onerous servitude on the business of preaching, if incumbent to go out of the plain and rectilinear way, merely because this one heretic or that other may have sprung up in some bygone age of the Church, of whose unscriptural crudities, after all, the great bulk of every congregation are completely unconscious. The office of a steward for dispensing the mysteries of God is wholly distinct from the office of a debater for putting down the mistakes and misconceptions of men. The pulpit is the place for the discharge of the one office, the press, or, if you will, the social party, is the place for the discharge of the other; and you should be accomplished for both, so as to acquit yourselves of them in the right places or occasions, but without interchanging the places and confounding the one with the other. And here let me admit that the very exercise of discriminating between truth and error may qualify you for a clearer and more distinct statement of the truth, a statement which you can make in the pulpit without disturbing the minds of your auditors at all with any intimation, and far less with any formal refutation, of the error that is opposed to it. I cannot refuse that, just as you may be better prepared for the description of a strictly rectilinear movement by having the deviations and the unevennesses pointed out to your notice, so may you be the better enabled, for a firm and unfaltering pathway of sound doctrine, by the deflections and the byways of unscriptural speculators having been set forth and exposed to you. Whether I regard your access to the public by authorship, or your opportunities of converse with men in society, I would have you, the future office-bearers of our Church, accomplished for the task of laying an arrest upon error—and I can imagine not a few, but many instances, where your studies of the controversial theology may accomplish you better for the direct statements of the pulpit, even though there should never be the formal introduction of aught like controversy there. Only in the order of your studies on the subject-matter of Christianity, I should like the *Theologia Elenctica* to come last, and even then not to be entered on without a constant reference, as I have already advised you, to the *Theologia Didactica*. The whole

discussion is now so implicated with controversy that I am not yet aware of a single treatise where you will find these two completely clear of each other; but certainly were I to assign a progress for your readings, I should vastly prefer your commencing with the books where the scriptural predominates, and finishing off with the books where the scholastic errors of the heretics are met and extinguished by scholastic instruments. On this principle, I must confess my partiality for those summaries of doctrine where, under each head or general position, you meet with a cluster of texts in proof or confirmation of it. It may sound oddly, but really, on principles which I hold to be the philosophically sound ones, I should esteem it a good commencement if you pondered every question and answer of our Shorter Catechism, with its accompanying Scriptures under each, in the little manual commonly known by the title of the Proofs; or if you read our Confession, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, in those editions where the Scripture proofs are given at large. After these there is a book that I like very much, the Aphorisms of Vitringa, where (though he dips a little into the controversial) the leading positions of theology are given in consecutive order, with a host of Scripture authorities under each of them. And here I would have you not to be betrayed into the impression of the insignificancy of the work because of the humble duodecimo form in which it is presented, nor to think that the enormous folios of the systematic theologian, who gives more of himself and less of Scripture, form a prouder or a greater achievement. I suppose that you read all the texts pointed out though not presented in these little summaries, and then you will be in the direct line of making solid advancement in the pure didactic theology. After him, I would have you to read an abridgment of the Marckii Medulla, both because of its arrangement and its scriptural references, though he enters more largely than Vitringa into the controversial, the title of his work indeed being the *Theologia Didactica et Elenctica*. It is difficult after this to institute a precise order for your systematic readings on divinity. I would not object to Burnet on the Thirty-Nine Articles, in spite of certain laxities of sentiment to be found in him. He may be followed by Pearson on the Creed; then by Calvin's Institutes; then by Pictetus' larger work on Systematic Theology, who, though large on the controversial, yet keeps the *didactica* and the *elenctica* perfectly distinct from each other. I on purpose would give him a precedency to the elder Turretin,

who is controversial all over, his book indeed being entitled *Theologia Elenctica*; and perhaps never was an author better accomplished for the ponderous task of which he has acquitted himself in so many ponderous volumes. There is no man, perhaps, who possessed more of the legal talent of clearing away the irrelevancies of every question, and putting it upon its own right basis; and then there is such soundness of judgment, even in matters of purely ethical science as well as in theology, and generally a wise and well-argued deliverance at the last. There are few occasions on which I either question or dissent from him; while all over, on the impulse of an immediate perusal, I have marked in places innumerable the gems of precious and weighty thought. You will observe I put him last in my catalogue, for with him at present I finish my recommendations, being not yet qualified to say aught of Stapferus, whose book, however, from its title, should be read at the close rather than the commencement of your series of systematic authors; the work I allude to is *Stapferi Institutiones Theologiæ Polemicæ*. The amount of systematic reading which I have now recommended is enough, and more perhaps than enough, on an average, for students of divinity. Some of you, I trust, on a principle which I have often adverted to, will overshoot my advice, making this their favourite walk, and so qualifying themselves for sustaining in their own persons the honours of the Church militant. But I have no ambition and no wish to send out a whole army of gladiators; and though I should not be sorry even if all, during the course of their preparation for the ministry, found time to read all that I have now specified, I must not forget the still higher demands which the hortatory theology has upon your attention than the controversial, and that the main object of your studies should be to qualify you for the business of exposition and address in pulpits, and for the care of parishes.

BOOK III.—CHAP. I.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE PERSON OF THE SON.

THE PRAYER.

We bless Thy name, O God, that when we had undone ourselves by disobedience, Thou laidest help upon one who is willing and mighty to save.

We rejoice that Thou sentest Thy Son to the world, and hast declared Him to be the brightness of Thine own glory, and the express image of Thine own person. Thou hast set Him forth as a propitiation—may we look at Him as such, and have peace. Thou hast set Him forth as an example—may we look at Him as such, and walk in His steps.

“It is the language of Dr. Priestley, that the value of the gospel does not, in any degree, depend upon the idea which we may entertain concerning the person of Christ, because all that is truly interesting to us, is the object of His mission, and the authority with which His doctrine is promulgated.”—Vol. ii. p. 2.

There are two distinct principles on which a wrong belief might endanger the interests of your eternity. The first is, that, as an unbelief in the face of clear scriptural testimony, it may imply a criminal disregard of the authority of Scripture, and so in itself may be the object of a direct judgment and condemnation. This principle may be conceived to be exemplified even with matters of doctrine and information which are comparatively trifling, such as, that Marcus was sister's son to Barnabas. Faith in such a statement may be of little importance on its own account; but still the want of it may indicate another want of fearful magnitude and effect—it may indicate the want of a full and settled faith in Scripture. But there is another and a distinct principle on which a wrong belief might put to hazard, nay put to certainty of overthrow and ruin, the wellbeing of our eternity. It may relate to a doctrine whose belief is indispensable to that state of mind and character without which there can be no meetness for heaven. The truth of Marcus being sister's son to Barnabas is in no way the medium of our moral or spiritual preparation for paradise; but many a doctrine can be specified having this property of a medium, and perhaps an essential medium, so that wanting it, you miss the road that leads to a blissful immortality, the mental discipline that qualifies you for its enjoyment or for entrance thereupon. And furthermore, as it may be expected that in proportion to the importance of the doctrine will be the frequency and the fulness of the disclosures which revelation make of it, we may expect that, in reference to it, a wrong belief may endanger the man's eternal state in both the ways which I have now specified, as being both a criminal defiance to clear scriptural testimony, and implying a state of opinion fatally deficient and wrong, because connected with a fatally deficient and wrong state of the sentiments and affections. The distinction which I have now made will enable us to dis-

criminate between the truths which are and those which are not fundamental in Christianity. They are those which are characterized by the second principle. A truth may be clearly revealed and yet not be a fundamental one. To be fundamental, it must essentially enter into the formation of those sentiments and that character which qualify for heaven.

Now, on both grounds we would meet the assertion of Priestley in reference to the divinity of our Saviour. In the first place, it is not unimportant whether we shall think one way or other of a matter, provided that Scripture has given clear and manifest deliverance thereupon, which we hold it to have done in reference to this particular doctrine. It is not unimportant whether we shall set up our own wisdom in opposition to the doctrines of revelation, and may in fact be the evidence of as rebellious a spirit as setting up our own will in opposition to the precepts of revelation. And then, as to the other principle—the importance of the doctrine in itself as a medium through which we arrive at a right state of sentiment and affection, let me only remark at present, that if the Saviour be clearly revealed as a Divine person, in what state are we, as to wrong and criminally wrong principle, if we do not render to Him Divine honours? Suppose that there is evidence enough to substantiate His Divinity did we only but attend to it, and then what excuse can we have for withholding from Him who is represented to us as God manifest in the flesh, as God blessed for ever, the homage due to His name? If you will but recollect, you will find that there were in this the very essence of direct impiety. Grant that the works of nature give every indication of the God of nature, and if you, in defiance of these indications, withhold from God the incumbent reverence and the incumbent gratitude, this were the very essence of irreligion. Now, I beg you to consider where lies the moral difference, if indeed there be any at all, between the indication afforded of the Divinity in the world, and the indication afforded of the Divinity in the word. If there be clear passages there attaching the characteristics and the honours of Divinity to the person of Jesus Christ, then to regard Him not as God and to worship Him not as God, is just tantamount to a refusal on our part of the allegiance due to a Being whose Divinity has been manifested and made known to us; or, in other words, is as much an act of defiance to God as if rendered on any other occasion when we had met the traces of Him in any other quarter of contemplation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. II.

SIMPLEST OPINION CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near, O God, in a spirit of humble dependence upon Thee. Give us to recognise Thy sovereignty in the history of the world, and to perceive how subservient all the administrations of Thy providence are to the fulfillments of Thy word. Thou art a God of judgment; and in the destruction of the rebellious of other days may we behold a manifest token of that still more awful destruction which awaits the ungodly at the consummation of all things. May we think of that coming day, of its solemnities and its terrors, and so be made to feel what manner of men we ought to be, in all fear and holy conversation.

“Having stated the three opinions concerning the person of Christ, to which all others may be reduced, I proceed to compare the grounds upon which they rest. And here I must begin with observing, that general reasonings concerning the probability of any of these opinions, or its apparent suitableness to the end of Christ’s manifestation, ought not to enter into this comparison.”
—Vol. ii. p. 17.

I would say of all general reasonings upon this subject what I have repeatedly said of conjecture and theory on any subject, whether of theology or general science, that it is placed beyond and above the limits of human observation. They are equally unsound and unphilosophical in both. To set aside Scripture on this high and to us inaccessible topic, is just as glaring a transgression of all just principle as to set aside experience on any question of general interest or speculation. To be the disciples of Bacon in things of science, is, if consistently upheld in the passage of the mind from the one department of investigation to the other, to be the disciples of the Bible in things of sacredness—it being the uniform demand of sound philosophy, What findest thou? and the uniform demand of sound faith, What rearest thou?

On the particular topic before us, related as it is to the constitution of the Deity, and to the competency of a superior nature entering into union with an inferior, so as to compound and to form one person, I would say that never could we be presented with a matter for our opinions or our thoughts so

utterly beyond the precincts of our attainable knowledge by any exercise of any faculty of our own. It is a thing of which, aside from that which enters into the narrative of Scripture, the collective experience of the whole species from their first origin can give us no information whatever. The Deity is altogether shrouded from our observation, wrapt as it were in profound invisibility from our eyes; nor can we penetrate the veil which mantles Him from the perception and the ken of the human senses. Any subject which relates to His physical constitution belongs to a sphere transcendently above us, and it may be said to lie at the remoteness of infinity from any possibility of our discernment. He who was with the Father from the beginning, and has told us something of the mysteries that be in the place He came from—He who, after having sojourned here, ascended to that place, and sent down the Paraclete, or a monitor to tell in larger revelation of a region wholly unexplored by us—one word of definite information from Him is worth a thousand of our own darkling speculations; nor can I imagine a more tremendous presumption, or even an infliction of greater violence against all the rules of just philosophy, to say no more, than for us to allow any imagination of ours to set aside the statements of Heaven's own inspired messengers.

BOOK III.—CHAP. III.

PRE-EXISTENCE OF JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy word, O God, dwell in us richly in all wisdom. Give us both to experience its power and to taste of its preciousness. May the disclosures there given of Jesus Christ teach us to honour the Son even as we honour the Father. There are secret things which belong to Thyself, and there are revealed things which belong to us and our children. We rejoice that among these we find, as if written with a sunbeam, that Christ is God. We would render to Him the homage that is due to His nature and to His name; and we confide in His everlasting strength both to sanctify and save. Be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

John the Baptist bore this testimony to Christ's pre-existence:—"After me cometh a man which is preferred before me,

for he was before me, *πρῶτος μοῦ ἦν*" (John i. 15, 30). Lardner interprets these words as meaning—"He was continually the object of my reverence." "I knew of Him before that He came out to public notice, and admired Him in anticipation, so as to regard Him even then as superior to myself." He was before me, we thus read, is tantamount to John's saying, that He was continually before myself in my own estimation—a specimen of the gratuitous and far-fetched way in which a remote and most unlikely meaning is attached to Scripture for the purpose of making escape from the obvious and natural meaning when that happens to be opposed to a favourite doctrine. But the interpretation is not so remarkable on this account, as that it should have been proposed and maintained by Lardner, a proud and pre-eminent name in theology, yet, I would have you to observe, in a special department of that science altogether distinct from the present one which we have now entered. An able expounder of the outward credentials of Christianity may not necessarily be an able expounder of its inward contents. It is one business to be a collector of testimonies, and another business to be a translator of texts. An authority earned on any given field of discovery and investigation should not be extended to another field wholly distinct from it; and it were just as irrational to defer to Lardner's opinion on the subject-matter of our faith, because he has been a successful and laborious compiler of its proofs, as it would be to make Sir Isaac Newton absolute on a question of anatomy, because he had laid open the mechanism of the planetary system. There is a strong delusion upon this subject among men who will not think for themselves and take their own independent view of every argument which is submitted to them; and it is because of my confidence in your superiority to this delusion that I fearlessly recommend Lardner on the evidences, though I think him wrong on the doctrines of our religion, and Michaelis on the bibliography of Scripture, though I think him egregiously wrong on the question of its inspiration. We should feel it somewhat a ticklish and hazardous matter thus to bring before your eyes the unsound deliverances of men whom, on their own peculiar subjects, you have been accustomed to behold with reverence; but really I feel as if there were a strength and a staple in the truth, by which it is enabled to stand its ground against every adverse influence of this sort, and more especially on the subject of the Trinity. I really do think, that the best

way of disarming Lardner's four sermons on this subject of all their mischief, would just be to read them. It were greatly more dangerous if you only heard that he was the author of an argument which you had not studied than if you had studied the argument. His known authority, associated with his unknown argument, would bring a more unfavourable influence upon the question than if both were known; so that the most direct mode in this instance of dissipating the authority would be to obtain a sight of the production, and by personal inspection become satisfied of its weakness.

I am sorry to allege of Lardner, that there seems something disingenuous in these sermons. In the first one, where he considers the Trinitarian scheme, he does not let himself out to an express or formal denial of it, quoting the words of our orthodox formularies, and then saying, "These expressions might be allowed to represent an obscure doctrine. Some have said that it is contradictory. All I affirm is, that it is obscure and difficult to be conceived and understood, if it be not absolutely incomprehensible." And yet when he comes in his second sermon to consider the Arian scheme, he is quite bold and distinct in his avowals, resting them, however, on such arguments as would make infinitely more against the Trinitarian, of which he had just spoken with such an appearance of reserve and delicacy—not therefore inflicting a direct and ostensible blow on the doctrine of the Trinity, but reserving his deadliest thrusts against it, through the side of another doctrine and another system.

"John viii. 58,—'Before Abraham was, I am.' The old Socinian interpretation was:—'I exist before that patriarch has become, according to the import of the name Abraham, the father of many nations; for that name is to receive its fulfilment by the preaching of my religion, in which all the nations of the earth are to be blessed through the seed of Abraham.' But this is saying nothing; for the Jews, to whom our Lord is speaking, existed also before this event: I am, and ye all are, before the patriarch becomes Abraham in this sense. The modern Socinian interpretation is not more plausible. 'Before Abraham was born, I am he;' *i.e.*, the Christ in the destination and appointment of God. My commission as Messiah was fixed and determined by the Almighty before Abraham had a being. But this is saying nothing peculiar to the Messiah; for known to God are all His works."—Vol. ii. pp. 33, 34.

I bid you remark here, that it is impossible to hear these and other Socinian explanations without an immediate and strong impression of their absurdity. They strike you at once as far-fetched, and as laying à strain and a distortion upon a passage whose natural meaning is altogether opposed to the one they labour to fix upon it. Now I think you must be sensible that this first impression is more forcible and vivid than that which a critical argument leaves behind it. For argument, you will observe, though it makes obvious that which is obscure, also makes obscure that which is obvious. The thing, in fact, may be too plain for reasoning, or at least the reasonings, instead of making it plainer to conviction, may only have the effect of overlaying by needless explanation that which is far more distinctly seen in the light of an immediate manifestation. Now this instant discernment of the obviously true meaning, and as instant discernment of the absurdity of its opposite, is the perception of common sense, and not the result of critical learning, and the understanding of an ordinary man is just as competent to it as the understanding of a scholar. In other words, with the general confidence I have in the accuracy of our translation, I would defer nearly as much to the impression of a plain reader whether among our peasants or our citizens, as to what the Bible says and means respecting the person of Christ, as I would to the conclusions of an erudite criticism. It is just like the confidence I would have in the understandings of plain and unsophisticated jurymen in regard to the depositions which they are listening to. There might be no danger of their mistaking the sense of these depositions, although it should be a very possible thing for very strange and perverse interpretations to be put upon them by the ingenuity of a hostile pleader, and such interpretations as might require an equal counter ingenuity on the part of the friendly pleader to disarm and neutralize. Meanwhile, the common sense that is in the jury-box arbitrates the question at the last, and far sounder and solider will the judgment be that it is left to such arbitration. Now, among the manifold depositions of Scripture, granting it to be accurately translated on the whole, we have the full weight and authority of such an arbitration by a multitude of plain readers—an arbitration that would have been sound and solid had controversies never been stirred, and just as sound and solid after these controversies as before them. And the inference which I educe from this is, that among the people of a

congregation, with the Bible in their hands, and the habit of perusing it, there is a solid and a warrantable conviction of Christ's Divinity, which all the argumentations of your text-book will not make more solid and satisfactory than it already is. It is right that you should know and that you should master every one of these argumentations, and be able at all times to combat the threatened inroads of heresy. But be assured that you may proceed *instantly*, or with a very short introductory statement and proof indeed, on the Divinity of Christ, and fill up the great body of your sermons with the richness of its moral and practical applications.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IV.

ACTIONS ASCRIBED TO JESUS IN HIS PRE-EXISTENT STATE.—CREATION.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE US, O Lord, to see in the greatness of the Saviour the greatness of that salvation which He hath achieved for us. Convince us of the danger we incur by neglecting it, and of the awful doom which awaits us, should we have been found to turn a deaf or a heedless ear to those overtures of reconciliation wherewith He came charged to our world. Forbid that we should add to the provocation of a broken law the tenfold provocation of a rejected gospel, and convince us in time, O God, that no anger burns more fiercely than the anger of slighted tenderness, no indignation more overwhelming than the indignation of offered and despised mercy. O be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

“The three fullest and most explicit ascriptions of the work of creation to the Son, are to be found in the beginning of the Gospel of John, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians, and in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. All the three appear to teach, explicitly and particularly, that Jesus is the creator of the world. Yet they have received different interpretations, of which you ought not to be ignorant,” &c.—Vol. ii. p. 43.

You will now begin to perceive the desirableness of a profound Scripture criticism among the ministers of the Church. Along with the facility of translating aright all those passages which contain important truth, and the more important, generally speaking, the greater this facility; but along with such

facility, it should be remembered, there might be the utmost difficulty in defending the translations that have been made. Nor will you be at a loss to explain the consistency of these two things. You have the light of many kindred passages in Scripture to guide you in making a translation, but in defending it you have to meet and put down all the allegations of your adversaries, who might thus lead you, by their argument, the whole round of Greek and Hebrew and Rabbinical literature. Should any of them, for example, quote, in opposition to the common rendering, an opposite usage of the word or phrase in question among classic authors, then however warrantable to make the translation on scriptural usage, it were further to be wished that the translation, when possible, could be defended on the ground of classical usage also. This has often been most triumphantly done in critical controversies by the defenders of orthodoxy. A solitary instance has been completely explained away, either proved, in fact, to be not an apposite instance at all, or proved itself to be an anomalous deviation from the established habit of classical authors. You will thus perceive how it requires a far more accomplished criticism to defend our translation than to have executed it; and that while, by means of a mere common light, you can insure to the multitude a supply of religious truth through the medium of our popular versions, it is by a higher light and a higher learning that you detect the darkening influences of sophistry and error.

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“It is this system (that of the Gnostics) which Paul so often attacks under the name of false philosophy, strifes of words, endless genealogies, science falsely so called.”—Vol. ii. p. 50.

I have already stated, that there appears to me to be nothing in the charges which Paul makes against science and philosophy, that makes against the true science and the sound philosophy of modern times. Let knowledge but rest upon evidence, and from whatever quarter of nature or history it may be gathered, it is impossible that it can have any hostile influence on Christianity. A truth in one department cannot be at war with a truth in another—a truth, for example, as discovered by Newton or demonstrated by Euclid, with the truth as it is in Jesus. There is no more incompatibility between a doctrine which justly represents some state of things on earth, and the doctrine which justly represents the state of things in heaven, than there is between the last discovery in chemistry and the last in astro-

nomical science. It is true of many an individual, that he may have a passion for science which absorbs his whole heart, to the exclusion of the things of sacredness; and any monopolizing affection of this sort, if it but keep out the faith of the gospel from the mind and the influences of that faith upon the character, is of deadly and pernicious effect on the eternal interests of him who is so actuated. But this is a different sort of mischief from that which the apostle alluded to when he adverted to the philosophy of his own times, which in doctrine and speculation stood directly opposed to the revelations of heaven, and in this respect is wholly dissimilar to the reigning philosophy of the day, whose cautious and inductive spirit, in virtue of which it would subordinate every imagination of its own to the results of an observation of nature, is in striking accordancy with that spirit which would cast down all lofty imaginations, in deference to the results not of natural but of scriptural observation, and so bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.

I may here take occasion to repeat what I have before hinted at, that once we know a philosophy to be fundamentally and altogether in principle wrong, it really seems a very unnecessary task to examine closely and in detail all the absurdities which it may have chanced to emanate. Now that we know natural observation to be the high-road to science and philosophy, and scriptural criticism to be the high-road to soundness in theology, are we to complicate these studies by the most unnecessary erudition, the object of which is to make one's-self acquainted with all the fooleries of all the ancients? I predict that much of the learning connected with our profession must, from the mere accumulation of a far better though more modern literature on the subject, fall into desuetude. I on this principle do not advise you to attempt being very profound about the Gnostics and their *Æons*, though as much of their peculiarities as explains John is highly important, and for this, and also for the sake of illustrating the history of opinions in the Church, you may read both Hill and Mosheim on the subject. But even the history of opinions in the Church will come at length to have a place far more secondary and subordinate than it has at present, or than it certainly had a century ago, and that as a study which will not be wholly but in great part superseded by the far more pertinent and productive inquiry, What are the actual averments of God's own actual revelation, and how shall we best elicit these by the ever-brightening lights of Scripture criticism? What gives me

less value than I otherwise would have had for Bishop Bull's work on the Trinity, is, that it is more an investigation into the opinions of the Fathers respecting the Trinity, than an independent investigation of his own. Were I to advise any time for the study, that is the work which I would have you to read, however, and more especially as there is an English translation of it, enabling you therefore to accomplish the perusal in less time. It were well that you became acquainted with the specimens which he presents of the style of speculation that prevailed in those days. You will satisfactorily see how the language of the didactic was at length foregone in the formularies of the Church for that of a polemic theology. I should like if many of you were to peruse Bishop Bull's work on the Trinity, and if all of you were to read the powerful volume of Horsley against Priestley, both of these works, let it be understood, being more to be consulted for the history or erudition of the question, than for the direct merits of it.

PART III.—CHAP. IV.—SECT. II.

COLOSSIANS I. 15-18.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us, O Lord, diligently to seek after, and supremely to prize, those truths which relate to the way of the sinner's salvation. May we remember the words of the apostle, who was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and who esteemed all things but loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord. Thou hast said that the knowledge of Thyself and of Him whom Thou hast sent is life everlasting; and in the awful description which Thou hast given of the day of reckoning, Thou hast told us of the vengeance that shall be inflicted on those who know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. May we, under the impression of these sayings, betake ourselves in good earnest to the study of our Bibles, and through the faith that is in Christ Jesus, become wise to salvation. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

• “The apostle, in reminding the Christians at Colosse, amid the sufferings to which their faith might expose them, of the ground of thankfulness which it afforded, is led into one of those digressions which are common in his writings. He had been speaking of that redemption through the blood of Christ

which is the fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion. The redemption suggests to him the dignity and character of the ransomer. He expatiates upon these topics for a few verses (chap. i. 15-18), and then returns to the point from which he had set out. The digression, although it appears to interrupt the course of the argument, promotes most effectually the design of the Epistle," &c.—Vol. ii. pp. 61, 62.

We have already said that though no uses of a doctrine could be stated, yet that the very circumstance of its being affirmed in the Bible, laid on Christians the obligation of believing it. If offensive to the taste and preconceptions of an inquirer, and if, because of this, the truth and authority of God are to be set aside, this of itself, whatever the importance or unimportance of the doctrine may be, may infer a deadly resistance to the faith, which of itself is a deadly error. It may be a decisive symptom of infidelity, and this, too, aggravated by circumstances which belong not to common infidelity. The latter is a crime, because, in the face of likelihoods, the attention was turned away from the evidence that might else have overpowered it. But the other, after a formal assent to the Bible as a message from God, forgets the docility and the reverence that were due, and with utmost moral unfairness attempts to pervert its meaning, and to tamper with its express and authoritative sayings. The discernor of the secrets of the inner man has His eye on the whole mental process of the controversialist, and can mark the character of his thoughts and affections, detect the latent dishonesty, and observe when it is that pride and passion, and the antipathies of offended taste, seduce him unworthily from the obedience of the faith. A moral responsibility for one's belief is not confined to the general question of whom the Bible comes from—so as to reach condemnation to infidels alone. It extends to the question of what the Bible says, and so as to reach at least as decisive condemnation to heretics also. They may suffer not merely because—wanting the truth they have rejected—they want the essential medium for such sentiments and affections as might qualify them for heaven; but irrespective of this, they may suffer for the rejection itself, because implying a heedlessness of what themselves admit to be the testimony of God, and an act of violence done to His plain declarations.

So much for the first principle on which a heresy might be damnable, and we hold that there is no topic, the denial of

which involves a greater weight of this condemnation than the one which now engages us. A repetition of acts, it is said, gives rise to a habit, and so many are the acts of violence that must be done to the manifold depositions of Scripture for the Divinity of Christ, that we fear the doctrine can only be disowned by those who, hardened in the practice, are in readiness whenever God's sayings and their own favourite sentiments come into collision, for inflicting upon Scripture a perpetual violence. We can scarcely imagine a state of mind more fearfully hazardous than this to the eternal interests of him who thus manifests it, or one that bespeaks a harder defiance to the authority of heaven's Governor.

But beside this one principle on which a heresy might be damnable, you understand that there is another. You are aware that the terminating object of Christianity is not the belief of its doctrines, and that this belief is but the stepping-stone to an ulterior achievement. It proposes, through the creed, to reach the character of man, and, accordingly, while it says that Scripture is profitable for doctrine, it adds that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished to all good works. Now this doctrine may be so far transformed or mutilated by heresy, as to be bereft of this efficacy. There are articles of information in Scripture which need never be present to the mind, for the sake of a salutary moral influence over it from the commencement to the close of the Christian life. We hold it in no instance safe that you deny any such article, but they often with perfect safety are forgotten, as the number of the tribes, the dimensions of the temple, the hour of the day at which our Saviour was crucified, the names of some of the apostles, the dress of John the Baptist, and a thousand other particulars it were needless to specify. But there are other articles of information which it is neither safe to deny nor to forget, and whereof it may be said that the very circumstance of their being out of your mind, puts to hazard your qualifications for a blissful eternity. We have already said that we cannot imagine a more daring moral offence, or one that should infer a heavier condemnation, than the refusal to God of the honour which belongs to Him. It is, in fact, the very essence or elemental principle of irreligion. But if told that Christ is God, and you refuse to honour Him as such, you just incur this very delinquency. A person has been revealed to you having the perfections, and the greatness and all the exaltation of

Deity, and you render Him not the homage that belongs to Deity. It makes no difference how the revelation of His Divinity came, if it be a sufficiently evidenced revelation. It matters not whether your attention and belief have been drawn to a God through the medium of the indications in nature, or through the medium of the indications in Scripture, provided they are true indications, and you by a right and incumbent attention might recognise the truth of them. Nature proclaims the unseen Deity, and you render Him the silent reverence of your adoration and gratitude. Scripture proclaims Jesus Christ to be the Deity—nay, that He formed and upholds that very nature whose indications had before satisfied you that it must have a God for its author—and if, after this, you withhold from Christ the same adoration and the same gratitude, yours is the guilt of as manifest an impiety as characterizes him who, though not an Atheist, bears in the whole habit of his affections and thoughts the levity, the heedlessness, and the hardy defiance of Atheism. Knowing of the existence of a neighbour, you are wanting in right and proper morale if you feel not humanely towards him. Knowing, or at least having it in your power to know, that Christ is God, you incur a still more flagrant defect from a right and proper morale, if you do not think divinely of Him and feel accordingly. The guilt is enhanced, if the being whom you treat thus unworthily has laid you under obligations of gratitude. If a man of superior rank, by an act of munificence, rescued your family from despair, and raised you to affluence and honour, we cannot imagine a more direct ingratitude than the affront of treating him beneath the level of his natural dignity. And nothing more flagrantly ungrateful, be assured, nothing in conceivable worse keeping with all that is becoming the relation in which you stand to the Saviour, not a more serious mutilation can be imagined on the right moral system of those affections and regards which belong to a redeemed creature than that, raised to the hopes and the happiness of eternity, and raised, too, by Him who, though rich for your sake became poor, you should in return withhold from Him the homage due to His character and station. We read in Scripture of the enormity of those who deified the creature as if he were the Creator. Equal is the enormity wherewith they are chargeable who degrade the Creator to the level of the creature. And he who is capable of inflicting this degradation on the Saviour, and that in the face of His asserted Godhead, is

not capable, be assured, of joining in that song of eternity where honour and glory and blessing are ascribed to Him who hath redeemed us and washed us from our sins in His blood.

On the subject of the practical uses of the doctrine now under consideration, I would certainly be cautious of so stating them as to imply, that had it not been for this doctrine, I could have no faith, no security, in other doctrines to be found in the Bible. I am not fond of the assertion that certain doctrines stand or fall together. If both be affirmed in Scripture, and if Scripture make not the express assertion, that they stand or fall together, I would therefore not say, that, apart from and anterior to the information which Scripture itself gives of the connexion between the doctrine of Christ's divinity and the efficacy of His atonement, if I did not believe in the one I would not believe in the other. But after having conceded this, I must state, on the other hand, that there is much in Scripture from which we might infer a connexion between them, and that in virtue of both being believed together, there is an indefinitely greater enhancement given to all the moral influences of the doctrine of the atonement. That there is a real connexion between the two doctrines is very strongly implied in the very expression, that we are bought with a price—that we are ransomed from our state of condemnation—that we are redeemed or bought again from the obligation under which we lay, of sustaining the penalties of a violated law. Now, more than the adequate price would not have been exacted. The justice of God would require no more than an equivalent for the outrage done to the authority of His government, to the high sovereignty and state of His offended attributes. The value of what was rendered would not exceed the value of what was owing on the part of them who were ransomed by it. If the blood of Christ be indeed that by which the Church was purchased, and if Christ was divine, both of which doctrines are expressly affirmed in revelation, then, on the principle that nothing more would be given in compensation for the dignity of a violated law than was enough to repair it, the inference seems plain, that nothing less than an act of expiation by Him on whose person sat the dignity of the Godhead, could effect the reunion of sinners with their God. And we now see how the law was magnified and made honourable, by a divine personage having had to bear the burden of the world's atonement—by Christ the Son of God, and equal with God, having bowed down His head to the sacrifice.

When the mind of a believer is occupied with both doctrines, you will perceive, I trust, how the one enhances, and that to an indefinite amount, all the moral and practical influences of the other. We cannot imagine how a more emphatic demonstration could be given of the evil of sin, of the dread and insurmountable barrier of separation which it raises between the God of sacredness and the guilty creatures who have offended Him, insurmountable we mean by any created force in the universe, since it needed the interposition of one travelling in the greatness of His strength, and that, too, the strength of the Divinity, to move it away. If the work of our redemption be the direct and personal achievement of Jesus Christ, it makes all the difference of infinity in our estimation of the magnitude of the achievement, whether we believe that Christ was the creature or that Christ was Himself the omnipotent Creator. It marks the force, the infinite force, of that moral impossibility, if I may so term it, which lay in the way of the sinner's acceptance, when thus given to understand that nothing short of the vicarious sufferings of a God could suffice for the reduction of it; and the movement thus made in heaven, the depth that was in it of the divine mystery, which angels are represented as desiring to look into, the terms in which the Captain of our salvation and His enterprise are described in the ancient prophecies, all bespeak that a work had to be done, and a mighty problem in jurisprudence to be resolved, which nought but an unsearchable wisdom could find out, and nought but the strength of omnipotence could execute. And thus the divinity of Christ enhances every moral lesson which can be gathered from the doctrine of the atonement. It enhances our sense of the exceeding turpitude of sin. It throws a deeper sacredness over the character of the Godhead. It props the sinking faith of the despondent sinner, when, trembling at the thought of God's dishonoured attributes and of His outraged law, he thinks that, in the homage rendered by the illustrious sufferer who poured out His soul to the death for us, the character and the law of God have received their noblest vindication. It exalts to the utmost the mercy of the Godhead, for it is mercy in its highest possible exhibition, when it thus had to force a way for itself through difficulties only to be conquered by the arm of one who is represented as mighty—and that the might of infinity—to save. The effect of His intercession—His power as a sanctifier—His right of mastery over all our services—the solemn authority of His

lessons and laws—the resistless force of such appeals as, “If ye love me keep my commandments”—the incumbent gratitude and incumbent obedience—all, all obtain a force and an intensity they never could have had, but from the doctrine that Christ is God.

These considerations will need to be further expounded. There is one more which at present I can only advert to without expatiating upon it. Only think of Him as God manifest in the flesh, and what an interest it gives to the study of His thus manifested character, to the history of His visible doings! In the gospel narratives of His life we are thus presented with a picture of the Godhead. The virtues of the eternal and unseen Spirit are made to radiate in visible expression from the human countenance, and to descend upon us in audible accents from the human voice. Through the medium of the senses we come to know of the else mysterious because invisible God. That dark and untravelled interval, which separates the objects of faith from all that is material, has had a high-way of communication thrown over it. By this descent of the incarnate Deity upon our world, the graces and the glories of the Divine character are held forth in ocular representation; and when we think it was the very God in human form who went about during His mysterious sojourn on earth doing good continually—that it was He who wept over the tomb of Lazarus, and mourned when He looked at Jerusalem in the view of its approaching desolation, the dread and the distance we associate with the Godhead are done away, when thus made so impressively to see that the greatest of all Beings is also the kindest and the gentlest and the best.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IV.—SECT. IV.

AMOUNT OF THE PROPOSITION, THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE CREATOR OF THE
WORLD.

THE PRAYER.

WE bless Thy name, O Lord, that Thou hast come forth upon the world from the darkness and the mystery which surround thy throne. Thou hast made a visible representation of Thyself in Thy Son, whom we recognise as God manifest in the flesh, the brightness of the Father's glory, the express image of His person. Give us continually to look at Him as our

propitiation, but give us also to look at Him continually as our example. By the imitation of Jesus Christ may we become like to God. By the transference of His virtues into our own characters, may we become meet for the joys and the companionships of eternity. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

Many theologians have affirmed of the power to create, that it is the incommunicable attribute of the Deity. There is, I have already observed, an assumption upon this subject which I agree with the author of our text-book in thinking that we are not entitled to make. We know not beforehand whether the power of creating be an incommunicable attribute of the Godhead or not. Should Scripture expressly say so, we could have no doubt upon it. But, anterior to Scripture, it is *ultra vires* on our part to make any affirmation upon the subject. I certainly have no recollection at present of aught that is very express or decisive in Scripture upon the subject; yet still we may gather something both from its intimations on this particular question, and on another of still greater practical importance, which I shall advert to presently, on the competency of a creature to a certain other achievement, which many have contended can only be effected by one that has the strength and character of the Godhead.

Instead of arriving at the two distinct articles of belief, that Christ is the Creator of the world, and that Christ is God, the first by an information from Scripture, and the second by a principle of my own, I confess I would be far better satisfied to have distinct informations from Scripture on both of these articles. I should have far greater value for its sayings than for my own reasonings; and therefore, instead of making them out on the strength of one information and one principle, I should feel that my faith had something far more solid to rest upon if but furnished from the Bible with two informations. Now this we actually have, one set of passages deponing to the creation by Christ Jesus, another set of passages deponing to the Divinity of Christ Jesus; and really, to fetch any additional argument for the Divinity from an *a priori* imagination of our own as to the incommunicable nature of the creative faculty, is to go astray in quest of weak arguments when stronger are at hand, is to place the deductions of human reasoning on the same, if not on a higher level, than the declarations of God. Should the Bible itself affirm that the creation is the exclusive prerogative of God, that is a different matter; and without going off the ground of

Scripture at all, we might, from the fact of Christ having actually created, arrive at the solid inference that Christ is indeed God.

Thus may we be enabled to arrive, and through a medium exclusively scriptural, at the inference of His Divinity from His creative power; and even from the mere separate assertions of these two things in the Bible, whether a connexion between them be there affirmed or not, we may gather some likelihoods, if not proofs, of that very principle which, at the outset, we have no title to assume. We know by a set of independent statements in the Bible that Christ has created, and we know by a set of statements alike independent, that Christ is God. A something may be gathered out of these two things, each of which we know to be separately true in regard to the connexion between them. It is often asserted to be the characteristic of a wise system of administration, when any effect is intended, not to incur a waste of means or of energy by the employment of a higher instrumentality than is needed for the production of it. By one kind of ministry, even the ministry of material agents, we are furnished with many physical accommodations—by another, the ministry of our fellow-men, we are admitted to many of the exercises and enjoyments of affection and moral principle—by a third, the ministry of angels, we are helped in some unknown and unexplained way on the road to salvation; and if by the ministry of none of these we read of the work of creation having ever been effected—if, instead of this, we are informed, by one set of passages, that Christ is God, and by another, that He is the Creator of all things—we have some ground for the inference, that it is for God alone to bring out of nothing—some presumption for a deliverance on the abstract question, whether the creative power be an incommunicable attribute of the Deity.

But we hold the reasoning on the power to atone still more decisive than the reasoning on the power to create. If a less costly sacrifice would have sufficed for the restoration of sinners, a more costly would not have been exacted. The law is represented as obtaining satisfaction for its injured rights, but it would have been unjust to have given it more than satisfaction. No more would be exacted than was necessary, more especially when one reflects on the painful, the humiliating nature of the exaction. To say that the sufferings of a creature could have atoned for sin, is to say that the sufferings of Jesus Christ the Creator

were unnecessary ; whereas, can we admit another idea than that of some deep and mysterious necessity for the endurance to which He bowed himself, an endurance so bitter as to extort from Him the prayers and the agonies of the garden ? What meaneth the supplication—" Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ?" What else meaneth it but that, for the restoration of a guilty world, the drinking of the cup could not be dispensed with, the passing of it was not possible. With such light beaming upon the question from Scripture, with such informations from the Sacred Volume, it is not easy to resist the impression, that the expiation of sin required the offering up of a Divine sacrifice, and that by nothing short of it could reconciliation have been effected between the transgressor of the law and the offended Lawgiver. He who bare the chastisement of our peace, bare it in the strength of the Godhead, and the atonement He made for sin was an adequate atonement only because the dignity of the victim was commensurate with the dignity of that law which had been broken, and of that Sovereign from whom it had emanated.

When a conjunction is thus established between the Divinity of Christ and the efficacy of His sacrifice, it invests with more august and venerable sanctity the character of the Godhead ; it upholds, in high imperial state and sovereignty, His law ; it bespeaks, and by expression equivalent to infinity, the evil of sin ; it augments, and that to an unlimited degree, the gratitude of the redeemed—thus deepening the moral influence of all these lessons, and throwing an enhanced sacredness over the whole field of our religious contemplations.

You will now observe how it is that the testimonies, about the precise force and import of which we have been so long employed, and which go to demonstrate that Christ is the Creator of all things, supply a direct argument for the Divinity of Christ. Though Scripture does not seem to have made any very distinct intimations as to the incommunicability of the creative power to any created being, it has explicitly enough affirmed that, in point of fact, God is the sole Creator of all things. This suffices for a firm reasoning on the subject, and makes the above testimonies that we have recently been examining just as decisive of the Godhead of Christ as the information given us by John in the first chapter of his Gospel. He does not tell us so by the one affirmation that Christ is God, but he does it by two affirmations, that Christ is the Word, and the Word is God. Neither,

when told that Christ is the Creator, does that of itself tell us by one affirmation that Christ is God, but by help of another affirmation, to be found elsewhere in the Bible, that the Creator is God, we come solidly to the conclusion at the last, and from being made to know that Christ is the Creator, and that the Creator is God, we are as effectually told of the Divinity of Christ, as when made to know that Christ is the Word, and the Word is God.

BOOK III.—CHAP. V.

ACTIONS ASCRIBED TO JESUS IN HIS PRE-EXISTENT STATE.—ADMINISTRATION OF PROVIDENCE.

THE PRAYER.

WE confess both our guilt and our frailty before thee, O God. But we rejoice that an omnipotent Saviour has undertaken our cause, that our pardon has been ratified by the blood of a divine sacrifice, and that He who poured out His soul to the death for us is now at Thy right hand, an intercessor and an advocate for all who put their trust in Him. As He is omnipotent to save, may we experience Him alike omnipotent to sanctify; and grant that through the working of that mighty power whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself, He may subdue our rebellious wills and our headstrong affections into a conformity to Thy law. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I hold the argument expounded in this chapter, if not the most direct and decisive, to be the most interesting of any on the subject of the Divinity of Christ. It does not stand, as it were, on the surface of the Bible. It would not meet the glance of a cursory reader. It has to be gathered from a comparison of Scripture with Scripture; from an investigation, the result of which, however, is most satisfactory, landing as it does in a very beautiful discovery, and unfolding a system of operations on the part of Christ in behalf of mankind that may be traced through Scripture to the commencement of the earlier dispensation, and thus evinces the historical consistency between the Old and New Testament. There is one obvious interference, I think, to be drawn from this examination. How much more of information and truth may be drawn out of the Bible, when made the object of a diligent and severe scrutiny! We believe that the study of God's word is as interminable as the study of His

works, and that there is in it a mine of hidden treasures which have not yet been unfolded. It is the remarkable experience of even plain Christians who have been in the constant and daily habit of reading Scripture, that however frequently they may have accomplished the entire perusal of it, yet they never fail on every repetition of the task, to read it with new light, to draw from it new truths and before unobserved relations between truths already known, or new applications to human life and human nature. It stamps on the book a peculiarity which belongs to no other authorship. For in two or three perusals, you will draw out the whole meaning and spirit of a publication on any subject of mere human learning, or even on theology, apart from Bible quotations. But while you exhaust the compositions of men in this way, the Scripture is found to be inexhaustible. This stamps a peculiarity on the Sacred Volume that announces the Divinity which penned it. And this evidence is valid, whether you ascribe the phenomenon to the exceeding variety of its matter, with infinite susceptibilities of comparison and application, or to the doctrine that the Spirit enlightens by the word, and that in proportion to the largeness of His influences is the enlargement of manifestation experienced by an earnest reader on every new perusal of it.

There is a peculiar force in the argument for the Divinity of Christ drawn from this particular investigation, and grounded on a circumstance to which I have not yet adverted. The very circumstance of its being gathered from the incidental expressions of a narrative where the object was not any formal doctrinal statement of the truth which they establish, proves a recognition of the truth, and a proceeding upon it, which is often more impressive than a categorical statement. But besides this, to bring out the evidence, you have to compare Scripture with Scripture. It does not lie upon the surface—it does not force itself upon the observation of the superficial reader. It lies hidden, as it were, under the broad and general aspect of things, and forms one of those recondite harmonies which could not therefore have been devised for the purpose of imposition, but which, on this very account, leave the most satisfactory of all impressions as to the reality of that common subject to which they all relate. You will be reminded, in consequence of what I say, of the *Horæ Paulinæ* of Dr. Paley, where, from the hidden and undesigned coincidences which he establishes between one Scripture and another, he evinces the historical reality of the

apostle Paul, and of the transactions ascribed to him in the New Testament. An impostor might devise plausibilities that struck the observation on their first being presented, but he would not readily devise those plausibilities which require a deep and patient investigation for their discovery. And in like manner, whereas corrupt readings, forcible suppressions of the ancient texts, interpolations of new ones, have been charged on the orthodox, we ask you to consider how completely beyond the reach of any such imputation are those Scriptures which we have now been examining, and from the comparison of which we educe so impressive an argument for the Divinity of our Saviour. They would need, in fact, not merely to have changed single texts, but to have changed or to have destroyed the texture of whole passages; and all this, you will observe, to produce, not that semblance of evidence for a favourite doctrine which glares upon the general eye, but an evidence that needs laboriously to be sought after, and which had never been brought fully out till after the lapse of many generations from the time when the controversy was at its hottest, and when the partisans on both sides of the question have been accused certainly of undue liberties with Scripture—liberties, however, let it well be understood, which could never have effected the general depraving of Scripture, or prevent us at present from approximating indefinitely near, and on the most abundant evidence, to the primitive state of the sacred writings.

You will here recollect the Socinian evasion from the sense in which the orthodox understand the appearance on Mount Sinai. We hold the angel there to have been a person, but they represent the angel to have been merely some material symbol of the Divine presence, whether the fire or the smoke or the thunder. They hold that God himself held converse with the Israelites in the delivery of the decalogue, and, whereas it is said that it was the angel who held this converse, they lay that expression on a mere sensible indication, whether by light or by sound, that was given of His presence. Couple the absurdity of their own hypothesis, the absurdity of this manifest evasion of theirs, with the soundness of their reasoning against the hypothesis of the Arians; admit with Mr. Lindsay, admit with him, and in his own words, that the whole transaction at Mount Sinai shows that Jehovah was present, and that He himself delivered there the ten commandments; but refuse to him the liberty of contradicting Stephen in the Acts, who tells us that the identical Being

named Jehovah in the Old Testament was the angel who appeared in the bush, was the angel which spoke, was not the light of the appearance or the sound of the words, as they would have it, but was a person who appeared and a person who spoke—and there remains between these a sound, an incontrovertible argument for the Divinity of Christ.

One very great charm of the informations which relate to the identity that subsists between the angel of the covenant and Jesus Christ, is, that it connects in the closest manner the Old and New Testaments. It so binds and harmonizes the two dispensations, and gives us to perceive so clear a line of connexion and continuity between them. It unites them both in one comprehensive scheme, and the manner in which Christ Himself comes forth from heaven at certain successive points or evolutions of it, evinces most strikingly His intimate concern with and special management of the whole. It is delightful to catch, as it were, even these faint and incidental traces of the mysterious way along which one and the same great personage make occasional presentation of Himself, and thus manifests His own busy agency and interest in the process that Himself did originate, and carries forward from its first commencement to its final consummation. We are aware of nothing which more gilds and glorifies the patriarchal ages than the truth of preternatural visitations made by the Saviour in His own person to Abraham and Jacob and Moses and Joshua. When we thus behold Him intromitting in person with that great moral enterprise which was so peculiarly His own, as at the first germ of it, when He called the father of the faithful from the land of his ancestors, and at its further expansion, when He brought the people out of Egypt, and gave the law from Mount Sinai, and brightened the tabernacle and the temple with His presence, and lastly, at its final consummation, when He veiled His glory in human nature, and sojourned on earth, and bowed down His head to the sacrifice, and, with the last accents of His expiring voice, cried out that it was finished, and gave up the ghost—I say, a progression of this sort, beginning with Genesis and having its ultimate outgoings in the book of Revelation, stamps a glorious consistency on the Bible, and binds together in firm concatenation the Old and the New Testament. Apart from the affecting identification which has been established between the Saviour in Christianity and the angel of the covenant in Judaism, we can read in the Hebrew dispensation the lineaments of an infant

resemblance to the perfect dispensation that followed it. But certain it is, that this pleasing discovery strengthens the association between them, and we do more confidently look for a sustained harmony throughout when we thus recognise the same fostering hand at the earlier passages of this great enterprise, and onward to its full and final consummation. We believe it to be the uniform finding of every intelligent and, at the same time, devout student of the Bible, that the more he is acquainted with the Old Testament the more will he discover it to be full of the Saviour. It is this, we think, which explains the growing taste and predilection of the aged Christian for its strains of earlier inspiration. He rejoices in finding the substance of his faith under the veil of these rites and ceremonies and symbols by which Israel's figurative Church was characterized, and it is not the less pleasing that it stands forth under another guise and in another attitude than he had been accustomed to behold it. We know that this affection for the types and double interpretations in the allegoric services of the Jewish ritual and prophecy has been ranked among the senilities of a decaying intellect; nevertheless the interest that is taken in them, though often the product of a warm imagination, is often also a most intelligent and well-founded interest, and not the less so though the general and superficial reader of his Bible cannot sympathize with it. The truth is, that there are harmonies between the prefigurations of the law and the principles of the gospel, which do not reveal themselves at the first glance of a careless or rapid observer. But they are not less real or substantial notwithstanding. They are not the creations of fancy—they are the perceptions of a deep and steadfast prolonged observation, recondite only to those who do not carefully search for them; but because of their very reconditeness all the more satisfying when found, and all the more certain indications of the profoundness of that wisdom which presided over both the Jewish and the Christian economy, and so proving that the same God is the author and finisher of both. We know that mysticism has been charged on these speculations; but in appreciating the justice of this imputation, it is of prime importance to determine whether it arises from the subject in itself being unintelligible, or from the persons who make the charge not being intelligent in regard to it. In either way there will be the very same feeling of mysticism, a feeling not peculiar in reference to a matter not understood of Christianity, but in reference also to the matter, not understood of any

subject or of any science whatever. It is the very feeling wherewith the uninitiated are visited when they hear the doctrines of chemistry or botany or medicine propounded in the peculiar, and to them, unknown nomenclature of these respective branches of learning. It is a feeling which, I am quite confident, would be dissipated by a single month of study directed to the harmony that obtains between the doctrines of the New and the prophecies or ritual observances of the Old Testament. You will find that these both radiate and reflect an increasing light upon each other, and, as the fruit of your investigations, I promise you an ever-growing conviction, that in like manner as the testimony of Jesus has been called the spirit of prophecy, so you will find the same testimony to be the animating spirit that actuates and pervades from one end to the other the Scriptures of the olden dispensation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VI.

DOCTRINE CONCERNING THE PERSON OF CHRIST TAUGHT DURING HIS LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

WE draw near, O God, in the faith of Him on whom Thou hast laid the burden of our iniquities. Give us to see, in the expiation made by this illustrious Sufferer, what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God. Give us to behold, in the dignity of Thy Son, the dignity of that law which He hath magnified and made honourable. And now that its penalties are done away, grant that its precepts may be our rejoicing all the day long, and the constant reward of our obedience. Strengthen us, O God, by Thy Spirit for all the services of Christianity, and be with us.—Amen.

At this point, the author of our text-book seems to underrate the achievement or effect of the argument already gone through. He speaks of having only yet disposed of the first opinion, and that the argument still remains between the second and third; in other words, that he has only yet demonstrated against the Socinians how Christ is not a mere man, and that he has yet to demonstrate against the Arians that He is not a creature, however exalted above man, but that He is in very deed the eternal and uncreated God.

I think that this has been already demonstrated, and that the transition is not a firmer one between the two propositions of

Christ being the Word, and the Word being God, than between the two propositions of Christ being the Creator, and the Creator being God.

If the only advantage, then, resulting from our thorough description of the remaining argument were to make out the position of Christ's divinity, this were a task that might be dispensed with. But I should hold our doing so to be the sacrifice of a most substantial benefit to our students of divinity. It is not only of the utmost professional importance to them that they should be told of the whole richness and power of the argument, but there is furthermore an incalculable good in the familiarity which they will thereby acquire with the contents and character of the Sacred Volume. They have already had an example of this in the doctrine we have just gone over respecting the angel of the covenant, and they must be sensible of the insight which this furnishes into many passages of the Old Testament. The reader who peruses, as one instance out of the many, the sixty-eighth Psalm, with the newly acquired information that not the Father but the Son is personally and throughout the subject of it, will, I am persuaded, feel a novelty of interest, in the exercise of which he was before unconscious, and in like manner it will spread a peculiar aspect over many other places of the Jewish Scriptures when he recognises them to be so full of the Saviour. Now, it is an extension of this benefit which we should forego, were we either to pass superficially or to pass over altogether what remains of the text-book on the subject of the Trinity. We should lose by it a vast deal of scriptural information, there being much unfolded in what is before us respecting the sense as well as the substance of the sacred writings. And, then, we have still additional doctrine to acquire connected with this great article : after having discussed the additional evidence for the divinity of the Saviour, we have yet all to learn respecting the union of His divine and human nature, respecting the divinity of the Spirit, and, last of all, respecting the manner in which the separate propositions that the Father is God, that the Son is God, that the Holy Spirit is God, and that God is one—the manner in which these are united in the one complex and comprehensive proposition that is discussed in a future chapter on the doctrine of the Trinity. Neither the Scripture nor the Christian literature connected with these questions can possibly be omitted, but must be submitted to, whether as an exercise of patience or as an exercise of busy and

most useful scholarship for some time yet, after which, when we come to the next doctrine in succession, to the depravity of human nature, there will be room for general argument in application to a matter that comes within the cognizance of our own independent consciousness, touching as it does on the character of man—a topic within the reach of our own mental perceptions, unlike in this respect to the constitution of the Deity, of which in ourselves we absolutely know nothing, and can therefore do little more about it than simply ascertain and state the informations of the Bible.

I am assured that the method laid down in the text-book (see pp. 155, 156) is far more in the spirit of true induction, and therefore of true philosophy, than that prescribed by Dr. Clarke. He professes, no doubt, impartially to examine the whole Scriptures, and has grounded his conclusion on their general scope, but this is not really what he does in practice. He first examines one, and that, we admit, a very extensive set of passages, and with the impression taken thence, he addresses himself to another and equally extensive set of passages. He first passes in review those texts or testimonies from which we learn that Christ was sent by the Father, that He received all things from the Father, that He came to do the will of the Father, and on these he grounds the assertion of inferiority wherewith he would qualify the obvious sense of other texts and other testimonies which give distinct information of Christ being God, of His having power in Himself, of Christ being equal to the Father. Now this is not according to the philosophy of sound observation whether in theology or in science. It is as if we should examine one-half of the phenomena related to a given subject, and ground on these a universal proposition wherewith to warp and distort our observation of the other half; whereas the way is to make diligent and individual inspection of each and all of the phenomena, and to ground on such a completed survey a proposition still more comprehensive than the former, because including in it both the generalities that each set of phenomena had suggested, and admitting, on the authority of observation, the truth of both. Should we not see how it is that the one separate generality harmonizes with the other, that is no reason why we shall resist the evidence obtruded by the facts of the case that so it is. The truth is, that Dr. Clarke's method, though not wholly, is in part the method of those who would subject the testimonies of God to the fancies of man. The only

difference is, that they set forth on their survey of the whole Scripture with the pre-occupation of a theory derived from their own resources, and to this they would subordinate every deposition of the Sacred Volume. He again goes forth with a theory grounded on so many depositions of the Sacred Volume, and thus pre-occupied, he would subordinate to it all its remaining depositions. Now the way both in science and theology is to be a strict examiner of all the phenomena in the one, the rigid expounder of all the passages in the other out and out—to generalize the informations thus obtained as far as we can generalize them, and should we not be able to find out the vinculum which connects one generality with another, still to believe that they are reconcilable, though we cannot reconcile them.

Let me here remark of Dr. Clarke, that whereas he seems to hold the absolute Divinity of Christ in the light of a preconception wherewith men go forth upon Scripture and transform its passages, it is in truth the fruit of a completed induction of passages, whereas his modification of the doctrine is the fruit, not of a completed, but a partial induction. However the doctrine of the Trinity may operate now when installed into the mind by catechisms previous to our full examination of Scripture, certain it is that the formation of that doctrine was the result of a full and finished observational survey carried over the whole length and breadth of the Sacred Volume. It is an utter misconception that it has been imported into the formularies of the orthodox through the influence of a prior imagination that possessed a kind of transmuting power on the plain and natural meaning of Scripture. It is, in fact, the result of its plain and natural meanings carefully collected, a compendious expression of the truth, no doubt, yet not an expression on which to ground the sense of the Bible, but an expression itself grounded on that sense. It is not the article which directs our understanding of the Scripture passages, it is the passages that directed the understandings of men at the framing of the article, and that still direct us when we give our consent to it.

One can perceive how, in virtue of the operation adverted to in the text—the illumination of the Spirit shed on the Saviour's conversation (vol. ii. pp. 158, 159)—the evidence of their own inspiration would be greatly brightened and augmented in the mind of the apostles. It is quite palpable that many of our Saviour's communications upon earth were met by the grossest misconception on the part of His disciples. We often read of

their eyes being held so that they perceived not the meaning of that saying. It looks strange to us that their understandings should have been so impracticable as to be proof even against what to our mind appear very plain and intelligible declarations. But we are in possession of a cipher which they had not. We are pre-occupied with doctrine which had not been revealed, and which ran counter to all their notions and expectations at the time. There is the truth of nature in the description given by the Evangelists of the disciples' slowness of understanding and slowness of belief; and to enter fully into their situation, we must remember the inveteracy of Jewish prejudice, and also the way in which obscure announcements of the suffering in reserve, might, by agitating their feelings, only serve to thicken their perplexities the more. There is nothing in the way of internal evidence that strikes me as more palpable than the historical consistency of the Gospels, on the one hand, with the Acts and the Epistles, taken in connexion with the fact of that great spiritual illumination which came upon the apostles on the day of Pentecost, and dispersed all doubt and all remaining darkness or difficulty away from them. Who can fail to perceive the difference between the timid, the irresolute, the half-informed apostles before the resurrection, and the bold, decisive, confirmed style of perfect assurance and self-possession wherewith they both spoke and acted after it. It would have required a very skilful dramatist, indeed, to have constructed a fictitious narrative with so much truth in the representation of character, and conduct so harmonizing with the representation there given of the historical circumstances and changes that took place, and which can alone account for it. They know now what explained all and harmonized all that had so much embarrassed them in the days of their companionship with the Saviour on earth. From the vantage-ground of their now full and finished revelation they could look back and perceive the significance and the consistency of all that had puzzled their understandings in the days of their yet uncorrected prejudices; and what between the Spirit bringing all things which our Saviour said to their recollection, and their perception now of the full meaning of these things, compared with the blindness and insensibility of other days, it would serve to establish all the more their confidence in the supernatural light wherewith they were now visited, and which at once brought new truth to their mind, and shed a powerful and pleasing radiance over that which they before had heard with their

ears, but which to them had been either utterly meaningless or lay shrouded in deepest mystery.

Whatever deliverance you may come to respecting the passage John x. 29, 30, &c., after having heard the controvertists state their respective arguments on the peculiar ground of Scripture criticism, there is one consideration not derived through the medium of the Greek, yet, I think, a very powerful consideration in determining our judgment on the question. We can perceive how, on the supposition of our Saviour's Divinity, He might, in agreement with His general policy throughout His life, have spoken doubtfully or obscurely, for a premature and full disclosure respecting His divinity might have been just as inconvenient in the present state of His disciples' mind as a premature disclosure respecting His death. Both these matters were gradually opened up to them, and they were told not all at once of the mysteries of the kingdom of Christ, but were told as they were able to bear them. This will explain how it is that our Saviour, on the supposition of His being very God, did not comply with the requisition of the Jews, did not tell them plainly. But take the other supposition—take the supposition that He was not God, and then think of the imperious call that lay upon Him to make a distinct and authoritative disavowal of it. He saw the effect of what He had already said, He saw the interpretation that His countrymen were giving to His words: they held Him to be putting Himself forth as God. Would He not have disclaimed, and that most promptly, the arrogant pretension, if arrogant pretension indeed it was? Would the meek and the lowly Jesus for one moment have suffered this delusion? Would He have permitted a single hearer to indulge the imagination of Himself being God if He really were not so? And is it at all in keeping with what we know of His character, that He, at the expense of the honour exclusively due to the Father, should have misled every friend He had at this conference to ascribe a greatness to Himself infinitely higher than what really belonged to Him? And would He, the example and the teacher of piety, have countenanced so flagrant a delusion? Would He himself have made blasphemous usurpation of Divine honours, or deceived others into a form of idolatry? Is this the way in which He would have honoured the Father? And can we for a moment imagine the humble and unambitious Jesus of Nazareth actuated by the vanity of the Roman emperors, and seeking, as they did, a place among the gods? Yet all this

would follow if the effect of His words was not merely to incense His enemies, who understood that He called Himself God, but grossly to mislead His friends, who, on finding that He disavowed not the imputation, would understand the same thing; and we cannot figure a more imperative call to speak plainly than on the present occasion—to say, in a way that could not be mistaken, He was not God if He really was not.

John xx. 28.—The declaration of Thomas. This is a very direct instance of misleading His own peculiar disciples, even as the former ones were of misleading both them and His countrymen at large, on the part of Jesus Christ, if He, a creature, thus suffered them to indulge in their own interpretation, whether of His words or His actions, and that interpretation evidently was that He held Himself forth as God. More especially does the instance before us contrast very strikingly with another recorded in the book of Revelation, where John was addressed by a voice from heaven, and on falling down to worship him from whom it proceeded, was most promptly rebuked and prevented—"See that thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus;" after which there follows a magnificent description of Him on the white horse that was faithful and true, called the Word of God, and having a Divine title ascribed to Him—"King of kings, and Lord of lords." There was the utmost alertness on the part of the fellow-servant to protect the writer of the prophecy from the delusion of honouring the creature as God, but none either to protect the writer or the reader of the prophecy from ascribing Divinity to Him whose description immediately follows, even Him who, called the Logos, has the name written upon His vesture, of "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

On the whole, then, there seems in the Gospels a beautiful keeping and harmony between the degree of light cast on this particular doctrine, and the degree of light cast in the same portion of Scripture on the other peculiar doctrines of Christianity. We have to the full as much of the Trinity there as we have of the Atonement there, or of sanctification by the Holy Spirit there, or, in general, of the spiritual nature of Christianity there. All these truths may be descried in the writings of the evangelists, but through a sort of twilight medium; nor do we meet with them fully shone upon in the Bible till after the illumination of the day of Pentecost we meet them in the epistles, which are the products of that illumina-

tion. We, of course, except the remarkable passage in John's Gospel, when he speaks in his own person as a teacher, and not as a narrator, whose single business was to record the words and actions of the Saviour. It is pleasant to recognise in this dawn of Christianity the truth in question, in, at least, as great a comparative distinctness as things seen in the obscurity of early morn bear to the same things seen in the broad sunshine of the risen day.

Romans ix. 5.—“It is further to be added, that the earliest Christian writers who quote this passage appear by the course of the argument to understand it as a plain declaration, that Christ is God over all, blessed for ever. It is so rendered in the most ancient versions, and the possibility of another interpretation was not suggested till the sixteenth century. If the apostle there did not mean to give these titles to Jesus, he employs a form of expression in which the natural grammatical construction of the words misled the whole Christian Church for fifteen hundred years.”—Vol. ii. p. 188.

This no doubt is a most unlikely supposition. More especially when you couple it with the extreme unlikelihood of Scripture being so penned as to mislead the Church into so lengthened and universal a deception. Nothing can be more distinct and declared than the charges against idolatry under the Jewish dispensation, nothing at this rate can be more distinct and declared than the authorities on the side of idolatry under the Christian dispensation. The readers of the Bible were most naturally and necessarily led into it; and not till an ingenious violence was done to the verse in question, after the lapse of fifteen centuries, was it disarmed of its power to lure every plain reader of the Bible into a deadly error. In the contests of Scripture criticism, one is apt to lose a fresh and powerful impression of the obvious sense, even though the argumentative establishment of that sense has been the result of a contest. But we think a consideration to which we have often adverted, and which we now state over again, is of great efficacy in restoring the confidence which controversy is fitted to shake. It is a popular argument, but not on that account the less effective, and you will find that it bears you safely through many of the controverted passages upon this question.

You will perceive from the account given in our text-book of the introduction and usage of the word *ἰσοούσιος*,* what that

* See vol. ii. p. 194.

often was which gave rise to an artificial language of theology. It was not adopted spontaneously or in the mere wantonness of speculation. It was forced upon the Church by the practical necessity of instituting a safeguard against error. The orthodox would have satisfied themselves with a creed whose articles were rendered in the phraseology of Scripture, had not that phraseology been wrested to their face, and the obvious sense of it formally and expressly denied. The restoration of Scripture was no adequate defence against this perversity. Scripture, and a wrong sense of Scripture, are not the two elements which came into competition with each other. The two elements are, a right sense of Scripture and a wrong sense of Scripture. Now it is not by merely going over and over the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture that you express this sense. A discussion about the sense, and a statement founded on that discussion, necessarily implies the use of other language than that of Scripture itself. The contest was not between Scripture and a wrong meaning of Scripture. But the contest was between men who ascribed one meaning to Scripture, and men who ascribed another meaning to it, in which case human language even on the right side of the question was unavoidable.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VII.—SECT. III.

WORSHIP REPRESENTED AS DUE TO JESUS.

THE PRAYER.

LIFT on us, O God, the light of Thy countenance. Enable us to behold Thee as our reconciled Father in Christ Jesus our Lord. Elevate our affections above the things of earth to the things of heaven, and give us a realizing sense of Thine upper sanctuary, where God sitteth on the throne of glory, and Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. May the faith of what is unseen and eternal, prevail over the seducing influences of what is seen and temporal; and by the Spirit given to us from on high, may we be enabled to live as the disciples of the Saviour, and the expectants of that immortality which He hath purchased for us.

These testimonies (see vol. ii. p. 204) respecting the worship due to Jesus Christ, appear to me very impressive evidences of

His Divinity. And the strength of them is founded upon this, the exceeding jealousy of God in regard to the creature obtaining that worship that was due to the Creator. There is something, we admit, indefinite in the term. We are aware that the same terms have been at times applied to express the homage of respect given to God and to a fellow-mortal, but notwithstanding this there is a high, nay, a peculiar style of worship, which God claims as exclusively His own, and our own feelings can attest the difference between the religious veneration of which God is the object, and that respectful veneration rendered by men to their superiors in society. Now if the worship to be rendered to Jesus is described in the highest terms of possible exaltation—if there be no possibility of discriminating between it and that which is spoken of as right to be rendered to God in general—if He be the object of prayer, of religious appeal as to the searcher of hearts, of adoration not to man only, but to angels, to all the angels, what else can we infer than that He is indeed God? Continually keep in remembrance, and for the purpose of preserving the strength and emphasis of this argument, that the confounding of God with inferior creatures, and more particularly in worship, is just the offence of which the Almighty is most intolerant, that this principle runs through the whole economy of the Old and New Testament, that it originated the older dispensation, and it may be regarded as the characteristic triumph of the new, that it completely established it. Take into account, along with these high awards of blessing and honour and glory and power to Him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, God's strong abhorrence of aught like usurpation in the matter of religious address or religious adoration. The verse (Rev. v. 13) appears to me peculiarly striking and forcible, because it attaches the same form of address and adoration to the Father and to the Son. The same *solemnia verba* which were not too low for the one, were not too high for the other; and it really is to my mind a most satisfactory establishment of the equality between the two persons, that in the very thing respecting which God most insisted on a distinction being kept up between Him and all His inferiors—we mean in the matter of religious worship and benediction, the very words which are ascribed to the Father are ascribed to the Son. It is this also which gives a high character as testimonies for the dignity and divinity of Christ, to the blessings that occur so often at the commencement and end of

the various epistles. Look over them particularly, and you will often meet with blessings of as high a character, sometimes identically the same, invoked on those whom the apostle is addressing, from the Son as from the Father, thus intimating an equal power of dispensing good things, as well as an equal title to be addressed in terms of celestial adoration.

BOOK III.—CHAP. VIII.

UNION OF NATURES IN CHRIST.

THE PRAYER.

THOU sittest, O God, on a throne of holiness, yet we approach Thee with confidence, because of the new and living way of access that has been consecrated thereto. We would do homage to the Son in all our approaches to the Father. We make mention of Him as our intercessor and our advocate, and we desire that the incense of His merits might be mingled with our supplications. May they thus rise before Thee, O God, with acceptance, and be answered in peace. For His sake, pardon our iniquities; for His sake, purify our natures, and render us meet for that inheritance of the saints, where Thy servants shall ever serve Thee. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

You may remember the distinction I have already insisted on between the *theologia didactica* and the *theologia elenctica*, and on what principle I attempted to justify the latter in its deviations from the language of Scripture. A pure *theologia didactica* institutes a survey and comparison of all the Bible passages which relate to a given subject, and out of them it constructs a generalized expression of the truth common to them all, which truth thus announced, and as nearly as may be in Scripture language, forms one of its articles. But should this article be controverted, it is not either by a mere reiteration of the article, or by the reiteration of any one of the Scripture passages which helped to establish it, that the controversy can be settled. The argument of the gainsayers must be redargued, and that, too, in terms adapted to meet and to neutralize their terms, and phraseology fitted to express a counter-testimony against that error which they had put forth in their phraseology, not merely in language that might adequately propound the

truth of God, but in language that might adequately protest against the errors of man. It is thus that a translation was called for; and had the defenders of orthodoxy just limited themselves to the object of so adjusting the statement of their articles as to make it express with accuracy the scriptural doctrine or the scriptural information, and at the same time put an extinguisher on the perversions of human sophistry, this would have been quite legitimate, and an ample vindication would have been possible of the scholastic style of divinity, notwithstanding its difference and deviation from the scriptural style of it. But in truth the defenders of orthodoxy went further than this. They did not limit themselves to a mere adjustment of the language for the legitimate purposes which we have now specified. They meddled with the subject and carried their speculations in it a great deal further than the informations of the Bible at all warranted them. This, you will observe, is a wholly distinct case of difference and deviation between the scholastic and the scriptural from the former; and it were well to discriminate them, for while the one is most justifiable, and was in practice most expedient and necessary, the other has misled even the Church and the orthodox into lamentable extravagances of speculation, and laid open the whole subject of the Trinity in particular, with its cognate and correlative topics, to the ridicule of the profane, to the merciless satire and severity of the infidel.

It is the ambition of being wise above that which is written that has led to these wretched aberrations from all sound theology. They might have been satisfied with the fact of the union of the divine and human nature in Christ; what business had they to speculate about the mode of union, or to disgust the world with their untasteful crudities, fetched from the arcana of a subject on which Scripture had spread a veil of decency? In respect to the method, therefore, of the union of the humanity and divinity in Christ, I will say nothing; but I am unwilling to leave off this subject, without giving you at least one specimen taken from the fancies of men respecting the mode of union between the three persons of the Trinity. It will lead you to appreciate what I hold to be an important distinction between one thing and another in the history of theological speculation, to distinguish between that which is right, when they substituted other language for that of Scripture, in order to put down the misrepresentation of the heretical, and that which was wrong when they made their daring excursions beyond the subject-

matter of Scripture. They could have put Bible truths in other language, yet kept within the limits of Bible information, and so we quarrel not with the unscriptural terms of Trinity and person and ἰμοούσιον; but there was no warrant whatever for going forth of the limits of Bible information, and so coming forth if not with antisciptural at least with unscriptural positions respecting the mode of derivation either of the Son from the Father, or of the Spirit from the Father, or of the Spirit from the Father and the Son. And so the specimen which I have to offer on this subject is taken from the controversy between the eastern and the western Churches in regard to the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son, when, after having determined that the Son was derived from the Father by generation, and the Spirit from both the Father and the Son by procession, a notable question was started—a question even entertained by Turretin—whether this was a procession by the Father and the Son separately, or a procession from the Father through the Son? The bare mention of it is distressing enough, and I just advert to it for one painful moment for the single purpose of bidding you not confound a deviation from Scripture language, grounded on a real necessity that occurred in the history of the Church, from the deviations not into different language only, but really into different and additional matter, grounded on the mere wantonness of human speculation. The example I have given, and all like examples, I would bid instantly away from my attention; and they are such wretched imaginations as these that so endear to me the admirable tact and judgment which appear in the deliverance of Calvin, who wanted no more to be said and no more to be speculated than that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one God, yet that the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are distinct from each other by some peculiarity.

Dr. Hill gives us sufficient specimens of the wantonness of theological speculation, which I trust you know how to distinguish from that legitimate doing of the Church, the object of which was so to define their articles as that they might present a safeguard against the unscriptural errors of those whose tenets were most clearly opposed to the obvious meaning of Scripture. This latter can be done without going beyond the limits of the subject-matter in the Bible. The former, again, is ever transgressing that limit, and trying to explore what Scripture has left unrevealed, to find out what Scripture has nowhere told us.

But while I prefer this charge against many of the heretics, I cannot acquit the Church altogether of blame in the matter either. There is in fact a number of the speculations that it would have been far better if the Church had taken no cognizance of at all. This clearly applies to all those questions which lie without the limit of scriptural information. If it was wrong in the sectaries to go beyond that limit in pronouncing on any of these questions in their own way, it must just be equally wrong in the Church to follow them beyond that limit, and pronounce upon the question in her other way. There may not merely be an error in the special deliverance on one side or other, there may be also an error common to both sides in taking up the question at all, or giving any deliverance whatever on the subject. There is surely much as respects the composition of the Divine and human nature in Christ—much that lies altogether beyond the range either of Bible statement or of human observation, and I would therefore greatly have preferred that the Church instead of interposing had suffered many an idle question to effervesce itself out, without holding any notice of or any decision on the subject to be at all incumbent upon it. In this wisdom, and this meekness of wisdom, the Church, we fear, has been greatly deficient in all ages. There has been an extent of sensitive vigilance, in virtue of which, when not called upon to say anything, it nevertheless came forward with peremptory articles, when it would have been far better to have abstained from the question altogether, either as a question that ministers not to godly edifying, or as a question which, naturally above the reach of all the controvertists on all sides, made it the wise and the becoming part of the Church to pass it over in silence.

The spirit of these observations is in keeping with the principle on which I ventured to offer my decision on the question of inspiration, when, instead of entering into the hidden methods of the production, I limited my opinion to the palpable qualities of the product. In like manner, I would say on the present question, that without feeling myself qualified, either by Scripture or philosophy, for pronouncing on the nature of a union which in its principle is inexplicable, I would say, that Christ was as much man as that we have the benefit of His example, the benefit of the fellow-feeling of His human sympathies, the benefit of the atonement effected by His death; and that, on the other hand, He is as much God as to make Him the object of my supreme religious reverence and regard.

In passing this condemnation even on the orthodox, I think I am fully borne out by all the passages—they are four in number—where Paul touches on those questions—not where one is scripturally wrong and another scripturally right—but those questions where a decision is either not practicable or of no practical value. It is remarkable that they all occur in his addresses to Timothy and Titus. To Christian ministers, therefore, who take a prominent part and have a literary interest in the discussion of these matters, which we do not meet with in the bulk of private Christians, I hold Paul's directions in this particular to afford another exemplification of that profound wisdom, the constant manifestation of which impresses such a character of divinity on the Sacred Volume. In the first of these passages, he admonishes in regard to the questions which are not for edifying, not to pronounce either one thing or other upon them, but to give no heed to them: "Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith." In the second, he sharply rebukes him who dotes about such questions: "He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth." In the third, he advises not to entertain such questions with a view to a deliverance either on one side or other, but to avoid them: "But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes." And lastly, he in substance gives the same admonition to Titus that he did to Timothy: "But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law, for they are unprofitable and vain." We think that had the Church acted in the spirit of these admonitions, there is many a sect and many a denomination that would never have been heard of, it being the uncalled for notice of the Church which exalted them into importance. It ought never to interfere, save where Scripture is obviously contravened, or when the consequences of any speculation would land in results subversive of the morality of Scripture.

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There is a considerable difference even among the orthodox on the question respecting the duration of the mediatorial kingdom; * though on comparing the text-book with Turretin, it is perhaps more in name than in substance. There can be no doubt

* See vol. ii. p. 247.

that the passage in the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 24) refers to the accomplishment and the surrender of the commission wherewith the Son had been vested, and this by some of the Trinitarians is held to be the termination of the mediatorial economy, and the giving up of the mediatorial kingdom. Now, they who with Turretin affirm that this mediatorial kingdom is eternal, allow that there are respects in which the mediation of Christ will cease, because in these respects the mediatorial work is finished. The salvation of His people is no longer to be acquired, for this He did for them by His death and His obedience upon earth. Neither is this salvation any longer to be applied, for this is already over in behalf of all His disciples who obtained from Him the Spirit to prepare them for heaven, and are at length everlastingly fixed in the heaven which He also prepared for them. But then, unwilling that the mediatorial kingdom should come to an end, this great master in theology has conceived a necessity for its continuance in the preservation of the salvation thus obtained and thus applied—a matter truly on which I must confess myself unable to decide, lacking that clear scriptural information upon the subject without which it is my profound feeling that I cannot tell.

On the other hand, they who deny the affirmation of Turretin, and contend for the termination of the mediatorial economy, concede as much in the way of qualifying their different proposition, as serves with his concessions and qualifications to bring the respective controvertists marvellously near to each other. They hold that there is nothing farther to be done in the way of mediatory offices, but that the recognition of Christ the Mediator will be everlasting—that gratitude to Him who had redeemed them from their sins in His blood will be the song of eternity—that the human nature of Christ will adhere to Him for ever, seeing that in the description of heaven, the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are said to be the temple of it, and the glory of God and the Lamb to be the light thereof. “The Lamb also, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters.” The kingdoms, too, of the world are to become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and, to mark the closeness and perpetuity of the union between the Saviour and the saved, it is described under the form of a marriage between Him and those blessed who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. On these verses, indeed, Turretin grounds the argument for the continuance and against the ces-

sation of the mediatorial functions. But instead of intruding into the things which we have not yet seen, I incline, through this whole speculation, to be as general as the Bible is general.

In reference to this passage,* however, let it be remarked, that on both sides of the question there is a consent and concurrence in the position that, whether the reign of Christ, *qua* Mediator, is finished or not, He reigns in virtue of His essential Divinity, equally participating with the Father in the glory of the ascription to God as being all in all. They agree in explaining the subjection of the Son to the Father as but denoting the subjection of His humanity; and differing though they do in their understanding of this mysterious announcement, they are equally zealous in upholding the glories of His essential nature.

Let me refer you, if you have any further curiosity, to Poole's Synopsis and the eighteenth question of the twelfth Locus of Turretin. The question is, *An regnum mediatorium Christi in æternum sit duraturum?* On the whole my impression is, that he has made out a good case, though, I must confess, my sense of the obscurity of Scripture on the subject has led me to regard it as practically unimportant, and so prevented its taking any strong hold on me.

It is to the credit of the wisdom of the Church of Scotland that, in its Confession of Faith, there is no deliverance upon the subject.

BOOK III.—CHAP. IX.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE SPIRIT.

THE PRAYER.

IN Thy light, O God, may we clearly see light. May we cease not giving earnest heed to the word of Thy prophecy, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our heart. May Thy Spirit lay hold of Thy word as His instrument, and thereby work powerfully within us, convincing us of sin, and convincing us of our need of a Saviour. We rejoice in Thy pure testimonies. We cherish the belief that Thine is the immaculate word of revelation, and that not one jot or one tittle of it shall fail. Give us to yield an unreserved obedience of the faith to its doctrines, of the practice to its commandments, and to experience that all of it is profitable. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

* 1 Cor. xv. 24-28.

We may be very sure that all Scripture is profitable, and more particularly that the truths implied in that formula, if it may be so called, pronounced over every Christian at his initiation into the visible Church, must have had a fundamental place and importance in Christianity. That belief which they were required to profess ere they could be admitted into the society of believers, as it should have a foremost place in the creed, so should it have a frequent place in the habitual and recurring contemplations of every Christian. There must then be a serious defect of sentiment or of mental habitude in us if there be a want of distinct reference on our part to these three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in our habitual religious contemplations. But here it may be thought that we require a clear insight into what is not clear—a constant attempt to give a separate occupancy in our thoughts to objects inseparable—a straining of the intellect to disengage from each other as distinct matters of thought what is mysteriously blended into one—to penetrate what is fathomless—to comprehend what is incomprehensible. This, I believe, is what has come of the impracticable speculations of men respecting the Trinity. The great endeavour of the Church has been to adjust the general and complex proposition in such a way as to make sure that each of its members admit all the separate and scriptural propositions which enter into it. The moral influence does not lie in the doctrine of the Trinity viewed as a whole. It comes directly and distinctly forth from each of its elementary or constituent truths. It is not the being correctly or learnedly taught in the physical constitution of the Deity which is profitable to holiness. It is not the unravelling of the enigma that works this effect. We ask you not to comprehend an intricate combination, but to dwell on that which may be simply apprehended, even that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God; and remember that the practical good of this contemplation is not founded on the manner in which these three are united in one Godhead—it is founded on the relations in which each of them stands to ourselves. There may be neither clearness nor any distinct religiousness of impression in the compound doctrine of the Trinity; while each peasant may understand and may be powerfully and practically affected by the consideration that he has the Father for the Divine principle of his being, that he has Christ for a Divine Saviour, that he has the Holy Spirit for a Divine Sanctifier.

We require him not to reconcile the distinct personality of each of these with the unity of the Godhead; but we say that a great deal of practical religion lies in the personal regards which he owes to each of them. It not only gives him a deeper sacredness of reverence for the law of God when he reflects on the strength of a Divine personage being put forth to avert from himself the penalties of its infraction; but the gratitude due to this person, the devotedness of heart and of service to His will, the confidence in His willingness and ability to save, the special regards of trust and affection which belong to Him as the Mediator between God and man—these rank among the elementary principles of the Christian life. And then, in regard to the Holy Spirit, whom we are apt still more frequently to lose sight of, both in regard to the distinctness of His person and the distinctness of His agency, we feel assured that an adequate recognition of Him would be of the utmost benefit to the interests of practical Christianity. The truth is, that in like manner as the Divinity of the Son stands forth more prominently, though not more firmly established in Scripture, than the Divinity of the Spirit, and so our contemplation of the one is apt to overshadow our contemplation of the other, we are furthermore afraid that the peculiar work of the Holy Ghost in the matter of the sinner's salvation is more, thus to speak, in the background of the Christian's habitual regards, than the peculiar work of Jesus Christ. In other words, we doubt that the atonement has a higher place in the creed and the estimation of many than the sanctification has. And we should hold it a corrective to this unfortunate tendency, if it were brought more frequently and more noticeably out by ministers in the hearing of their people, that as it required the forthgoing of one Divine personage to effectuate the removal of their guilt, so it requires the forthgoing of another Divine personage to effectuate the renewal of their nature.

It should constantly be pressed upon their attention, and the argument grounded on the respective functions of the Son and of the Spirit would help to force it the more upon their convictions, that their purification is just as integral a part of their whole redemption as their pardon is—that they must either partake of both or have no part nor lot in the matter at all—that the very apparatus, as it were, of the economy which has been set up in heaven for the restoration of man may instruct what are the parts in which this restoration essentially consists—that if, on the one hand, the sacrifice by a Divine atonement has been provided, on

the other, the regeneration by a Divine influence has been equally provided ; and if you dissever these two component parts of our salvation, you may as well offer to break up the celestial economy that has been instituted for the purpose of carrying it into effect—you may as well make free with the Divinity Himself, and try to inflict mutilation on the constitution of the Godhead.

On the distinct practical regards due to the Holy Spirit I must forbear at present to expatiate. That such is our helplessness in ourselves, and such the obstinate and, by all created means, the incurable depravity of our nature, as to call for the interposition of a Divine agent, is of itself a sentiment of great practical effect towards both the commencement and the progress of our regeneration, weaning us from all dependence on our own powers, and putting us into an attitude of dependence and prayer towards Him who alone can bestow the grace sufficient for us, who alone can perfect strength in our weakness. * * *

At the time of baptism, not only was a faith professed in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but idolatry was specially renounced. You will observe here the very strong application that might be made of the argument on this subject which we have repeatedly insisted on—we mean that grounded on the sacred intolerance which is manifested throughout the whole of Scripture for the errors of idolatry, and therefore the total improbability of such divine-like ascriptions being given to the Son or to the Holy Spirit, if either the Son or the Holy Spirit belonged to the rank of the subordinate and the created. I must not insist at greater length upon this, but may point your notice at least to the circumstance of the initiated being required at baptism solemnly to renounce idolatry, and then the following up of this renunciation by the *solemnia verba* of a form which most naturally leads all who come under it to render the highest celestial homage to the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in whose name they were initiated into the way of salvation.

BOOK III.—CHAP. X.

DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY.

THE PRAYER.

WE profess, O Lord, our continued dependence upon Thee. Give us to cultivate a perpetual and an affectionate sense of it, and may the habitual

exercise of our mind be that of communion with Thyself all the day long. May we not lose sight of God when engaged in the business of the world. May we remember that there are duties for all the occasions of life, and that in no moment of time is man left to the solitary independence of his own movements. Give us therefore to live constantly under the sense of Thy presence, and to act constantly on the principle of obedience to Thy will.

I think it quite judicious to finish off this whole matter with the doctrine of the Trinity instead of beginning with that doctrine ; or, in other words, to discuss the evidence for the elementary propositions first, and then show how they have been formed into a complex and comprehensive proposition, instead of taking up the completed and comprehensive article at the outset. I am not sure that the advantage of this is thoroughly understood. Even Moses Stuart, in his work upon the subject, judicious as he is, might have improved, I think, the order of his argument, by discussing first the evidence of the elementary propositions, and then showing how the doctrine of the Trinity is but a generalized expression for these, instead of grappling with the metaphysical difficulties of the combined proposition at the outset of his discussion. The true representation of the case in regard to the doctrine of the Trinity is, that we have been led, by clear scriptural evidence, to believe in certain positions, each, by itself, simple and easy to be apprehended, but that these do land us in a difficulty when we attempt, what Scripture nowhere attempts, to demonstrate their consistency with each other. Taken in this order, belief in the doctrine of the Trinity is the result of an inductive process, and our adherence to that belief in the face of the inexplicable difficulties which are involved in it, is just in the very character of a true Baconian or experimental philosopher, when, on the evidence of facts, he resolutely credits them as facts, though utterly at a loss for their reasons or their principles. The other way, of beginning with the complex or comprehensive proposition before you have discussed the evidence of the separate ones, gives a certain *a priori* character to the whole speculation, and has the effect, I think, of exhibiting it with less of that character of strength and rationality and sound criticism, which in theology is sound observation, than really belong to it.

It is truly instructive to observe* that the only verse which was conceived to give a scriptural expression of what I have

* See vol. ii. p. 273.

called the complex or comprehensive proposition, is given up, and, I believe, warrantably and rightly given up, by the great majority of critics. All Scripture is profitable; and if the separate propositions are clearly expressed there, but not the general one, what is this to say but that the main edification and practical benefit of the doctrine lay in its elementary truths, and not in the generalized article which the controversialists have drawn out of it? We dispute not the soundness of their deduction, we dispute not the necessity of a generalized expression in opposition to heretics who set themselves in opposition even to the separate and elementary truths; but when we find that these truths, instead of being exhibited in conjunction in the Bible, are brought forward in almost every instance individually and by themselves, what is this but to say that the great moral and practical influence of this revelation lies in our being made to know that the Son, our Saviour, is God, and that the Spirit, our Sanctifier, is God? It is delightful to understand that in preaching we have not to perplex ourselves with the adjustments of the schoolmen, which, though they did achieve the service of lifting up a safeguard against the influence of heresy, did not, at the same time, change the essential quality of scriptural truth, or the power of that truth when scripturally stated and enforced on the consciences of men. I cannot too earnestly or repeatedly insist upon it, that your business in the pulpit is to be expounders of the scriptural and not expounders of the scholastic theology. It is indeed remarkable that there is no explicit assertion of the union between the persons in the Godhead in the Bible, however fairly, and, indeed, irresistibly, that union is deducible from the separate propositions which enter into the doctrine of the Trinity. Still we never find it brought forward in this general form for any moral practical purpose, as our Saviour's divinity is, for example, to enforce the virtue of condescension and humility. Indeed, whether any moral was expressly founded or not on the separate proposition of Christ being God, and the Spirit being God, the relations in which they respectively stand to us, the offices which they discharge in our behalf, give the highest practical consequence to the information that each of them is Divine. I should like if, as the result of our earnest and oft-recurring observations on this topic, you learned to disengage the scholastic from the scriptural when enforcing from the pulpit any of the doctrines which are related to the Trinity; and I should further rejoice if, in virtue of the frequency wherewith we

have applied it, it were impressed on you as a general principle that might be carried over the whole extent of doctrinal theology.

Let me not be understood, however, as meaning to convey, that because inexpedient in the pulpit, these articles of an artificial theology were useless to the Church. They served an important purpose; and, in point of fact, Arianism was unheard of many centuries after the termination of the Nicene controversy, during which period the elementary propositions might have been enforced on the consciences of men without disturbance. The truth is, that profound controversy and profound Scripture criticism stand to right pulpit doctrine very much in the same relation. Neither will extend very materially the domain of religious truth, but each fulfils a high and important function by the line of circumvallation which they throw around the domain, by the barriers which they have presented against the incursions of heresy. This service has been alike accomplished by our polemics and our philologists; but it follows not that our pastors should introduce either the argumentation of the one or the criticism of the other into the pulpit. They have, however, done inestimable good notwithstanding, in that they have ward-ed off the invasions of heresy, and thrown a canopy of defence around the faith of our cottage patriarchs.

When it is said that the attempt to reconcile the Trinity with the unity of God has been more in the way of speculation than of Scripture criticism, let it be recollected that each of the elementary propositions rested on Scripture evidence alone, and that the generalized expression of them in the proposition of the doctrine of the Trinity is not properly speculation. The object of speculation is to find out ligaments or bonds of connexion between the distinct separate truths, which bonds or ligaments Scripture has not made known to us, and it is not to be wondered at that in this particular, there should be no information whatever elicited by Scripture criticism.

“In order to do justice to the Catholic system,” Dr. Hill says,* “it is necessary to state the manner in which those who hold the system endeavoured to reconcile the divine unity with the subsistence of the three persons.” Here I demur. To give a complete view of the literature of the question, it may be necessary to state all the attempts which have been made towards this reconciliation, but it is not by a statement of these attempts that

* Vol. ii. p. 285.

justice is done to the question itself, or to the Catholic system. Calvin, in his noted deliverance of great, but I think of wise generality, made no attempt to reconcile the elementary propositions with each other, but only brought them into juxtaposition, and wove so many simple affirmations into a comprehensive and complex one. This is only reassembling the elementary truths in one sentence, it is not reconciling them; and I contend that ample justice is done to the Catholic system, if it can be shown that each of the simple propositions is based on scriptural statement, and the complex or general proposition has been rightly deduced out of them. All that follows, then, I hold, is a very close treading on the margin that separates the known from the unknown, and perhaps a pressing inwards sometimes on the ulterior region. At the same time, I do think the matter managed by Principal Hill with a delicacy and a generality which do credit both to his judgment and taste; and as I particularly admire the ultimate deliverance which he has come to on the subject, we need not shrink, now that we have come so near to the end of our journey, from the same full and minute description of the remainder that we have observed along the whole of that continuous and protracted way, through which with such exemplary patience you have travelled.

BOOK III.—CHAP. X.—SECT. IV.

AMOUNT OF OUR KNOWLEDGE RESPECTING THE TRINITY.

THE PRAYER.

We acknowledge and repent before Thee, O God, the sinfulness of our nature. Make us more deeply sensible thereof, that we may be led to prize the remedy of the gospel, and be reduced to a thankful acquiescence in its overtures of reconciliation. Do Thou manifest the truth of Thy word to our consciences, and give us not only to discern there such a picture of ourselves as may convince us of sin, but such a fulness in the offered salvation as may cause us to rejoice in the worth and sufficiency of our Saviour. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

We cannot fail here* to remark the substantial unity of the two Established Churches of Great Britain in respect of doctrine, though not in respect of government or of form—unity,

* See vol. ii. p. 301.

therefore, in regard to that on which the Bible has explicitly delivered itself, variety in regard to that on which the Bible has left no very distinct or authoritative statement at all. In spite, however, of this their substantial unity, I have no wish that they should ever be united, holding it wise not to attempt an incorporation which, if attempted, would be resisted, and thinking it quite possible that two Churches may be one in charity though unlike in constitution, of the same faith under different forms.

It here occurs to me to say, that I hold it a high point of Christian wisdom not to give offence by the introduction of trifling novelties into the service of a congregation, even although they should be real improvements as far as they go. The apostle Paul I hold a perfect example of tact and delicacy in this respect, and have often admired the dexterity wherewith he applies the light of a clear and important principle to the questions of minuter casuistry. To him it was a trifle whether he ate flesh or not, but if it were to offend a weak brother he would not eat flesh while the world standeth. There was a fine combination in this—strength of conscience along with the utmost tenderness for the infirmities of the weak. It is the very combination I should like you all to realize, superiority to vulgar prejudices, but along with this the utmost indulgence, save when the higher interests of truth and godliness were at stake—a kind and considerate indulgence for vulgar feelings. The introduction of the organ into public worship I give as one example of what I mean. You may not care about it, perhaps rather like it on the whole, yet if it gave serious distress to but one of the congregation, I should hold this a paramount reason for not insisting upon it. The practice of standing at the psalms may be specified as another. I have known the utmost clamour and dissatisfaction excited on both of these occasions, and even witnessed a great parochial effervescence on the practice being abolished of reading out the line. I mention these instances merely for the sake of giving greater distinctness to the general lesson of an enlightened forbearance with each other in the mere circumstantials of worship, in contrast to the furious intolerance and zeal which characterized and at the same time disgraced a former age.

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“We are thus brought back, after reviewing a multiplicity of opinions, to the few simple positions which constitute the whole amount of the knowledge that Scripture has given us concerning the Trinity,” &c.—Vol. ii. p. 309.

This statement of our text-book brings us to what I should call the *ne plus ultra* of our deliverances on the subject of the Trinity. And you will observe the extreme generality of the description. I should feel inclined to describe it by negatives rather than by affirmatives, denying Sabellianism on the one hand on the scriptural evidence of the distinction between the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; denying Tritheism on the other, on the scriptural evidence of there being only one God, professing the utmost value for the separate propositions, and on their being formed into a compendious proposition, confessing my utter ignorance of the ligament which binds them together into one consistent and harmonious whole.

* * * * *

“The second inference or advice is, that as you cannot expect to give the body of the people clear ideas of the manner in which the three persons are united, it may be better in discoursing to them to avoid any particular discussion of this subject, and to follow here, as in every other instance, the pattern of teaching set in the New Testament.”—Vol. ii. p. 312.

This is a very judicious advice, though he has not entered minutely into the reasons of it. Indeed, I have nowhere met among Trinitarian writers, a formal recognition of the distinction which I have so much insisted on between the separate propositions viewed in their individuality, and the comprehensive proposition formed by the juxtaposition of them all. If it be true, even as I think it, that the moral and the practical good of the doctrine comes directly forth of the separate propositions, then there is no call, for any good purpose at least, to deviate at all from the scriptural exposition of the subject; and this consideration is further enforced by what I have so often asseverated on the respective functions of the polemic theology on the one hand, and the simply didactic or hortatory on the other. I will only further observe, that there is no duplicity in this advice of the text-book. It is not telling you to receive one thing at the hall, and to go forth with an opposite thing into the pulpit; it is only to receive one thing here and go forth with a different thing there. And that just because you should become qualified to defend the truth as well as to deliver it, just because there may be an occasional call upon you to become polemics, as well as a constant call upon you to become pastors; and whether you come forth on the field of controversy or not, it is of importance that you, the future pastors of the Church, should be shielded against the influence of

all these heresies, to which, in your more varied and extensive acquaintance with the authorship of your profession, you are greatly more exposed than any of the people who are beneath you.

“The essential points of Christian instruction, which it is the duty of the ministers of the gospel to impress upon the people, are revealed in the Scriptures in such a manner as to be in no danger of leading into the Sabellian, the Arian, or the Tritheistic scheme of the Trinity; and therefore if we adhere, as we ought always to do, to the pure revelation of Scripture in our account of the three persons, we have no occasion to expose to the people the defects of these schemes, and we may reserve to ourselves all the speculations about the manner in which the three persons are united.”—Vol. ii. p. 313.

This is a most cheering and important truth; and I trust you see the reason of it. We can make out no more of the Trinity than the separate and scriptural propositions will let us, and by expounding these, you in fact furnish the people with the only materials which are available, even to the profoundest theologian. What a beautiful prospect does this open, when these matters come to be clearly understood and faithfully proceeded on! What a mighty disencumbrance to the work of the pulpit if all the terms and technicalities of the polemic theology were at length dispensed with. What a superior effectiveness, under the blessing of God, may be anticipated from the preaching of the word, when the word itself dictated the sermon, and that without reference to the numberless perversities of sentiment which it is the office of the *theologia elenctica* to crush and to exterminate. What a blessed revolution, when this *theologia elenctica* is confined to its own place, and a pure *theologia didactica* is all in all throughout our parishes. The scholastic ought *instante* to be wholly superseded by the scriptural in the work of the ministry; and let us hope that by the growth of moral honesty among men, and submission to the true philosophy of theological investigation, controversies may at length disappear, and so this scholastic theology, with its services wholly uncalled for, may become a useless and a forgotten thing.

BOOK IV.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE, THE EXTENT, AND THE APPLICATION OF
THE REMEDY BROUGHT BY THE GOSPEL.

THE PRAYER.

THY mercy, O God, is in the heavens, and Thy truth reacheth to the clouds. We rejoice that in the gospel of Jesus Christ this mercy and this truth have met together. We had come within the scope of Thy threatenings. The vengeance of a broken law was upon us. Thou stoodest committed to the declarations which Thyself hadst made against the children of iniquity; yet Thou foundest out a way in which to harmonize with the attributes of a nature that is holy and venerable, a full acceptance of the sinners who have offended Thee. Make us wise and understanding in this the way of the Lord, and give us that knowledge of Thyself and of Jesus Christ which is life everlasting. Be with us now and ever.

In the text-book, the distinction is not sufficiently adverted to between the controversial and the simply didactic theology, although there are some most judicious and important advices in regard more especially to the proper work of the pulpit, which are evidently founded upon it. The whole plan, therefore, is more accommodated to the correction of heresies than to the immediate derivation of the truth from Scripture—a process which, if it were possible, one would like to see executed by one completely unconscious of all the human differences that had existed upon the subject. The exposition of divine truth is a work different, and differently gone about, from the exposure and the correction of human error, although you come by each of them to the establishment of the same principle at the last. Let us not be alarmed, however, as if we were again to be sickened by another round of interminable polemics. They, in the first place, are not of so revolting a character, for we will not come into contact with the jargon of the schools, or be scandalized by the daring and offensive liberties which, in the wantonness of speculation, were taken with the constitution of the Deity; and, on the other hand, the subject of investigation lies nearer home. Instead of relating to the constitution of God, it relates to the character of man. The lights of experience and Scripture are now to be blended together, and the whole track before us now partakes more of the character of a home-walk through the recesses of our own felt and familiar nature. The depositions of

Scripture criticism are responded to by the depositions of one's own consciousness, and the questions all so touch on the state and the prospects of humanity, as to give a very near and affecting interest to the whole speculation. I, on Thursday, shall explain how it is that the greater number of theological writers do not begin at the point where we now are, in their expositions of the subject-matter of Christianity, although I think it would in fact be a far more continuous transition from the Natural to the Christian theology. By commencing with the Trinity, as is very generally done, the line of continuity is broken, and a great immediate ascent made, *per saltum* as it were, to a theme the most transcendental of any in the Christian record, and which, if we prosecute too far, would land us in the most hopeless and unresolvable mysteries. Let me ask you, then, to feel how as if, fresh from all that natural theology had informed you of, or rather given you in the shape of obscure and uncertain intimations, you were entering your first footstep on that territory where alone relief from the distress, and satisfaction to the most urgent inquiries of nature could be found.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. I.

DISEASE FOR WHICH THE REMEDY IS PROVIDED.

THE PRAYER.

WE feel, O God, the burden of our alienation from Thyself in the sad fruit of all this ungodliness, in the perversity of our hearts, and the innumerable errors and deficiencies of our lives. We pray for a full application to our sad moral disease of the remedy of the Gospel. Give us to experience a present salvation in our being delivered from the power of sin here, as well as a future salvation in our being delivered from the punishment of sin hereafter. And grant, O God, that entering now on a life of resolute and universal holiness, we may at length become meet for the inheritance of a blissful eternity. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

The moral disease under which we labour may be regarded as the basis of the Christian system. It is that which Christianity presupposes, which Christianity proceeds upon, and its great object, in fact, is to administer a restorative and a relief from the natural wretchedness of our state and the natural

maladies of the human constitution. We hold it of prime importance that we should have deep and adequate notions of the guilt and depravity of man; for just in proportion to our sense of the virulence of the disease will be our sense of the value of the remedy, will be the value that we set both on the sacrifice that atones and on the Spirit that sanctifies. A meagre and superficial imagination of human guilt lies at the bottom of all meagre and superficial views of Christianity. Extenuate this, and everything else is reduced and extenuated in proportion. A slight hurt requires but the application of a slight and gentle remedy; and, accordingly, on the system of those who look on the moral distemper of our nature as but slight, you will find, in correspondence with this, that all the peculiarities of the gospel revelation are well-nigh attenuated into nothing. Christianity, instead of being regarded as a radical cure for a mortal disease, is but regarded as a mild and gentle remedy for a slight moral ailment. When the doctrine of man's corruption is thus reduced, everything else is enfeebled and made slender in the same ratio, and either the blood of a satisfying propitiation to wash away our guilt, or a regenerating Spirit to create the clean heart and make it all over again, are felt to be alike uncalled for.

It serves to mark a connexion between the Natural and the Christian theology, and to evince how continuous the transition is from the one to the other, when we observe that the doctrine which stands at the commencement of the Christian, is strongly impressed upon us even by the feebler lights of the natural theology. There is a conscience within every breast, there is the sense of a moral and a righteous Governor who planted it there. There is a consciousness of deficiency from that pure and perfect virtue which is required by His law, and so a consciousness of sin. The inward conviction of depravity, the agonies of remorse, the forebodings of vengeance, these do not need to be put into us by a revelation from heaven, they are feelings which man has already, and wherewith he might meet the disclosures of revelation. They were not unknown in ages of darkest heathenism, and still are to be met with by the bearers of the gospel among the savages of far distant lands. In short, there is a universal theology of nature, which has familiarized all men to the fearful sense of guilt and of danger; and instead of this feeling having to be awakened by Christianity, it forms one of the prior and ready-made securities for Christianity obtaining an earnest hearing from men, that it comes charged with overtures by which

to appease the feeling which before its appearance in the world had often been painfully awakened in the human bosom.

It is here altogether worthy of being remarked, that though previously informed by nature of our guilt, this does not supersede the necessity for the same information being further given us by Christianity. It may both be true that by the light of nature alone we may arrive at a certain sense and a certain sensibility towards sin, and yet that when further told of it by Christianity, the sense and the sensibility may become tenfold more alive than before. This corresponds with the phenomena of human consciences in ordinary life. Take the case of a man hurrying on to some guilty indulgence, and perhaps entered upon a course of it. His conscience is far from being entirely asleep in insensibility; it gives him occasional disturbance—it embitters the course of pleasure upon which he is embarked. He is not at ease, pursued by a sense of worthlessness, which, however, may not be nearly adequate to the enormity of those offences into which he is fallen. There is a film of shade and of dimness between the eye of his conscience and the wickedness it is employed in contemplating, in virtue of which, though he does apprehend the guilt of his own misconduct, he apprehends it but dully and hazily, carrying along with him, therefore, but a languid sense of his own worthlessness, and a sense of it that easily glides away from his heart when the fascinations of sin have entered it, and which can at all times be overborne amid the impetuosity and uproar of those guilty passions that war against the soul.

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

from without has, as if by sympathetic touch, illumed the candle of his own conscience within, and such is the power of mere external testimony, that it not merely overwhelms this victim of depravity with shame, but with all the agonies and horrors of self-condemnation before unfelt.

This remarkable power of external testimony to kindle a respondent light within the man's own breast has not been enough adverted to. We feel persuaded that much of the operation and effect of the internal evidence for the truth of Christianity lies in this principle. It is a principle verified to the full in common authorship. How is it that a moral writer, whether by dissertation or even by fictitious history, recommends his own wisdom and discernment to the admiration of his readers, just by holding up to them a mirror of their own minds? He tells them that which they never adverted to before, yet of which on the moment of its being told, they instantly recognise the truth and justice. He can charm from long oblivion a thousand of their own experiences which rise up as witnesses for what he says of some peculiarity in the state and tendency of their own affections, or in the constitution of their moral nature. We know that an external testimony can bring to recollection many a historical event in one's outward life which for years had lain in profoundest forgetfulness; and so external testimony can bring to recollection these historical events in one's inward life, which form, in fact, the materials for the knowledge of human nature. Thus it is that when a man of wisdom and profound discernment tells of human nature and its peculiarities, there is many a reader or hearer who never could have made the observation himself, but who, on the moment of its being made, instantly recognises it, and does homage to the truth. It is remarkable that so many forgotten things should be laid up in the dormitories of one's own bosom, and would lie there for ever, unless awakened into life and consciousness by a voice from without. This is a profound part of our nature, but a part which belongs to every man, and makes him a subject for that manifestation which the Bible calls the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience. Things are said to him from without, and he by means of an independent faculty or knowledge from within assents to the truth of them. How can this be, if they are novelties, and he appears only to have heard them for the first time? It is truly for the reason which I now specify. The external voice has awakened many a dormant recollection, which had long escaped his notice, and

would have remained in oblivion for ever; and these recollections thus made alive are the living witnesses within for the correctness of these intimations, which are now brought to him from without. The voice of another, whether it comes to him by hearing or by authorship, has an echo in his own bosom, and that an echo which, but for this voice from without, would never have been awakened.

You will now see the importance of it to us that human guilt, though deposed to originally by nature, should be proclaimed as it is by revelation. Nature at first deposes but in part, and without adequate sense or sensibility, to its own guiltiness, just like the man who indulging in wickedness has a conscience that tells him of the evil, but tells him faintly and feebly, till, when further told of it by others, the same conscience records, and that with powerful voice, the remonstrance which then is sounding in his ears. Now this, and this precisely, is what the Scripture doctrine of man's depravity does for the man who reads, and reads intelligently, in his Bible. It convinces him of sin, a conviction, however, you will observe, not resting exclusively on the faith we have in the outer testimony of Scripture, but a conviction that he originally had in his own mind, though but faintly and feebly, before the testimony of Scripture had any effect upon him, and a conviction still flowing from a source within himself, though opened by external revelation, by that hammer of the word of God which breaketh the rock in pieces.

If I have succeeded in making myself intelligible on this important matter, you will perceive how it is that the doctrine of man's moral depravation is, in fact, shared between the theology of conscience and the theology of Scripture, and how it is just the very truth which occupies the transition space that lies between them. This, then, I would seize upon as the proper outset doctrine on the moment of your entering into the subject-matter of Christianity; and you will perceive, I trust, how by means of it a sort of bridgeway is thrown across the gulf of separation between the Natural and the Christian theology.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy blessing, O Lord, rest on all our attempts to penetrate the meaning of the Scriptures, and to know the mind of the Spirit, as it is delivered there. Give us thereby to become wise unto salvation. May sin, both in its guilt and in its pollution, be effectually done away by the all-sovereign remedy revealed to us in the gospel; and grant, O Lord, that, convinced of the depth and the virulence of that moral disease under which we labour, we may be reduced to a thankful acquiescence in the overtures of the New Testament. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

We are now at a very important transition in the science of theology. We have considered the great moral disease which pervades, and that universally, the families of earth, and we now proceed to consider the remedy held forth to us from heaven. You are aware of the distinction between the judicial and the personal in the disease, and it is of the utmost importance for you to understand that there is a distinction in the remedy precisely the counterpart of this. Christianity, wherever it takes effect, reverses both the personal and the judicial state of man; and whereas by nature there is both a condemnation under which we lie, and a corruption by which we are tainted, by the gospel there is, on the one hand, a free acquittal, or rather justification for all who embrace it, and on the other, there is a transformation of character—a change from sin to righteousness—inasmuch that the real disciples of the Saviour are delivered, not only from the guilt of moral evil, but are also delivered from its power.

It is of the more importance your attention being fastened on these two individual parts of the remedy, and your ever insisting on the second to be as indispensable as the first, that on this subject there is a deep and an inveterate delusion in the popular understanding. I could almost affirm of the majority of our people, that they look on Christianity far more as a dispensation of pardon than as a dispensation the aim and object of which is to moralize the character of men—that the relief which it principally offers is a relief from the punishment of sin, and not a relief from the bondage of sin itself. What, in fact, they chiefly

regard in it is the indemnity which it offers against the pains and penalties of the broken law, and not the reinstatement which it proposes to effect of the ascendancy of that law over the heart and the history of man. In other words, it is but a salvation addressed to the sentient or the animal part of our nature that they at all care for, or a deliverance from those physical sufferings inflicted on the disobedient by the hands of an angry and avenging God. The salvation in Christianity addressed to the moral part of our nature is what I am afraid they have but low and languid conceptions of; and it will be your part to correct this sordid imagination, and train them to worthier and more exalted views of that economy, the object of which is not merely to reconcile, but to regenerate—not merely to avert from men the wrath of an offended God, but to restore them to His image, and to all those moral graces and perfections by which His nature is irradiated. The truth is, that a judicial deliverance, so far from being the ultimate or highest part of the Christian salvation, stands to the personal deliverance only in the relation of means to an end. Justification is, as it were, the starting-post of the Christian life, and sanctification is the landing-place. The one is but instrumental or introductory to the other; and if the first effect of Christ's death is to wash us from our guilt, the great and terminating effect of it is, that He might purify us to Himself, a peculiar people, and make us zealous of good works.

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These are the two great doctrines, I had almost said divisions, of Christianity. By the one we are informed what that is which constitutes our title to heaven, by the other what that is which constitutes our preparation for it. Ere we have part in that glorious inheritance, we must not only be made meet in law, but we must also be made meet in person and character; and I hope to make it clear that, by giving to the righteousness of Christ the whole glory of the first of these objects, we take a most effectual method of speeding onward the second of them, which is to perfect our own personal righteousness.

It will be your part to vindicate the truth as it is in Jesus from the aspersions which have been so plentifully cast upon it, and for this purpose to put the holiness of the gospel on the front and foreground of all your ministrations. You will have more to do than perhaps you are aware of in tracking through all its disguises that subtle Antinomianism which, though seldom

avowed, has in effect insinuated itself into every popular creed of Christendom. You must expound the salvation of the gospel as being a moral salvation; and protest on every occasion, in the hearing of your people, that unless they are turning from sin to righteousness, their salvation has not yet begun, nor have the lessons of the Christian faith taken any effect upon them.

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I may here remark, that Scripture is more exclusively the source of our information in regard to the remedy than in regard to the disease. For the latter we have the light of consciousness as well as the light of revelation. In speaking of man's moral depravation, the Bible speaks of what may be termed an earthly thing, or a thing which, having its place on earth, is a subject of man's direct and personal observation. In speaking, again, of God's method by which He proposes to reconcile and regenerate the world, the Bible speaks of that which may more properly and exclusively be termed a heavenly thing. It is a thing which has its place in heaven. It is a matter which appertains to the jurisprudence of God. In affirming the delinquency of the human character, we affirm that which has its proof and its verification within the precincts of a man's own bosom; in affirming the scheme of our redemption, we affirm that which was devised in the counsels of the upper sanctuary. For the one there is a confirmation and a response in human experience; of the other, information had to be brought to us from a place which the experience of man does not reach. We are therefore more exclusively dependent on the informations of Scripture for the one doctrine than the other—revelation being our sole guide and our sole authority on this great question.

I would furthermore observe, that there is a difference of effect in the preaching of these two doctrines which, I think, admits of being explained. An able and effective exposition of the disease is more interesting to the general public; an exposition of the remedy, though alike able and effective, is only more interesting to those who are in earnest about their salvation. The following I hold to be an explanation of this phenomenon: In preaching on the disease, you appeal to man's own consciousness of his own moral nature; you enter into the recesses of his heart, and may hold out a vivid portraiture of the hidden man who thinks and feels and purposes there. The testimony which comes from without is met by a reflex consenting testimony from

within. Man is always interested when there is held out to him, as in a mirror, a faithful representation of himself. For this purpose it is not necessary that he should come under the power of the lessons wherewith he is plied. It is enough if he but recognise the justice of them. He will then feel the same sort of dramatic interest which is felt in witnessing any vivid exhibition of life or manners. Whether or not he comes under the power of what is said, if there be in his bosom but a responsive echo to its truth, man must and ever will feel interested. In this way the exposure of the man's ungodliness may not only be listened to with toleration, but be admired and acquiesced in by thousands who are neither humbled nor alarmed because of it.

Now, you are very generally abandoned by the sympathy of these hearers, when you pass from an exposition of the disease to an exposition of the remedy. It comes to be very different when you speak about matters the knowledge of which is brought from afar, instead of speaking about matters which lie within the homestead of man's own familiar recollections. And accordingly, the very hearers who hung with intense interest when told graphically and experimentally of the disease, feel the insipidity of the theme when you proceed to tell them of the remedy, to expound the efficacy of Christ's atonement, or the validity of His substituted righteousness. The truth is, they take no personal, they take only a speculative or literary interest in the question at all. This interest is upholden when engaged in those topics which admit a vivid delineation of our own felt and familiar humanity, but it takes flight when the question relates to a subject so remote from any experience of ours as the jurisdiction of Heaven, and the manner in which redress and reparation have been made for its outraged dignity.

And it is only with those few who have been practically awakened into a sense of their own deep and urgent concern in these things—with those whose fears have been awakened, and who are visited by the conviction of a present guilt and a coming judgment—with those who, affected by the realities of the question, make their reconciliation with God the object of their resolute inquiry—it is only with those, I say, that you find the welcome of a willing and an obedient ear when you tell that to them a Saviour has been born.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. I.

SOCINIANISM.

THE PRAYER.

WE would bless Thy name, O God, because it is holy. Yet Thine is a holiness tempered with mercy, and which, though utterly repugnant to sin, is not inconsistent with the utmost compassion and love to the sinner. We rejoice that in the scheme of our redemption these elements which appear to be so discordant have been completely harmonized—that there truth and mercy have met together—that there righteousness and peace have entered into fellowship—and that in virtue of the de cease accomplished at Jerusalem, Thou canst at once be a just God and a Saviour.

“The fundamental principle of the Socinian system is this: Pure goodness, or a desire to communicate happiness, is conceived by the Socinians to constitute the whole character of the Deity,” &c.—Vol. ii. pp. 362, 363.

This I hold to be a very prevalent illusion, and which serves to explain much of what is meagre and unsound in theology. It is not confined to Socinians alone; we meet with it, though chiefly among educated people of orthodox denominations at least, whatever their leanings and principles may be. It forms, I think, the great deficiency in our systems of natural theism. Butler is free from it; and by a single remark, I think, in one of his footnotes, he clears himself effectually from all participation in the error to which I am now adverting, and which consists in merging all the moral attributes of the Divinity into one, that one being benevolence. Butler says somewhere that we have no reason to presume that the production of happiness was the sole end of God in the creation—that He may have had other and even more paramount objects in view, and he instances the vindication and the glory of moral righteousness. I should say it was a great defect of Paley’s *Natural Theology* that he makes so little account of those perfections in God to which more peculiarly belong the characteristic of sacredness. He, too, falls very much into the way of amalgamating all the attributes of the Godhead into a placid undistinguishing tenderness, ascribing to Him the fondness rather than the authority of a parent, and obliterating all those characteristics which belong to Him as a

sovereign, a lawgiver, and a judge. God's intolerance for sin as sin is overlooked in this way of regarding Him; and I do hold this to be at the bottom not of Socinianism alone, but of much of the false and therefore fatal security that prevails in the world.

I have already remarked, that to this laxity of principle in theological science there is a corresponding laxity in moral or ethical science. In our abstract systems of moral philosophy there are some who have attempted to resolve the virtuousness of all rectitude whatever into benevolence, and so to make the obligation and the morality of justice and truth and purity lie altogether in their subserviency to the good or happiness of society. Our soundest philosophers upon this subject, however, disclaim this analysis, and affirm an independent character of virtuousness in these qualities, which may therefore be held the orthodox system of morals. I hold it altogether worthy of your observation, that what the advocates of an unsound ethical theory affirm of certain virtues in the abstract when running and resolving them all into benevolence, the advocates of an unsound theology on the other affirm of Him who is the concrete, if I may so speak, and exemplar of all the virtues, affirming of God that the all-engrossing morality of His nature is benevolence, and that His justice and truth and holiness are but the ministers of this perfection; so that, according to their estimation, in the great act of forgiveness which has been extended to a rebellious world, there needed no homage to these inferior or subsidiary qualities of His nature, seeing that by this great act He has demonstrated the supremacy of His goodness, that great master virtue which subordinates all the rest, and comprehends all the rest.

You will observe that this Socinian view of the Deity reposes on a principle disowned by a vast majority, and those, too, of highest name in ethical science. But it is not primarily or principally from them that we derive our assurance as to the great doctrine of the atonement. All the positive evidence and all the positive information we have on this subject are furnished by Scripture; and we employ the authority of the ethical principle not to establish the doctrine of God, but to nullify the objections which men have raised against it. We do not regard the ethical principle as a prop to the theological doctrine, but the theological doctrine rather as a confirmation and a testimony to the soundness of the ethical principle. We hold it as a very

striking expression of the high and independent prerogatives which belong to truth and justice, that when these attributes in the Divinity were staked to the infliction of those penalties which had been annexed to disobedience, it was not by a simple and unconditional act of goodness that the outrage was repaired. A propitiation had to be rendered. The penalties were not cancelled;—they were only transferred from the head of the offenders to the head of their substitute; and in the agonies and cries and symptoms of deep endurance on the part of this mighty and mysterious Sufferer, do we both behold an homage to truth and justice and holiness in themselves, and, as virtues residing in the character of God, do we behold in this solemn transaction of our atonement the lustre poured over them of an awful vindication.

But our chief purpose in these observations is not to adduce this doctrine as evidence in behalf of any ethical system. If such a system be at all well founded, it must be accordant with that practical sense of morality which is universal among men, and which is anterior to the formation of any philosophic theory. And accordingly, the impression on every unsophisticated conscience is, that mere benevolence does not comprehend the sum and the substance of all virtue—that truth and justice have at least a co-ordinate rank with it—that there is an authority, a rightfulness in these great principles which it were anarchy to violate—and that if as existing in God there is not in every act of the Divine administration a full recognition and homage rendered to them, then the character of the Godhead suffers mutilation. In these circumstances, an unconditional act of mercy could not have appeased the fears of guilt. There would have been the misgivings of conscience in the face of it. Men would not have felt at ease while the question of God's truth and justice and holiness were left undisposed of. It is the manifest union of truth and mercy in the gospel which gives to the message, not of simple but of propitiated pardon, its hold and its charm over the moral nature of man. He sees in the redemption of the New Testament a halo of all the attributes, and that there and there alone the benevolence of God shines forth upon the guilty world without one shade of slightest obscuration on its august and inviolable sacredness.

The placability of God is often affirmed in Scripture, and that without any reference to the work of a mediator. The one is not always spoken of in conjunction with the other; but if both the

one and the other are asserted in the Bible, at however great a distance from each other, though not always placed in juxtaposition, and within the limits of the same verse or sentence, then both must be sustained as true—that is, that God is merciful, and yet that that mercy finds its way to our guilty world only through the channel of the mediatorship of Christ. Nor is the first of these positions at all shaken or impaired in its credit and certainty by the second of them. Although the mercy of God reaches the transgressors of His law only through the merits and mediation of His Son, there is nothing in this which at all deducts from the strength of this attribute. It was not the redemption by Christ which originated the mercy of God, but it was the mercy of God which originated the scheme of our redemption. He so loved the world as to send His only begotten Son into it; and herein is love, that He sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. It is of the utmost importance that you give a primary, a presiding place to the kindness of God the Father in the great work of redemption. You are not to represent Him as devoid of all movement or affection of good-will to mankind till propitiated and made placable, as it were, by the sacrifice of His Son upon the cross. You must ever remember to impress it upon your people that the tender mercy of God to His strayed children lay at the bottom of the whole of this marvellous dispensation—that He felt towards them all the longings of a bereaved parent—that the mode of recovery was a method of His own devising, and instituted by Him for the purpose of finding a way by which He might reach the guilty, and put forth that mercy upon them which is the darling attribute of His nature. And because it had to devise such a way, so far on this account from its being a mercy abridged and obliterated, it was mercy in its highest possible exhibition, because a mercy that had to struggle, as it were, against the necessities of a high and holy administration—a mercy that had to scale the barrier which the truth and justice and sacredness of the divinity placed in its way—a mercy by which, rather than destroy our world, He spared not His only beloved Son; and now that the wall of separation has been taken down by Him who died the just for the unjust, a mercy is held forth to the acceptance of all, which, rejoicing in its own exuberance, goes abroad over the face of the world, and plies with its overtures of welcome and good-will all the individuals of all its families.

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“ In the opinion of the usefulness of Christianity all who re-

ceive it as a divine revelation readily agree. But the Socinians, as if desirous to atone, by this branch of their encomium on Christianity, for the dishonour which other parts of their system are conceived to do to that religion, go far beyond other Christians in magnifying the importance of the gospel as a method of instruction. They represent its precepts as not only simple, clear, and authoritative, but as inculcating virtues which are neither explicitly taught in the law of Moses, nor deducible from any of its principles; and they allow the messenger of the grace of God all the honour which can accrue to his character and to his religion from the essential superiority of his precepts."—Vol. ii. pp. 366, 367.

There occurs here a very curious discrepancy in the system of the Socinians. On the first aspect of their doctrine one would say of it that it is characterized by the magnifying of reason above revelation. It is because certain Scripture positions, when viewed literally and just as they stand, are so offensive to the natural understanding, that they would have them qualified and moulded into a conformity with our own conceptions of what is right and reasonable. This is the principle of all those liberties which they have practised on the plain and obvious declarations of the Bible; and yet when their argument requires that they should magnify the errand on which the Saviour came, even though the single purpose of that errand was the instruction of the world, they speak in such terms of our utter dependence on the informations of the upper sanctuary as if revelation did all, and it were utterly incompetent for reason to do anything. You know the respective functions of the two. It is, in the first instance, the part of reason to sit as supreme arbiter on the evidences of a professed message from heaven to earth; it is, in the second instance, the part of reason to ascertain the sense of this alleged revelation, but that, you will remember, on the same principles of grammar and criticism which determine the sense of any ordinary author. After this, reason resigns her office, but not till she has pronounced it to be most reasonable that after the bearer of an alleged communication from heaven has produced the satisfying credentials of His mission, nothing remains for it but the unqualified submission of our faith to all the doctrine and all the information wherewith he is charged.

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We think Dr. Priestley has shown the want of a sound philosophic spirit in having dogmatized so confidently on his par-

ticular side of the question in regard to the constitution of the soul;* but, on the other hand, we hold that the reasoning on the opposite side has been a great deal too confident also. With me the deciding authority for the separate existence of the soul is the authority of Scripture, as gathered from the following and other like passages:—"This day thou shalt be with me in paradise;" "God is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though not the God of the dead but of the living;" "Better to be absent from the body and present with the Lord." On these plain testimonies I hold the substantive existence of the soul, apart from the materialism by which it is now encompassed, to be a stable category of the faith; but I confess that the depositions of Scripture far outweigh, to my apprehension, all the demonstrations of pneumatology on this subject. There was a style of reasoning very prevalent at the beginning and middle of the last century—and nothing astonishes me more in the history of philosophy than that Butler and Brown should have given in to it—by which the natural argument for the immortality of the soul is grounded on its alleged immateriality, and then this immateriality made to rest not on substantive proofs, but on the subtlety of such distinctions and such definitions as I am not able to comprehend. I see nothing contradictory or absurd in the assertion, that on matter, or the combinations of matter, it is in the power of the Almighty to graft the capacities of thought and feeling. I am far from saying that He has done so. The Scripture tells me otherwise. It has made the discovery of an immaterial principle, to which reason was altogether incompetent. As far as I am able to penetrate into this question, when viewed merely as a question of metaphysics, and without regard being had to the authority of revelation, I do not think that philosophers have clearly made out a connexion between the soul's immateriality and its immortality, or clearly made out the position of its immateriality at all. I am sure you will find that part of Butler which treats of this argument the least satisfactory of all in his masterly volume on the analogy of natural and revealed religion; and really when Dr. Brown speaks of the soul being immaterial, else it would be divisible—and so we might speak of half a joy, the third part of a feeling of resentment, and resolve each emotion into fractions or segments—I must confess that he is beyond the sympathy of my understanding altogether. I dispute not that there is a strength of natural argument for the immortality of the

* Hill, vol. ii. pp. 368, 369.

soul, but I believe that it does not rest on the immaterial nature of it. The most powerful argument is the moral one grounded on the consideration of God as the Judge and the Governor of the world, coupled with the consideration, that both between man and man, and between man and his God, there is an infinity of unresolved questions—questions of justice we mean, as when one injures and oppresses another, or as when all, without exception, have incurred the guilt of defect and delinquency towards the Creator who gave them birth. There is a foreboding of natural conscience on the subject of these questions; and we cannot resist the impression and the dread of a day of account, to which, as they are unsettled here, they one and all of them will be postponed, that the innocent may meet with their redress, and the guilty with the retribution which is due to them. This argument is the first in strength for the immortality of the soul; and the second I hold to be grounded on the largeness of the desires and capacities of man—a largeness which nothing here can satiate, and which can only be met, therefore, by such counterpart objects as an immortality might furnish. After having proposed these two arguments, nature, I think, has exhausted her strength upon this question, and all which has been drawn by philosophers from the consideration of the physics of the mind, serves, in my apprehension, not to advance, but to enfeeble the cause.

Those Socinians who hold immortality to be natural to the soul, at the same time affirm that it sleeps between death and the resurrection. It is altogether a remarkable feature in Socinianism, that while it proceeds throughout on the competency of reason to judge of revelation, and even to qualify its declarations and its doctrines at pleasure, there are certain respects in which it admits and zealously asserts an incompetency in this faculty, far greater than is assigned to it by the generality of moralists and theologians. We have stated one example of this in their contending that all religion among men has its source in revelation, thus giving an enhanced importance to our Saviour's errand of instruction; and in like manner they deny the capacity of reason to discover the immortality of the soul, and thereby give an enhanced importance to the proclamation made in the gospel of life and immortality, and more especially to the fact of the resurrection, as being at once the evidence and the pledge of this high destination to us all. They want to make it out, that apart altogether from the objects wherewith the mission of our Saviour is commonly associated, such as the atonement for

sin and the fulfilment of a perfect righteousness, which man is invited to make use of as the plea for his acceptance with God, and the work of obedience by which he obtained, as a reward, the dispensation of the Spirit whereby to renew and to sanctify men—they want to make it out, that, apart from these objects, there are others of high enough importance for conferring a dignity and an interest on the undertaking of Jesus Christ. Enough, they think, that He made morality the subject of clearer statements and more impressive sanctions than before. Enough that He exemplified what He taught, and thus favoured the world, not with a code of virtue, but with a living picture and representation of it. Enough, more especially, that He poured such a flood of evidence on the great doctrine of man's immortality, and more particularly by His own resurrection from the grave, coupled with the announcement that it was but a sample and a prototype of the general resurrection. Now certain it is that He did accomplish all these objects; and we must not in the spirit of opposition to Socinianism, overlook the value of them. He did all these things, though we differ from the Socinians, in thinking that He also did a great deal more. Let us not, however, be insensible to the exceeding worth of those services which the Socinians ascribe to Him, or expend, what controversialists are very apt to do, all our zeal on the defence of that in which we are resisted or assailed by our antagonists. Let us frankly admit the preciousness of those things, too, which they allow that He performed, even though, to the disparagement of what we hold to be orthodoxy, they will contend that He performed no more. More particularly we have every disposition to go along with the Socinians in all which they allege of our Saviour's resurrection as a far more effective evidence than any which nature can supply for the immortal capacities of our species. We cannot imagine a greater contrast, in point of real strength and effectiveness of argument, between the airy subtleties of the pneumatologists on this subject, and the exhibition of a risen Saviour holding converse with His disciples, and standing revealed to the eye of their senses as a man who was dead and is alive again.

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Perhaps from the sketch here given of Socinianism, you will be enabled to perceive the truth of our former assertion, that a slight and superficial view of the disease under which humanity labours is sure to be followed up by a proportionally slight and superficial view of the remedy applied to it. There is consistency

ascribed in our text-book to their system, but it is a consistency of this sort: they extenuate one part of the doctrine of Christianity, and they extenuate, in like proportion, every other part of that doctrine. They feel not the enormous guilt of him the whole habit of whose heart and whose history is that of unconcern towards God. Besides the fundamental error of imagining that man can obliterate the guilt of his deeds simply by renouncing them, they proceed on the imagination that man has in himself a moral capacity and power of renouncing all the evil affections of nature, and transforming himself into a new creature of pure and holy and virtuous affections. The Bible tells us that God will turn away ungodliness from the hearts of those who believe; but they assume that man can himself turn it away, and that, at the simple bidding of his own will, he can at once shake himself loose from the thralldom both of condemnation and corruption, and start on that new career of progressive excellence in which he earns at length the reward of a blissful immortality. They most assuredly in this are not borne out either by Scripture or experience. There is a moral impotency in man, in virtue of which he cannot bid away his earthly affections from his heart and call on the heavenly affections to take their place, and have henceforth the ascendancy over him. The Bible represents such a transition as this to be as life from the dead, incompetent to the powers of fallen humanity, so that, after all, the amendment on which Socinians suspend their hope of forgiveness, is at best but an amendment in the decencies and the moralities of civil or social life, in virtues which are distinct from godliness, amid which they may all life long breathe in no other than an earthly element, and without the slightest share in that preparation for heaven which consists in cherishing the spirit and cultivating the holy affections and graces of heaven's society.

Consistency has no praise if it be a consistency of errors, a harmony arising from the adaptation of one principle which is wrong, to another which is equally wrong. It may so happen that a system of false positions shall hang very well together—but with a system of truth it can never happen otherwise. In a system of falsehood one part may be well adapted to another part, while as a whole it is at variance both with Scripture and experience; but a sound and just system will not merely have internal symphonies within itself—it will bear to be confronted, *ab extra*, with the lights both of the Divine word and human observation. We cannot now enter into a formal and elaborate

defence of the system of our Church, though we believe, on the very announcement of it, it will recommend its own superiority to that of Socinians, in respect of its accordancy both with the contents of the Bible and with the characteristics of human nature. It is a system based on the entire and radical depravity of man, the essence of that depravity lying in man's natural ungodliness. It proposes the atonement of a real sacrifice made by the Son of God upon the cross, having in it the virtue of an adequate expiation for all that deep and desperate guilt where-with humanity is chargeable. Under the solemn sanction and guarantee of this great transaction it makes the overtures of reconciliation to all; and they who are led to embrace these overtures, instead of regarding God in the light of goodness alone, behold, in the spectacle of the cross, the most impressive demonstration of His sacredness, and withal His irreconcilable antipathy to moral evil, so that while they receive the forgiveness of sin, they receive along with it a fearful sense of its enormity; and while, in looking with intelligence and faith to the great propitiation, all terror of the Godhead is charmed away from their hearts, they inevitably draw from the contemplation a sentiment of deepest reverence. We further insist on the great moral charm and efficacy of this doctrine in bringing man under the dominion of other motives and other principles than before: that man, on looking at the good-will which presided in heaven over this scheme of reconciliation, cannot look believingly thereat without the emotion in his heart of gratitude back again—that the love of God thus manifested to him calls forth a responsive love in him towards God, and that under the promptings of this mighty and all-subduing affection, he enters with alacrity on the service of his heavenly Master, not in a spirit of legal constraint, but in a spirit of willing obedience. Corresponding to this change in the forensic state of man, we zealously affirm that there is a change, too, in his personal character, at once the consequence of his salvation and the test of its reality. And to make out this latter change there is an agent revealed to us from heaven, whose part it is to originate and to carry forward, and at length to complete this great moral transformation—a power whose office it is not to supersede the activities of man, but to stimulate these activities—fetched down from heaven by prayer, and evincing its descent on the suppliant not by a vision or a voice, but by filling his heart with the purposes and adorning his history with all the performances of virtue. ^

system therefore ours, providing at once for the unbroken dignity of the Lawgiver, and establishing the best moral securities in the heart and nature of man for the observation of the law.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. II.

THE MIDDLE SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

WE would yield ourselves up to Thee, O God, as the duteous and devoted subjects of a rightful Sovereign. We would henceforth renounce our own will and our own way, and give ourselves wholly over to Thee, that Thou mayest rule in us by Thy Spirit, that Thou mayest rule over us by Thy law. We rejoice in the facilities of that open access which is now provided for sinners in the Gospel, and we desire that Thy goodness, as manifested there, may have the effect upon us that it had on the Christians of old—may it lead us to repentance.

The rise of the middle system I consider as a very instructive fact in the history of theological doctrine. Its advocates seem to have felt the influence of two opposite forces, one acting on each side of them. In the first place, they seem to have been impressed by the lack of evidence for Socinianism, or rather by its direct and diametrical opposition to the whole evidence of Scripture. But, in the second place, they felt the offence of the Cross; they could not brook the doctrine of the New Testament in all its fulness and all its peculiarity; and they were nauseated by the phraseology as well as by the substance of the evangelical system, and thus their anxiety to dispose of all that is pointed and special in the description of the remedy, laying it under the guise of general expressions, and so removing from their sight what is a matter of antipathy and disgust with them. They will allow that our immortality has been earned for us by the service of Christ, but they cannot brook the notion of His sacrifice. They will allow some vague conception of an interposed service of some kind or other on His part, that He is the mediator between God and man, but they feel cold to the idea of His intercession, and more especially when its efficacy is connected with the efficacy of the great atonement. They will even admit that the rewards of eternity are earned not by us, but earned by Him for us, while they shrink from the doctrine of an imputed

righteousness, and so represent the matter after all, as to make the acquisition of heaven the achievement and the remuneration of our own penitential obedience. And then the system proceeds on the native and inherent power of man both to commence and to accomplish that obedience, thus evading another of the offensive doctrines of peculiar, which is really scriptural evangelism, even that of the agency of the Spirit, whereby man is regenerated and sanctified, and made meet for an inheritance among the choirs and companies of the celestial. It is thus that all the precision and particularity of the Gospel statements are, if I may so express it, overclouded with generality. What may be called the real and substantive material of the doctrine of the New Testament is kept out of sight, and the whole history of the intervention by Christ in behalf of a ruined world described, not in the terms of the actual steps of the process, but rather in the terms of those moral attributes on the part of God and the Redeemer, which originated the process and carried it forward to accomplishment; and which description, I beg you to observe, would be equally applied to any other effectual process which had been instituted with the same design, for however our recovery had been accomplished, still it would have evidenced the good-will of God who longed after it, and of Christ, the Son of God, who cheerfully undertook and succeeded in the execution of it. And this is one of the plausibilities which the advocates of the middle system can allege in its favour. They contend that they have no wish to reduce or extenuate the magnitude of the gift. Eternal life is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. But they also contend that the incumbent gratitude and the incumbent obedience are to be estimated by the magnitude of the gift, and not by the manner of it; that the moral effect and importance of the doctrine do not seem to depend on the tenet of the atonement, for whether our blissful immortality may be referred in general to the service of Christ, or to that more special modification, the sacrifice of Christ, the same loyalty both of affection and allegiance is due upon our part. It is thus they flatter themselves they might get quit of a doctrine revolting to their taste, even that of a propitiation by the blood of Jesus, and still retain all that sense of obligation towards Him which the orthodox view of His mediation is fitted to inspire. They profess that their view, expressed in terms of generality though it be, still recognises the love of God as the origin, and the love of Christ as the instrumental cause of our recovery to a

state of immortal blessedness. Under their system, therefore, there may be as powerful a reciprocation of felt gratitude on the one side, to manifested goodwill upon the other—the same fellowship of confidence and regard both towards the Father and towards the Son.

Now admitting that, in point of moral effect upon us, it came to the same thing whether we regarded our salvation as due in the general to the intervention of Christ, or due in particular to that special mode of intervention, a sacrifice for sin, wherein He poured out His soul to the death for us; yet we would ask what right have we to generalize that which the Bible so expressly and authoritatively specializes? There can at the least this be alleged against the middle system, that there is in it a blinking of the testimony of Scripture, a revolt from its language and its peculiar form of representation, a disposition to veil over the very words of inspiration, and to merge into vague description the specific statements which inspired men have offered to the world. And there is one thing particularly which should put us on the defensive against such a practice, and that is, that in the Bible itself there is a virtue annexed to the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, and a vanity to those words of man's wisdom which many incline to substitute in their place. And it further informs us of the disgust and antipathy of nature against the things which are revealed, the natural man receiving not the things of the Spirit of God. And more especially in this very doctrine, so disguised and slurred over, if I may use the expression, by this middle hypothesis, we are told that the preaching of the Cross is to them who perish foolishness, all apprizing us throughout of the danger we incur by putting away from us any plain doctrine of the Bible, and the plain and obvious meaning of those vocables in which it is conveyed to us.

But, besides this, it is not true that you preserve the moral character of the transaction entire and unbroken, though, giving up the particular mode of interposition which the orthodox contend for, you still admit that to that interposition we owe our recovery from a state of ruin to a state of everlasting blessedness. The mode, we say, is charged with principle; there is in it a moral essence which, by this generalizing process, is altogether dissipated—for you lose by it the manifestation of the Divine character; you lose the demonstration, the impressive demonstration given on the Cross, of the turpitude of moral evil; you

lose that aspect of blended love and holiness which shines forth in our redemption—we mean the redemption not as expressed in general terms, but the redemption as specially set forth in the peculiar doctrines of the sacrifice, and the substitution, and the propitiated pardon, and the imputed righteousness. And what we think destroys altogether the practical effect of this middle system is, that you lose by it the adaptation which there is between the view that Scripture holds forth of our recovery, and the real state of the human conscience. There is nothing in the generalized doctrine which meets the universal misgiving that is on all spirits in regard to the prerogatives of a violated law and the dignity of an insulted Lawgiver, and the homage due to those attributes of the Godhead which stand committed to the execution of sanctions most formally annexed to the Divine command, and most solemnly proclaimed. There is altogether a breach and a mutilation inflicted on the whole jurisprudence of the question, and which nothing but the atonement of the gospel can repair. It is in the reception of that doctrine alone that the sinner can repose himself securely on the mercy of God, and still preserve an undiminished respect for His sacredness. It is by it, and by it only, that the law is magnified and made honourable, that the Lawgiver retains His place on an undegraded throne, that His government is preserved from the anarchy which an act of connivance at sin would most certainly bring along with it. And be assured that it is not as this doctrine figures in the demonstration of moralists and theologians, and exposes there the defective jurisprudence of this middle system, it is not by this triumph alone that you are to estimate the vast importance and worth of the peculiar doctrines of Christianity. It is by their adaptation, their practical adaptation, to the moral nature of man. It is by their fitness to tranquillize all the misgivings, and all the fearful suspicions of guilt and of vengeance which, in virtue of that nature, would still stand their ground against the bare and unsanctioned declaration of pardon. It is by the ready reception which is given to the tidings of forgiveness when thus guaranteed and thus guarded; and, above all, it is by the union which it establishes in human hearts between the peace of a solid dependence on the mercy of God, and the reverence which they will still yield to the law and the Lawgiver, under the appalling demonstration held forth in the Cross of Christ of the malignity of sin, and the vindicated authority of Him who, by the economy of the gospel as well as by the economy

of the law, hath made it so impressively palpable that He is a God who loveth righteousness and who hateth iniquity. . . .

I cannot agree with those who think that either the middle or the Socinian views afford a better field for eloquence in the exposition of them than does the Catholic. Perhaps in actual exemplifications, there may have been finer and more eloquent composition on the side of the two former. But this is because in the critical and argumentative work of establishing the superiority of the Calvinistic in respect of evidence, there is no room for eloquence, and then, after it has been thus established, we are really too apt to concentrate our regards on those truths which have been controverted, or on those aspects of the truth under which it has been controverted. After having won for our doctrine the mastery which belongs to it on the field of argument, we are still very apt to propose it in the terms of argument; and thus in the direct buisness of enforcing it on the acceptance of our hearers, there is too much of the complexion of mere argument given to our exposition of it. Controversy induces the necessity of precision—precision requires an appropriate nomenclature, a technology, the use of which is certainly adverse to the impressions of eloquence. And therefore it is that I would have you mix up as much of generality in your descriptions as the Bible warrants you to do. The error of your opponents lies in not specializing the doctrine to the extent to which it is done in the record; let it not be your error that you speak of these special doctrines only in the terms of a rigorous, and precise, and formal controversialist, without ever describing them in those terms of comprehensive generality in which Scripture often describes them, and that in passages on which, taken exclusively, the middle system founds its partial representations, giving us the truth, but not the whole truth—giving us the doctrine in brief, without giving it in the detail. It is your part to do both; and thus may you have all the scope for various and impressive eloquence which either Arians or Socinians have, while, in addition to this, you have the peculiar topics of orthodoxy, which supply the grandest possible conceptions, both of the dignity of the law, and the high state and sovereignty of the Lawgiver. If our system has not been impressively set forth, it is not from any incapacity in its truths, the incapacity must be wholly in its expounders; for what truths more fitted to awaken those emotions which it is the object of all eloquence to produce than the truths involved in the doctrine of our redemption, when

viewed in all its depth and all its peculiarity. One of the best examples of this which I at present recollect you will find in M'Laurin's sermon on Glorifying in the Cross of Christ.

At the same time, it must always be recollected that there is a natural offence against the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, and this is an offence which I believe no translation from a theological to a general style can of itself overcome. This I hold to be an error in Foster's celebrated Essay on the Aversion of men of taste to Evangelical Religion. He attributes too much of that aversion to an obsolete and exploded phraseology on the part of theologians, and too little of it to nature's repugnance against the doctrine itself. The antipathy is not so much to the style as to the substance, and that substance cannot possibly be rendered in a full and adequate manner without the use of that peculiar and technical nomenclature which necessarily leads every divine who does justice to his subject into a diction that cannot, I fear, without the surrender of essential truth, be translated into the diction of classic or general literature. I know not, on the one hand, a more pleasing and satisfactory evidence of a change, a great moral and spiritual change, than when a person of cultivated taste, and who wont to nauseate the whole phraseology of evangelism—a phraseology wherewith they had been in the habit of associating all that was homely and vulgar, seeing that it is the very phraseology which, as being the vehicle of those truths by the reception of which we are saved, is alike acceptable to the Christian peasant and to the Christian peer: I say I know not a more gratifying transition than when, in virtue of a charm now felt in the substance of the truth itself, the old disgusts are all put to flight, and he who wont to confine his reading to what was eloquent in poetry and literature, can now regale himself with the pages of Owen, and Flavel, and Boston, and Alleine, and Baxter. On the other hand, it is your part, without a sacrifice of these doctrines, which are peculiar, and which are necessarily couched therefore in a peculiar technology revolting to nature, it is your part to generalize as much as the Bible does, and to take an example, in fact, from the advocates of the middle system, not grounding, as they do, the whole style of your representations on the verses where the work of redemption is spoken of generally, but without this exclusion to mix up the general with the peculiar representation, at least as much as Scripture itself does. It is thus you will achieve, in part at least, the object of Mr. Foster in the Essay

now alluded to. You will intermingle the general with the peculiar; and so far as you do this, you will approximate the style of the pulpit to the style of ordinary literature.*

BOOK IV.—CHAP. II.—SECT. III.

THE CATHOLIC SYSTEM.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art shrouded, O God, in mystery, but it is a mystery which respects Thine own everlasting counsels, and the concerns of Thy general and extended machinery. When, instead of attempting to comprehend the universality of Thy works and of Thy ways, we look to the part of them where-with we individually have to do, there is no mystery, but a distinct offer of mercy to each of us, and a distinct call to repent and turn to the Lord Jesus, and be saved. May we meddle not with that which is Thine, for it is a matter too high for us. May we be wise in those revealed things which belong to us and our children.

I should like to qualify the assertion that a bare enumeration of texts will not suffice for the establishment of the doctrine in question.—Vol. ii. p. 391. It certainly will not suffice for the removal of the objections which sophistry and false criticism have raised against it. For this special service, we must meet the objections and disprove the criticism; but in far the greater number of instances, after we have done this, we have just demonstrated that the texts as they stand, and as they stand in our English translation too, must be taken in the obvious meaning that would naturally suggest itself to any man of common sense and common understanding. For the specific service of putting extinction upon a heresy, a bare enumeration of the texts will not suffice; but had the heresy never existed, this service would never have been called for, and those texts barely read out in the hearing of an inquirer do adequately and legitimately fulfil the great object of making him understand that their respective affirmations in the plain and natural sense of them are the very announcement of a God who cannot lie. And what is more, although a heresy do exist, yet in those numerous assemblages of society, and that vast majority of the population among whom

* See Review on Foster—Christian Instructor, 1813, p. 328, &c., or in Dr. Chalmers's Original Works, vol. xii. p. 221, &c.

the heresy is unknown, these texts do fulfil the great end which I have now specified. I would have you to distinguish between the function of an erudite Scripture criticism as an instrument of defence, and its function as the instrument of the direct enforcement of the truth on the consciences and understandings of men. In the former capacity, it is indispensable to the Church; in the latter, it is not so. The assertion of an opposite reading on the part of Arians and Socinians must be met by an elaborate search into the proper evidences of the question, the versions, and manuscripts, and quotations which have come down to us. The assertion of an opposite rendering on their part must be met by the authorities and reasonings of an elaborate philology. But when your object is to enforce the thus vindicated lesson on the minds of your people, it is altogether a preposterous application of Scripture criticism to lay before them the process of vindication. Had it not been for the disturbing force of heresy, you would have kept plying direct at the obvious lesson; and now that the disturbing force is warded off, you still keep plying direct at the lesson. It is by Scripture criticism that you settle the question between you and the heretics—it is by simple quotation, and proceeding in the way of immediate application and address on the words quoted, that you fulfil the great work of the ministry between you and your people. And so it was a signal mistake on the part of Michaelis, that to be qualified for the office of the Christian teacher even of a rustic congregation, it was quite indispensable that he should be versant not in Greek and Hebrew only, but in Syriac and Arabic, and be besides able to point out all the Rabbinisms of Scripture. We trust that this lore will increase and be perpetuated in our Church, that the battles of the faith may at all times be successfully fought, and that we might never labour under the want of championship, or of equipment for such a warfare; but let us distinguish the things which differ, and while we make due acknowledgment to the worth of sacred learning, let us at the same time be very sure that it is just an enumeration of Scripture verses, and then, without criticism at all, a direct enforcement of them, which has impressed, and most legitimately impressed, all that is just and good and practical in our religion on the general mind of Christendom. This is not enough to silence the controvertists, but it is enough for all the purposes of a direct impression on every honest and unsophisticated inquirer.

I think that Dr. Hill lays too great an onus here on the de-

fenders of the Catholic doctrine. He holds it necessary that they should prove the doctrine not to be irrational and unjust, which is tantamount to the positive vindication of its rationality and justice. Now, in order to put any doctrine into a capacity for being established by Scripture, I conceive it enough to prove not affirmatively that it is just and rational, but that for aught we know it may be just and rational. It were well if this part of the logic of theology were better understood and better observed in theological discussion. I am sure the transgression of it has led to a great deal of incompetent reasoning. When we are told of any doctrine that we must prove it first agreeable to reason, then to Scripture; if we mean more by the former than for aught we know it may not be unreasonable, then are we making Scripture wait ere we give admission to any of its doctrines till reason has first pronounced upon them. Unless this matter be distinctly understood, then Scripture is deprived of all those prerogatives which belong to an independent authority, and is degraded into the state of a witness whose averments must not be credited, unless another witness be called in, and depone by his averments to the truth of them. Now, the one witness may be conceived to know what the other is altogether ignorant of, and therefore I say if any faith is to be placed in the integrity of the former, though it cannot in the circumstances be corroborated by the testimony of the latter at all, then we should allow the question to be decided on his solitary evidence. It is enough if the one witness do not contradict the other. We should not require of the second that he should know of a matter to which the testimony of the first refers, and then superadd his consenting evidence to that which has gone before it. It is enough, though the second say, I know nothing of the matter; I can neither speak to the truth of it, nor yet to its contrary;—this is enough, I say, for warranting our implicit confidence on the single and unsupported evidence of the first witness. Now Scripture may be the first witness, and reason the second. It is well when they both consent to one and the same positive affirmation. But it may be, and often is, an affirmation which Scripture alone depone to, and which is utterly beyond the province of reason either to confirm or to deny. She may be able to say nothing for, and just as little able to say anything against it; in which case it is quite competent for her to say, that for aught she knows it may be just as Scripture describes; or, in other words, we are not to hold Scripture in abeyance till

reason has decided in her favour; it is enough that it be a subject on which reason is altogether silent, not a subject on which reason pronounces that it is true; or to repeat it in the terms wherewith I set out, a subject on which reason says, that for aught she knows it may be true, or that for aught we know it may not be not contrary to reason.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE are unable, O God, to comprehend the whole scope and tendency of Thy universal government; but, blessed be Thy name, Thou hast furnished us with clear and distinct and authoritative information in regard to the individual part we ourselves have to take, and the individual prospect that is before us. We have truly nothing to complain of. Thou callest us to repentance. Thou swearest by Thyself that Thou hast no pleasure in our death. Thou hast provided a sure way of access to the throne that is above us, and to the blissful immortality that is before us. May we comply with the overtures of Thy gospel, and from this time forward embark in the faith of Christ on that way of progressive holiness which leads to heaven.

We now enter on the Scripture proofs for the establishment of the doctrine which ought to be regarded as the keystone of the Christian system. It is this doctrine which constitutes Christianity the religion of sinners; and besides the way in which it pervades and is interwoven with the whole texture of holy writ, its capital importance as an article of faith is made the subject of many a distinct and specific testimony, as when Paul professes among his converts that he was determined to know nothing save Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I hold the reception of this doctrine to be the turning-point of the sinner's salvation. Anterior to this he is either indifferent to the question of his acceptance with God, or, if he entertain it in good earnest, and have a conscience at all enlightened as to the magnitude of his guilt and the high prerogatives of the law which he has violated, he is oppressed by a spirit of bondage, and maintains a fearful distance from the God whom he has offended, in the remorse of a present guilt, and the dread anticipation of a future vengeance.

It is by the charm and the efficacy which lie in the accepted tidings of remission through the blood of an atonement that this burden is lifted away from his heart ; and he can now look upon a God as inflexible in truth and awful in His justice as ever ; yet, with those already discharged and manifested in the great act of propitiation, he can lay hold, without misgivings from any part of his moral nature, on the offered mercy of the gospel. On this single change lies suspended that greatest of all personal revolutions. He is translated into a new moral existence. The God whom he formerly was afraid of, now trusted and loved, becomes the master not of his constrained, but of his willing obedience. The change spoken of in the New Testament from the spirit of bondage to the spirit of adoption, instead of being only read of by him as some mysterious thing in which he has no share, is now realized in his personal experience. He walks at liberty, and with the emancipated powers of a new-born creature, he runs with alacrity and delight in the way of new obedience.

“The first thing necessary for those who defend the Catholic opinion respecting the gospel remedy is to show that it may be stated in such a manner as not to appear irrational or unjust.”
—Vol. ii. p. 393.

To revert to the principle and practice of some theologians who think it necessary to shew, *a priori*, of every doctrine that it is reasonable, ere they will give any place or credit to the testimonies of Scripture on the subject, I contend that no absolute showing of this kind is requisite. It is enough if we can simply show, not that there are ways, but that there may be ways in which the doctrine at issue is reasonable. To undertake the proof of any position being reasonable, is surely proceeding on the competency of reason to judge of the merits of that position. Now we contend that there are a thousand positions of which reason can affirm neither one thing nor another, and respecting which, then, one can neither say that it is agreeable to reason nor contrary thereto. Yet all such positions may be substantiated and made sure on the authority of Scripture ; and if this principle were sufficiently understood and acted on, many is the fallacious argumentation that would be superseded and cut short by it. Infidels and demi-infidels have objected, for example, to the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer, and hold it an unreasonable doctrine in the face of that unvarying consistency which all nature exhibits to the notice of observers. Some of you may recollect the one way in which I contended that a reconciliation

could be effected ; and there is more than one way, but it is not necessary on our side of the argument to make absolute demonstration either of one way or another. It is enough for our purpose if, for aught we know, some of these ways may be the actual one, to clear out, as it were, an open space for the affirmations of Scripture on the subject, and, on the strength of those affirmations, to hold both by the doctrine of the efficacy of prayer and of a special providence.

I have formerly stated to you what I conceived to be the precise use of a hypothesis in theology. It may not succeed in making positive establishment of its truth, but it may have rendered a great service to the cause notwithstanding, simply by its enemies not being able to make a positive establishment of its falsehood. Conceive this hypothesis to quadrate with the doctrine in Scripture, then the *onus* of overturning the hypothesis lies on the antagonists of the doctrine, ere they can set it aside on the score of unreasonableness. In proportion to the likelihood or plausibility of the hypothesis will the task of overturning it be the more difficult ; and therefore, though it may lend no affirmative force to a doctrine already asserted in Scripture, yet till itself be disproved, it stands an unremoved obstacle in the way of all hostile assaults upon the doctrine. It is precisely thus I would estimate the logical value of the *a priori* reasonings in which theologians have indulged on the subject of the atonement. For example, it is argued that the honour of God's law must be vindicated by such a transaction. Not unlikely, I would say beforehand. Or that it is indispensable to the reconciliation of God's truth and justice with the exercise of mercy to the sinful. It may be so, I would readily answer, and would call on an objector to our express Bible testimonies in favour of the doctrine to prove that it is not so. Or such a demonstration must be given of the turpitude of moral evil, else vice would reign triumphant in the universe. This is not an improbable consequence, and, at all events, it is for him who resists an article that the Scripture affirms to make it positively out that no such consequence would follow. These are all so many semblances of truth before the revelation, and the effect of the revelation is to turn the semblances into certainties. Their use, when semblances, is not to contribute much if any affirmative weight to the testimony of Scripture, it is to convince the objector how much he has to overcome, how many plausibilities and conjectures he must first dispose of, ere he is entitled to resist that tes-

timony. They perform an important function, but not, we think, in the way of supplying positive argument for the truth of the doctrine. The great master argument is still the declaration of the Bible, and now that the declaration is made, there is a sureness and a solidity stamped on the principles of the *a priori* reasonings which did not formerly belong to them. They do not help, save in a negative way, to the establishment of the doctrine. But now I read them as so many lessons in the doctrine itself, and gather from the contemplation of it a deeper reverence than I ever had before for that law which required such an awful vindication of its outraged dignity, and that Lawgiver whose sacredness it has illustrated by the sufferings, by the worth, and the greatness of so costly an expiation.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. I.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE would do homage, O God, to Thy supremacy over all the affairs of this lower world. Thou rulest both in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. The processes of all nature and all history are but the footsteps of Thine administration; and, in the countless diversity of operations, still it is God who worketh all in all. Be Thou enthroned in our wayward and rebellious hearts, O God. Take unto Thyself Thy great power and reign over them. Thou art able to subdue all things unto Thyself: subdue our stubborn, our headstrong wills, and cast down every lofty imagination, and everything within us that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

According to the definitions given of sin, guilt, and punishment, you will observe that the advocates of the orthodox system do not ascribe sin to Jesus Christ, that is, that personally He was a sinner, or that there adhered to His character aught of the taint of moral evil. But neither will they regard His sufferings in the light of simple inflictions, but in the light of inflictions because of sin, though not His own sin, but the sin of those for whom He died. And they understand, therefore, the term *guilt*, not as that which indicates a residing pollution in him who is chargeable therewith—they understand guilt merely as

liableness to punishment, by which they mean that Christ had to undergo the full weight, at least, of all the legal chastisements due to sin—that He submitted to a treatment which, in the eye of the law, He would have deserved had He personally committed all those sins which have been expiated by His blood; not that personally He was a sinner, but that forensically He was regarded and treated as such, and thus took upon Himself a burden as great as the punishment that we should have borne.

I would bid you fasten upon the expression of there being other “reasons which we are not qualified to perceive,” which might, if we knew the whole, be adduced in vindication of the doctrine of the atonement.* Now this single consideration is of itself enough to furnish a clear ground for the establishment, and valid establishment, of the doctrine on the positive evidence of Scripture. The preparation for the testimony of Scripture regarding any doctrine, is not that we know reasons why that doctrine is likely, or probable, or true, but, for aught we know, there may be such reasons. Now, I would extend this principle not merely to the unspecified reasons adverted to in this clause, but also to all the reasons which have been specifically educed in the text-book for the purpose of demonstrating the rationality of the doctrine. We prodigiously strengthen our cause, we make it far less vulnerable to the attack of enemies, we place it more securely beyond all cavil and all captiousness, when, instead of resting it in part or in whole on the positive foundation of reason, we count it enough by the *argumentum ab ignorantia* to ward off objections, and so give the doctrine an impregnable basis on the testimony of Scripture. I would not say, as at the commencement of this section, that the first principle on which the doctrine proceeds is one taken from our own reason and sense of morality; enough that the doctrine may be true for aught which our own reason and sense of morality can suggest to the contrary. It is thus that you throw, and most logically and legitimately throw, the *onus* of establishing the contrary on your antagonists, and at the same time give that first and foremost place to the affirmations of Scripture which properly belongs to them. I would greatly prefer, then, the argument of this section as far as it has proceeded hitherto to be thrown into the shape. The Almighty in requiring an atonement may be only acting as the supreme Lawgiver—there may have been no anger to appease by this transaction, nor personal jealousy of His own

* Vol. ii. p. 405.

dignity, nor that desire of justice which actuates a creditor in the prosecution of a debtor, in insisting upon a surety—there may have been nothing of all this, but it may have been for the upholding of the moral government, and protecting it from the inroads of that anarchy which the pardon of sin without an atonement would have brought along with it. It may have been wholly for this most worthy and beneficent object that aught like vindictive or punitive justice has been put forth in the great deed of the world's propitiation; and we cannot know whether this end might not have been answered by the transference of the punishment to the person of the exalted and withal voluntary substitute; it is for reasons not which we absolutely know to be solid and just, but which, for aught we know, may be solid and just, that on this question we shall resign ourselves wholly and exclusively to the testimony of Scripture. It is thus that I would have all the *a priori* reasonings to be brought forward, not in the shape of positive but of conjectural affirmations. By this proceeding we shall not ultimately lose the benefit of the important principle which they involve, for the revelation itself, after we have thus made room for it, will go far to decide the question of the truth and justice of those principles, will go far to brighten the conjectures towards certainties, and thus enlighten us in the jurisprudence of the whole question through the medium not of the wisdom of man, but through the medium of the word of God.

It is of the utmost importance to your practical sense and impression of the Divine character, that while, on the one hand, you do not regard it as consisting of mercy alone—an error of Socinians, and of those opposed to the doctrine of the atonement—so you do not regard it as consisting of justice alone, an error into which we are apt to be betrayed by the injudicious representations of those who are friendly to that doctrine. For this purpose remember, in the first place, that it was not the love of God which stood, as it were, in abeyance till a propitiation was rendered, it was the love of God which originated and set forth that propitiation. The gospel is just a manifestation of the mercy and kindness of God to us through Christ Jesus. And then, in the second place, if our sins did present an obstacle which required a mighty suffering and sacrifice on the part of the Son of God ere pardon could be granted to them—if the interests and dignity of the moral government made such a way of redemption indispensable—if God, that the world and its family

might not be lost to Him for ever, had to spare not His only beloved Son, but give Him up to the death for us all—then that such a barrier had to be scaled and got over, just enhances the exhibition that has been given of His mercy—a mercy so strong, that it sought for itself a way over such obstructions as but for a scheme of infinite wisdom, and an act of infinite condescension, would have been wholly impassable. The mercy of the gospel is mercy in much higher exhibition than a simple movement of compassion would have been that came spontaneously in the breast of the Godhead, and that cost no expense either of toil or of suffering for its indulgence. It was a mercy that had to struggle as it were for a discharge of itself through the moral difficulties of an outraged law that called for reparation, of an insulted government whose dignity must be upholden, of a jurisprudence trampled under foot in the face of men and of angels, and which, if not vindicated, the Lord of creation would have wielded an impotent sceptre, and sat on a degraded throne. It was amid the conflict of high elements like these, that mercy kept by its purpose, and at the cost of infinite humiliation and deepest agony to the only beloved Son of God, at once harmonized all the attributes of the Divinity, and rejoiced over them. I think the effect of our academic theism has been to give us a cold and naked and unimpressive view of the Deity, very unlike in impression to the warm endearing representations of Scripture.

I trust that I have said nothing in disparagement of the great principles that the authority of God's law should be upheld, that every demonstration should be held forth of the evil of sin, that mercy should be administered, but in such a way as neither to bring down the honour of God's justice and truth, nor in such a way as to relax the obligations of morality in the world—I trust I have said nothing in disparagement of these principles, because I have repeatedly affirmed in your hearing, that instead of seeing them placed as so many confident affirmations in the preliminary reasonings on the subject of the atonement, I should rather like to see them placed as so many corollaries to a doctrine resting mainly on the authority of Scripture, and would therefore regard them as so many lessons to be stated and drawn from the contemplation of the atonement itself. We do not need any positive and *a priori* dogmatizing on heaven's jurisprudence ere we prepare a way for the testimonies of Scripture on the subject; for even though that whole field of contemplation were, prior to revelation, an utter blank, and so as that we were

neither entitled to say nor to gainsay aught about the matter, this at least would leave us on equal terms with the Socinians ere we entered on the examination of the Bible, and give us the benefit of all the distinct and explicit averments which occur so copiously in its pages.

But while we thus think that in the conduct of the argument, it is far better not to lay any stress beforehand on the natural principles of morality and reason, unless in so far as to make sure that, for aught we can perceive there is at least no contradiction to these principles in the article at issue, yet we cannot be blind to the fact, that in virtue of the doctrine being so accordant as it is with man's moral nature, it gains a far readier attention and acceptance than it otherwise would from the people to whom it is addressed. It is just because the conscience of man does such homage to the law's uncompromising nature, that the doctrine of an atonement, by which the demands of the law have been satisfied, is so welcomed by us. It is just because of the impression that is on all unsophisticated spirits, of a God whose truth and justice cannot be trifled with, and whose sacredness cannot sustain violation without vindication and redress from the outrage, that the sinner rejoices in the scheme by which the Lawgiver may be exalted, and yet himself, the transgressor of the law, be safe. I would certainly not found much on the accordancy which obtains between the doctrine of the atonement on the one hand, and the sentiments and the surmises and the fear of man's moral nature on the other, in the shape of an *a priori* argument; but I rejoice in the great practical worth and importance which belong to this accordancy, as that which in point of fact speeds the acceptance of the doctrine among men. These feelings and intimations of my moral nature are not the avenue through which I find my way to the demonstrative establishment of the doctrine, but they are the avenue through which the doctrine itself, when proposed and stated as in Scripture, finds its way to my heart. I am led to close with it not only because it meets my difficulties and my fears, but because it maintains untarnished my reverence both for the Lawgiver and the law; and this felt coincidence between the remedy of the gospel and the exigencies of my condition, not only forms a distinct evidence for its truth but adds to the amount of that internal evidence in favour of the whole Scripture, grounded on the adaptation of its discoveries and its truths to the nature of those subject or recipient minds for whose benefit it was formed.

And now do we feel ourselves at full liberty to speak of the actual benefits which accrue to us from this method of our recovery, when these are insisted on not as a positive argument beforehand by which to establish it, for the precise argumentative power which belongs to this consideration it were exceedingly difficult to estimate, but as a felt or an experienced virtue in the doctrine itself, after that on its proper evidence as an article of revelation, we have become persuaded of it and embraced it, and had an actual sense and feeling of its preciousness. The first of these that I would insist upon is the solid peace which it establishes in the mind, and solid for this reason, that it is not liable to disturbance from any part of man's moral nature. There is nothing in the sense of God's authority and truth that can discompose a spirit thoroughly at rest on the foundation of the atonement and righteousness of Christ, because in these it perceives a far more illustrious vindication both of the Divine majesty and character, than if even the law had been left to take its direct way in the infliction of its threatened vengeance on the children of iniquity. And then there is the exquisite manner in which this peace that cometh from the faith of this doctrine can be sustained in the sinner's bosom without disparagement to the sinner's holiness. There is no system, we will venture to say, which could possibly have been imagined, that would have so harmonized the honours of the law with the peace and pardon of those who have broken it—none that could have guaranteed so sure a forgiveness, and yet, to use the language of the psalmist, a forgiveness that keeps entire in the heart of him who receives it the fear of God. "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." None that could have so completely ridded man from the fear of terror, and yet maintained unshaken within his heart the fear of deepest reverence. None in which the assurance of a full and sufficient indemnity could have been so enshrined in sacredness and in the high honours of a law that had in a way so marvellous, and yet so effective, been magnified and made honourable.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. III.

DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

THE PRAYER.

We again enter into Thy presence, O God, with a solemn sense of Thine august and inviolable purity, as contrasted with the defilement of our own natures. Looking to Thee, O God, may we be made like unto Thee. May we be enabled, through the maintenance of a habitual converse with Thyself, to make head against the opposing forces of a world lying in wickedness. May we put on the whole armour of God to fit and prepare us for this contest: and enable us to strive against sin, to watch and to pray against it, till, by the aids of Divine grace, we have been enabled to prevail over it.

We need only revert to the origin of the Jewish ritual, in order to rebut the argument of those who are adversaries to the atonement, and would dispose of the express and explicit language of the New Testament on this subject by affirming it to be a mere accommodation to the usages of the Old Testament. It often happens that celestial things must be expressed in the terms of things which are terrestrial, in which case the announcement must be understood not in a literal but in a figurative sense. Let it be well considered, however, that the observances of Judaism had not a terrestrial but a celestial origin—that not merely the services of the tabernacle, but its very form and fabrication were after the pattern that God showed to Moses in the Mount. They were types, no doubt, but such types as had their archetypes in heaven. They spoke a language, no doubt, though the language of action and representation; not a language borrowed from the human and the earthly, but a language invented by God himself, and put forth by Him for the very purpose of expressing the substantial realities of the new dispensation. This view of the matter, if rightly pondered, will not only neutralize, but it will reverse the statement of our antagonists. They would make the sacrifices of the law to be real, and Christ's only figurative, whereas in truth the real and the figurative must exchange places, the legal being the figurative, and the great gospel sacrifice being the only real one. And let me here state that many do find it a most fascinating contemplation, when made to perceive the truths of the new

economy pictured forth in the symbols of the old one. There is in it even somewhat of the charm and entertainment of poetry. The imagination is regaled along with the other faculties, and that not because the connexion between the semblance in Judaism and the substance in Christianity is an imaginary connexion. It is impossible to read the Epistle to the Hebrews without the conviction that what the ancient Church set forth in figure, the later Church sets forth in verification and fulfilment, and that the sustained harmony which obtains between the manifold rites of the Mosaic and the leading truths of the evangelical economies, reflect a mutual evidence and illustration upon both. I promise you that if you enter on this study, you will find it a regaling as well as a confirmatory exercise. The recent work of Dr. Brown of Eskdalemuir, introduces you into a very minute and statistical acquaintance with the polity and the usages and the religious architecture and rites of the Jewish nation. But some of our ordinary commentators have evinced, in a way that is very satisfactory to myself, the manner in which the ceremonial of Judaism might be legitimately impregnated with evangelism. I will not go further at present than recommend Matthew Henry on Leviticus; not that he does not spiritualize to a greater extent than perhaps he is warranted to do, but that he will impress on most readers a well-grounded conviction of there being indeed a substantial harmony between the two dispensations, besides imparting a very pleasing and peculiar interest to a portion of Scripture in which a mere cursory or general reader may perhaps recognise no substance and no significancy whatever.

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It is possible to raise a bulky erudition on any question in theology. The controversy relating to sacrifices has been prodigiously extended through the various topics which have now been engaging us. Their various kinds among the heathen—the source in which they originated—the understanding which the people had of them—have all been the subject of many a weary and ponderous argumentation. I trust you perceive that in this theological warfare the struggle between the parties on any one of these questions is but a mere affair of outposts, which, however determined, leaves the main strength of the case on both sides very much what it was. There is really no determination which can be come to on those topics that will essentially either obscure or augment the scriptural, which is the proper

evidence on the point at issue. I would not, therefore, advise you to waste much of your strength and time upon this question. Argumentatively, the heathen sacrifices are of little use to us in the work of defending or establishing the doctrine of the atonement, and yet I would have you to perceive the distinction here, that historically and practically they might have been of the very utmost use in preparing the way of the heathen for the reception of the Christian truth upon the subject. It has been well remarked in the text-book, that the practice of sacrifices gave rise to a language which made it possible to convey the truth to them in terms which could be understood. There is one way in which we do annex great practical value to those heathen sacrifices. I do not think they are of much service to the controvertists of the present day in arming them with a sensibly greater force of argument on the side of orthodoxy; but I think they may have been of very great service to the converts of the Apostolical day, as perhaps in many instances being the very stepping-stone on which their attention was gained to the Christian message that told of the great and the only sufficient sacrifice. I cannot estimate the argumentative force in favour of the atonement which lies in these heathen sacrifices, nor do I feel that there is much if any force in them at all. But along with this, I can understand that the sacrificial notions of the heathen, and their familiarity with the conceptions and the feelings involved in the whole system of their sacrifices, may in millions of instances have made them far more intelligent and more willing recipients than they would otherwise have been of that gospel which set forth the great propitiation that had been made by means of an illustrious victim for the sins of the world, and preached forgiveness of these sins through faith in His blood.

But certainly the most important preparation for the Christian doctrine of the atonement was the Jewish sacrifices; and what gives a peculiar value to it is, that they were appointed for the very object of preparation. They were the shadows of the things that were to come. I have already remarked on the strange inversion that has been practised here by the advocates of Socinianism, in that they have turned the shadow into substance, and the substance into shadow, affirming the literality of the Jewish sacrifices only, and representing the great Christian sacrifice as but a figure taken from this literality and grounded thereupon. We know that in spite of the general rejection of

the gospel by the Jewish nation, there were a great many Jewish converts notwithstanding, it being particularly mentioned in the Acts that a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. I cannot imagine, then, a more systematic deceit to have been practised on a whole people, begun many centuries before, and persevered in through successive generations, than the deceit which the whole scheme of the Jewish polity and ceremonial was calculated to practise upon the Jewish understanding, provided that the death of Christ was not a real propitiation for the sins of mankind. Those Hebrews who were converted to the faith are told in terms the most simple and unqualified that we can possibly conceive, that Christ was offered up a sacrifice to God; and whenever the analogy is adverted to between the Jewish and this great Christian sacrifice, it is with the view of representing the latter as the antitype or the archetype of the former, the latter as the substantial verification, the former as but the symbol or figurative representation thereof. At all events, the ceremonial sacrifice in the opinion of all the Jews had a virtue tantamount to the deliverance of the sinner from ceremonial uncleanness or guilt; and there is nothing in the New Testament which could ever lead them to conceive otherwise, everything rather there which should directly lead them to view the death of Christ as a real sacrifice, having a virtue in it to discharge or do away the real and substantial guilt of every soul which put its confidence therein. Let me again recommend your studious and sustained attention to the Epistle to the Hebrews; and I should rejoice if any of you felt emboldened on my advice to grapple with a work so ponderous as Owen's Commentary on that Epistle—a lengthened and laborious enterprise certainly, but now is your season for abundant labour; and the only thing to be attended to is, that in virtue of being well directed, it shall not be wasted on a bulky, though at the same time profitless erudition. I promise you a hundredfold more advantage from the perusal of this greatest work of John Owen, than from the perusal of all that has been written on the subject of the heathen sacrifices. It is a work of gigantic strength as well as gigantic size; and he who hath mastered it is very little short, both in respect to the doctrinal and practical of Christianity, of being an erudite and accomplished theologian.

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There is no subject on which a man of *a priori* spirit, who must have a why and a wherefore for every phenomenon, meets

with less satisfaction than in his attempt to explain the rationale or the purpose of many an apparently inconsequential thing which he meets with in Scripture. There is an analogy on this subject which I have often thought is not without its force, between the book of nature and the book of revelation. There are passages in both, the meaning and object of which we are at a loss to determine. There are the extended deserts, the dreary climes unpeopled of all rational and intelligent life, the mighty waste of waters where else there might have been the fair and fertile abodes of man; and besides, there are the fierce or loathsome animals, the tormenting insects, the deadly poisons, and many other things alike inexplicable, and which yet scarcely obscure, and far less obliterate, the evidence which, in varied characters of beauty and magnificence and design, attests that nature has a God. And in like manner there are portions in the book of Scripture to us meaningless—some may even think mischievous things, in this other product of the great Creator, whole chapters of barren nomenclature, catalogues of generations and families whose appellations only are all that now survive, genealogies which run in streams from a very early commencement in the world's history, but which are now lost at their termination in the general ocean, as it were, of the species, and then such a laborious minuteness of complication both in the ritual of Judaism and in the construction of its religious edifices, such a labyrinth of manifold observances, such, to all appearance, arbitrary and capricious distinctions between the clean and the unclean in meats and animals and persons, such an anxious multiplicity of prescriptions about the order of their most fatiguing ceremonial, and the ingredients of its various offerings, so many other inexplicable things in this said Bible as may be exceedingly difficult for us fully and satisfactorily to explain, and yet which can never overbear that flood both of moral and historical light that speaks its Divine origin, and invests it in celestial splendour. The first set of enigmas, however unintelligible in themselves, does not make the whole of nature unintelligible, so that it should not speak to us most clearly and audibly of a God; and the second set of enigmas, though equally unintelligible in themselves, does not make the general voice of the book unintelligible, or deafen at all our perception of the characters which belong to it of a voice from heaven. And more than this, just as the students of nature are making daily progress in the discovery of utilities before unobserved, and where none had been

previously suspected to exist, just as in the progress of physical science objections are converting into proofs, and a beneficent purpose, more especially in the frameworks of anatomy, is now recognised in what before looked a useless or a hurtful excrescence, there is a striking parallel to this in the labours and the criticisms of those who are exploring the book of revelation. The harmonies of the world are not more glorious or more indicative of a presiding wisdom in the construction of it than the harmonies of the word. The intricacy of those organic combinations, which even the humblest insect realizes, does not tarnish the majesty of Him who, while He thus stoops to the work of microscopic arrangement, is throned in sovereign ascendancy over all worlds; and neither ought the specific injunctions which He gave to Moses, respecting the framework of the tabernacle, to cast obscurity over the glory of Him who had just manifested from the flaming top of Sinai the terrors of His greatness and of His might to the thousands of Israel. But, as I have just said, there is a purpose evolving itself more and more to the eye of inquirers in things which before looked meaningless or mysterious in the Bible. The symphonies between the old and the new dispensations are becoming more evident; and just as modern history and ancient prophecy reflect illustration on each other, so the further we observe in the Christian economy, the more instinct with life and sentiment do we behold the economy of Judaism. We are aware of the ridiculous excesses into which commentators have fallen, when, outrunning all the lights of sober interpretation, they would attach a spiritual meaning and force to every pin of the tabernacle; yet neither the derision of enemies, nor the folly of injudicious advocates, can obscure this great and general proposition, that Judaism represents in symbol what Christianity has revealed to us in substance, and that in that comparative infancy of the world they to whom the oracles of God were committed, saw, though in greater dimness, and as if through a medium of dawning twilight, the great lineaments of the gospel scheme, the placability of God in that He forgives the offences of the penitent, yet a placability exercised in such a way as to vindicate the honour of His law, in that the forgiveness was rendered through the ceremonial of a prescribed sacrifice, dictated by a God jealous of His majesty, and who would only be approached in the way that Himself had appointed. This is becoming more manifest now than it was to the theologians of an older generation; and then as to the excessive scru-

pulosity about meats and other observances, there is a great purpose that can be discerned in all this. It was of utmost practical importance that that nation who were to be the selected depository for many centuries of the special counsels of God, should have a wall of separation thrown around them so as to preserve them from all the contaminations of heathenism, and more especially, from losing their individuality in being merged and mingled with the people by whom they were surrounded. There could not be a more effectual device towards this end than that of multiplying the points of distinction between them and all other people, and attaching to the non-observance of what they observed, and to the rigid observance of what to them was unknown, all the force and sacredness of a religious obligation. It is thus that many prescriptions, which might appear quite trifling and irrelevant to us, did, for aught we know, or rather must, we certainly know, subserve this great object in the policy, if it may be so termed, of the Divine administration.

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The mercy-seat sprinkled with blood is an expressive emblem of the Christian doctrine of our atonement. It is not simply to the mercy-seat that we are called, but to the mercy-seat thus sprinkled, and which therefore speaks to us of the guilt that had to be cleansed, of the justice that had to be propitiated, of the malignity in sin that called for such a demonstration. This is to the taste and antipathies of unrenewed nature one of the most revolting doctrines in Christianity, a revolt which, in the apostles' days, was characterized as the offence of the Cross, and a revolt in which the mere disciples of general sentiment and literature still fully sympathize. Nevertheless it is, in truth, the great palladium of that economy under which we sit, essential both to the peace and the purity of every disciple—a peace that without such an exhibition would be liable to perpetual misgivings from the very suggestions of our moral nature, which no general assurance could possibly quell; for, after all, there would be intruding upon our comfort and our quiet the thought of a God who could not be mocked, of a Sovereign whose law must be upheld in all the rightful authority which belongs to it, of a truth and a justice which it were anarchy to violate, of a throne in heaven that must not be reft of the pillars that support it, and a King sitting on that throne whose every word is unchangeable, and who ever must maintain an entire and untainted jurisprudence over the creatures whom He hath formed. These our own

conscience would ever and anon be suggesting to the mind, and filling it with a sense of constant insecurity; and thus the exquisite skilfulness of that method by which the sacredness of the Divinity is even more illustrated in the exercise of His mercy than it would have been by the direct infliction of their threatened penalty on the hosts of the rebellious. Mercy in a general way would have left our moral nature unsatisfied; mercy in a gospel way meets and is at one with every part, as it were, of that nature. It is this perfect adaptation to the human conscience, and more especially the manner in which the doctrine of our atonement enlists on the side of our security those very attributes which, under the law, were in hostile array against us, making, in fact, the justice of God now satisfied, the truth now embarked on the promises of the gospel having already been fully vindicated by the death of Christ in respect to the threatenings of the law, the holiness now irradiated by the spectacle of the cross and of the blood that flowed from it—making these, I say, which were before the immovable barriers in the way of a sinner's reconciliation with God, the guarantees of his safety;—it is this which gives a weight and a preciousness to the doctrine in the feelings of all who are really stricken with a sense of their delinquencies, and who have been led to entertain the question between God and themselves in good earnest. It is a stumblingstone and a rock of offence, we know, to many, perhaps to the great bulk of human society; but to them who believe it is precious; and when once the conscience of man is fully aroused to the question, there is positively no other doctrine within the whole compass of natural or revealed truth which can meet or satisfy it. And then, in addition to the one great interest of the sinner's peace, I beg you will observe the essential subserviency of this scheme to the other great interest of the sinner's virtue. In the act of stepping into reconciliation by this peculiar way, he hears, as it were, most audible proclamation of the turpitude of moral evil. When entering on the comforts of the Christian faith he receives the strongest impulse towards Christian repentance, and draws from one and the same contemplation the delightful assurance, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee," and the awfully emphatic warning, "Go and sin no more."

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The scapegoat sent into the wilderness is an expressive emblem of the Saviour. It tells by action what our late and more

explicit dispensation tells in express and articulate revelation. It signifies the bearing away of our sins to the land of forgetfulness, where no more mention is made of them. Through the medium of this contemplation, too, is the heart of many a Christian made to rejoice in the complete oblivion of all his offences, and the delightful sense, now that his iniquities are carried away, and the barrier of separation is removed, that all is clear with God. This I hold to be one beautiful representation of the truth in figure, or the truth in sensible representation. And there are many such held forth in the Jewish ritual. Let me only instance the people praying in the outer court while the priest was within the temple burning incense—a truly picturesque and expressive representation of the present condition of the Church in its relation to Him who hath entered within the veil, and is there adding His intercession to our prayers, and pleading for us the merits of that atonement, the incense of which is said to rise in grateful memorial before God, like the incense of a sweet-smelling savour. We see in this example what we often meet with when studying the relation of the two economies to each other, the substantial doctrine of the one shadowed forth by the imagery of the other; and now that both are placed before us, the imagery so far from obscuring the doctrine, giving at once both a more powerful and a more pleasing impression of it. This same idea, the incense of our Saviour's merits, mixed up with the prayers of those who believe in Him, is immediately suggested to every pious and intelligent reader of the Bible, by that passage in the Book of Revelation, where it is said—"And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."—Rev. viii. 3, 4. We are abundantly sensible that in some hands this work of allegoric interpretation has been greatly overdone. Perhaps even good Bishop Horne carries it to occasional excess in his Commentary on the Psalms, on the whole a very precious composition notwithstanding. It is possible to form a caricature of anything, and certainly this attempt to find out a mystic meaning for one and all of the literalities in the Old Testament has been caricatured. With this deduction, however, there remains a manifold harmony between the rites of the one dispensation and the reali-

ties of the other, not a fanciful but a substantial, nay, a designed accordancy, which makes the whole of Scripture profitable even in these latter days, and imparts something of a far higher and more solid value than a mere imaginative charm to the reading of the Old Testament.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. III.—SECT. IV.

THREE GREAT DIVISIONS OF THE LAW OF MOSES.

THE PRAYER.

WE have reason, O God, to lament our exceeding distance and deficiency from Thy law—the frailty of all our purposes—the wretched contrast between our high-toned resolves in the hours of retirement, and the utter prostration of our powers amid the urgency of this world's temptations. Save us, O God, from the punishment of sin, but save us more especially from its power. Deliver us from the agonies of a present guilt as well as from the fears of a coming vengeance: and grant that we may be washed and sanctified, as well as justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

I promise you from the study of the Mosaic ritual, a perfect and well-founded satisfaction in your own mind, that many of its observances were intended to represent the great Christian atonement; and I am quite sure that any impression of irrationality which you may now associate with the idea of types will be dissipated by your observation of the numerous and sustained analogies which can be specified between the alleged types and the alleged antitypes. Now once you are convinced that a rite may be typical, you will furthermore pass on from this to be reconciled with the idea of typical events and typical personages, and on this stepping-stone, again, you will be led to perceive a rationality in the double sense of prophecy, which at present some of you may not be aware of. The truth is, that once you admit a typical event or a typical personage, then to get to the prophecy with a double meaning, you have merely to assign to the prophet a position anterior to both the type and the antitype. Had there been no typical event or personage shadowing forth the final accomplishment, then that accomplishment could only have been the subject of a simple and direct prophecy. Or even though there were a corresponding type to it in the history

that was past, yet if the prophet stood between the type and the antitype, still he can only have uttered a prophecy of single interpretation. A prophecy becomes a double one only from the circumstance of his position, only from the time of the utterance being prior to the time of type and antitype both; and so the humbler and the nearer fulfilment in the one preceded a higher and an ulterior fulfilment in the other. David and Solomon are both alleged to be the types of the Saviour. Grant but this, and you are ushered into the admission of double prophecy, by the supposition that one had arisen in the time of the Judges, and predicted the glories of a reign which accorded in its general outline with the prophecy, but fell short perhaps of those glowing and magnificent terms into which the prophecy expanded. You have such predictions of Solomon in the Book of Psalms, where the extent and perpetuity of the reign can only find an adequate explanation in the kingdom of the Saviour; and you have another such example in the prophecy of the siege of Jerusalem, where the representation is at length dilated into such expressions as can only admit of future application to the desolation of all things. I must confess a great prepossession in my own mind against all this in the gross, and at the outset of my attention, but that prepossession has been dissipated by my growing acquaintance with the details, and more particularly do I feel convinced that instead of affording scope for the caprices of imagination—a double prophecy operates as a corrective, and sets additional boundaries, in fact, against the errors and deviations of this faculty, and serves all the more effectually to chasten and restrain its extravagance.

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I have already insisted at full length on the consideration that Judaism stood to Christianity in the relation of the shadow to the substance. It is the substance which casts the shadow, and gives it its shape and its outline. And so they were the realities of the Christian faith which gave their form to the rites and usages of the older dispensation. In the gospel revelation, the heavenly things which are there spoken of are not expressed in terms borrowed from the Mosaic observances, but these heavenly things did at the commencement of the Jewish economy cast down their shadows upon earth, which shadows are just the earthly, the carnal ordinances of the Jewish polity. The sacrifices of the law are but sacrifices in figure, they furnish nothing to the sacrifice of Christ, not even the phraseology

in which it is couched and conveyed to the world. It was the great sacrifice of Christ which furnished to them their being, and which gives to them all the significancy which they possess. It was at the time when Moses studied the pattern showed to him in the Mount, and made the tabernacle after that pattern, it was then that the substantive realities of the Christian faith were drawn out in the symbolical rites of the Jewish ceremonial; and to make the doctrine of the atonement a mere figurative expression of the placability of God taken from the usages of the children of Israel, is to turn back the stream into the fountainhead, and to make what is primary and what is secondary in this matter change places the one with the other. This view, while it maintains the substance and the entireness of important truth, exhibits the connexion between the two dispensations, and shows that while God had respect to the latter in the institution of the former, man, under the pupilage and in the training of the former, was prepared for the fuller and broader revelations of the latter economy.

It is needless to say more on the topic, that what was but shadows in the system of Judaism, was substance in the system of Christianity. But I may here take the opportunity of animadverting on the Socinian evasion taken notice of at the end of this section—a shift which evinces at least how much the doctrine of a sacrifice annoys them, and how bent they are at all hazards to get out of it. It is like the last and desperate fetch of men, who, though vanquished a thousand times over, are yet resolved to die hard upon the question; and I beg, if you have not yet studied particularly the two or three paragraphs where it is stated and refuted in the text-book, you will look at it again as a specimen, I think a fair one, of the Socinian expedients in their controversy with the orthodox on this matter. You are aware that in the case of individual sin-offerings the victim was slain not by the priest but by the offerer; the slaying of the victim in their account, then, was but a circumstance, and the great virtue of the transaction lay not in it, but in the oblation made by the priest, or the part which he afterwards took in it. And even on the day of atonement, though it was the priest who slew the victim with his own hands, yet that was but a circumstance too, for far the most important part of the ceremony was his entering into the Holy of holies, and appearing before the mercy-seat. And so putting aside from view the sacrificial part of these observances,

they would in like manner put out of view the death of Christ as a sacrifice, and contend that His priesthood did not lie there, did not begin, in fact, with any part of His history on earth, or with anything He did in this world, but took its commencement with His entrance into heaven, being the counterpart to that entrance which the Jewish high priest made into the Holy of holies. You are aware of the odd turns which theological speculation has often taken, and I am sure you have only to look over a list of the titles of exegesises, for multitudes of questions which the plain reader of the Bible never would have thought of. But the reason is, that the Church militant has been compelled to take up its positions and to shape its arguments, so as to meet the endless varieties of capricious and unlicensed speculation; and on studying the history of doctrinal Christianity, you will find that the Church really did not originate the greater number of those questions, but was compelled, in defence of the truth, to go forth on the combat with the errors which multiplied so interminably on every side of it. These questions did not originate with the orthodox but with the heretical, and I do hope that as controversy subsides, which it will do with the progress of true Christian philosophy, I say that in proportion as this takes place, a very great number of questions, transmitted in Latin from one professor of theology to another, and dealt out to the students as the topics of those most agreeable and entertaining of our College exercises, we mean the exegesises, will at length be superseded, and, sunk in the shades of obsolescence and oblivion, will be no longer heard of. It is this puerile imagination of the Socinians which I have now been adverting to, that gave rise to the question whether Jesus Christ acted as a priest upon earth.

The refutation of the Socinian idea is a very short one. You have it effectively done at the conclusion of this section. It was the priest who made the atonement, but he did it by the blood of the victim. He entered into the holy place, but it was not without blood, which he sprinkled on the mercy-seat; but really, to stand out any longer on this question, in the face of the direct announcement, that neither by the blood of bulls and goats, but by His own blood, Christ entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us, I should feel to be a direct and daring act of rebellion against the authority of Scripture.

I cannot take leave of this subject, however, without observ-

ing that there is here presented to us another of those beautiful analogies—the beauty of which, however, I fear, will not be felt, save by those who have a relish for the doctrine of the atonement, and feel it to be precious. The blood that was shed without, in the sacrifices of the law, carried into the holy place, shadows forth the virtue of the propitiation made upon the Cross, as carried upwards to the place of intercession at God's right hand. It blends together, as it were, the atonement and the intercession of Christ, and represents our Advocate on high as armed with the irresistible argument of those sufferings He himself had endured, and that sacrifice He himself had finished, by the shedding of His own blood in behalf of those whose prayers He was handing up, perfumed by the incense of His own merits, to the throne of God. Such views, however nauseated by those whose taste is founded on general literature alone, do, I am persuaded, furnish most solid aliment both to the peace and the piety of many an humble Christian.

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The advocates of universal pardon appeal to this verse (Rom. iv. 25) in support of their peculiar tenet. They argue from the similarity of the two phrases—His dying for our offences and His being raised again for our justification, as that the two must be alike, both in having the character of substantive facts, and also in being co-extensive with the species. He was delivered, because we had offended, and all of us had done so. He rose again, because we are justified, and all of us are so. They have overlooked the distinction, stated in the text-book, (p. 469,) between the antecedent and the final cause. In the first clause, the *for* is not expressive of the final, but of the antecedent cause; because man had sinned, He died, but the final cause of His dying was the remission of their sins, and He rose again, not because all men antecedently were justified, but finally in order to obtain the reward of His obedience, which was the justification of all who believe in Him. When He ascended on high, He obtained gifts for men, one of which was the gift of righteousness, even that righteousness, of which we are told in the former chapter, that it is unto all, and upon all who believe. If *διὰ* is to be understood as denoting the antecedent cause in the first clause, and the final cause in the second, then that parallelism is destroyed on which they found one of their arguments for an actual pardon having passed upon all men.

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The distinction is very clearly stated in the text-book between the personal and the judicial in the matter of our salvation; and I hasten to avail myself of the opportunity which it affords me of testifying the strong sense which I have of the indispensableness of both. The whole design of Christianity is not to deliver from a state of judicial condemnation; it has another design—that of delivering us from a state of personal corruption. It is not merely a salvation from wrath, it is a salvation from wickedness; and were we to separate for a moment in thought two things which, in fact, are so indissolubly joined together that the one is never realized on any individual without the other going along with it, but separating them for a moment in thought, were I asked which of the two salvations I held to be the more important, and on which of the two I would lay the greatest stress in my expositions of the gospel of Jesus Christ, I would say, that if the end is greater than the means—if the *opus operatum* is greater than the instrument by which it was accomplished—if the thing for which an achievement takes place be a higher and more important consideration than the thing by which the achievement is executed—then I would say, that in point of real worth, the personal salvation has by far the precedency over the judicial. The provision for the sinner's holiness is of greater moment than the provision for the sinner's safety. The one is the terminating object, the other but the stepping-stone; the one is the landing-place, the other but the introduction or entrance on the road that leads to it. That surely is the greater which forms the ultimate design, and that the lesser which stands to it in but a preparatory relation, or in a relation of subserviency. Christ died for our sins and thereby a great judicial deliverance was wrought out for those who believe in Him; but this was done in order to a something ulterior—He died for our sins, in order that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

I am the more eager to seize on the opportunity of thus delivering myself, that of late, in my Thursday lectures, I have been more led to expatiate on the forensic relation in which we stand to God, and how it is that that relation has been changed by the interposition of Christ in our favour. This change, then—this change in our forensic relation—is due to Him, and to Him wholly. They are His sufferings, and these alone, which have obtained our remission at the bar of justice from the

penalties of hell. They are His services, and these alone, which have obtained for us at the bar of justice a right to the rewards of heaven. Our own services do not contribute one iota to either of these objects; and I hold it of capital importance in your expositions of Christianity, not merely your affirming constantly that we are justified by faith, but that we are justified by faith alone; not merely that our plea in equity for a blissful immortality is the righteousness of Christ, but that it is a plea which cannot in the least be added to, cannot in the least be strengthened by any righteousness of our own. Our title-deed to heaven is not that to which Christ on the one hand, and man on the other, have contributed their respective shares. The matter is not thus partitioned between the sinner and the Saviour; and it is not in point of theoretical consistency, but in point of practical effect, that I would have you to hold it as of the most vital importance for you yourselves to understand, and to make your people understand, that in the forming of that title-deed, Christ has done everything, and man has done and can do nothing.

Now, alongside of this strenuous asseveration, I would asseverate as strenuously, that without holiness no man can see God. I fear that some of you have met our doctrine, more especially of an imputed righteousness, with the suspicion or the fear that an Antinomianism lurked under it. Let me, therefore, bid you advert to what I hold a distinction of capital importance between one method and another of guarding any article of our faith against the abuses to which it may be liable. One method is by qualifying the article itself—by laying something like a deduction or an exception upon it, and thus diluting, as it were, the whole spirit and substance of the article. For example, some would modify in this way the doctrine of an imputed righteousness. They would say, that without the righteousness of Christ we could have no valid plea of admission; but neither could we, having that plea without our own righteousness into the bargain. Both must go together; and so, in a certain vague and indeterminate way, they would make man's merits enter along with Christ's merits into the completed title-deed of the rewards of immortality. And so, too, when the same doctrine is expressed in the shape of justification by faith. They will allow that without faith there can be no justification, that faith is a *sine qua non*, but so also are works,—both help, both—and they can quote passages of Scripture for this—both are indispensable for our admission into heaven; and so the use they would

make of this undoubted and indispensable necessity for the personal virtue of man, is, that though justified by faith, he is not justified by faith alone. And all this, in order to guard the doctrine of the sinner's justification, as laid down in Scripture from the abuse of Antinomianism. Now, there is another way of guarding against this abuse, and I call on you to remark how different it is from the former way, and, I may add, how infinitely solider, and sounder, and more consonant with all that is right and obvious on the principles of the subject. Have a care lest you mitigate and reduce any one doctrine of Christianity, but be sure to bring it forward in all the fulness and decision of those scriptural testimonies which support it; and I am very sure, if observant of this rule, you cannot possibly deduct from an article conveyed in language so very express as that a man "is justified by faith without the works of the law."—"To him that worketh not, but believeth in Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."—"For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God."—"Not of works, lest any man should boast."—"We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." And to put an end to all partitioning between these two elements, we have the following remarkable testimony: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work."

How, then, is it that we guard against the abuses of Antinomianism in this doctrine, if not by a mitigation of it? My reply is, that I would mitigate nothing—I would diminish nothing; but instead of bringing forward only one doctrine, I would make a full and faithful exhibition of all the doctrines of the New Testament. It is strange that this very obvious expedient should be really so much overlooked. If the New Testament were brought forward as a whole, it would be found of one part that it would effectually operate as a corrective against the apprehended evils that may be conceived to lie in another part of it. These evils are realized by those exclusionists in theology who select their own favourite article, and throw everything else that is in the field of revelation on the background of their contemplation altogether. Now, the way in which some ministers would protect their auditors from the abuses to which this or any other article is liable when viewed singly and apart, is to

keep it back, and so perhaps to make it retire into a state of greater distance and indistinctness than before. This is the first way; but the second I hold to be infinitely better, which is, not to cast any of the truths or articles back, but to bring one and all of them equally forward, at least as much forward as the Scripture itself does. The doctrine of justification by faith alone may be abused if suffered to monopolize the whole field of vision, but it is not so liable to be abused when you place by the side of it, in characters equally luminous and equally emphatic—"I tell you, Nay; unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The doctrine of a man not being justified by works may induce an undervaluing of works to the man who harps exclusively upon this one quotation, but not to the man who looks with open and honest eye to this other quotation—"We shall be judged by the deeds done in the body, and shall receive every man according to his works;" so, in fact, as to authorize this weighty and memorable sentence—justified by faith, yet judged by works. It is not by casting the obscuration of a fainter and dimmer light over the first clause, that you disarm the mischief wherewith some conceive it to be impregnated; but it is by bringing out to the full light of day both the clauses, and giving an equal prominence to both. Let Christianity, viewed in its entireness, be left to furnish the guards and the correctives which may be necessary for preventing the abuses of a limited or partial contemplation of it. It has within itself a counteraction to every apprehended evil; but it makes all the difference whether man shall take his way of providing a security against those evils by veiling certain parts of the testimony, or, acting the part of a faithful steward, shall deal forth all the mysteries of the kingdom of God just as they have been put into his hand, and so give effect to God's way of it, just by a broad and fair and full exhibition of His word, and of all the doctrines and declarations and precepts which are to be found in it.

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These two expressions, "justified by his blood" and "through faith in his blood," suggest a very important distinction between two things, the object of faith and the act of faith, the one the ground or efficient cause of our justification, the other but the instrument by which we receive it. It is not a mere metaphysical distinction subservient only to the adjustment of a useless speculation. It is a distinction of great practical utility, and, when rightly applied, eminently serviceable to the peace and

establishment of many an else anxious inquirer. You will observe, that whereas the great aim of the legal economy of "Do this and live," would be obedience, so under the new economy of "Believe and be saved," the great aim is faith. And for this purpose people are very apt to look inwardly for the act of faith, instead of looking outwardly to its object. Why, in this case, they are just in as likely a way of finding that which they are in quest of, as the man who, to ascertain whether he had a real sight of any external thing, would, for the determination of this question, try to invert his eye backward upon the retina, and ascertain whether a picture of the object had been projected there. The best way of getting at the ocular sight is to look fully and openly and objectively on the outer thing, and the best way of getting at the mental sight, which is just the faith, is in like manner to look fully and openly and objectively on that which is proposed to your faith. For example, in the case before us, to realize the comfort and influence of the doctrine of the atonement, I would not go in quest of my faith in the blood of Christ, but my thoughts would terminate on the blood itself. I would look abroad on the properties not of that which was reflected from within, but of that which was exhibited from without. I would think of the preciousness and power of a sacrifice so costly, and of the undoubted good-will on the part both of the Father and the Son which this transaction indicates, and, in short, my view would rest and terminate on the thing to be believed, and not on the belief itself; for in the former way, and not in the latter, it is that we shall ever attain to peace and joy in believing.

Great use, we apprehend, might be made of this distinction between the objective and the subjective in Christianity. I never would, as Antinomians do, and as perhaps is too much the fashion with the most recent and remarkable at present of our sectaries, discard the subjective so far as to dispense with the scriptural injunction of self-examination; but at the same time I never would forget that the objective looked at and believed in, is the primary source of all moral influence upon the heart, and so furnishes the subjective with all its materials. There can be no reflection from the subjective without a radiance, in the first instance, from the objective; and it is by keeping open communication between the two, or, in other words, by looking externally and directly towards the good-will of God, the atonement of Christ, the truths of Scripture, which

are apart from ourselves, and without ourselves, as so many objects, that the subjective gratitude is awakened. There is an admirable chapter by Richard Baxter on the melancholy habit of those people who are constantly employed in thinking on their thoughts instead of thinking on the proper objects of thought. It is a habit which lays open the Christian mind to a thousand fluctuations, but more generally on the side of distress and despondency. How infinitely better for the secure and stable peace of those religionists, that instead of dwelling on their own inward experiences, and making aught so precarious and changeable as these the ground of their confidence, they would maintain at all times the gospel attitude of looking unto Jesus, they would rest their confidence on the substantialities that were without themselves, and independent of themselves—thus leaning upon what in Scripture is called a sure foundation, and ever breathing in peaceful security, because ever looking to Him who is the same to-day, and yesterday, and for ever.

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I think there is a beauty in this whole explanation,* and more especially in the distinction between the *πάρεσις*, as applied to the sins committed prior to the decease that was accomplished in Jerusalem, and the *ἄφεσις*, as applied to the sins committed now and from the time that the new economy of the gospel was set up in the world. And it goes to evince the substantial oneness of the two dispensations; and that under the system of Judaism men were essentially under the same moral regime as under the system of Christianity—the one being but a development of the other, or the one being in early twilight what the other is in the fulness and splendour of the risen day. This will explain how it is that there is so much in the exercises of a pious spirit under the former economy, as portrayed in the Book of Psalms, to meet the experience and accord with the feelings of a pious spirit under the new economy. The truth is, that what the sacrifice of Christ now has fully disclosed respecting the character of God, was also, though dimly and through the medium of symbolical representation, perceived by the holy men of old who belonged to the Church of Israel. They had the same complex view of the justice and placability of the Supreme Being as exhibited in the whole system of their sacrificial worship; and so the same objective religion, though obscurely beheld, to call forth from the subjective spirit of many the very penitence and

* Vol. ii. pp. 492-494.

the very faith which form the great elements of actual and experimental religion in the present day.

In that remarkable passage where the doctrine of a propitiation by Christ is so expressly affirmed in connexion with its principle, even the vindication of the justice of God when conferring forgiveness on the guilty, we have, as if for the purpose of completing the vindication, and leaving out nothing which might be alleged in opposition to it, the forgiveness considered in two relations, in relation to the current forgiveness that is going on now under the full establishment of the Christian economy, and the forgiveness that was awarded in times past, before the rendering of the great propitiation when our Saviour called out that it was finished, and bowed down His head, and gave up the ghost. I have already remarked on the beauty of an expression, peculiar and appropriate, by which the forgiveness of those in times prior to the commencement of our era is rendered in the original *πάρεσις*, instead of the ordinary term, *ἀφεσις*. I would have you also to remark, that this is stated to have been done through the forbearance of God—a word distinct even in meaning from forgiveness, inasmuch as the one is the final act of pardon, the other is the withholding of the act of punishment or correction. But what I more especially would have you to remark at present, is the apparent anxiety on the part of the apostolic mind to do away any exception which might be alleged against the justice of God, in that the punishment consequent on the transgression of His law was not actually inflicted on those who had disobeyed it, either in times past, or now during the current history of the Divine administration. It marks a feeling on his part of the necessity for such a vindication being made fully out; and accordingly he states, at the conclusion of his argument, that this sacrifice, comprehending a provision for the forgiveness of sinners, both under the old and under the new dispensation, was required in order that God might be just while the justifier of them who believe in Jesus. I hold this therefore, to be a direct scriptural affirmation, not merely of the atonement as a fact, but of the atonement in connexion with its principle, the principle of so exercising the mercy of God as that it shall not encroach on His attribute of justice. It was done in this way that God may at once be a just God and a Saviour—that God may be just while the justifier of those who believe in Jesus.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. IV.

ETERNAL LIFE.

THE PRAYER.

WE would render thanks to Thee, O God, for Thine unspeakable gift, Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent to be the Saviour of the world. We rejoice in the fulness of His salvation, that He has not only offered up His body a sacrifice for the sins of the world, but that after He died and rose again, He obtained gifts for the rebellious, even that Spirit which is poured abundantly on all who believe in Him. We would conform ourselves, O God, to the whole of this economy, both trusting in that forgiveness which is through His blood, and walking in that strength by which He enables His disciples to perform all holy obedience. Be with us now and ever, for His sake.—Amen.

It is very true that we are not able to draw a line of demarcation between those things which enter into the passive and those which enter into the active obedience of Christ; and it is also true that, in voluntary suffering on the one hand, there behoved to be the forthputting of that resolute determination, which may be conceived of as a positive quality, while, in the strenuous and sustained obedience on the other, there may have been the endurance of much pain and of many sore and bitter privations. It may therefore be difficult to disentangle from each other the specific deeds which enter into the two distinct sorts of obedience; and yet there may be no difficulty in perceiving generally, that by the pains which our Saviour underwent He made an end of sin, and by the performances which He achieved, He brought in an everlasting righteousness. We hold it of importance in Christian doctrine, to generalize the conception of a right wrought out for us by the mediatorial services of Christ, in virtue of which they who believe have not only a right of exemption from the sufferings of evil, but have also a right of admission into the blissful tenements of heaven. We think that what Adam undid by disobedience, Christ set up again by His obedience, and that the recovery and the ruin are counterparts to each other. Now, Adam forfeited his right to all the enjoyments of eternal life, as well as brought down upon himself, and all the sinners who descended from him, the inflictions both of great moral and great physical wretchedness. By Christ the whole of this mischief was repaired; and as it was

the forfeiture of a right which entailed upon us the whole mischief, so it is the re-establishment of a right which has secured to us the benefit of a whole reparation. The one is co-extensive with the other. And so the justification of a believer includes in it not merely a title to be released from the sentence of condemnation, but a title to the inheritance of blessedness. When justified by faith, we not only have peace with God, in virtue of which He lifts away from us the hand of an avenger, but flowing from this justification, we rejoice in hope of the glory of our God; or, in other words, He opens upon us the hand of a rewarder. In the Lord, it is stated, that we have redemption; but, as if that were not the only privilege, and not the same with others included in the enumeration, it is also stated, that in Him we have righteousness. The two are distinct and distinguishable; and the difficulty which attaches to the mere attempt of classifying the deeds of our Saviour's obedience into active and passive, should not obscure the specific difference, both in respect of their functions and their effects, which lies between the legal deed of acquittal on the one hand, and the legal bestowment of a reward upon the other. We feel persuaded that there is abundant evidence in Scripture for this distinction, and still more, that it does strengthen the security of the Christian, and makes him perceive a broader and more multiple harmony between his salvation and the whole character of God, when made to understand that He is not only merciful, but just and faithful to forgive our sins; and not only merciful, but just and faithful to bestow upon us the rewards of a blessed immortality. On the whole, I know not a better definition of justification than that given in our Shorter Catechism, and in which are comprehended both the right to deliverance from evil, and the right to a part and a possession in the joys of heaven—"Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in His sight." These two things may be separated. A man may be pardoned, and so have the burden of punishment and wrath lifted off from his person, without being accepted into positive favour, or being admitted to the preferment of a positive reward. The gospel includes both.

I beg you to understand, once for all, that though very few theologians make a distinction between Christ's active and his passive obedience, that does not imply that there are few who conceive of Christ's whole mediatorial service, that it includes a right not merely to the remission of sin, because Christ hath

borne its penalty, but also a right to the reward of righteousness, because Christ hath earned its full remuneration. There may be no foundation in Scripture for parcelling out, as it were, the deeds of our Saviour's history into active and passive, but let not any difficulty which may attach to such an undertaking as this, at all obscure a distinction between two things which, though never separated in reality, may certainly be viewed apart from each other as separate objects of thought. I feel quite assured of the practical importance as well as the theoretical justness of such a distinction; and that corresponding to it, as I have already abundantly insisted upon in your hearing, there is a distinction in the actual experience and feeling of those who are inquiring their way to a blissful eternity. We are quite sure that not only do sinners, under the power of strong conviction, feel their appropriate deliverance in the first of these services, but sinners aiming with all their might at the work of obedience, and for the purpose of establishing a right which, after all, they find to be untenable, find their deliverance in the second of these services. The substitution of Christ, when seen in the one aspect, meets the case of him who sinks and is in heaviness, because of a present remorse and the fear of a future vengeance. The same substitution, when seen in the other aspect, meets the distinct case of him who, without any such sense of helplessness as goes to paralyze his activity, sets forth on the strenuous work of obedience, and that for the purpose of substantiating a claim to the rewards of the law. It is well for the one to be told that Christ has suffered for him, and he may now stand acquitted of the penalty; and it is equally well for the other to be told that Christ has served for him, and he may now be instated in a title to that inheritance which He alone hath purchased, and He alone hath won. Sure we are that the latter proposition will not extinguish the obedience of him who rightly accedes to it:—it will only furnish it with another object and with another aim;—it will transform what before was a mercenary into a willing obedience;—it will substitute the services of gratitude for the services of constraint, and greatly refine and exalt all his notions of virtue, by leading him to regard it not as an instrument by which the reward of heaven is gained, but as being in itself that very reward: the divine beatitude of the upper sanctuary being in fact the beatitude of spirits attuned to the love of God, and formed after the likeness of Him who is Himself the perfection and the pattern of all moral excellence.

I have already adverted to the extreme beauty of the emblematic representation given in the law, and whereby the office of Christ as our advocate and intercessor at the right hand of God is shadowed forth. The people praying in the outer court while the priest within is burning incense, is the scene described in Luke i. This passage has in it a strong doctrinal association, and of which we obtain a most effectual explanation in that Epistle which, of all others, deserves most to be studied, for the purpose both of learning how the rites of the old economy may be impregnated with the spirit and sentiment of the new, and also how the substantial doctrines of the new may be expressed in phraseology borrowed from the ceremonial worship of the old dispensation. It is needless, then, to expatiate on this any further; but I would call on you to remark the mighty importance of what is going to be stated on the subject of the Spirit as the earnest of our inheritance. I will have to ask you presently to mark the difference between the pledge and an earnest—the one being a security for some future payment, and the other being a part of that payment. Taking this view, I know nothing which is more fitted to demonstrate what heaven really is, than the Spirit being denominated the earnest of that glorious inheritance. It is like a first instalment, a payment in part of that which in kind however is the very same with the payment in whole. It would appear from this that our heaven begun is just the work of the Spirit begun in us, even that work which is all righteousness and goodness and truth. Nothing can more expressively evince that the beatitude of that place is just a moral beatitude, than the Spirit being called the earnest of our inheritance, or, in other words, that the fruits of that Spirit, consisting of love and joy and meekness and temperance and long-suffering, form the very treasures which constitute the main reward, the main enjoyment of the upper sanctuary.

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When a controversy breaks out among Christians, it is sometimes denominated a split in the Christian world. Now it often happens that this is not only a split between persons professing one and the same faith, but it is literally a split between parts of one and the same testimony. Each party attaches itself to its own part, and that, as far as it goes, a real part of the testimony of God. So that neither may be wrong in the positive sense which characterizes them, and their only error consists in each denying the sense of the other, when in fact both of them are

true. We hold this to have been remarkably exemplified in the different solutions which have been given of the question—On what grounds am I to believe that I have a personal interest in the salvation of the gospel? One party contend that it is by a direct faith in the truth of the Promiser, who holds forth to all who believe the assurance of this salvation; and the other, that this assurance, instead of entering into the primary or direct act of faith, comes by an act of consciousness, or when a man recognises in his own character those marks or evidences by which he is made to understand that he is growing in a personal meetness for heaven. I happen to think that the truth upon this question is made out by superadding the positive opinion of the one party to the positive opinion of the other, and that the error of both consists mainly in that negative part of the opinion of each, which consists in their denial of what the other asserts, insomuch that the first party would refuse that any hope of heaven could be gathered from the work of self-examination at all; and the second party, again, grounding their whole hope of heaven on the result of this examination, would deny that any such hope could be conceived *instantanter* anterior to experience, and by an immediate radiance as it were from the objective truths of Christianity. I think that there is a legitimate hope grounded on each of these foundations; that there is room, without conflict and without interference, for the first hope, which I would call the hope of faith, and, at the same time, the second hope, which I would call the hope of experience.

For the elucidating of my meaning, let me direct your attention to Romans v. 1-4. You will perceive in this passage hope introduced in the train of consequences at two different times. Now the first time I apprehend it to be the hope of faith, the second time the hope of experience.*

Now, instead of saying that we derive all our hope from looking at the object, that is, the truth of the Promiser, or that we derive all our hope from looking at the subject, that is, my own renewed character, is there any conflict or interference in saying that our hope is founded partly upon both? and is it not obvious, from the illustrations which we have given, that both may harmonize, and that the absence of the one may legitimately darken and extinguish the other. The misfortune of controversy is, that the whole truth is broken into parts by it;

* See Lectures on the Romans.

and of this controversy, in particular, we are greatly apprehensive that while, on the one side, in their zeal for the freeness of the gospel they would dispense with all reflex examination into one's own personal state and history, on the other side, in their zeal for the interests of virtue, they may obscure that warrant which the New Testament holds out for an act of immediate confidence on the part of the sinner, who is invited even now to enter into reconciliation, and to set himself securely down under the delightful assurance of God being at peace with him. For this reason, when a controversy does arise in the Church, we think it better, if circumstances admitted, of its being suffered to work itself out in its own effervescence without any public or authoritative notice being taken of it. The thing of which we are most apprehensive is, lest, in opposition to a heretical deliverance, the Church should come forth with a counter-deliverance, as exceptionable on the one side as the error against which it pronounces is exceptionable on the other. In particular, I should ever regret any such interpretation of the matter in dispute, as that which, when asserting the place that belongs to the hope of experience, would refuse a place, and even a precedency to the hope of faith, or would darken the character of the gospel in its being a message of good tidings to the chief of sinners, and in the blessed truth of which the chief of sinners might instantly rejoice.

There is just one thing more which appears necessary at present for completing these observations. I will not refuse that even for the primary act of faith there is necessity for a certain consciousness, insomuch that without the one the other might be impossible. For example, I do not understand how a man could take peace and joy to himself from the invitation of "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," if conscious within himself that he wanted the will or the purpose to forsake all that the Saviour would have him forsake, seeing it is expressly said, that he who doth come to Him must forsake all. It is thus that Augustine burst into light and confidence on the moment of the conscious resolution that he would give up all his sinful indulgences. And it is thus when an amnesty is declared to the rebellious on their appearing at a certain place and giving up their arms, the man who feels the purpose within him of going to that place and making the required surrender may *instantly* feel the security of one who is now at peace with the governor whom he had offended. It is not necessary for the purpose of

his feeling this immediate confidence that the declaration be one of positive and unconditional pardon—enough if it be the declaration of a pardon upon terms, and he feel within himself the consciousness of acceding to these terms. And like manner it is not necessary, as a writer of the present day represents it, that there shall be an act of proclaimed and universal pardon from heaven ere any man shall feel a proper warrant for rejoicing in the consciousness of God being at peace with him. Enough that there be the declaration of a universal amnesty upon terms; for let a man believe in the honesty of that declaration, and be conscious of his readiness to acquiesce in those terms, and then may the light of an assured hope enter even now into his heart, and he may go forth on the walk of prescribed obedience with the delightful assurance that his sins are forgiven, and that God is his friend.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. V.

EXTENT OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

Do Thou work in us, O God, to will and to do of Thy good pleasure, and may the effect of Thy working in us be, that we work ourselves—working out our salvation with fear and trembling. May we know what it is to strive mightily, according to Thy grace working in us mightily. May the doctrine of Thy blessed Spirit and of His influences not supersede our own labour, but may it stimulate that labour. May it, acting in us, make us active; and may we, combining a spirit of prayer with a spirit of performance, make instant progress in those graces and accomplishments which fit for the Jerusalem above. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

I cannot but remark it as a strong internal evidence for the truth of sacred history when the various parts of an extended narration hang so well together as to be in perfect good keeping and consistency among themselves. I think if this can be recognised, even in minuter traits and those nicer strokes or delicacies of description, which make it improbable that an inventor should have thought of them, it goes to augment the impression of its being a narrative founded on a natural and a true original. I am not sure if I can appeal for a better instance of this to any other part of the record than that which

portrays the gradual transition of mind undergone by the apostles on the subject of the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom. At the outset, you perceive in the earlier part of the Gospels, a complete Jewish darkness upon this subject; and this scarcely, if at all, dispersed during the time of our Saviour's sojourn upon earth. The caution and delicacy of our Saviour's management in regard to this topic are strikingly contrasted with the slowness and unwillingness of their belief in it, and with the obstinacy of their misconceptions—an obstinacy certainly that was not dissipated by converse with Jesus Christ during His lifetime, and which stood its ground even after the death and resurrection of the Saviour. But they not only misapprehended the spiritual character of His kingdom, they also were blind to the universal application of it;—and this latter prejudice was longer persisted in than the former one, not being entirely overthrown till the conversion of Cornelius, or rather till the *exposé* which Peter gave of this transaction to the council at Jerusalem. The contrast between the gradual, and timid, and hesitating character of the apostolical mind on this subject before the fulness of its disclosure, and the bold, intrepid, confident avowals which they made afterwards, together with the fearless way in which they, generally speaking, proceeded upon it, gives a dramatic truth to the whole representation which cannot fail to impress on the mind of the reader the authentic character of the whole story.

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It need scarcely now be a matter of discussion whether Christianity was intended to be a universal religion in the sense that it was addressed to the people of all countries. In the national sense of the term, no one but the Jews themselves doubts of its universality. The important view is, how this matter is to be understood in the individual sense of the term? And here the question resolves itself into two matters, which are distinct from each other—either the universality of the Christian salvation in point of effect, or its universality in point of proposition. In regard to the first of these, the universality in point of effect, there are a certain class who deny such universality, and yet are denominated universalists. For you will observe, there is a distinction between universality in point of necessary, and universality in point of actual effect. The Arminians, generally speaking, neither admit the universality in point of actual effect, nor yet the non-eternity of hell-torments, and yet there is a

sense in which they may be termed universalists. They contend that there is no necessary bar in the way of any man's salvation, more especially no such barrier as that of a Divine decree standing between any man and the achievement by his own efforts of a blissful immortality. And yet they will admit that, in point of fact, many fall short of eternal blessedness, and, by their own perversity and disregard of the overtures of reconciliation, are landed in everlasting punishment. In reference to the controversy between them and the Calvinists, there is a ground for calling them Universalists, even although they may possibly have views as limited as the latter have in regard to the actual number of those who in very deed and reality shall eventually be saved. Their sense of the term "universal" does not, in fact, relate to the eventual, but the possible salvation of all men; and what they strenuously contend for is, that there is no predestination standing in the way of this possibility.

I shall not have time to go over the topic of Predestination with the same fulness which some of you may recollect that I did last year, and most of you may recollect that I did two years ago; but still it must be recurred to so far as to furnish me with the principles of a distinct deliverance on the various questions that still lie before us in the text-book; and I shall only say, that firmly persuaded though I be of that doctrine, on grounds both scriptural and philosophical, and fully as I subscribe to the views and reasonings of President Edwards in his Essay on the Freedom of the Will, I should refrain from the slightest mention of it, if I thought it at all interfered with the universality of the Christian salvation in point of proposition, or if I thought I could not, with as much consistency and as great urgency as any zealous Arminian, beseech, and honestly beseech, every man to repent, and turn, and be saved—if I could not say, in the hearing of an assembled congregation, however indiscriminate and however numerous, that God had fastened a mark of exclusion upon none of them—that He sincerely entreated one and all to wash out their sins in the blood of the satisfying atonement; nay, swore by Himself, that He had no pleasure in their death, but rather that they should come to Him and live. I take this early opportunity, then, of avowing my conviction, that Calvinist though I be, I hold there is nothing in Calvinism which should lay an arrest on the Christian minister, when he plies with the calls and invitations of the gospel, not the whole congregation only whom he is addressing,

but every individual of that congregation, assuring him specifically, that if he is willing to be saved, God is still more willing to save him, laying before him an open way to heaven, which he is welcome, nay, importunately bidden to walk in; and let him speculate and even murmur about the decrees of God as he may, they are his own stubborn will and his own evil deeds—they are these and nothing else which lie between him and that blissful immortality, the portals of which, with waving flags of invitation, are, by the constitution of the gospel, open to one and all of the human family.

There is one principle which I should like to impress upon you on our entrance into this question. A doctrine may be true, and yet may not be a seasonable truth, which it is expedient or wise in a Christian minister to urge when intent on some given object that belongs to an executive part of his high office. All Scripture is profitable, but profitable for particular ends; at one time for doctrine, at another for correction, at another for reproof, at another for instruction in righteousness. Now, when your aim is one of these ends, it is not a right way of proceeding to ply the people with that doctrine which is appropriately subservient to some other of these ends; and, be assured, that the great part of your skill, as able and discerning ministers of the New Testament, lies in the selection of the fit and specific topics for the specific achievements which you have in view. There is one example, the spirit of which I shall often have occasion to advert to in my lucubrations on the questions that now lie before us. The man who came to the Saviour with the question, "Are there many that be saved?" wanted theological information on a theological subject certainly, and it is truly instructive to observe the entertainment given to this question by our Saviour. He did not give the required information; but He gave what was a great deal better for the man—He gave him directions how he should proceed, in order that he may become one of those saved: "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The spirit which dictated this reply admits, we think, of abundant application to the matters which lie before us, and we shall frequently advert to those occasions on which it were infinitely better and wiser to put aside a thing of speculative curiosity, and substitute in its place a thing of practical influence and persuasion.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VI.

PARTICULAR REDEMPTION.

THE PRAYER.

WE rejoice, O God, in the fulness of that revelation which Thou hast given to the world. May all the wealth and all the wisdom of it be ours. Save us, while engaged in the study of it, from our own imaginations. Give us to sit, with the docility of children, to the lessons and the informations which are there laid before us; and make us to feel that, when God speaks, it is the part of man to listen, and to believe, and to obey. Through Thy word may we become wise to salvation—through Thy word may we become perfect, and thoroughly furnished to all good works.

This seems the proper place for the introduction of a question, whereof it is greatly to be lamented that the necessity should have occurred for its ever being raised at all, as a topic of speculation. The question relates to the amount or value of the sufferings of Christ. It proceeds on an arithmetical view of the ransom which He paid for sin, and hinges on the consideration whether it was equivalent, looking at it in the character of a price, or a purchase-money—whether it was equivalent to the salvation of all men, or only to the salvation of that limited number who pass under the denomination of the elect. I have ever felt this to be a distasteful contemplation, and my repugnance, I feel no doubt, has been greatly aggravated by my fears of the danger which might ensue to practical Christianity, from the injudicious applications that might be made of it, especially in the work of the pulpit, and when urging hearers to accept of the offered reconciliation of the gospel. It is always to be dreaded, and if possible shunned, when a transcendental question, relating to the transactions of the upper sanctuary, or to the part which God has in our salvation, should be so treated, or take such a direction as to cast obscurity over, or at all threaten to embarrass, the part which man has in it. There may not merely be an intruding into things unseen, when thus scrutinizing into the agreement or terms of the bargain, as it were, between the offended Lawgiver and the Mediator, who had undertaken to render satisfaction for the outrage inflicted on the authority of His government; but the argument might be

so conducted as to mislead and perplex the heralds of salvation in the execution of their plainly bidden task—which is to go and “command all men everywhere to repent”—to “go and preach the gospel to every creature.”

It is not that I am prepared to condemn the admission of this subject as an article into the Confessions of Reformed Christendom. You have heard my repeated explanations of the origin of Confessions, and their gradual extension to the magnitude which they have now attained. Had it not been for the perversions of heresy, they would never have been called for; and, in the present instance, had it not been for the dogma of those who contended for the final salvation of all men, we might never have heard of any counter-dogma, in the precise form and designation of particular redemption. It is not that by the article of a confession, we superinduce anything new upon the Bible, or make any addition to the things which are contained in this book. Every article has, or ought to have, a scriptural basis, and is in fact a proposition constructed on the sayings of Scripture; or, more identical still, it is but the translation of these sayings from one language to another—from the language, if you will, of the temple to that of the academy—the one used for the instruction of worshippers and practical disciples; the other used for the correction of scholastic or sophistical gainsayers. The great evil to be apprehended is that which might arise from the confounding of these two offices. We have no quarrel with the truth of the article, and indeed look upon it as the legitimate consequence of certain other doctrines regarded systematically and comprehensively in their bearings on each other, and to which doctrines both human philosophy and the Word of God lend their concurrent attestation. If by particular redemption it be meant that Christ so died for men, as that the salvation obtained by His death only took effect on a particular number, this we cannot question; but if it be meant by particular redemption that the salvation may not be made the subject of a universal proclamation, may not be tendered honestly, while urgently tendered, to all men, or severally and individually to each of them, this we promptly and indignantly deny, resenting it as we would any mutilation of the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is because these two propositions are so apt to be confounded that we do feel a sort of sensitive antipathy, the dread of a great practical evil, on the mention of either of them. And then what daring as well as distasteful language is often employed by the defenders of the

orthodox proposition. Even when I consent to their doctrine, I abominate some of their arguments. I cannot bear this great and solemn transaction, the decease that was accomplished in Jerusalem, to be spoken of in the terms of a mercantile negotiation between the Father and the Son. I think they transgress the limits of a becoming and reverential silence when they assign a precise arithmetical value to the blood that was shed, and then tell us that this must only form a commensurate price, or a commensurate expiation, for the guilt of those who were saved actually, else there must have been a superfluous expense of suffering—the injustice, as it were, of laying more upon Christ than He obtained a return for as the fruit of the travail of His soul. This whole nomenclature of the market and the counting-house I utterly dislike; and my repugnance thereto is not the less violent, that it bears the character of a presumptuous and intermeddling speculation. I should feel it a most unwarrantable inroad on a region too high for us did we attempt to reason on the matters contained in the book of life. And really, if I may say it without irreverence, judging from the style of certain theologians on this topic, they seem to me as if they could scarce have spoken otherwise though they had access to a ledger-book kept in the upper sanctuary, and where the worth of the ransom, or amount of the redemption-money, and number of the redeemed, had been set off as equivalents against each other. It is monstrously revolting to my ears, when I hear certain statements, almost in the form of calculation, respecting the blood of the atonement, as if it were computable and divisible like purchase-money, as the price paid and told out, under the old economy, in shekels, for the redemption of the souls of the children of Israel. The simple majesty of the truth as propounded in Scripture has often undergone sad desecration at the hands, I will not say of merely unphilosophical, but of most unsavoury and untasteful theologians, whose speculations on this subject are often absolutely hideous. Enough for us to learn the terms of the New Covenant viewed as a covenant between God and man. We step beyond our province when we presume to inquire into the terms or overlook the accounts of this great transaction, viewed in the light of a covenant between the Father and the Son.

But it is not merely because of the offence done by it to the true Christian philosophy that we deprecate many of the views which have been given, and many of the expressions which

have been uttered by theologians in their treatment of this question. A still more serious calamity is the practical disturbance which it has given to the work of the pulpit, as well as the initial perplexities which it has thrown across the path of the inquirer at the outset of his religious earnestness. I have heard my deceased friend, Robert Hall, say of the great majority of evangelical preachers in England, that they were so encumbered with the dogmata of their creed, as positively not to know in what terms so to lay down the gospel as that a plain man should know how to take it up. And this dogma of particular redemption, ill understood, forms the main cause of their embarrassment. If Christ died not for all, how I can make a tender of His salvation to all? If He died only for the elect, in what terms can I declare the readiness of God to take into acceptance the multitude before me? How can I represent Him as waiting to be gracious, if, in the exercise of a discriminating grace, He has purposes of mercy only for certain some who are unknown to me, while He has no such purpose for certain others, who are alike unknown to me? In these circumstances, it would appear as if I could neither single out those to whom I might deliver the overtures of reconciliation, nor am I free to cast these overtures abroad in the hearing of all the people. It is thus that clergymen, manacled and wire-bound in the fetters of their wretched orthodoxy, feel themselves impeded and restrained in the exercise of their functions as the heralds of mercy to a guilty world. They know not to whom they should deliver the message, or from whom they should withhold it, and are uncertain of the very first footstep they should take in prosecution of the work which has been given them to do. They cannot properly limit their proposals to the elect, for they do not know them; and, after all, this is not the proposal wherewith they have been charged, which is, to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven, to call on all men everywhere to repent and turn unto God, and do works meet for repentance.

Now this is a sore evil; and is fitted, if anything, to spoil the gospel, or rather the declaration of the gospel, of all its efficacy. Yet to make this declaration, and to make it freely or without exception to all, is one of the plainest injunctions in the New Testament. What then ought to be the inference, but that this doctrine of particular redemption is either not a doctrine at all, or is grievously misunderstood—if in virtue thereof, a minister feels himself restrained from making the open procla-

mation of its offered forgiveness to all within his reach, or from beseeching every man to enter through Jesus Christ into peace and fellowship with the Lawgiver whom he had offended.

Now, which term of this alternative do we take—whether that Particular Redemption is not a doctrine, or that it is grievously misunderstood? We take the latter term. It is a doctrine, but a doctrine sadly misunderstood and misapplied. We shall endeavour to demonstrate the former; that is, exhibit the proof for the doctrine through the medium of the text-book, and by our commentary on its various lessons. We shall endeavour to evince the latter; that is, expose, and if possible rectify, the abuse which has been made of the doctrine, in our Supplementary Lectures. And this, by the way, is perhaps the most palpable exemplification which occurs of the respective departments in our course—when the main and direct lesson is often given in our colloquial treatment of the class-book, and the illustrations or corollaries of the lesson are as often given in original preparations of our own. I wish by this remark to impress on you the great importance of your own private studies on the successive chapters of Dr. Hill, as well as to assure you that I lay fully as great a stress on the frequent and lengthened notes which I append to various of its passages, as on the more elaborate compositions of my own, by which the three first days of our week are occupied. There will be a great failure in the object of your attendance here, there will be the foregoing of a principal benefit, if you pass over carelessly or superficially the work of its two last days—whether by a laxer attention to what is then delivered from the Chair, or by the remissness of your own preparatory readings at home.

But while thus stating what I hold in the general to be the relative importance of the two great co-ordinate branches of our course, let me at the same time state, that in regard to the particular doctrine before us, as well as to the rest in order—I mean the doctrine of Predestination, I think it of fully greater necessity to guard against their abuses than even to establish their truth. When viewed in relation to God, these doctrines, if prosecuted beyond a certain limit, become transcendental mysteries, and speedily pass into the description of matters too high for us. When viewed in relation to man, they have their uses no doubt, for who can question that all Scripture is profitable—but a deadly mischief has often arisen from the perversions which have been made of them. To ward off the mischief which has arisen from

these doctrines, I hold to be a service of greater practical value than even to come forth with their evidences and their claims to be admitted into the theological system as articles of our creed. There is at the same time one difference in our treatment of these two dogmata. For the proofs of the first, Particular Redemption, we refer you chiefly to the text-book, while we reserve to ourselves the exposure, and I hope rectification, of the practical errors which have sprung from it. In our treatment of the second, again, or of Predestination, we shall bestow more of direct labour on it in our own person, both on the establishment of it as a theory, and when viewing it in connexion with the interests of practical religion.

But returning now to our topic of Particular Redemption, let us proceed on the altogether sound and safe principle of Bishop Butler, that it is our true wisdom to attend more to the part which man has in any question, than to speculate on the part which God has in it. In reference to God, we cannot refuse in the face both of Scripture and reason, that known to Him are all things from the beginning; nay, further, as we shall afterwards demonstrate, that by Him all things are not only foreseen but determined—and more especially the final number of those who shall be saved. These are undoubted premises, yet I would forbear to ground thereupon the arithmetic of our Particular Redemptionists. The truth is, that save for the purpose of framing a counter-proposition to meet some heresy capable of being turned to a practically mischievous application, I should feel disinclined for any further prosecution of the question, at least on this side of it. I would abstain from any numerical consideration of the value of Christ's sufferings, nor entertain the difficulty whether they were equivalent for the salvation of all, or only of the elect. This is a matter which belongs rather to the transaction between the Surety and the Lawgiver—a supernal or transcendental theme, therefore, and which, as lying in that direction, it is both our philosophy and our piety not to intrude into. It is our part to look in the other direction, to view it as a question between God and man, or rather as a question between God and each man individually: and it is thus, that in every case of real practical earnestness, the question is generally entertained. We read that Christ died for the world; but did He die for me in particular? Is the foundation laid in Zion by His atoning death, a foundation broad enough for me to rest upon? Are the overtures of reconciliation that have come from heaven such as I

can entertain in the form of overtures addressed to myself? How can I so take them up, after being told that Christ died only for some; and it is nowhere said that I am included in the happy number? The perplexity felt by a minister in the pulpit as to the terms in which he should propose the message of reconciliation, is the very perplexity felt by the individual hearer as to the terms in which he should receive it. It is thus that the trumpet has been made to blow uncertainly; and that many a spirit, mystified and bewildered among the difficulties of a theme too high for it, has been unable to grope its way to a place of enlargement and safety.

We see no other method of resolving the perplexity than just by disentangling the celestial from the terrestrial of this whole speculation, and, foregoing all curiosity about the part which God has in it, to look singly and intently on the part which man has in it. If salvation be not destined for all, of this at least we may be very sure, that salvation is proposed to all. If Christ did not so far die for me, as that He is yet mine in possession, He at least so far died for me, as that He is mine in offer. This is truly the matter on hand; this is the word nigh unto us. I cannot run the speculation upward to the heights of the past eternity, nor onward to the depths of the future everlasting. But with neither have I at present or practically to do. The thing immediately before me—the only thing I am called at this moment to entertain—is the invitation of the gospel, which invitation, I, as minister, have the full warrant to throw abroad without limitation or reserve among all and every of an assembled congregation; and they, as hearers, have each individually for himself as full a warrant to close with and confidently to appropriate as an invitation to him in particular. He may not be able to reconcile the absolute with the relative in this question—the whole and just perspective thereof as seen from the point of view in heaven, with the partial, though, as far as it goes, the equally just perspective thereof, as seen from the point of view on earth—the wide and general contemplation taken of it by God above, who looks from beginning to end, from one extreme to the other of the scheme universal, with the lower and limited contemplation taken of it by man below, who may cast a far and wildering look on both sides of him, yet can see no further into the scheme than to the brief evolution of it in his own little day—the ephemeral and intermediate passage whereupon his own history is cast, and wherewith he himself is closely

and immediately implicated. And it were his wisdom to be satisfied with thus seeing—it were truly his wisdom to recall himself from the distant to the near—from gazing on the infinite, behind and before him, to the besetting realities of his present condition—to the urgency and plain meaning of present calls. His business is not with the counsels which were fixed upon before the world, nor yet with the consummations which take place after it; his business is not even with the matter as it respects the species, but with the matter as it respects himself. He may not be able to adjust all the parts of the complete and comprehensive whole; but enough if he is able to discern his own part in it, and rightly to proceed thereupon. Let all the perplexities of the general speculation be what they may, they affect not what to himself should be the weightiest and yet the most applicable of all truths—that God is beseeching him to be reconciled—that in reference to him, God is waiting to be gracious—that He is now plying him with the offers and entreaties of the gospel, saying, “Come now, let us reason together;” and, “Turn thee, turn thee, for why shouldst thou die?” This is the topic for the minister to preach, and for the people to listen to; this is the revealed thing which belongs to them and to their children; this is the right demonstration to make from the pulpit, extricated and set free from the demonstrations of an ambitious philosophy. It is the sounder and better philosophy which keeps a man within his own sphere, and leads him to take the part which the great Artificer and Governor of all has specially assigned to him. His business is to look to himself: his concern is not with the scheme universal, or that part of it which is out of sight in heaven, but with that part of it which, brought nigh to him on earth, is made to bear on the fears and the feelings of his own heart, or on the urgent interests of his own little home—the question, so often exemplified at the first promulgation of the good tidings, What shall I do, that I and those of my household might be saved? The materials, most ample and satisfying materials, for the solution of this question, are within the reach of every man who himself is within reach of the Bible. He needs only attend to its plain lessons, and forego his own adventurous and most unfruitful speculations. Instead of roaming over the wide expanse in pursuit of the distant and the indeterminate, he has only to busy himself with the distinct and definite matters which are brought to his own door. The some who are ordained to eternal life—the sheep out of all

the species, for whom Christ died—the elect for whom the Lamb was slain before the foundation of the world; it is his part to recall himself from the perplexity of his spirit upon these, and turn him to the sayings which serve for the guidance of his own footsteps: “Repent and be converted, every one of you.” Let whosoever believe, and he shall not perish. God is not willing that any should go into perdition; He beseeches every man; He willeth all to repent; He willeth all to come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved.

The things of the spiritual are often illustrated by correspondent things of the natural or the material economy. Did we look only to our world as a planet, as the member of a great and gorgeous universe, and more especially to the vast rapidity of its movement in space, we might well tremble for the safety of its tiny inhabitants, and wonder how it is that our earth can take a part in these larger evolutions of the firmament, and yet the people who live in it can walk without disturbance as on a stable platform, and keep their footing upon its surface. We know what the physical laws are which reconcile this seeming incongruity, and in virtue of which it is that man, though placed and borne along in the vortex of immensity, can prosecute his homely and familiar goings with as great security as if all were at rest. And even though we had not known, and our philosophy been inadequate for the explanation, the same would have been our experience, and the same wondrous harmony between the absolute and the relative would still have been realized. Now, what is true of the cycles in the heavens, is alike true of the cycles of eternity. There is a transcendental theology which labours to sever them, and to adjust all seeming discrepancies between the incumbent part which belongs to man upon the one hand, and on the other the sublime mysteries of all the foreknowledge and all the pre-ordination on high. Whether it may succeed or it may fail in this daring enterprise, let us never forget that there is a patent and practicable way for the humblest of Zion's wayfarers, who, if they but simply betake themselves to the gospel's bidden walk, will at length make good their entrance on that region of immortal light and blessedness, where they shall know even as they are known.

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I would again revert to this topic with the view of making you clearly understand the distinction between one kind of universality and another—the universality of redemption in point of

effect, and its universality in point of proposition. And again, there is a distinction in regard to the first of these—the universality in point of effect, which I beg you will keep in mind. Most of the Arminians agree with all the Calvinists in not allowing the universality in point of actual effect, but they do not agree with the Calvinists in affirming any want of such universality in point of necessary effect. There is an actual limitation, they admit, upon the universality, but no necessary limitation. There stands, they contend, nothing like a fatality in the way of its being universal. In short, they contend that there is no predestination, no antecedent decree upon the subject. They, generally speaking, admit that all historically, or in point of fact, will not be saved; and that, so far from there being an actual universality, the number really and indeed saved will fall greatly short of the whole family of mankind; but then they affirm, that what this number shall be is not a matter of predetermination, but a matter of contingency—that it is not determined beforehand by God, but depends on the course that shall be taken by the self-determining power of man, in the exercise of that liberty which, in the metaphysical sense of the term, they most zealously assert for him. On this particular point the Arminians and the Calvinists are at issue; and there are certain ultra-Calvinists, who understand the limitation of the decree, or the limitation caused by the predestination of God, in such a way as not only to deny the universality of redemption, in the first general sense of the phrase, but to deny it in the second general sense also—that is, they not only deny, *in toto*, the universality of the Christian redemption in point of effect, but they even deny it in point of proposition. In virtue of their notions on the subject of election, they not only believe in the absolute impossibility of the gospel salvation being ever realized by all, but they even feel restrained from proposing it to all. In laying the very first overtures of Christianity before the people, there is often mingled—I think most injudiciously and unwarrantably mingled—a most perplexing reference on their part to the doctrine of election, and often a positive discouragement, amounting in some instances to positive prohibition on the great bulk of the people from entertaining the subject at all, saying, that for aught they know, they may have no part whatever in the matter. I must do my utmost to clear the whole matter of this disturbing and complicating influence; and meanwhile I satisfy myself with announcing, that I know nothing of more vital importance to the efficacy of your preaching, than

your proceeding, as I believe you fully warranted by Scripture, on the free and boundless universality of the gospel salvation in point of proposition, and that you fall short of your commission as the heralds of God's mercy to the children of men, if you ply not, with the assurances and the honest assertions of His good-will, one and all of the human family.

Before terminating this subject, I should like particularly to make you understand in what respect I agree with the statement of Dr. Whitby, and, in fact, with all that is ascribed in the text-book to universal redemptionists, in the most important, that is, in the practical sense, of these affirmations, and how, consistently with this, I hold by the Calvinistic doctrine of an absolute predestination. I should hold it a most grievous effect of that doctrine on your conduct of the business of the pulpit, if you did not address all men, as the subjects of the proposed pardon and justification—if you did not assure them of a reconciliation on their turning to God, and having faith in the Lord Jesus Christ—if you did not, for this purpose, urge them so to turn, and expound to them, affectionately as well as fully, the truth as it is in Jesus—if you did not tell them, just as these universal redemptionists do, that their salvation depends on their faith. The remedy, in fact, is much more extensive in proposition than it is in effect. It may be held out, and honestly held out, in proposition, to all, while at the same time, and effectively, it is limited to those who repent and believe, while most assuredly all who do so repent and believe shall be saved. And it is also quite true, that though the offer of redemption were rejected by all, there is a sense in which that redemption might still be called universal. The offer could not have been given without it; and now that Christ hath died, the offer might be made to one and all of the species. The qualification which I want you to lay on certain passages in the text-book, where the tenets and views of the universal redemptionists are explained, is not so to understand it as if there were not Calvinists who did not subscribe, and that most cordially, to much that is there ascribed to them, and I fear so ascribed to them as to give you the impression that the Calvinists stand opposed to the whole of it. You will act the part of unfaithful representatives of the King of heaven; you will have put a sore misrepresentation on the terms of that embassy wherewith He has intrusted you, if you do not make open proclamation of the gospel as a universal offer, and do not make use of this moving argument with one and all of your

hearers—that in relation not to some one, but to every one, God is waiting to be gracious.

Those of you who are acquainted with Butler's Analogy know the principle on which he reconciles with the truth of Christianity those phenomena of unequal distribution which have perplexed the views of so many of our speculatists. He attempts no absolute reconciliation, but he makes it conclusively out, that if such inequality is to be held a sufficient reason for dissociating a God from Christianity, then experience and observation furnish like phenomena, which afford us sufficient reason for dissociating a God from nature. This, in fact, is the great principle of his incomparable work, and it is a principle which both Arminians and Calvinists stand equally in need of; neither can promise any positive solution of the difficulty; but it is a difficulty which, if permitted, on its own strength only, to set aside our peculiar speculations, should in all consistency be admitted as a valid objection to any system of religion whatever, and so would land us in a state of Atheism. Both Arminians and Calvinists come at length to an insolvable something, which lies beyond the limit of our comprehension, and it will be found that that something relates to the vindication of the character and ways of God. We do not understand how it is that the creatures of God should be endowed with such an exceeding variety of privileges and gifts, insomuch that some are far more liberally dealt with than others. We only know that so it is, and yet retain our belief in the existence and perfect character of God notwithstanding. When, instead of comparing different species of creatures, we limit our view to one species—to our own—we know not why it is that some men should have been so gifted with natural powers and advantages, while others have been doomed to extreme poverty, and, in respect of mental endowment, are born and live in a state of idiotism; still, we know that so it is, and yet, if not Atheists, persist in believing a God, and generally, too, a God whose ways, did we but know all, would be found to admit of full justification. And we do not know wherefore it is that some countries have been visited with the light of the gospel, while others are left to barbarity and paganism; but still the irresistible fact is obtruded upon us, and yet Arminians notwithstanding retain their confidence in God as a Being who, in the great day of the manifestation of His counsels, will stand forth to the assembled universe as being indeed its righteous and merciful Governor. Finally, we do not know

the reason, which is as yet inscrutable, why of two individuals, living in the same country, to all appearance equally gifted with the powers of natural discernment, and sitting under the very same ministration of the truths of Christianity, the one should be taken and the other left—the one should have his convictions overpowered, and his whole nature brought under the transforming and saving influences of the gospel of Christ, while the other persists in the deep lethargy and unconcern of nature. The Calvinist, who believes that it is the grace of God which makes the difference, cannot tell why it is that there should be any such difference at all; but still, though he know not why it is, he is forced to believe that so it is; and with as much reason, we contend, as in any of the former instances, does he hold that, when this inscrutable thing has had the light of the coming manifestation thrown over it, will it be found of all the ways of God that they are righteous and true. On each and all of the systems we are at length landed in an impracticable difficulty; but it is a difficulty which attaches to the procedure of the Divinity, and not a difficulty, you will observe, which attaches to the part that we are called upon to act for the salvation of our own souls; and the wisdom which I chiefly want to impress upon you, in the management of this whole speculation, is that which distinguishes between the things we do know and that will be found to relate to our own conduct, and the things we do not know and that will be found to relate to the high and hidden counsels of the Divinity.

Were I commissioned by an earthly monarch with the overtures of reconciliation to the inhabitants of a province that had risen up in arms against him, and were I authorized by the terms of that commission to hold forth the overtures of pardon, and not of pardon only, but of pardon and preferment to all who should cast away from them the weapons of their rebellion, the line of my duty at least is quite plain. I have but to urge their acceptance of the offered terms. I have to assure them of the perfect honesty of my master, and the perfect safety wherewith they might place their reliance on him. I may be conceived to have the advantage of being able to appeal to bygone instances in which their brothers in rebellion had been persuaded by my entreaties to give in, and how they now lived in perfect security, and had been raised to happiness and honour on their compliance with the gracious proposal. With this invitation I would keep plying all who still held out and were obstinate; and how-

ever much I may be at a loss to account for the difference between those who consented to my proposals and those who resisted them, still it would be quite clear that the only way in which I could do a real practical service to those people would be to persevere in that earnest solicitation by which alone I had ever succeeded in gaining the surrender of any, and on which surrender they had never in a single instance failed to obtain the full possession of those blessings which I was authorized to hold out as the sure effect of their compliance.

I might feel myself greatly baffled and at a loss did I attempt to philosophize in a speculative way on the question, How comes it, after all, that two sets of human beings should be so differently constituted as that the first, after perhaps a good deal of resistance, should at length give way under the power of my earnest and repeated assurances, while the second stand their resolute ground, and at length die hard under all the pathos and urgency I can bring to bear upon them? This might present a dark, perhaps an unresolvable subject to my understanding; and yet the path of my practical duty might remain perfectly clear and obvious notwithstanding, which is just to persevere in widely circulating and affectionately urging the overtures wherewith I had been intrusted, seeing that it is in the prosecution of this business only that the number of the pardoned is increased, and the number of the impenitent lessened, whether I can comprehend or not the theoretical question which I have started about the difference between them.

It would add greatly to my wonder and perplexity, too, if in the course of my inquiries into the cause of this difference I had learned that the very king whose ambassador I was, possessed a before unheard of power to work a receptive disposition in certain of these rebellious subjects, while he left others to the native obstinacy of their own rigid and uncomplying tempers, and that in point of fact it was he who gave this disposition to those who did accept of my published overtures, while he withheld it from others. His policy—wherewith, however, I had nothing to do—would present itself to my notice as a profound mystery; yet my practice, wherewith I had everything to do, would remain on precisely the same footing as before. It would still be as much my duty as ever to knock at the door of every heart, seeing that it was only by my thus knocking that the door of any heart was opened to my terms of reconciliation. It matters not on what cause, known or unknown, the difference depended

between those that withstood my application and those that gave way to it. It affects not the line of my incumbent duty as the herald of those overtures in the least, though I should come to know that it depended on the will and power of him from whom I had received the charge of them. It might throw a deeper shade over his counsels, and make them all more incomprehensible than ever. The duty of plying men with these overtures would still remain. After this new discovery of the principle on which the success depended, the measure of the success might still remain the same, and the encouragement founded on the experience of this also remain. In short, there may be much in this doctrine to aggravate my speculative difficulties; but the way of duty, and the motive to the performance of it, are just what they used to be.

But a further information may be presented on this subject. I may be made to know that this same sovereign gave a disposition to receive his overtures on a proper request being sent to him to that effect, whether from myself, the herald of his merciful proclamation, or from those who were the objects of it. There would be nothing in this to alleviate the mysteriousness of the whole procedure, perhaps rather to enhance it; but still the part I had to perform in it would be perfectly clear and obvious. I might not understand how to reconcile the merciful character and universal terms of his proclamation, with the partial exercise of his power in giving a disposition to receive it only to some and not to others of his rebellious subjects. This may be a great deep altogether beyond the reach of my soundings; yet, with all the difficulty in theorizing on his conduct, there needs not rest the shadow of a doubt on what the incumbent footsteps are of my own conduct, which would just be to ply the people among whom I had been sent with the most importunate entreaties to return to the sovereign who sitteth with open arms to receive them, and to ply my sovereign who had sent me with my importunate requests that he would speed the success of my message among a people made willing by him in the day of his power. And if my uniform, nay unexcepted, experience should be, that never did a single creature return in the terms of the amnesty whereof I was the bearer, but, in spite of his bitter provocations, he had all its promises and all its immunities made out to him; and did I also experience that never did the request for a willing heart, if only preferred without any mixture of dishonesty or any misgiving of distrust, that never was such a request sent without the plen-

teous effusion of a right and a relenting spirit on him who was the object of it—surely all that is palpable in these transactions might well bespeak him to be a merciful, while they are only those recondite things wherewith my conduct and my practice have nothing to do, which bespeak him to be a mysterious sovereign.

Now it is just so with the overtures of the gospel. We have a warrant from the King of heaven for placing them at the door and plying with them the heart and conscience of every individual. We have a further warrant to pray for a blessing on our endeavours; and He tells us that a believing prayer for this will be effectual, descending so far, in fact, as to ask that we should put Him to the proof: Only prove me, and see whether I will not pour out a blessing upon you. It is a mysterious thing that all hearts should not be overpowered by the touching and tender demonstrations of the upper sanctuary. It is a still more mysterious thing that He who constructed overtures which are addressed to all, should only give the susceptibility of being impressed by them to some. It alleviates not, perhaps it enhances, the mysteriousness, that He should profess a readiness to give a clean heart and a right spirit to those who ask them—for these I must be inquired after. Still it is but a mysteriousness resting on His counsels, for all is noon-day light and simplicity in regard to our conduct, whether it be the conduct of Christian ministers or of Christian individuals. None who accept of these gospel overtures will be disappointed; and none who pray for the power of accepting them, if they do it honestly and in good faith, will have that power withheld from them. The salvation of the gospel is free to all who will, and the overtures of it may be addressed with perfect sincerity to one and all of the human family.

I have not yet broken ground on the main question, but I want to possess you at the very outset with what the conclusion is which I want to establish—Predestinarian though I be, it is not so much the dogma of Predestination as the innocence of the dogma that I want to establish. I further hope to vindicate in some degree its usefulness; but my main object is to satisfy you that it interferes not with the universality of gospel calls and gospel invitations.

On entering upon this topic, I cannot but express my regret that the question between universal and particular redemption should ever have been stirred. I do not think that the interests

of truth or the maintenance of essential orthodoxy required it. The controversy, I think, has assumed an unfortunate shape when stated in the terms, whether Christ died for all men, or only for those who shall finally be saved. I regret that these two terms should have been put together in this alternative method, as if the affirmation of the one necessarily involved in it the denial of the other. There is a sense in which Christ died for all men—by His death He brought in an everlasting righteousness, which, in the *ipsissima verba* of Scripture, is unto all and upon all who believe; and our business is to urge this gospel on the acceptance of one and all. This is true; and yet it is just as true that none but they who believe shall finally be saved. This is all I should feel inclined to state on the head of this particular controversy; and then, were there a disposition to stir the question in another shape, and to inquire whence the difference in point of phenomenon—of mental phenomenon—between those who believe and those who believed not, might not this difference be ascribed to the power and pre-ordination of Him who hath the hearts of all men in His hand? I would enter on this special track of investigation, and proceed in it as far as the light of nature and the light of revelation could carry me. We think that all which is essentially Calvinistic might be established in this way; while, at the same time, when we had got to the impossible difficulties of the question, we think that a man of a wise and philosophic spirit could not fail to perceive that, after all, this greatly maligned and misunderstood Calvinism left the urgencies, and the duties, and all the plain and popular and practical bearings of the religion of Jesus on the souls and consciences of all men on the very footing in which it found them.

In regard to the particular shape of the question between universal and particular redemption, I think there is great sagacity and soundness in the following extracts from Douglas's *Truths of Religion*, p. 231 :—

“We must, however, be careful to take our notions of the divine nature and infinite extent of the atonement of Christ from the oracles of God, not from the writings of men who lower every subject which they treat to their own limited views. In the substitution of the innocent for the guilty, and in the transference of merits and demerits, the most obvious and frequent illustrations in Scripture are derived from the transference of debt, and the terms are borrowed from pecuniary transactions. But illus-

trations in Scripture unfortunately are frequently mistaken for facts; and divines, taking the metaphorical phrase literally, have reasoned as if sin and debt were in all respects convertible terms; and as money is divisible into pounds, shillings, and pence, so merit and demerit might, it is conceived, be divided into equivalent and corresponding parts; and one great division among Christians is in a considerable degree owing to the high question whether Christ paid the penalty for the sins only of those that are saved, or whether, in addition to this, He paid the penalty for the sins of who are lost. But the difficulty, and the view that led to it, are alike imaginary, and have no foundation in Scripture or in reason. That guilt is not exhausted by application and imputation, we have too evident proofs among the numerous descendants of Adam; for should the world continue to an undefined number of ages, never would the descendants of the first man cease to be implicated in Adam's fall, on account of the numbers who had previously partaken of his guilt and of his nature. Adam broke God's law; all those who are connected with him as their federal head are accounted transgressors also: the question is here not of numbers, but simply of connexion. Christ fulfilled the law; those who are united to Him by faith are accounted to have fulfilled the law also. Again the question is not of numbers, but of simply of connexion.

“Yet even were it otherwise, and if guilt or merit were exhaustible by imputation, the infinite merit and ‘riches of Christ,’ in every way ‘inexhaustible,’ might have precluded the rise of so foolish and unscriptural a dispute as that which debates whether Christ died for all, or only for the elect.”

While I have this work in hand, I cannot resist the temptation of presenting you with another extract from it, though on another subject. You may be aware of the liberties which are now taking with the Christian doctrine of the atonement, and how this manifestation of the Divine love to men is so generalized in the phraseology of some recent writers as to throw a gloss over the whole character of this transaction viewed as a substitution of the innocent for the guilty, by which substitution our sins have been laid to the account of the Saviour who died for them, and His righteousness has been laid to our account who believe in Him. Mr. Douglas's deliverance on this question, too, is equally wise and scriptural with his former one:—

“There are other writers who, without proceeding to these lengths of impiety, consider the atonement merely as an example

and exhibition of Divine love towards mankind ;—that God in Himself has no need of reconciliation to sinners ;—that He has no attribute of justice to appease, for that justice is not an original attribute—that it is merely a modification of His benevolence, seeking to produce the greatest results of happiness by maintaining the order which is most conducive to its attainment ;—that it is sin which makes the sinner groundlessly imagine that God is his enemy, while the truth is, (if he would but recognise it,) that God is always his friend, whether he sins or not ;—and that, therefore, God (the impiety of the supposition is theirs, not mine) has conducted a sort of sacred drama in giving up His Son to death, that they may see by so high an example, in spite of all that conscience tells them to the contrary, how infinitely God still loves them, however sinful they may be, and without any reference to the imputation by faith of the righteousness of Christ. All such sickly and unscriptural fancies proceed from a want of that deep conviction of sin, that awful sense of the holiness and justice of God, which is so eminent in the sacred writers. Mere reasoning or disputing can have small effect in such cases ; it is only when the Spirit is poured out abundantly from on high, —when the sinner beholds the wrath of God revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,—and when he hears by faith the Saviour exclaiming, ‘ If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,’ that he will perceive that sin is a bar to reconciliation on the part of God far more than on the part of the sinner, and that divine and eternal justice is an inseparable attribute of the all-perfect Being. The more we are taught by the Holy Spirit, the more we shall discern of the holiness of God, and of the hateful-ness of sin in His sight, and of the absolute necessity of the atonement, in order that infinite love might redeem a lost race from eternal destruction. But now that the atonement is made, and that God has not withheld His only begotten Son, we may rejoice that all walls of separation are thrown down, that the veil is rent in twain, and that God, when we believe in the Lord Jesus, is our Father and our Friend for ever.”—Pp. 238-240.

In short, you will find this book to be a repository of precious things, and though the absence of lengthened reasoning and of sustained illustration may have deducted from its interest, yet, generally speaking, as a collection of sound deliverances on the most important topics in theology, and those often couched in expressions of original felicity and power, I have very great pleasure in recommending it to general perusal.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VII.

OPINIONS CONCERNING PREDESTINATION.

THE PRAYER.

WE lament before Thee, O God, our innumerable defections in heart and in history from Thy Divine law. We feel our daily need of recourse to a Saviour that we may be forgiven, and to a Sanctifier that we may be strengthened for the work of obedience. By nature we are averse to Thy pure and holy commandment. Do Thou put it in our hearts, do Thou write it in our minds, do Thou enlist our taste and our affections on the side of obedience, that our duty may be our delight, and that all our services may be the services of willingness.

It does not appear to me a sufficient argument at all mentioned by Clarke, and apparently with approbation by Dr. Hill,* for the possible foreknowledge of contingent events, that the foreknowledge has no causal influence giving a determinate certainty to that event which is the object of it. We are quite aware that it is not the proximate cause, and may not, in fact, be the remote cause, or cause at all, of the event; but that appears nothing to the purpose, for it at least indicates that that event and no other can happen at the place and time when and where it is known beforehand that it will take place.

Edwards, on this part of the argument, is triumphantly superior to Dr. Clarke and all the Arminians.

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You will now perceive, that after speculation is carried to a certain extent, we come in contact with difficulties, whatever our religious system may be. They are not peculiar to Calvinism, and they all more or less are connected with that most unresolvable of all questions, the existence and the origin of evil. We venture to affirm that this is a question equally gravelling to Socinians, Arminians, and Calvinists; and that on the subject now before us, we are presented with a specimen not merely of a difficulty to which the Arminian system has introduced us, but what appears still more condemnatory of its truth, a positive contradiction. To say of foreknowledge that it can extend to contingencies, is just to say of an event that it may be cer-

* Hill, vol. ii. pp. 26, 27.

tainly known it is to exist, and yet that it is uncertain whether it will exist or not. There is something worse than mysticism in this, there is clear and evident absurdity, though the only conclusion I would have you to deduce from it at present is, that if a system of opinions is to be rejected because of certain unexplained and inexplicable things which it involves, then on the highest of subjects, and more especially on the high subjects of religion, we can have no system of opinions at all.

You will remember the observations of last session on the causes which have led in the history of the Church and of its controversies, to the multiplication of articles in the creed of the orthodox, and more especially how it is that these articles are sometimes, in respect of substance, of a more speculative character than a mere practical expounder of Christian truth would be led to entertain, and in respect of phraseology are couched in terms not to be found in Scripture. The truth is, that the Church was not the originator of such articles.

I would have you to apply these observations to the question before us. Had no Socinian and no Arminian speculation been obtruded on the Church, there might have been no call for any counteractive article upon the subject, and ministers would have acquitted themselves of all they owed to the doctrine of God's absolute sovereignty, by expatiating, in the first place, which they could have done directly and textually from many passages of Scripture, on man's total inability of himself either to understand aright or to do aright in the matter of his own salvation; and in the second place, that it is God, by His free and sovereign Spirit, who works in us to will and to do; but, in the third place, that this Spirit is the most welcome and accessible of all privileges, and is made by the very terms of the gospel as free to all who desire and ask it as the cheap and common bounties of nature; if an earthly father giveth bread to his hungry and imploring children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him? The effect of such a pastoral treatment as this on the part of a minister is not most assuredly to discharge the people who are under him from the obligations of a most active and strenuous performance, but to make them combine with the habit of performance the habit of prayer. It is not to annihilate their part and office as workers in the business of religion; but by making them join dependence on God with diligence in themselves, it is in fact to make them fellow-workers with God. It is not to relax their vigilance and their

vigour amid the difficulties of the Christian warfare, but it is to set them on a field of discipline and duty with that best security for a triumphant issue, that they have derived strength from the upper sanctuary for all the toils and struggles of their new obedience. It is thus that practical Christianity is made to prosper in many a parish where, under the wise ministrations of a pious and orthodox clergyman, the church of the favoured district is still thronged with earnest worshippers on the Sabbath, and through the week the voice of psalms is still heard in many of our cottages. But when a wrong dogma arises, that if admitted and circulated would not merely change the theoretic views of the people, but greatly worse than this, would relax that practical habit or attitude in which they go about the work of personal Christianity—if either a Socinian speculation were to undermine their faith in the omniscience of God, or a Socinian and Arminian speculation together were to weaken their dependence on that grace which is withheld from the proud and given only to the humble—were the sentiment of a self-sufficiency in man to withdraw their fellowship from Him without whom they can do nothing, but through whom, strengthening them, they are enabled to do all things—then both soundness in the faith and success in the practice of religion are alike endangered, and the Church is called to lift her protest against the withering invasion, or, in other words, to frame her article, and call on the most erudite of her sons both to establish and defend it. It is thus that to meet all the exigencies of the Church of Christ upon earth, a polemic theology as well as a pastoral theology is called for; and all I want is, that you do not confound the respective functions of the two, but that, while the polemic is engaged in the thickest of that controversy that is going on without, you should, within the vineyard and in discharging the business of the pulpit, continue to manage the work of the pastoral theology very much as before. The counter-assertion of the Calvinists against that of the Arminians or Socinians, is not the very assertion of the God who spake to us from heaven. It is not God speaking to us, but it is man speaking his sense or his understanding of what God hath spoken. The just sense and the just understanding it may be, and most important that it should be rendered into an article, where it serves the purpose of a signal as to what we conceive to be true, and a standard against what we conceive to be false. Meanwhile, it is very possible that in a system of wise and judicious parochical ministrations

the controversy may be wholly unknown, and any reference thereto may be wholly uncalled for. You may just proceed on your clerical work precisely as you would have done though neither Arminian nor Socinian heresies had ever called away your attention from the word of God. The business of expounding and enforcing Scripture may go on most prosperously, although the dogmata of the Arminians and Socinians, and even the counter-dogma, as stated in the language of Calvinism, were never heard of, and your people, trained to the sentiment that they cannot think too humbly of themselves or too highly and dependingly of God, may be translating the Christianity of the New Testament into their own characters and hearts, and leaving the great doctors in theology to settle their own general questions just as they may.

But there is another and greatly worse effect that an ill-understood polemical has over the pastoral theology, and that is when the general deliverance of Calvinism now before us lays any arrestment on the preacher, so as to impede the perfect openness and freedom wherewith he would hold forth the gift of pardon and eternal life to the acceptance of all men. This you will perceive is a wholly different thing from that of making the assertion that all men are actually pardoned. To declare of any of the benefits of the gospel that they belong to all men in actual property and possession, is a very different thing indeed from preaching the gospel to all men, and calling for their compliance with it. The former is in glaring opposition to the whole truth and tenor of Scripture; the latter is the very essence of gospel preaching—and we affirm of this essence, that it is destroyed, if, on the imagination of any difference whatever between the elect and other men, you make a difference between one class and another when addressing to them the first overtures of the gospel. The gospel stands forth, in its character of freeness, not to a certain species of men to the exclusion of others, but it stands forth in this character generally to man; and when the remission of sins, through the propitiation of Christ, is set forth, the proposition is couched in such general terms as the world or sinners—or lastly, than which nothing can be imagined more abstractly and comprehensively general, the pronoun *they* who believe shall be saved; *he* who calleth on the name of the Lord shall be saved; *whosoever* cometh shall not be cast out. There is scarcely, in fact, a term in language which has the power of reaching to every individual of the species which is not

employed in setting forth the overtures of the New Testament : “Every one that asketh, receiveth ;” “Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved ;” “Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man open, I will come in to him, and will sup with him ;”—and we conclude, therefore, that a minister sadly mistakes what that is which he is practically to do in the capacity of an ambassador or a herald, if he suffer his ill-understood and his worse-applied system to vitiate the commission wherewith he is charged, or spoil it of those open characters of grace and benignity which belong to it.

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Any difference in point of final result between one man and another, whether that difference be foreseen and preordained or not, should make no difference in the initial treatment which both should receive from the ministers of Christianity. They are alike objects of the same message, and should have that message addressed to them in the very same way. There is an awful distinction in the ends of the two men, but there ought to be no distinction made at the commencement. There is nothing in the decree which overbears their being affectionately, nay honestly urged on the subject of their salvation ; for if the one shall indeed be saved, the decree which respected him is carried into effect by his own acceptance of the gospel message ; if the other shall indeed be lost, the decree which respected him is carried into effect by his own wilful rejection of the kindness that was pressed upon him, and which, if he had received, would have had upon him its free and full accomplishment.

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There is one observation which I think of capital importance, though I have not seen it mentioned as vindicating the Calvinistic view from the charge of its making God a being not moved by the love of righteousness in His ordinations, but making these ordinations irrespective of character. This charge is grounded on the way in which the matter is put by Calvinistic theologians when they say, that God chose some to everlasting life, not in respect of any righteousness which He saw in them, but of His own sovereign pleasure ; giving the impression, therefore, that in that pleasure the love of righteousness and the hatred of iniquity do not enter. Now, it should continually be kept in mind that the ordination, when rightly understood, is not the ordination of an individual and ultimate event, but the ordination of a process, and that in this process the two terms of righteousness

and everlasting life stand indissolubly connected. A being who waits, as the Arminians would represent Him, till the creature hath manifested a righteousness of character, and then translates him into heaven, as possessed of a befitting character for its exercises and joys, really gives no higher demonstration of his love for righteousness than the being who is conceived to overrule the whole history of his moral empire, but so overrules it that holiness and happiness, that righteousness and heaven, shall stand inseparably conjoined the one with the other.

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 I have no doubt that the explanation* offered by Molina, of there being a *scientia media*, has been satisfactory to many, not however because any distinct matter was presented to their notice, but because of a certain shadowy imagination that the innovation of the mere term had the effect of conjuring up. There is a mighty imposition in nomenclature; and just as Charles Fox said of a very ordinary speaker in parliament, who, at the same time, had all the semblance which accent and manner could give of impressive oratory, that he spoke to the tune of a good speech, so it may be said of many a reasoning couched in scholastic phrase, and ushered in with all the forms of definition and dialectics, that it is at least to the tune of a good argument.

I must say that I think the mode in which the Calvinistic system is stated in vol. iii. p. 53 of our text-book, is, for practical purposes, rather unfortunate. I demur not to the substantial doctrine, but to the manner in which it is here put forth, and which I think is calculated to lay a crushing arrest on the practical work of Christianization. In the first place, I do not see what business we ever had to enter at all on a speculation about the precise amount of saving efficacy that lay in the atonement by Christ, and whether it were commensurate to the salvation of all men, or commensurate only to the salvation of the elect. It is a most distasteful and a most unpractical question, that we had no call to try our arithmetic upon. The thing wherewith we have to do is, that in virtue of Christ's mediation and sacrifice, there is salvation for all who will, and most assuredly a salvation in which not a creature who places his reliance upon it will be disappointed. This is the message wherewith we are charged, and with this we are fully warranted to go round among all the families of the earth, or to give it a more familiar and

* See vol. iii. p. 46.

business application, a message which every parish minister might carry round among all the households, and, as good Richard Baxter did in the town of Kidderminster, beseech every individual he met with to mind the things which belong to their peace. And this speculation, as put by some of the particular redemptionists, has not only an unpractical, we fear it has an antipractical effect, and more especially when coupled with the sentiment expressed in another clause of the text-book, even that it is not in the power of man to increase or diminish the number of the saved. I do apprehend that when Calvinism is put in this particular way, it may be so mistaken as to paralyze the zeal and activity of ministers for the Christianization of their parishes—of parents for the Christianization of their families—of religious philanthropists for the Christianization of their neighbourhoods, or of those who are placed within the sphere of their respective influences. I hold this way of putting things to be very unfortunate, and more especially that I think there is a method of so representing the matter as to combine the most rigid opinion on the subject of God's sovereignty and God's predestination, with the most strenuous prosecution of all those means and measures which either Scripture has prescribed or experience has confirmed as the likeliest expedients for speeding and multiplying the work of conversion in the land.

I do hope that when you meet with passages in the text-book which would go to reduce the importance and the effect of human agency in the business of Christian instruction, the illustrations which I have already brought forward will not be altogether lost upon you. I beg you will never lose sight of the distinction between the predestination that fixes a determinate and isolated event, and the predestination that fixes and determines the steps of a process—a predestination that makes the consequence sure, but not more so than it makes sure the antecedent which went before it—a predestination that, while it binds the whole in an adamant necessity, makes the intermediate steps of the series as indispensable and as efficient as is the determinate necessity which it gives to the termination of it. When the subject is looked at under this aspect, then you will perceive how, while perfectly sure on the one hand that a distant consummation is all fixed and foreseen in the counsels of heaven, you, under the operation of what I have termed the contiguous antecedent, should give yourself with all zeal and energy to the matter on hand, to the near and immediate work which it is your part to

accomplish upon earth. The doctrine of predestination should no more slacken the practical work of a Christian minister, than the doctrine of necessity should slacken the work of a teacher in any of the sciences. If predestination be true, which I believe it to be, then the extent to which chemistry shall be known, the precise number of chemists that shall be formed out of the general species, is all fixed and foreordained, and absolutely determined, to that very amount from which eventually there will not be a single hairbreadth of deviation. Yet who would ever think of any other way by which this particular education can be propagated, than by the active and busy and multitudinous teaching of it; and what is true of chemistry is just as true of Christianity, both as respects the knowledge of its doctrine and the number of its disciples. What preposterous folly to abandon the means by which this noble achievement might be carried into effect, on a speculation about the whole and the final result having been already the subject of a rigid preordination! With this we have nothing to do. We are placed in the midst of the contiguous antecedents, and it is to these that we have to resign ourselves, and on these to act, and with all strenuousness, the part that we have in the process. It is neither with the commencement behind, nor with the termination before, that we need to hold our converse, but with the affairs of that intermediate passage on which our lot is cast. It is thus that there is positively nothing either in the philosophical doctrine of necessity, or in the theological doctrine of predestination, which should at all affect a prudent and a painstaking and a busy application of the means within our reach for the accomplishment of the end that we are set upon in the walks of merchandise, or scholarship, or politics, or domestic economy; and most assuredly these doctrines should as little affect the business of Christianity, where the means are a faith and an obedience, and the end is salvation and everlasting life. And then, as to its not being in the power of man to increase or diminish the number of the saved, there is a sense in which this may be understood with safety, but there is also a sense in which this very dangerous assertion may be most lamentably perverted. It is not true that under a universal apathy on the part of Christian ministers and philanthropists, there will be the same number of the saved as under the labours of zealous, enlightened, and able clergymen. This can be made quite consistent with the doctrine of a predestination, which includes this zeal and activity; but we are

far better employed when, instead of theorizing on the way in which the zeal and the activity have been originated, we enter on the field of Christian labour and actually put them forth, and that too in the full confidence—a confidence warranted both by Scripture and by experience—that he who labours most assiduously in his allotted vineyard, has the best reason to expect, and will in general realize, the greatest amount of fruit from his labour.

BOOK IV.—CHAP. VIII.

OPINIONS CONCERNING THE APPLICATION OF THE REMEDY.

THE PRAYER.

WE deeply humble ourselves, O God, under a sense of our own manifold infirmities. May Thy Spirit be sent forth to help them, to strengthen all our purposes of obedience, to arm us against the assaults of every external temptation, and lead us so to live as to evince that Thy law has the supreme rule and authority over us. Rule in us by Thy Spirit—rule over us by Thy law; and may we, under the vivid apprehension of our own frailty, ever go forth on the work of obedience in an attitude of prayerful dependence on Him who alone can bear us off more than conquerors from every scene of duty or of danger.

The Arminians allow, then, consistently with their principle, that there is such a process as the improvement of a less measure of grace, and the bestowment of a larger measure of grace in consequence.

We could adduce a host of Scripture testimonies to the reality of a process the most important perhaps of any that is revealed to us in the New Testament, on the matters of practical Christianity. It is that in virtue of which greater advantages are given both for the understanding and the practice of religion, if we make a busy and a faithful improvement of smaller ones. At the very commencement of the process, in fact, this principle comes into play, insomuch that we are responsible for the use or the neglect even of those ordinary and natural advantages which are common to all men. The general light of conscience in man brings the people of all countries under a distinct responsibility

for their use or their neglect of it; and a still higher responsibility lies on those who, in addition to this law of the heart, have lived in a Christian land, and had the external light of the gospel around their habitations. This is distinctly intimated to us in the passage of its being more tolerable for those of Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for those to whom the offers of Christianity were made, and on whom its evidence had shone. Now, we know not how early in this process the Spirit intervenes, nor how far beyond the pale of all who shall eventually be saved the Spirit carries His internal operations on the heart and the consciences of men. There is a distinction made by theologians between the ordinary and the saving influences of the Spirit of God, proceeding on a conviction which I think most fully warranted by Scripture, that these influences are vouchsafed to many who shall finally fall short of everlasting life. I will bring only one quotation in support of this doctrine, though many others equally pertinent and decisive might be adduced. There are men spoken of by the apostle Paul who have tasted of the Holy Ghost, and yet fall irrecoverably away, so that there shall be a moral impossibility in the way of ever renewing them again to repentance. Now, connected with this there is a principle very frequently asserted in Scripture and a process founded thereupon, which announces its own equity. It is, that to the faithful and right use of the present light or the present strength, more light and more strength will be given; and conversely, that if the intimations of our present light be disregarded, that light will be gradually, and perhaps at length irrecoverably, withdrawn from us; or, if our present strength be not put forth, that strength will waste into decline, and may at length sink into a helpless moral impotency. There is a law, in fact, of spiritual dispensation that accords with the law of habit in this respect, and it is expressed briefly but comprehensively in this single verse—"He who hath, to him shall be given; and he who hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." There are innumerable passages in the Bible which can only be explained by this procedure of the Divine economy. My Spirit will not always strive with the children of men; He will withdraw Himself from those who resist His influences: and so also we are told, to grieve not the Spirit—to quench not the Spirit—to tempt not and provoke not the Spirit to abandon us—all implying that He, when thwarted in the discharge of His office, as either the monitor or the strengthener of man, is discouraged

and repelled by the oppositions of the human mind, and at length desists from the work of plying us any longer with His admonitions and His warnings, or of affording those supplies of help from the sanctuary by which man is upheld in the work of obedience. It is thus that there is a regress of character effected by the successive withdrawments of the Spirit of God from the soul, and, on the other hand, a progress effected by successive enlargements of this influence from on high, as intimated in the following decisive testimonies of Scripture:—"The Holy Ghost is given to those who obey him;" "If any man keep my sayings, to him will I manifest myself;" "To him who ordereth his conversation aright, I will show my salvation;" "The path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;"—these all mark a connexion between the diligent use of our present advantages, and the further augmentation of them, and unveiling, as it were, the secret steps of that mental or moral history which, though never delineated by the finger of science, has oft been realized amid the doubts and the prayers and the growing illuminations of many an humble Christian, who, by this very process, advances from one degree of strength to another, till he appears perfect before God in Zion.

I cannot expatiate on what I hold to be a beautiful and important consequence which may be educed from this process. I think it another way by which to reach a blow to Antinomianism, and to demonstrate the thoroughly practical character of the Christian religion. They who make faith all in all, and works nothing, may perhaps be revolted by the affirmation, that not only is faith the principle of works, but that works have a reflex influence on faith, so as both to enlighten and to strengthen it. This finds its explanation in the doctrine, that the Spirit of God imparts more largely of His gifts and His influences in the proportion that we turn to account the gifts formerly received or the influences formerly shed upon us. He is the author both of our clearer discernment of the truths and our more vigorous obedience to the precepts of the gospel; and He may reward, as it were, our faithful use of one of His gifts by bestowing upon us another—our strenuous conformity to the duties of religion by our broader view of its doctrines. It is thus that there is a connexion both intimated in Scripture and realized in the experience, I would say, of all Christians, between obedience and spiritual discernment on the one hand, between disobedience and

spiritual darkness or despondency on the other. It is on this principle I should be inclined to bestow a different treatment from what is commonly given to cases of obstinate religious despondency. These melancholy patients complain that they can catch no bright or exhilarating view of the Saviour, and the way in which they are generally proceeded with is by the bare exposition of the truth, a declaring of the faith to them in its simplicity, and a reiterating of this again and again in their hearing, and all without effect in moving them out of their leaden apathy, or rather out of their settled and to all appearance incurable despair. Now, I feel strongly inclined to treat this case of religious melancholy just as I would a case of common or constitutional melancholy, by giving something to do. It will often, it will almost always be found, that this heavy and heartless depression is connected with some habit of disobedience. I would bid the subject of my spiritual treatment take note of his practical delinquencies; I would awaken him to duty and righteousness, in all their varieties; I would tell him to keep closely and diligently at the work of the Christian precepts, if he wanted the light and the comfort of the Christian privileges; I would point out a thousand passages in Scripture, whence I could gather that not only did faith animate morality, but where the moralities of the gospel brightened the manifestations of its faith—as in the noble passage of the prophet Isaiah, where the loosing the bands of wickedness, and the breaking of every yoke, and the dealing of bread to the hungry, are represented as causing the light of the soul to break forth as the morning, and its health to spring forth speedily.

But leaving this collateral subject, let us in one short paragraph state the application of our principle to the matter on hand. We believe, then, that far beyond the pale of those who shall finally be saved, there are the dawns of religious conception and the aspirations of religious earnestness. Even at the very outskirts of the world's population, there is a natural law of morality mixed up with the impression of a God—what the Apostle denominates a law to themselves—by which all those shall be judged who are strangers to the external laws of revelation. We believe that in reference both to the dwellers out of Christendom and to those in Christendom who fall short of Christianity in the only effectual sense of the term, there may be those influences which theologians have termed the ordinary influences of the Spirit of God; and we furthermore believe, there is no

man who is rightly affected by these, and improves them to the uttermost, who will not be the subject of larger and brighter manifestations. We furthermore think, that no man who is condemned on the day of judgment will be found to have done all he might with his own actual and personal advantages, however slender they may have been, for that if he had done so more would have been given to him. The clear principle of equity on which he will be condemned, in fact, is that he has not done so, and so it will be found of every man that he is the wilful author of his own misdoing. Let us not then, in arguing against the Arminian scheme of an independent human will co-operating with the grace of God, let us not shut our eyes against the reality of that process which we have been attempting to unfold, and in virtue of which we think that man may put forth resistance to the motions of the Spirit within him, and incur on this account a most just sentence of condemnation; that, on the other hand, he may welcome and cherish and obey those motions, in doing which it is very possible that he may be sensible of nothing more than of faithfully acting up to the lights of conscience and understanding within him, and that as the effect of his so doing, those lights are made to brighten more and more along the path of his history, so that, from day to day, he becomes a more intelligent and a more devoutly active Christian than before. The reality of such a process is not the proper or real point of difference between the Arminians and Calvinists. Both, I think, ought to acknowledge a resistance on the one hand to the grace of God, and the busy conscientious forthputting of all the strength and light we are favoured with on the other, as in stirring up the gift that is in us. The question between them is, whence are we to account for the difference between the man who resists, and the other who conforms to the intimations and actings of the Spirit of God? The Arminian would refer us to an independent self-originating power in man, the Calvinist prefers even this disposition to improve grace, as well as every other good and perfect gift, to a visitation from above, so as from beginning to end to make it of grace altogether that we are what we are.

You will perceive from the close of this chapter, how nearly at times a sincere Arminian and a Calvinist may approximate. The latter cannot deny that there is a resistance of the Spirit of God; and as to the former, that is, the Arminian, I could not desire a more ample concession from him than is expressed in

his fourth article—that the grace of God is the beginning, the progress, and the perfection of all good. We hold him as a theorist on Christian subjects to be very defective. But let him consistently proceed on this declaration of one of his articles, and this will prove, in spite of his errors, that, to use a familiar phrase, the root of the matter is in him. There are such recognitions among the Arminians as afford the utmost scope of sentiment and feeling to the humble, and so men alike humble of each denomination may be said, while they differ speculatively, to realize the same common test of Christianity, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Such occasional instances as this, however, do not annihilate the importance of the Church having Calvinistic rather than Arminian articles, as we believe that the consistent ministrations of the former are infinitely more effectual in speeding onward the cause of Christianity, both as to its faith and its practical righteousness.

I think the precise difference between the Arminian and the Calvinistic theories is not very clearly or appositely stated in the text-book. The author makes an Arminian affirm certain things in respect to the application of the remedy, and after he has finished the exposition of our system on this point,* he proceeds to say that the Calvinistic system gives a very different view of the application of the remedy. I should like you to accompany me, sentence for sentence, over at least one part of this passage in the text-book, and that with the view of making you distinctly comprehend how it is that I would discriminate the two systems of doctrine from each other. “As higher degrees of grace are supposed to be given in consequence of the improvement of those which were previous, the Arminians consider the efficacy of all grace as depending upon the reception which it meets with.”—P. 64. I should also say that the efficacy of all grace depends on the reception it meets with, with the single exception of that grace which goes to the account of disposing us rightly to receive it; for I differ from the Arminians, in ascribing the receptive disposition, as well as all that is received by it, to grace also. But let us not overlook the important practical affirmation, that, with this exception, all other grace is effectual only according to the way in which it is received and improved by us. “They cannot say that it is of the nature of grace to be effectual; for though, according to their system, it be given to all with such

* Vol. iii. pp 64-67.

impartiality, that he who believes had not originally a larger portion of grace than he who does not believe, yet there are many in whom it does not produce faith and repentance." This sentence is quite right, I think, and I would only remark, that I hold it to be quite an assumption on the part of the Arminians, that there is an original grace given to all equally and impartially. I am by no means sure that the same force of moral suasion is brought originally to bear upon all spirits, and I feel quite sure that the same susceptibility of being operated upon by that moral suasion, has not been given to all. There is an inequality, an original inequality, in this respect, our only difficulty respecting which is the difficulty that attaches to the character and conduct of God, and a difficulty, too, that admits of being met by the very considerations which, in Butler's Analogy, are brought to bear on all the other inequalities of the gifts of nature and of providence. "It is purely, therefore, from the event that grace is to be distinguished as effectual or ineffectual; and the same grace being given to all, there is no other cause to which the difference in the event can be ascribed, than the difference in the characters of those by whom it is received." It is purely from the event that we come to know whether the grace is effectual or not. The assertion that the same grace is given to all is a gratuitous supposition, and yet we can agree with them in thinking that the difference in the event is to be ascribed to a difference in the character of those by whom it is received. This, however, still leaves untouched the question, Whence this original difference of character? and it is precisely on the solution of this question that I would make the difference between the Calvinists and the Arminians to turn. "As the event of the grace of God is conceived to depend upon man, it follows, according to this system, that the grace of God may be resisted, *i.e.*, the obstacles opposed by the perverseness of the human will may be such as finally to prevent the effect of this grace." The event does not depend upon any self-determining power in man, and yet it depends on man's will—that will, in fact, resisting the grace which it ought to have yielded to, and incurring a righteous condemnation in virtue of that resistance; and yet we hold this to be quite consistent with the Calvinistic system, that God distinguished those on whom the grace took effect in this way—that He not only wrought in them the grace of the gospel, but He willed and wrought in them to will the reception of it. "Accordingly, the Arminians find themselves

obliged to give such an account of the nature of grace as admits of its being resistible :” All that grace which is apart from the disposition to receive it is resistible. Grace, in its comprehensive meaning, as including also the disposition to receive it, is not resistible.

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By a jealousy of himself, by a vigilant guardianship of his character, by prayer and diligence, and all the instruments of moral and spiritual cultivation, by a strenuous effort that his shall not be a counterfeit but a real Christianity; in a word, by as practical and painstaking a life as if predestination and perseverance had no place either as doctrines in the Bible or as articles of faith in any of the creeds and confessions of Christendom, man may assure himself of his conversion being a reality.

Here, then, is another example in which Arminians and Calvinists, with all the theoretical difference which is betwixt them, do in practice agree. It is therefore the more to be regretted that for the sake of securing the practical benefit which they imagined that Calvinism destroyed, the Arminians should in their speculations on the divine economy of grace have advanced sentiments that derogated from the sovereignty of God; and by disowning His predestination, should in fact disown His prescience. An Arminian should say to a disciple whom he imagined to be converted—this conversion of yours, though real, is not necessarily an abiding one; that will depend on your own exertions, and you must, therefore, give all diligence to keep fast what you have gotten. Now, wherein would the address of a Calvinist differ from this? He would not say, this conversion of yours, though real, is not necessarily abiding; but he would set out with as good a premise to the inference that should follow,—he would say, this change that has been effected upon you, though a likely and a promising one, may not be a real conversion, and therefore you must give all diligence to make it sure; an Arminian would say, give all diligence to make it good. We admit the doctrine of an absolute election, but the only way in which you can discover yourself either to others or to your own mind to be one of the elect, is by realizing on your own person that character of moral and spiritual excellence to which the elect are as much predestined as they are to heaven. And we admit the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints; but the question is yet unresolved whether you are one of those saints;

and the only way in which you can ever know, or have an actual part in this great privilege, is by the sanctity and the virtues of your life. The disputants are widely at variance on subjects of speculation; but you see how each may be stimulated by his own peculiar view to a life of unremitting activity and care—the Arminian to make fast that position of the convert which he thinks he has attained; the Calvinist to satisfy himself that it is indeed a position which he has actually gained. Both have an equal interest in the busy cultivation of all moral and spiritual excellence, for both know that without the virtues of the Christian life they will have no part in the joys of a Christian eternity. But the Calvinist has this special advantage—his profounder views of the sovereignty of God, and of the dependence of all on the will and power of the Divinity, will naturally incline him more to the expedient of prayer. The Arminian, if his heart be at all inflated by the views of his understanding, will have a self-sufficiency unfavourable to his progress in the service of that Being who resisteth the proud. The Calvinist, if his feeling be at one with his theory, will be on the best and likeliest vantage-ground for proficiency in the service of that Being who giveth grace to the humble.

And there is one most decisive advantage which a well-understood Calvinism has over all the systems which are opposed to it. It affirms that all is of grace, proceeding on the fundamental position that man is unable of himself to think a good thought, or to do a good thing. The Arminian, on the other hand, ascribes to man an ability for something; and accordingly, what he experimentally finds man to be able for, to that he will give a character of religiousness which the other denies. Only reflect here on the difference in the standard of religious practice which this may involve. Man, in the exercise of his natural powers and natural feelings, may exhibit what have been called the natural virtues of the human constitution. Without the aid of a spiritual visitation from on high, he may be instinctively just, and benevolent, and courageous, and true, yet without any practical regard or feeling of subordination in his heart towards God. He may, even on the strength of a native resolution, which it is altogether competent for man without the aids of divine grace to conceive and to execute, be punctual in the discharge of many a religious observance, yet be destitute all the while of that religion which is in spirit and in truth. Now the Calvinist, proceeding altogether on the idea that a right religious state is

utterly beyond the original powers of man even to approximate to by ever so little, sends forth, from the very outset of his earnestness, the cries of helplessness and distress. His thinking so humbly of what he is, is connected with his thinking so highly of what he ought to be. When he says, that man cannot of himself think a good thought, or do a good thing, it is because of the exalted apprehension that he has of God's law. He may not have a lower estimate of the human powers, after all, than the Arminian; but, with a far loftier estimate of the religious standard, he affirms, that to those powers such a standard is wholly inaccessible. He perceives how complete the moral and spiritual revolution of character required is ere he can be a Christian, and so puts into busiest operation the engines of faith and prayer; and so a Christianity arises based in deepest humility, but which, watered by the dew of heaven from the earliest germination of it, rises with the impress not of an earthly but of a heavenly character upon it, and so is fit for being transplanted into the Paradise of God.

Before proceeding to our examination on the ninth chapter of the Fourth Book of Hill's Lectures, I would remark on the commencement of the paragraph in the 67th page, that I hold him unfortunate in his statement of what he calls the fundamental principle of the Calvinistic system, and at variance, in fact, with what he had formerly represented to be that principle, which I should hold, in his own language, to be the entire dependence of the creature upon the Creator, and the will of the Supreme Being being the cause of everything that now exists, or that is to exist at any future time. We regard as unfortunate the assertion that Christ did not die for all men, but for those of every nation who are in the end to be saved. We think that the only practical and important view which should be taken of the power of Christ's death is, that it is a death of efficacy to save all who shall repent and believe; and that the way to extend the benefits of this death, the way to multiply those who shall eventually be saved by it, is to call on men everywhere to repent; and for the purpose of gaining their persuasion or belief, is to ply them everywhere with the substance of the Christian message, which substance, in fact, by the manifestation of its truth to the conscience, involves in it the main credentials of the message. I positively do not see the call or necessity we ever had to speculate on the connexion between the power of Christ's death and the actual number of the saved, treating the subject

as we would a question of calculation. I would again recall to you the extracts I read upon this topic from Douglas's book on the Truths of Religion, in which he felicitously says that he regards that question not as a question of numbers, but as a question of connexion, instituting a parallelism in the matter between Adam and Christ. Whoever is connected with the first Adam by descent, has part in the guilt and also in the depravity of his progenitor; and in like manner, whoever is connected with the second Adam by faith, has part both in His meritorious righteousness and in the regenerating influences of the Spirit, which is at His giving. This view leaves untouched the questions of election and divine sovereignty to be resolved on other principles, which doctrines it has been our strenuous object to evince should have no effect in limiting the warrant wherewith the Christian minister is empowered to go forth upon the species, and to make intimation to all and sundry, that if they will but venture their reliance on the promises of the gospel, and proceed upon its calls, they shall be saved.



BOOK V.—CHAP. I.

REGENERATION—CONVERSION—FAITH.

THE PRAYER.

WE again, O God, would approach Thee with the reverence which is due to Thy name. We stand in daily, rather in perpetual need of supply out of Thy fulness; and therefore would we persevere in the habit of daily and hourly application, asking till we receive, seeking till we find, knocking till the door be opened to us. More especially do we pray for mercy to pardon, and for grace to help us in every time of need. We have nothing but our own infirmities to speak of; may the power of Christ be made to rest upon them, and we be enabled to do all things through Him strengthening us.

There is a wide difference between the scholastic and the practical, which is the scriptural treatment of the momentous doctrine of regeneration. The scholastic treatment of it has often been carried most extravagantly far, viewed as it has often been in the light of a physical rather than of a moral question. It were a great disencumbrance to theology to cast of all those excesses of speculation into which men have been carried by at-

tending to this doctrine as they would to a process of mental physiology. On this subject we should keep by the generalities of Scripture, which, general as they be, are not vague, but distinct and decisive, and tell with the utmost precision and power on the conduct of the inquirer, giving a most specific direction to his mind, while labouring under a concern for his immortal interests, and prosecuting the question, What shall I do to be saved?

For, in the first place, what can be of greater practical interest to a human creature than, without any revelation as to the mode or the mysteries of the new birth, to be told that unless he do in fact undergo it, he shall not enter the kingdom of God? This at least carries to him the plain intimation, that the state he is in by nature is not the state it will do to die in—that without such a renewal, or such a transformation of mind as justifies the magnitude of the term employed in Scripture to express it, even that of being born again, or born from above—that without this he is on the road to an undone eternity. Even though he know of nought more special than this, it were enough at least to awaken the strongest general alarm and earnestness. The doctrine, then, though not pushed further than to such a very general announcement as this, might be a powerful weapon in the hands of a Christian minister, whose business it is to state and that in the most urgent and persevering way, to his hearers, that if they remain what nature made them, they will die; and if not so made over again as to become new creatures, they will have no part nor lot in the blessed resurrection. Even with but this to announce, you might do much in awakening nature from its deep lethargy, and in breaking up the repose in which the human spirit so loves to indulge. It is like laying an axe to the root of that meagre and superficial Christianity which is the undoing of thousands and tens of thousands; and I know not a more satisfactory characteristic of a radically sound and scriptural clergyman, than that he tells his people fearlessly and without mitigation, how, without a mighty revolution in the first and natural habitudes of the human spirit, we are the children of the world, and with the world will be destroyed.

At the same time I feel sensible, that without a more special information than this, the doctrine, when only advanced thus far, will do little more than break up the tranquillity of nature, and induce a general feeling of insecurity and disquietude. Even this is a mighty service in the work of Christianization, to

lessen the dependence which man naturally has on his own powers, and the complacency he feels in the prospects of his own deceitful imagination. But a great deal more must be told ere he can be made to understand wherein it is that his precise deficiency lies, and what that is which, if made out, will repair the deficiency, and make him meet for a blessed eternity.

The Scripture affords all the particular information which is necessary. But still it reveals to us nothing respecting the *modus operandi*—nothing to satisfy the scholastic curiosity of those who would look at regeneration as a physical process, and would fain trace the secret steps of the mysterious and invisible agency by which it is brought about. Its revelations do not refer to the *modus operandi* at all, but only to the characteristics of the *opus operatum*. It describes to us not the consecutive terms of the production, but it describes to us very particularly the qualities of the product. It no doubt gives a general intimation that the Spirit of God is the agent in the matter of regeneration, but in a manner and by a way which itself tells us is wholly untraceable, and so therefore it has put a bar on the curiosity of our restless and prying intellects in this direction. Yet, while so reserved about this, the Bible is most abundantly explicit on what to us is practically far more interesting. It reveals not the interior mechanism of the operation, but it reveals the fruits of operation, the moral virtues which result from it, and the character of him by whom it has been undergone—the love, the peace, the joy, the meekness, the temperance, the long-suffering, the goodness, and the faith, by which each may individually know whether he has been subjected to a regenerating influence, whether he is a new creature.

Now, it is thus that the minister of the gospel is so copiously furnished with the materials of an urgent appeal to all consciences. The Bible tells him what the works of the flesh, or in other words, what the moral characteristics of nature or of the old man are; and it also tells him what the fruits of the Spirit are, what the moral characteristics of grace or of the new creature are, and he can lay the convincing evidence of his own state before each of his individual hearers. He may set him to try himself by the characteristics which he feels to be in his heart, or which stand palpably out on the deeds of his history. It is not by the felt working of the Spirit, but by the observed working of the Spirit, that we ascertain ourselves to be the children of regeneration. Scripture marks apply not to the gener-

ating process, but to the thing generated. Instead of having to find our mysterious way through the arcana of a process that is hidden and unsearchable, there are obvious and decisive tests by which a man might know himself whether he is born of God. And we repeat, that we know of no preaching more useful than that by which a man is revealed to himself, by which he learns, from the conscious ungodliness of his own heart, that he stands on the wrong side of the line of demarcation, by which he is made to stand convicted of such deficiencies as, if not repaired, will leave his eternity unprovided for, and so lead him to cast about for a remedy, and to take no rest to his soul until he find it.

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It is often said that we know only the general fact of conversion, but we know nothing of the manner of it. We know that for the accomplishment of this effect the Spirit operates on the character of man, and transforms it to an entirely different and new character; but we know not how He operates, or by what particular and intermediate steps it is that we can connect the first listing of the Spirit, who bloweth where He listeth, with the final result of a regenerated human spirit. And certain it is, that there may be many hidden intermediate terms between the first movement of the Spirit and the last result of His operation on the heart and character of man of which we know nothing; and it is by the divings of a presumptuous theology into the unknown and unknowable arcana of the subject that so much discredit and delusion have been attached to an undoubted Scripture doctrine. Yet it is not altogether true that we know nothing of intermediate terms, of certain things between God's Spirit and man's mind, and as far as we know these do we know something even of the manner of conversion. Let the unauthorized speculations of those who would dive into what may be termed the mental physiology of the process be for ever discarded, but this does not hinder that there may be certain palpable intermedia through which the Spirit operates on the mind, and which it is of the utmost practical importance should be adverted to. If, for example, though it be not universally, yet if it be generally, through the revelation of Bible truths and the moral influence of Bible lessons, that the Spirit establishes over the understanding of man the ascendancy of new principles, and awakens the heart of man to the sensibility and the power of new affections, this is letting us know so much not merely of the

fact, but also of the manner of the Spirit's working, and it is a manner, too, which it is of prime and practical importance that we should know. It is weighty and most material information, and of the utmost moment as to the guidance of all who have been visited with religious earnestness. It is letting them know what their likeliest position is for being in the way of the influences of this heavenly visitant. It is giving them to understand, if I may so express it, the place of meeting, the place of assignation between the Spirit of God and the spirit of man, and telling the aspirant after heaven that he should give earnest heed to the words of God's testimony, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart.

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The mystics of whom Dr. Hill speaks* were, many of them as synergistical as the Pelagians. They retired from the world, they gave themselves to laborious meditation, they made painful sacrifices, they maintained a strenuous conflict with the propensities of nature, and, as far as I can perceive, might, in perfect consistency with their peculiar tenets, have regarded their consequent meetness for heaven to have been as much the joint result of man's working along with God's working as they did with whom they are contrasted in the text-book. I would not think of opposing the Pelagians and the semi-Pelagians to the hermits, or the men of penance and prayer, in the Middle Ages. I would have opposed them to the Fatalists, whose notions of fatalism led them to the utter abandonment of the use of means or of all activity in the religious life, to a sort of waiting or expectant quietism in which they passively continued till visited by an influence that came, as they thought, irresistibly upon them, and without any working beforehand or co-operation on their part. Such men, whether they distinctly appeared in ancient times as a sect or not, are the proper counterpart to the Pelagians; and certain it is that the error is not confined to any one denomination, but leavens with Antinomianism the men of various parties in the present day, and has established a kind of spurious predestination in the bosom of Christendom.

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I think there is a light within the reach of each man which, had he improved it as he ought, would have conducted him to larger manifestations, and issued in his salvation. It is his resistance to this light which forms the principle of his condemnation

* Vol. iii p. 194.

in the day of reckoning. It will be found on the examinations of that day that men did not avail themselves as they ought of the knowledge they actually had, of the strength they actually had. It is this which puts a minister on high vantage-ground in reference to all the hearers of his congregation. He has a something wherewith he can ply every man's conscience there, and by which he can enlist every man's conscience on the side of religion. But the conscience often gives its testimony on the side of the minister without obtaining a practical ascendancy over the hearer. It has lifted a remonstrating but not an effectual voice; and this it is which forms the material of the man's condemnation. He was made to know, and in a certain degree, to feel what was right, and he might have followed up what he felt if he would. But he would not; and because of the moral perversity of his will he becomes a proper subject of the condemnatory sentence in the last day of account. I hold it of mighty importance to concede this to the universal redemptionists, however much it may carry the semblance of a participation in their error. But it is only a semblance, for this much can be conceded without trenching on any peculiarity of the most rigorous Calvinism. While we admit there is a light of conscience among them all enough to condemn if they will not follow its dictates, there is still room for the question, Why is it, then, one man wills, and another wills not? On the principles of Christian necessity, or, what is better and more authoritative far, on the principles of the Bible, we can give no other answer than that it is God which makes one man to differ from another, and that it may be predicated of all men, that they have nothing which they did not receive.

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Let me here remark that there is very great danger in misconceiving the sentiments of others, more especially when grouped into a class or theological party. I think the Church has suffered a great deal less from the presence of men who have alleged a pretension to inward light, apart from Scripture, than from the presence of men who, confiding in the power of the natural faculty as all-sufficient for the right discernment of Scripture, have derided and derided every pretension to inward light whatever. There are some expressions in the text-book which I should like to have been guarded and modified, ere they had found admittance there. The impression given by it is, that a spiritual communion, and the approach of the soul to God, is a

species of perfection merely ideal. There is an approach of the soul to God, there is a spiritual communion, there is an intimate revelation of the things of faith to the soul, which we restrict no doubt to the things of Scripture, but which still is realized by the children of light, and in comparison with which the calm and uniform performance of the things that are good and profitable to men, may be nothing more than the cold, correct, natural morality of earth, as compared with the morality of heaven—the actions of the hand, as compared with the affections of the regenerated heart. . . .

It is not for the mere sake of properly adjusting the theory of religion, there is a most momentous practical effect involved in our separating the constituents of faith from the consequences of faith. The gratitude, the love, the disposition towards new obedience—these are not, as represented in the text-book, the ingredients of faith, they are but the effects of it. Observe what follows by making them the ingredients. By faith we are said to be justified; but if our piety towards God, or our desire to conform to His law, or any moral characteristics whatever, shall be regarded as parts and constituents of this said faith, then, under the consciousness of our sad deficiency, we shall never attain to the solid peace of one who rejoices in a firm sense of his acceptance with God. But reduce faith to its simplicity, take it in the obvious and uncompounded sense which you attach to the mere act of believing, regard it as purely a giving credit to God's testimony when He sets forth Christ as a propitiation for the sins of the world, and invites one and all in the world to cast upon Him the burden of their reliance, and then see how, by immediate transition, one might enter into peace and become a confiding, tranquillized, and happy creature, simply because convinced that the most powerful of Beings, whom he aforesaid regarded as an enemy and an avenger, is pacified towards him, and now makes him a free proffer of fellowship and forgiveness. It is of the utmost importance, we say, to the secure and perfect establishment of the inquirer's peace that this should be made a matter of believing, and believing only, or in other words, or to express it in the article of orthodox Churches, that the sinner is justified by faith alone—by faith we mean in the proper, and simple, and obvious sense of the term, not as made up of love, or loyalty, or any moral qualities whatever which do not enter into the constitution of faith, however surely and necessarily they proceed as fruits and consequents therefrom. It is of the utmost im-

portance that the confidence and comfort should spring directly from the proper object of belief, which is the sureness of God's own testimony, and not from the consciousness of love, or gratitude, or any moral quality in ourselves. We must not wait till these have somehow or other arisen within us, ere we enter into confidence with God. At this rate, we shall wait for ever. The sense of our imperfections will be a constant and most oppressive discouragement in our way. It is not by looking inwardly at the disposition of our own mind towards God, but by looking outwardly at the declarations of God's mind towards us—by looking at His reconciled countenance and hearkening to His beseeching voice that our light springeth out of darkness, and we make instant transition to peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us not suppose that by excluding moral affections, moral principles, or moral characteristics, from having any part in the essence of faith, we therefore exclude them from having any part in Christianity. They are, as I said before, the consequences, though not the constituents of faith, and the exercise of faith in its direct and unencumbered simplicity, is the way to bring them on. It is not by attaching love, which is an affection of the heart, to belief, which is an act of the understanding, it is not by compounding these two together that you make out the saving faith of the gospel. This faith, in its proper elementary character, is belief and nothing else, and the exercise of faith is just a believing exercise. It is just a holding of the things said in the gospel to be true, and when pressing on your own mind the consideration how true they are, you are just acting and exercising faith in them. You do not make out a faith by tacking the love or obedience of the gospel to a belief in the gospel. This faith is but belief, and belief only, and if it be actual belief it will bring the love and the obedience in its train. I by no means, you will observe, though I exclude the moral characteristics from having anything to do in the composition of faith—I by no means, on that account, exclude them from having ought to do in the matter at all. It is true, I do not bid you fetch up a consciousness of your own moral worth, and join that with a believing regard towards God's overtures of reconciliation in the gospel, and on the strength of these two things, say that you have a warrant to rejoice in your felt agreement with the Lawgiver whom you had offended. The truth is, that in this way of it you never will reach to solid confidence or comfort, and

that because one of the two elements, the moral, is of such a shadowy uncertain ambiguous character. I would therefore detach that element from what I call the great initial step in Christianity altogether, and present for your exclusive attention at the time the love which prompted God to send His Son into the world. I would bid you regard that as the single object of your believing contemplation, satisfied that though you could not emerge into confidence and peace so long as this object was hidden, or at least bedimmed by the doubtful pretensions of your own moral excellence and worth, yet when these were cleared away from the field of contemplation, and you were led to behold in separate and untarnished lustre the effulgence of Heaven's goodwill to a guilty world, and to yourself among the guiltiest of all, then it is that I lay before you a clear unobstructed pathway to peace and joy in believing. And love will follow in the train. We know and believe the love that God hath to us, says the Apostle, and we love the God who first loved us. And obedience also will follow. This is the love of God, that ye keep His commandments. To make these enter among the preliminaries of a man's Christianity, is to prescribe for him an outset that is quite impracticable. To bid him simply believe at the first, and resign himself to the influence of the things believed on his heart and conduct afterwards, is the only hopeful commencement, because in the order of Scripture and the order of the human faculties.

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BOOK V.—CHAP. II.

JUSTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, a God of forgiveness. Thou puttest forth not of Thine anger only, but Thou puttest forth even of Thy remembrance the iniquities of Thy repentant children. We desire to rejoice in the free and gracious style of that reconciliation into which Thou enterest with those who have offended Thee—casting their transgressions behind Thee—removing them to as great a distance as the east is from the west—casting them into the bottom of the sea, or rolling them away into the land of forgetfulness, where no more mention is made of them. But though Thou art thus a

God of forgiveness, let us know it is a forgiveness that Thou mayest be feared; and may we combine with the security of the Christian faith, the diligence of the Christian practice. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

There is nothing which has served more to obliterate the peculiarities of the gospel, and to introduce an indistinct, and wayward, and meagre, and superficial theology in its place, than the confounding the respective parts and functions which justification and sanctification have in the system of Christianity. It is evident that if you introduce human obedience, even the obedience of the most perfect man upon earth, into that judicial righteousness on which God admits him into heaven, and that because of his legal claim to its inheritance, you invest him with that claim because of a righteousness which is imperfect. You make a compromise between the dignity and authority of God's law on the one hand, and man's disobedience, because man's frail and defective obedience, on the other. You bring down in that way the honours of the Divine government; whereas one great purpose of the mediation by Christ is to provide for the acceptance of the sinner, but in such a way as shall magnify that law which the sinner has violated, and make it honourable.

You know how for this purpose He took upon Himself the penalty that we should have borne, and fulfilled the obedience that we should have rendered. Our legal claim to heaven consists not in the merit of our own obedience, but in the merit of the obedience of Christ—a merit commensurate to the utmost demands of the law, and by sustaining which there is no infraction whatever on the law's prerogatives. This is what I might well term a contrivance of exquisite skilfulness, by which God, in consistency with His unchangeable attributes, and the high sovereign state which belongs to Him as the Lord and the Legislator of heaven and earth, can, not for our own righteousness' sake, but for the sake of the righteousness of another, give to frail and polluted creatures such as we a rightful investiture with the honours and the rewards of eternity.

The grand peculiarity of the gospel lies in this, that sinners are not absolved from punishment by an act of simple forgiveness, but by a forgiveness obtained for us as the reward of another's sufferings; neither are they admitted to everlasting reward by an act of simple bestowment, but a bestowment which comes to them as the reward of another's obedience. Our sins

are laid to the Saviour's account, and He bears the whole burden of them. His righteousness is laid to our account, and we are invited to the full reward of it. This doctrine of the exchange between the sinner and the Saviour, of the substitution of the one in place of the other, pervades the whole New Testament; and it is nowhere more distinctly expressed than in the following sentence: "He became sin, or a sin-offering, for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Now it would nullify this part of the evangelical dispensation altogether, if anything else were admitted into the plea of right between God and man than that one thing which God hath expressly provided for the purpose of making out such a right. To mix up the obedience of the sinner with that of the Saviour, as entering at all into the judicial consideration on which heaven is ascribed to us, would be an utter subversion of that which essentially and characteristically constitutes the gospel of Jesus Christ. It would not only be in express opposition to the statements, but it would utterly traverse what may be called the great moral of the gospel. The reconciliation of the law's dignity with the bestowment of its rewards on the sinners who had defied its authority, would henceforth be reduced to nothing, and the re-admission of the sinner into God's spiritual and unfallen family on the ground of a virtue that was imperfect, would land us inevitably and helplessly in the conclusion of heaven's degraded throne and dishonoured Lawgiver.

It is a subject of all others the richest I do think in sentiment and principle, and also in practical application—affecting not merely the character of God's administration, but the great interests both of the sinner's peace and of his progressive holiness. On this subject I have already expatiated at great length, and will say no more at present than state my deep and growing conviction of the vast importance of the article in question to the wellbeing of the Christian Church. The Reformers, in making their uncompromising and unflinching stand for the doctrine of justification by faith alone, made a stand for what, in my estimation, forms the very essence of the Christian revelation; and I do most cordially acquiesce in the sentiment of Luther, when he affirms of this great doctrine, that by its admission or its rejection it forms the *articulum ecclesie stantis aut cadentis*.

And let us not imagine, we repeat, that by rejecting human virtue from any place in our title-deed to heaven, we therefore

reject it from an indispensable place in the personal character of all who are admitted there. To secure the interests of virtue, it is not necessary to confound things which are in themselves distinct, or give to one the place which properly and exclusively belongs to another. Though virtue enter not as a constituent, its existence is no less secured, if it be a sure and unfailing consequence from the faith of the gospel. The distinction, be assured, is not of a merely scholastic or speculative nature, but is of the utmost vital and practical importance in a man's Christianity. How the doctrine we now advocate of justification by faith alone not only brings surely after it the sanctification of all who believe, and not only insures the being, but immeasurably refines and exalts the personal character of our righteousness, will fall more properly to be discussed in the next chapter of our text-book, which treats of the connexion between justification and sanctification. Meanwhile, we make confident assertion of the two propositions which we now utter in your hearing—that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law, and that without holiness no man shall see God.

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When an Arminian enters upon his course for heaven, his point of departure is from what he calls his first justification, a privilege common to him along with all men. The landing-place or termination or further extremity of that course is his second justification, which all along the course it is his incessant labour to make out by a patient continuance in well-doing. If he succeed he will be appointed in the last day to a place in the inheritance of the blessed, and the sentence of that day is but an open declaration of that justification which he incessantly wrought for through life, and which, by dint of a virtuous and resolute perseverance, he has carried.

There is much, we allow, in all this, assimilated to the progress of the disciple as laid before us in the New Testament. There is a commencement which one and all are invited to make; there is a progress in moral and spiritual excellence—a habit and a constant increase of well-doing, in which all who enter on a profession of Christianity are urged to persevere; there is, lastly, a day of judgment, in which all shall be examined as to the history of their lives or deeds done in the body, and when, as the result of that examination, they who have done evil shall be doomed to eternal punishment, they who have done well shall be admitted to life everlasting.

There is, therefore, we repeat, a general resemblance between the Arminian representation of this matter and the representation of Scripture; and we must look more closely and narrowly to the points of distinction between the Arminian and Calvinistic schemes, ere we can properly institute a comparison, or pronounce a judgment between them.

In the first place, then, we have to remark, that this representation of the Arminians proceeds on the competency of man, by his own performances and powers, to make out his full and final justification. I can discern no homage in it to the proclaimed and peremptory declaration of the Apostle, that by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. These works are confessedly imperfect. In motive, in principle, and even in material execution, they are short of God's lofty and spiritual commandment; and how a justification can be made out in these circumstances we are unable to comprehend, save by a sort of half-way meeting between the law of God on the one hand, and the obedience of man on the other—by the one letting itself down to the standard of man's convenience or his wishes, and by the other lifting itself up as far as the powers or possibilities of human nature can carry it. At this rate we cannot escape from the conclusion, that the awards of the judgment-seat, if made on the principle and ground of merit, must exhibit, in the view of all the heavenly witnesses and assessors there, a degraded law and dishonoured Lawgiver—heaven's Ruler, on the one hand, receding from His own exactions and His own authority, and heaven's subjects, on the other, preferring a claim to the rewards of eternity, and that because of their own lame and imperfect performances, which, lame and imperfect as they be, are yet offered in the presumptuous confidence that they are good enough for God.

Now, it is to do away the infliction of such a stigma on the consistency and honour of the divine administration—it is to reconcile the prerogatives of the law with the acceptance of those who have broken it—it is that God may be just, yet the justifier of the ungodly—it is to save the offence and the violence which would otherwise be done to the jurisprudence of the divine government, that, if I may so express myself, the apparatus of our redemption has been raised; and we repeat, that it would nullify the whole principle of this peculiar economy, if the plea of merit is to be introduced into the transactions between God and man, and that plea shall not fully meet all the demands of the law,

and fully satisfy them. It was for the very purpose of magnifying the law, and making it honourable, that Christ for us sustained its penalties, and for us rendered faultless and unflinching obedience to all its precepts; and we actually neutralize or rather traverse the whole purpose and design of this dispensation, if we, in the statement of our plea, thrust forward our obedience between the pure and penetrating inquisition of the Divine Lawgiver and the obedience of Christ. Instead of our righteousness standing between God and the righteousness of Christ, it is His righteousness that stands between God and any righteousness of ours. Christ's homage to the law was taking upon Himself the burden both of its penalties and its duties; and our homage to the law is our yielding ourselves to Him who bowed down His head to the sacrifice; and so we, in the act of presenting our claim to heaven before the notice of heaven's Sovereign, pray that He would look upon us not as we are in ourselves, but that He would look upon us in the face of His anointed.

And therefore it is, that our orthodox reformers have stood forth so sturdily and so inflexibly for the doctrine of justification by faith alone. Besides its accordance with the express statements of Scripture, they have felt that the honour of the divine government, that the great legal principle which went to characterize the whole of heaven's jurisprudence, was involved in their resolute assertion of this article. And therefore it is that they call on their disciples, at the very outset of their Christianity, to renounce all dependence on their own present righteousness, and all hope of ever obtaining, by any future righteousness of theirs, a right, a forensic and unchallengeable right, to the kingdom of heaven. Their uniform and strenuous deliverance on this subject is, that a right hath been achieved for them in another way, even by the righteousness of Christ, who by suffering for us, hath obtained our discharge from the penalties of the law which we have broken, and by His obedience for us hath obtained that legal right to the rewards of eternity which is made over to us as a gift and a free dispensation, but which we never could have acquired or established by any obedience of our own.

Now, it is the affirmation of all Scripture, that this right, this justification, turns upon our faith. It becomes ours upon our believing. We may be deceived, we may think we believe when we do not; and so we may think we are forgiven when we are not. But this does not hinder that there is often a genuine faith, though there be also often a counterfeit resemblance of it.

And if this faith may be conveyed long before death, if it may have entered the mind of one who shall have lived many years after it in the world, then, if we will make a question about the time when this man's forgiveness of all trespasses has taken effect, if this be a subject which our speculatists and our controversialists in theology will be meddling with, I see not how to escape from the conclusion, that man is often a pardoned, a fully and absolutely pardoned and accepted creature, long before his departure from the present scene of existence; or, in other words, that in this life he undergoes not the first but the final justification, and that the legal investiture is upon him of a right to deliverance from all the penalties of sin, of a right to all the rewards of obedience.

But you will observe all the while, that notwithstanding the absolute sureness of this justification in itself, the man is just in circumstances of as great urgency for leading a virtuous and obedient life as if by its means he still had to justify his work, for a thing may be sure in itself, yet not be at all sure to him; and the one way in which he can make himself sure of it is just by fixing and realizing in his own character the bidden piety, the bidden purity, the bidden humanity, the bidden uprightness of the gospel. He looks, and looks exclusively, at the righteousness of Christ as his alone plea, but he knows that his own personal righteousness is the required and the indispensable preparation. At all events, and whatever capacity or whatever place and function his own personal obedience has in the matter, he knows, on the express informations of the Bible, that without it he will not reach a state of eternal blessedness. To strive at such an obedience with the view of substantiating a legal right, is indeed a very different thing from striving at it in a spirit of grateful conformity to the will of Him to whom alone He looks for the establishment of that right. In the one way he must either bring down the law, or waste himself on the heartless because the impracticable task of equalizing his performances to the full and absolute perfection of its righteous demands on him. In the other way he goes forth spontaneously, on an impulse of love to the Saviour, and of respect both for the authority of all His precepts and for the truth of all His intimations, making indefinite approximations towards a perfection which, on this side of death, he will never reach, but in this way gradually assimilating himself to the character of that heaven where he will serve his Redeemer without frailty and without a flaw.

Those of you who remember my lectures on the subject of Predestination, will perceive an analogy between the practical application of that doctrine and of the one which is now engaging us. We have contended for the truth of the doctrine, but contended at the same time that it left all the inducements to an active, painstaking, busy life of Christian obedience precisely on the same footing on which it found them. Our election may be sure in itself; but this hinders not the Scripture admonition to make our calling and election sure; or, in other words, to make ourselves sure of our election. And the only way in which we can obtain this assurance, is through the medium of our own personal conformity to the example and will of our Saviour; and it is the very same in the case before us, though justification may be, for aught we know, absolutely fixed and certain already. It may have the historical and irreversible certainty of a thing already past, just as the decree of election has; but it cannot be made certain to us save through the medium of our own personal virtues. Our own righteousness forms the alone proof to us of our having a personal interest in the righteousness of Christ; and our want of such righteousness will be in itself an infallible proof that we really have no part nor lot in the matter.

You will here also remember what I said in regard to faith, that if genuine and real in reference to one part of the testimony, it will have respect to all the other parts of the testimony, and proceed upon the truth of them. *Pari passu* with its faith in Christ as a propitiation, it will have its regard to Him as an example, seeing that the voice which speaketh from heaven sets Him forth in both these capacities. *Pari passu* with its comfort in the saying, That the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, it will have its confidence in the authority of the saying, That without holiness no man can see God. He will embrace all the truths of Scripture—he will proceed on all. Looking at one part of the testimony, he will rejoice in that he is released from the law as a covenant; looking at another, he will bear constant respect to the same law as the rule of life. There will be room in his mind for as much as the Bible finds room for within its pages. He will not refuse the testimony, that by faith he is saved; but as little will he refuse the testimony, that without repentance he will perish. It, in fact, is a faith as broad and as long as the record of God's inspiration, and one which will have substantiated into harmony the two sayings—justified by faith, judged by works.

BOOK V.—CHAP. III.

CONNEXION BETWEEN JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to address ourselves to the examination of Thy word with that humility which becomes us. Give us to feel that our right and incumbent attitude is that of little children who have all to learn. It is not for the creatures of a shortlived day to scan by their own wisdom the counsels of Him who is from everlasting to everlasting. It is not for the occupants of one small and solitary world to sit in judgment over that high administration which embraces all the worlds of the immensity that teems with them. We therefore would learn of Thee from Thine own word, and casting down all lofty imaginations, would bring every thought of our hearts into captivity to the obedience of Thine authorized messengers.

I truly know of no question that is more important than that regarding the connexion between justification and sanctification, and of none the right explanation of which would go farther to do away many difficulties, and, I may add, many prejudices and antipathies associated with our faith, or that would pour a more satisfactory light on the right character and design of Christianity. I felt it myself as the greatest enlightenment and enlargement I ever had experienced, when made to understand both the indispensable need of morality and the securities that we had for its being realized on the character of Christians, notwithstanding the doctrine that by faith, and by faith alone, we were justified—a doctrine which I at one time regarded as Antinomian in its tendencies, and as adverse to the interests of virtue or practical righteousness in the world. I know not a more essential accomplishment either for a sound doctrinal theologian or for a practical expounder of the lessons of Christianity from the pulpit, than that he should rightly discern the place which morality has in the evangelical system, on which he will not fail to perceive that a doctrine on which many of the merely sentimental lovers of morality look hardly and suspiciously—as if it were inimical to good works, not only secures the being of morality, but inconceivably refines and purifies and exalts its character.

On the broadest view of Scripture that can be taken, you must be sensible of the very different representations it gives in different places of the importance of good works—a difference that almost impresses the idea of an opposition between one place and another, when sometimes they are vilified as of no account or estimation in the eye of God, and at another are demanded as indispensable to our entrance on a blissful eternity. I need not bring the counterpart passages into juxtaposition with each other. The bare statement I now make will recall them to your mind. They may be brought very copiously and abundantly forward, and they will at least suggest the conviction that on this matter there is much to discriminate and much to observe upon, ere we shall attain a complete and harmonious view of divine truth.

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I happen to differ wholly from our author in the historical view which he has given* of the style and spirit of pulpit ministrations both in England and this country. The period which he rejoices in as one of improvement I look back to as a Middle Age of deadness and degeneracy in the Church of Scotland; and the anterior period both here and in our sister country which he regards as an age of Antinomianism, I happen to regard as an age of far more powerful and effective preachers than those who succeeded them, by whom a greatly more extensive work of Christianization was performed, and many more thousands were not only made intelligent in the doctrine, but were personally and practically imbued with the graces and virtues of the gospel.

It may be thought surprising that two individuals who are at one on all the main points of doctrinal Christianity, who are alike Calvinistic in their views, who agree upon the whole in their notions respecting the theory of religion, should vary in their estimates as to what is and what is not the full and faithful preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. However difficult the analysis may be which would serve to explain how it is, nothing can be more certain than that so it is; and yet it may perhaps help the explanation if we can quote a few instances where the letter of orthodoxy has been most rigorously adhered to and most powerfully advocated, and yet the spirit of it is not characterized throughout with the real fervour and unction of apostolic preaching. On the one hand, then, I think it possible to be as able a defender of the literal articles of the Calvinistic creed as even

* See vol. iii. pp. 232, 233.

Horsley was, and yet to nauseate the personal and living application of those very truths when urged from the pulpit with all the earnestness of a mind that was thoroughly and devotedly in earnest. On the other hand, it is equally possible that ministers could be found of far laxer orthodoxy than either Horsley or Hill, who yet would pass as mystics, or even Antinomians, with men who lay claim to that very rationality which is spoken of in the text-book. I could instance the Wesleyan Methodists, who, protesting as they do against our predestination, and in some instances, I believe, against our doctrine of imputed righteousness, nevertheless deliver themselves in those very terms which suggest the idea to many, of their being after all among that class of divines who, with a liberal use of the ordinary evangelical nomenclature made up of such words as grace and faith and salvation, and the other generalities of a certain professional slang, do, in fact, lose sight of the plain and everyday duties of ordinary life, and to whom, therefore, we in vain look for those expositions of morals and manners which we find in the pages of Barrow and Tillotson, and which are marked by a shrewd discernment of character and by a wise observation of human nature. Such phenomena as these indicate the necessity of entering somewhat more deeply and fully into the subject than we otherwise should have done.

In the first place, then, I would remark that very often, I would almost say very generally, when the charge of fanaticism, or mysticism, or irrational extravagance in religion, is incurred by man, it is not because of any doctrinal variation between him and his accuser, but is because of a variation that may more properly be termed personal or practical. Doctrinally the two may agree in this position, that grace from on high is requisite to their performance aright of any Christian duty. The practical inference from this is, that man, distrustful of himself, should live much in prayer, and mix the humblest supplications to God with the holiest endeavours to love and serve Him. There is no divergence between them as to the doctrine; it is on the moment of its practical application, however consistently and however legitimately it follows from the doctrinal truth, it is then, I say that the divergency begins, and that the cold and merely intellectual Calvinist revolts from the habit of a practical or experimental Calvinism. It is altogether worthy of remark, that it is not mere doctrine which brings down the charge of fanaticism—that this is an imputation far oftener preferred against a certain

state of heart or of personal habit in reference to Christianity, than it is against a certain state of understanding or belief in reference to Christianity—that it is a contemptuous denunciation which far oftener lights on the desires and the doings that emanate from man's practical nature, than on the dogmata that come forth of his intellectual nature—that, in a word, the excessive strictness of the conduct has far more frequently to meet with this charge, than the excessive strictness of the creed. For example, it is not because one of the articles of his faith is, that man's chief end is to glorify God, that a man is branded as a fanatic; but because he honestly labours to live in conformity to this article, and because zeal for that glory is throughout the animating principle of his conversation in the world. The despite, and ridicule, and opposition which attach to those very peculiar people called Christians, attach to them not because of the peculiarity which marks their believing, but because of the peculiarity which marks their living. They may not believe differently from the men who deride them, but they proceed on the reality of what they believe. In short, theirs instead of being Christianity in doctrine or intellect alone, is Christianity in real and practical earnest, and this whether you have heretofore adverted to it or not, will be found, on the analysis of every future observation you make, to constitute that peculiarity on which the charges of fanaticism, and enthusiasm, and methodistical extravagance, are made by men of an irreligious spirit so abundantly to rest.

But how comes it, it will be asked, how comes it that Antinomianism, in reference to those people, should find a place in the list of those hostile and contemptuous charges which are preferred against them? If theirs indeed be Christianity in earnest, if the distinction between them and their despisers is, that whereas the religion of the latter has its place in the reason or understanding alone, their religion has its *locum standi* in the practical department of their nature, their Christianity must stand at the widest possible distance from Antinomianism, which supersedes practice by faith, and would make the dogmata of religion so paramount and in fact all-sufficient, as to exclude the doings of religion from any share in the right state of a man's Christianity here or in his salvation hereafter. Our answer to this forms another call on your attentive consideration; and if I can succeed in making this matter intelligible, I trust you will perceive the reason why my estimate of pulpit ministrations at different periods in the

history both of the English and Scotch Church, is altogether the reverse of that which is here presented by our author in the text-book.

The expounder of terrestrial morals necessarily makes use of those terms which are recognised, and which indeed are daily and familiarly employed in general society, as expressive whether of the ordinary duties of life, or of the merits and demerits of human conduct. In the details upon which he enters he must particularize many of the virtues and vices which are in constant exemplification before our eyes, the names by which the various graces and accomplishments of character, on the one hand, and by which the various deformities and faults and deficiencies of character, on the other, are commonly designed, must be of perpetual recurrence in his sermons; and so we shall hear from the pulpit much of statement and urgent exhortation on the cultivation of truth, and integrity, and courteousness, and benevolence, and these perhaps minutely diversified into their modifications of plain dealing and punctuality in business, and civility of manners, and high-minded honour, and all the other virtues which shed a grace and exaltation on the character of man; and we also, from the same pulpit, will hear indignant denunciations against the opposite characteristics—as, for example, against all the varieties of fraud, the duplicity, the cunning, the disguised falsehood, the convenient plausibilities which are so frequently practised in the walks of merchandise, the embezzlement of agency, the purloinings of household service, the idleness and deficiencies of workmen, the violence of successful oppression, the evil speakings, the malignant and low-minded gossipings of many a festive and social party, the unfaithful service, whether of artisans in the workshop, or of labourers in the field, or of domestics in the household establishment—why, the minister who takes cognizance in his sermons of all these minute and manifold virtues, who pictures human life in his pulpit sketches, and makes pertinent or striking applications of all that is general in ethic principle to the actual mind and manners of society,—such a man will earn the character of being a preacher strikingly and eminently practical; and yet I call upon you well to remark, that after all it may be but the morals only of a terrestrial standard which he deals in, and these enforced only by terrestrial sanctions. Why, it is possible at this rate to be an eminently practical preacher even under an economy of atheism. The reciprocations of morality between man and man might be

powerfully urged and powerfully delineated—a moral approbation might be pronounced, and that most impressively and eloquently, on that which is right—a moral indignation denounced with equal energy and effect on that which is wrong, and yet, just as an eloquent expounder of the principles of taste, both in its theory and practice, may deliver in masterly style all the lessons of the subject, without assuredly one reference to God, or the seasoning of so much as one religious principle—why may not an eloquent expounder of virtue, both in its principles and its practical applications, acquit himself in very masterly style of his business as a practical preacher, and with just so little of reference to God or to any religious sanctions whatever, as that, mainly and effectively, his lessons are but those of an earthly morality urged home by earthly enforcements? In other words, God may in effect, though occasionally referred to, be as good as banished from a ministration of this sort altogether, or, at all events, the God of a sentimental or academic theism, and not the God of Christianity, from whose mouth have emanated the peculiar doctrines of the atonement and sanctification, may be the alone inspiring divinity of all his compositions. From this rapid and imperfect outline which I now give, I trust you perceive how a preacher may, in one sense of the word, be practical without at all being pious. The morality in whose lessons he deals may be a pure and elevated and humane and upright morality, and yet stand in his demonstrations altogether disjoined from godliness. It may be the morality of a mere citizen of earth, and not have one iota belonging to it of the morality of a citizen of heaven. It may be a most correct and classical morality as far as it goes, without, however, the very least of what may be called the flavour of the sanctuary—impregnated throughout with a classical or a philosophical or a literary spirit, but not at all with an apostolical spirit. I should like to characterize by some appropriate epithet this species of morality, for I confess I like not the distinction that is commonly made between an evangelical and a moral preacher, holding, as I do, that the evangelical preacher can only vindicate his claim to that title by being constantly and eminently a moral preacher. I want to familiarize you to another sort of distinction—to abolish, in fact, the contrast between the evangelical and the moral altogether, and to set another contrast in its place—a contrast not between the moral and evangelical preacher, but a contrast between the preacher of sacred and the preacher of

secular morality, understanding by these terms, that whenever morality is enforced from the pulpit on motives altogether apart from the will and honour of God, or from its bearing on the prospects and preparations of eternity, it may, in the letter of it, be correct morality, and yet a morality which, in point of spirit and sentiment and motive, may be wholly secularized.

With the aid of this distinction we perhaps might enable you more justly to appreciate the character of different ages in regard to the style and quality of their pulpit ministrations. There may have been the change referred to in our text-book in that morality formed more the subject-matter of sermons with Barrow and Tillotson and Atterbury and Sherlock in England, with Blair and Charters and Logan in Scotland, than with the preachers of the generation that had gone before them. But ere you can determine whether this change be indeed an improvement, you must examine whether to the morality thus introduced there belonged the characteristics of the secular or the sacred. There might, in fact, be a great deterioration in the lessons of the pulpit even with the infusion of a greater amount of morality, and that in two ways. First, the impression given by the sermon may be that the morality thus recommended, if only followed and carried into practical fulfilment, has the reward of merit in the happiness of eternity—an impression which many a moral sermon gives, even without a formal or explicit statement of the error, but by its mere reticence on the all-important doctrine of justification by faith; and, secondly, the introduction of moral preaching into the pulpit may be a degeneracy instead of an improvement if it be a morality enforced by worldly sanctions—a morality which recognises not the will of God as the supreme rule, the glory of God as the supreme object of whatever things we do in the land of our pilgrimage—a morality which stands disjoined from the prospects of the immortal state, or which, even with all its express references both to God and to eternity, recognises not that Jesus Christ is the Author of salvation—that by His sacrifice, and by it alone, we are delivered from the guilt of sin—that by His obedience, and by it alone, we are translated into the rewards of righteousness—that by His Spirit, or the Spirit which He gives in answer to the prayers of His followers, and by it alone, we are qualified for taking part in the choirs and companies of the celestial. Wanting these there may be eloquent descriptions of virtue, there may both be subtle and sound discrimination of character, there may

be a searching and anatomical inspection into the arcana of the human heart, there may be a moral glow and moral colouring throughout the whole of the pulpit composition, and yet if you distinguish the whole of morality into the secular and the sacred, and if that which wants the sacred be altogether secular, a preacher with all his talent and power and natural virtuousness, may still be a secular, an earthly moralist notwithstanding. The very duties on which he preaches may, in themselves, and apart from the motives, be after all the duties which might reciprocate between man and man under an economy of Atheism. Such are the integrities, and the humanities, and even the activities of life, all enjoined most certainly by God in heaven, but which, apart from the thought of God or any sense of His authority at all, might still be urged by man upon his fellows whether in the pulpit or out of it, as the incumbent moralities of the world in which we live. And we again repeat that there may be a far more plentiful importation of such topics into the ministry of the gospel at one age than at another, and still, instead of an age of improvement, as represented in the text-book, it may have been an age of most woful and withering deterioration.

It is on these principles that we would not only modify, but utterly reverse the estimate given by our author in the text-book as to the ebbs or the alternations which may have taken place from one generation to another in the character and style of pulpit ministrations both in this country and in England. We look on the transitions which took place in the days of Stillingfleet and Barrow not as transitions from a worse to a better, but as transitions from a better to worse; not as transitions from an Antinomian to a moral, but as transitions from a sacred to a secular; and as we proceed downwards to Clarke and Atterbury and Tillotson, we can trace, we imagine, the gradual disappearance of the *sal evangelicum*, till at length the meagre Arminianism of almost all the English pulpits, shrivelled and bereft of all that is peculiar whether in the spirit or sanctions of the gospel, gave forth, in sermons which have been compared to a fine winter day, in that they were short, and clear, and cold, gave forth a very distinct system of practical ethics, we allow, but a system from which the whole vitality of religion had fled, and without one principle fetched down from the upper sanctuary by which to animate and to sustain it.

And I would say the very same of our own country—that its pulpits became secular and inefficient at the very time which

our author has fixed upon as the period of our having become rational. It was the preaching from the days of John Knox down to nearly the middle of the last century, which first ripened and afterwards sustained the moral and religious character of the Scottish nation. The degeneracy began with the first introduction of England's elegant literature into our country, and along with that, of England's cold and meagre Arminianism into our pulpits. When our sermons began to be so tinged as to be transformed towards the likeness of papers in the Spectator, rather than of those noble compositions the homilies of our sister Church—it was then that the clergy lost the sympathies of our people, and lost their wonted ascendancy over them. We are far from making this the test of clerical perfection; and in matters of religion, as little as in other things, would we say of the *vox populi*, that it was *vox Dei*; but certain it is, that he who formed the Bible formed it in adaptation to the actual wants of human nature—to the fears and the demands of human consciences; and hence it is that the faithful exposition of Scripture doctrine meets with that sort of response in the feelings of the general multitude, which accounts in great part for the popularity that attaches to the preaching of the truth as it is in Jesus. This is the real principle of the popular acceptance which awaits our evangelical sermon, not that it is accommodated to the prejudices of the vulgar, but that it is accommodated to the felt exigencies of man's real condition; and when a sermon is changed from the sacred to the secular, it loses the benefit of all that congeniality with the tastes and the demands of the people which is founded on this accommodation. And so our author's period of light and of improvement was, in fact, the period of Scotland's greatest darkness. It was the middle age of our Church, when, with the exception of a remnant—Willison and Maclaurin, and Gray, and Erskine, and Walker, and Witherspoon, described as the Puritans of their time, its ministrations fell powerless on the land, and the large proportion of the people fell away from the tabernacles of their forefathers. Of late there has begun a decided, I trust a progressive revival; but it is just the revival which our author, and many kindred with himself, would have stigmatized as a reappearance of the Antinomianism of other days—as the lapsing back again to the weakness and fanaticism of a more barbaric period.

But let us deal evenly with all parties. If they who are known as the moral preachers have failed, in that they have lost

sight of the evangelical principles which can alone give the right spirit and the right efficacy to the exposition of duties, they who are termed the evangelical preachers have very generally failed, in that they have kept a great deal too much by the generalities of principle, and have refrained from that minute and varied exposition of the duties of life for which, I am sure, they have no sanction whatever in the practice and example of the first teachers of Christianity. They tell us of sanctification in the gross, but they enter not into the details of sanctification. They assign to it its right place and position in Christianity, in as far as they represent it to be not a legal purchase, but a moral preparation for heaven; but still, throughout the whole of the discussion connected with this question, it is but holiness in the general that we hear of, and not holiness in its distinct and daily exhibitions. What we want, in short, from their hands, is sanctification more broken up as it were into its manifold diversities and details, suited to all the virtues of everyday life, and brought close to the business of men. Wanting this, many, very many, are the ordinary hearers who cannot discern the practical character of their preaching through the dim and technical nomenclature of their various explanations; and the people, while they acquiesce, and with pleasure too, as they would in a very pleasant song, when the minister tells them of sanctification, just for want of that explicitness and precision which I am now desiring, nourish their hearts, in the treacherous complacency of a real and practical Antinomianism. There is a vast enlargement in the field of pulpit ministrations which has scarcely yet been entered on, and on which I would invite you to break forth. Never lose sight of the great doctrine, that we are justified by faith. Never lose sight of the righteousness of Christ as the alone meritorious ground of our acceptance with God. Never lose sight of the actual impotency of our depraved and fallen nature, insomuch that without Christ we can do nothing. Never lose sight of the doctrine, that it is only through Him strengthening us that we are enabled to do all things. But along with this, enter into description and detail in the account of all these things. Explain each of them, urge each of them, and bring forth, in all its rich variety, Christian duty, as suited to all the varieties of human experience. Tell us not merely of our dependence on the Spirit, but enter into far more familiar description and detail than I find often attempted now-a-days on the distinct fruits of the Spirit—the actual specific accomplishments

and graces of the Christian character—the manifold variety of social as well as of sacred duties—the social made sacred by the infusion of gospel doctrine and of the gospel spirit throughout the whole staple of your ministrations.

I have already quoted in your hearing the example of the Apostles, and mentioned how, while in the first half of their epistles they are generally doctrinal, and that in the highest sense of the term, they branch forth into the minutely and familiarly practical at last. Proceed on the distinction between two classes of hearers—the converted and the unconverted. In reference to the latter, you should urge constantly their undone state by nature, the impossibility of recovering from it by any attempt on their part even to perform the very duties, which, in all their fulness and all their minute variety, you are urging upon the other class—of the obstacles they set up in the way of their own salvation, if they go forth on the vain enterprise of establishing a righteousness of their own—of the only ground on which such a righteousness as constitutes our right can possibly be made out, of what Christ hath done, and what Christ suffered even for the chief of sinners—of the voice of welcome and goodwill to all, which you, as one of the ambassadors of the New Testament, are entitled to lift up in the hearing of a general congregation—of justification being by faith alone, and a sanctification as indispensable as the former, being the fruit of the Spirit given to them who believe, and for which all are encouraged to pray. These are the principles of the doctrine, I would say the first principles of the oracles of God; after which, if they have taken effect to any extent, so as to present you with the class of the converted as well as the unconverted, you, in reference to them, that is, to the converts of your congregation, are not to be constantly laying at the foundation—a charge to which many of our evangelical clergy stand peculiarly exposed—whereas, in the language of the Apostle, they should not be constantly employed in laying again the foundation, but should go on to perfection; and so, while it is their duty to give to every man a word in season, and for the sake of the unconverted, to keep up a large ministration in their pulpits of the primary, and fundamental, and essential doctrines of the New Testament, doing this also, for the sake of the converted, that they may keep their first faith, and hold fast the beginning of their confidence; yet the thing peculiarly suited to them is a large and explicit ministration on the details of holiness, the duties of faith and every-

day life, and the obligations which lie upon their hearers in their relative stations as husbands, and wives, and children, and masters, and servants, and members of society; and be assured that the conscientious filling up of all these stations, with the proper duties which belong to them, forms a most essential part of going onward even to perfection.

BOOK V.—CHAP. IV.

SANCTIFICATION.

THE PRAYER.

IN drawing near to Thee, O God, we would do especial homage to the moral perfections of Thy nature. Thou art a God of unspotted holiness, and sin is that accursed thing Thou canst not pass by without a punishment, or without an expiation. Do Thou thoroughly impress us, O God, with the evil of it, and with Thine irreconcilable enmity thereto; and give us to know how deeply tainted our natures are with this sore and withering leprosy, that we may hail the tidings of deliverance by the gospel, and rejoice that there is a physician there. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

There has been an extremely useless and uncalled for question agitated in the Church on the subject of repentance, which I would not have adverted to but for the practical mischief that might accrue from it to the work of Christianization. The question is, which of the two comes first—faith or repentance? Now, here is the evil that arises from a minister waiting to adjust in his mind the metaphysical order of these two. He may, on the one hand, think that it is not time for him to exhibit the overtures of reconciliation till a certain progress have been made in the contritions, and even in the amendments of repentance. Or, on the other hand, he may think that it is not yet time to call on the people, either for the purposes or the performances of the new life, till the whole orthodoxy have been established in their minds of the doctrine which respects the justification of the sinner, or the meritorious ground of his acceptance with God. In both these ways the practical outset of Christianity has been darkened and enfeebled. The minister feels an entanglement in his mind as to the mode of opening the subject, and the people are left in a state of perplexity as to what the distinct and obvious

things are which they must begin with—fearing, on the one hand, to entertain a joyful confidence in the offered reconciliation of the gospel, because they are not yet good enough; and fearing as much, on the other hand, to enter on the work of reformation, lest this should imply that in virtue of works and of obedience by themselves, they presume to make out a righteousness of their own—a claim and a title-deed for the inheritance of a blissful eternity.

It is thus that the metaphysical speculation of theologians as to the rationale of the process has embarrassed the initial attempts of Christian ministers actually to institute the process and set it agoing, and therefore I would say that whether or not they can adjust the order of precedency between faith and repentance, there is a distinct call upon them for preaching both, and that at the very outset of their addresses to the people on the subject. Tell them, even now, to break off their sins by righteousness, and tell them even now to rest on the righteousness of Christ as the alone ground of their acceptance with the Lawgiver, whom they have offended. The order of subjects in their practical ministrations is not to wait on the previous intellectual order in their minds respecting the antecedency of one step to another in the moral system of their hearers. For the purpose of giving effect to the process, it is not necessary that they should in fact analyze it, or even be able to analyze it. They have to follow scriptural example. If at one time they are afraid of putting repentance before faith, they should remember that historically John, the minister of repentance, was sent as a forerunner to Christ, and that even he set forth, as is recorded by the Evangelist Mark, on the work of his public ministry with the initiatory call of—Repent, and believe the gospel. If, on the other hand, they are afraid of putting faith before repentance, let them remember that in Scripture there is really no such metaphysical nicety attempted, and certainly no such nicety proceeded on; for though Paul adheres to the order of Mark when he defines the subject of his preaching to be repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, yet innumerable are the places in the Bible where the primary and ascendant influence is given to faith, as if it presided over the commencement as well as the whole progress of all in Christianity that is worthy of the name.

On the one hand, be assured that you will run into a great practical error in the conduct of your pulpit ministrations, if you

abstain from urging on the people *instanter*, and whatever their religious belief and knowledge may be, that they should turn from that which is morally evil to that which is morally well; and you will run into an error as great, if not daily telling them at the same time that Christ is their only refuge, and His righteousness their only plea for acceptance with God—a plea which they are invited confidently to use and to rejoice in, from the earliest moment of your holding converse with them upon the subject.

But before I altogether quit the subject, let me offer what I hold to be the right metaphysical view which should be taken of the question. There must be the antecedency of a faith of some kind or other to every practical movement. Even anterior, long anterior, to a full and distinct understanding of the economy of redemption, there might be an incipient movement towards the whole subject, accompanied with the practical renunciation of gross and ordinary sins; but even this general earnestness, misdirected as it may be, presupposes a faith to this amount at least—a faith in the reality of the whole subject. A man whom you, with the whole force of your moral earnestness, attempt to dissuade from his thefts, or his impurities, or his deceptions of any sort, and whom perhaps to that extent you prevail upon, proceeds on the belief in his mind of a general something which makes it his highest duty and interest so to do. To that extent he has faith, and practice up to that extent it is your duty to urge upon him; and without waiting ere a more enlarged faith shall be formed in him, who knows but this may be faith in embryo—who knows but it may be that elemental principle compared by our Saviour to a grain of mustard-seed? and let us, therefore, join an energetic moral process to the business of Christianization, and look on the question, whether faith or repentance comes first, or whether you first turn from your sins or to the Saviour, to be nearly as ideal a one as whether, in turning round to the opposite point of the compass, you turn first to the south or from the north. The one implies the other; and instead of assigning any precedency in the matter, I would say of the two that they are contemporaneous.

BOOK V.—CHAP. VI.

BAPTISM.

THE PRAYER.

WE again implore, O God, the inspiration of Thy wisdom, and the continued protection of that all-powerful hand which upholds us continually. There is a diversity of operations in nature, yet it is Thou who workest all in all. There is a vast multiplicity of doings in human life, yet may we forget not that Thou art the Being with whom we have mainly and emphatically to do; and make us sensible that we are short of what we ought to be, if we are not doing all things to Thy glory—not doing all things in the name of Jesus. Give us, O Lord, a lofty estimate of Thy law, that proportionally thereto we each may have a lowly estimate of ourselves, and that a sense of the unfulfilled requisitions under which we sit may shut us up to the faith and the following of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I would recommend to you as an excellent subject for a sermon the moral lesson that might be drawn from baptism, when considered as the initiatory rite of the Christian religion. For, of what is it the symbol? Expressing it generally, it is the symbol of purification. But to give the virtue and strength of a practical application to it, it should be distinctly noticed, that it is not so much of purification from the guilt of sin as from the pollution of it. For, remember that the water of this ceremonial is a personal application, and be assured that the substantial thing represented by the water is a personal application also; the one, as sprinkled on the body, is fitted to cleanse it from the defilements of material pollution; the other, as sprinkled on the heart, is fitted to cleanse it from the defilements of all moral pollution. And we accordingly read of baptism in St. Peter as being realized in its proper substance and significancy when associated, not with the putting away of the filth of the body, but with the answer of a good conscience to God; and just as the moral baptism of John symbolized the higher and spiritual baptism of the Saviour, so may we be assured that the baptism by water, which is so distinctly personal, symbolized what is just as distinctly personal, the washing of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

The great lesson, then, to be enforced in a sermon on baptism

is, that at the very entrance of Christianity, the renunciation of moral evil is held forth in full prospect and contemplation to all who assume the profession of the gospel. We are given to understand that the initial step of this religion is a renunciation, in purpose and desire at least, of all sin. The outward and ceremonial baptism, in fact, is the sign of this; and from a sign it advances into a seal, when the party who submits to this ordinance is regarded, by the very act of doing so, as having come under an obligation to prosecute a strenuous departure from all iniquity. By giving a sermon on baptism this direction, and a most right and warrantable direction it surely is, you are enabled to hold forth in striking and impressive manifestation the moral character of the Christian faith; and what with the tendencies of man to Antinomianism—what with the misunderstanding which exists as to the real design and object of our most holy religion—it is of importance that you should seize on every opportunity, and make use of every argument, for evincing what a virtuous and practical system that is of which you are the expounders, and should be the examples too.

A vast amount of misplaced zeal has been expended on the question, whether baptism should be by sprinkling or immersion? Let me here, however, acknowledge, which I do most sincerely and cordially, that this magnification of small matters is very often associated with a worth and a weight of character and principle which are altogether sterling. There are thousands of the minuter controversies which I cannot sympathize in on either of the sides, and just for want of a clear or important principle to hold by. But it is evident of the men who do enter very keenly into those disputations, that they feel as if they had got hold of something very clear and very important; and the strenuous, indomitable urgency wherewith they pursue the object their hearts are set upon, is the pledge, at least, of a deep religious earnestness. We meet with exemplifications of this in all ages of the Christian Church: among the Nonconformists of the seventeenth century—among the sticklers for sitting rather than kneeling at the Sacrament—among the protesters against the abomination of gown and surplice as vestments for clergymen—in short, among the advocates for or against a world of petty circumstantials, whose zeal in their respective callings I infinitely regret, because of the contempt which is thereby drawn on Christianity, but for whose conscientiousness in the urging and spreading of the same I at the same time have the most profound

reverence and regard. If there be any geographical distinction between one part of Scotland and another in this respect, I would say that the interesting relics of the olden pertinaciousness and the olden zeal for little things, are to be found most abundantly in the west. I am sure I affirm this without the slightest feeling of reproach, or even of disrespect. Were there no other principle, indeed, than my love of antiquities, I should feel inclined to regard this peculiarity with the utmost toleration. But a far higher principle than this comes into operation; for, agreeably to the general law which I have just announced to you, I have found it associated in that part of our Establishment with so much of upright and pure and resolute assertion in behalf of great principles, that I with all my heart forgive the obstinacy of their adherence to small points, and retain in their favour a very large surplus of high and positive esteem to the bargain. For example, they have been all along the sturdy champions of nonplurality in the Church, of residence in parishes, of sacredness in Sabbath observation, of the cause of Christianity at home, by their incessant efforts to enlarge the church accommodation, and of the cause of Christianity abroad, by the support which they have ever rendered both to Bible and missionary and colonial societies. After this goodly enumeration of great and noble services, the occasional littlenesses wherewith they at times may be associated are like spots in the sun; and I am sure ought to be viewed in no other light than with the most good-natured indulgence, just as one views the feebleness or peculiarities of some aged friend, for whose substantial worth at the same time we have a just veneration. Accordingly, it is not within the limits of the Bothwell region, that land of sturdy principle, signalized by the exploits and the martyrdoms of our covenanting forefathers, where I would attempt the slightest innovation on their ancient forms, however harmless, or even to a certain extent beneficial; seeing there are many there who, on the proposition of any change, however insignificant, will resist you by saying they will never consent to let down even the smallest pin of the tabernacle. There was an attempt some time ago to introduce the organ into the Scottish kirk—it was the most unwise of all enterprises to attempt it in the west. Since that the abomination of a painted window in one of the churches was obtruded on the public gaze; but it could not be permitted to stand another Sabbath in the west. To read the line in psalm-singing, is one of the venerable and antique peculiarities of our

land; and the abolition of it met with far the sturdiest resistance in the west. The antipathy to paper in the pulpit, which used to be in force all over Scotland, is still in greatest force and inveteracy in the west. I state not this for the purposes of levity or ridicule, but of presenting to your notice the very peculiar conjunction which I have just now remarked upon between a zeal for great principles, mixed up, as it often is, in the history of the Church, with a zeal and tenaciousness about the merest bagatelles. The west is the very quarter to which I look most hopefully for the revival of our Church and the maintenance of our highest moral and religious interests; and however amused therefore with the innocent peculiarities to which I have just now adverted, it cannot dispossess the veneration and serious regard wherewith I look at that portion of our Church—very much, in fact, as our General Assembly looked at the question which broke out about the tables, and finally disposed of it—when our venerable mother, sitting in her collective wisdom, was called on to decide the quarrel that had broken out among her children, she allowed me, the one party, to continue the table-service in the way I had found to be most convenient; but, instead of laying aught like severity or rebuke upon the other, she, while disappointing them of their plea, dismissed them at the same time with a look of the most benignant complacency.

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I should like you to estimate soundly and rightly the precise argumentative effect of the scriptural reasons that might be adduced for infant baptism. In the first place, there is an ultra demand for an express and positive appointment in the Bible for many things ere we have a complete warrant for the doing of them; and they who make this demand in the present controversy lay much stress on there being no absolute ordination in behalf of infant baptism. But we might very well reiterate upon them, that if there be no express ordination in Scripture for the baptism of infants, as little is there any ordination so express as to be exclusive for the baptism of adults. So far, then, we are upon equal ground; and if they would lay upon us the *onus* of an absolute proof for the lawfulness of the practice, we have just as good a title to lay on them the *onus* of an absolute proof for its unlawfulness. But we have very strong scriptural argument for repelling this charge. If unlawful, why was it so instituted in the parallel rite of circumcision? In passing from the

initiatory rite of the one economy to the initiatory rite of the other, nothing, I am sure, could be so natural as to assimilate them in all the circumstances which were not expressly forbidden. The absence of any such prohibition leaves us in possession of very strong scriptural argument for the practice as observed now by the great majority of Christians. Surely, if infant baptism were a bad or a wrong thing, the later scriptures would have interposed a caveat against our falling into it, and more especially as the older scriptures had a direct tendency to mislead us into such an observance. In all matters not expressly repealed, or not necessarily superseded by the overthrow of the Jewish economy, the analogy of the two dispensations forms a strong argument for the authority of any practice countenanced by the former, though not expressly enjoined by the latter, and a still stronger argument for its innocence.

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“But mark how it fared with the posterity of Abraham. He, the first Hebrew, believed and was circumcised; and it was laid down for a statute in Israel, that all his children should be circumcised in infancy. In like manner, the first Christians believed and were baptized; and though there be no statute laid down upon the subject, yet is there no violation of any contrary statute, when all our children are baptized in infancy. At the origin of the two institutions, the order of succession is the same with both. The thing signified took precedence of the sign. Along the stream of descent which issued from the first of them this order was reversed, and by an express authority too, so as that the sign took precedence of the thing signified: And so has it been the very general practice with the stream of descent that issued from the second of them; and if the want of express authority be pleaded against us, we reply that this is the very circumstance which inclines us to walk in the footsteps of the former dispensation. Express authority is needed to warrant a change, but it is not needed to warrant a continuation. It is this very want of express authority, we think, which stamps on the opposite system a character of presumptuous innovation. When once bidden to walk in a straight line, it does not require the successive impulse of new biddings to make us persevere in it. But it would require a new bidding to justify our going off from the line into a track of deviation. The first Christians believed and were baptized; Abraham believed and was circumcised. He transmitted the practice of circumcision to infants; we transmit

the practice of baptism to infants. There is no satisfactory historical evidence of our practice having ever crept in—the innovation of a later period in the history of the Church. Had the mode of infant baptism sprung up as a new piece of sectarianism, it would not have escaped the notice of the authorship of the times. But there is no credible written memorial of its ever having entered amongst us as a novelty; and we have therefore the strongest reason for believing, that it has come down in one uncontrolled tide of example and observation from the days of the Apostles. And if they have not, in the shape of any decree or statutory enactment that can be found in the New Testament, given us any authority for it—they at least, had it been wrong, and when they saw that whole families of discipleship were getting into this style of observation, would have interposed and lifted up the voice of their authority against it. But we read of no such interdict in our Scriptures; and, in these circumstances, we hold the inspired teachers of our faith to have given their testimony in favour of infant baptism, by giving us the testimony of their silence.

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“This affords, we think, something more than a dubious glimpse into the question that is often put by a distracted mother when her babe is taken away from her—when all the converse it ever had with the world amounted to the gaze upon it of a few months, or a few opening smiles, which marked the dawn of felt enjoyment; and ere it had reached perhaps the lisp of infancy, it, all unconscious of death, had to wrestle through a period of sickness with its power, and at length to be overcome by it. Oh, it little knew what an interest it had created in that home where it was so passing a visitant—nor, when carried to its early grave, what a tide of emotion it would raise among the few acquaintances it left behind it! On it, too, baptism was impressed as a seal, and as a sign it was never falsified. There was no positive unbelief in its little bosom—no resistance yet put forth to the truth—no love at all for the darkness rather than the light; nor had it yet fallen into that great condemnation which will attach to all who perish because of unbelief—that their deeds are evil. It is interesting to know that God instituted circumcision for the infant children of Jews, and at least suffered baptism for the infant children of those who profess Christianity. Should the child die in infancy, the use of baptism as a sign has never been thwarted by it; and may we not be

permitted to indulge a hope so pleasing, as that the use of baptism as a seal remains in all its entirety—that He who sanctioned the affixing of it to a babe, will fulfil upon it the whole expression of this ordinance: And when we couple with this the known disposition of our great Forerunner—the love that He manifested to children on earth—how He suffered them to approach His person—and, lavishing endearment and kindness upon them in the streets of Jerusalem, told His disciples that the presence and company of such as these in heaven formed one ingredient of the joy that was set before him,—tell us if Christianity do not throw a pleasing radiance around an infant's tomb? And should any parent feel softened by the touching remembrance of a light that twinkled a few short months under his roof, and at the end of its little period expired—we cannot think that we venture too far when we say, that he has only to persevere in the faith and in the following of the gospel, and that very light will again shine upon him in heaven. The blossom which withered here upon its stalk, has been transplanted there to a place of endurance; and it will then gladden that eye which now weeps out the agony of an affection that has been sorely wounded; and in the name of him who, if on earth, would have wept along with them, do we bid all believers to sorrow not even as others which have no hope, but to take comfort in the thought of that country where there is no sorrow and no separation.*

“ Oh, when a mother meets on high
The babe she lost in infancy,
Hath she not then, for pains and fears,
The day of wo, the watchful night—
For all her sorrow, all her tears,
An over-payment of delight?”

BOOK V.—CHAP. VII.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE PRAYER.

MAY Thy Spirit, O God, guide us into all truth; and lest we should go astray in our inquiry after it, may we remember Thine own saying, that

* The two last paragraphs are to be found in “Lectures on the Epistle to the Romans,” vol. i. of “Select Works,” pp. 140, 141, 145, 146.

Thy word is truth. May we not, in quest of it, ascend in fancy to heaven, and think that we are to fetch down its secrets by a direct conveyance from Thine upper sanctuary. Neither may we descend into the earth, or think we are to find it among the darkling speculations of Thy creatures here below. But may we make diligent search in Thy word, which is nigh unto us; and as Thou rejoicest to meet the man that worketh righteousness, do Thou rejoice the hearts of those that are seeking after Thee in Scripture by the fulness of Thy promised manifestations.

The Lord's Supper serves but as a sign when viewed merely as a commemorative ordinance. It represents a great historical transaction, the death of Christ; and even apart from any particular view of the design and efficacy of that death, still it is fitted to awaken gratitude when connected with the thought, that that death was subservient in some general way to the welfare of mankind. But the symbols of the Lord's Supper remind us of something far more special than this. The bread represents the body that was broken, the wine represents the blood that was shed for us; and though still making but a sign of that ordinance, yet, as signifying the doctrine of our atonement, it holds out a sensible exhibition fitted to recall this great truth, and to strengthen our faith in it, and so, through the medium of this faith, to awaken a gratitude far more distinct and significant and lively than any cold generality can possibly inspire.

But, still confining ourselves to the use of this ordinance as a sign, let us consider what more is represented by it, and the exhibition of which by symbol may tell on the moral affections and purposes of the beholders just as if an exhibition were made in statement. When made in the latter way, or by statement, then it is literally and properly a sermon; when made in the former way, or by symbol, then it is a sermon by action—and certain it is that in this way it may be a most impressive sermon, and telling us, too, more things than one. The great object, no doubt, the prime exhibition made by this ordinance, is Jesus Christ evidently set forth crucified before us. The Lord's Supper, as I have already said, is a most vivid representation of the doctrine of the atonement. It may be called a representation of it in picture; and while there is not necessarily anything in a sensible or symbolical exhibition which ought to corrupt or complicate this great truth, there is everything in it, from the constitution of our nature, powerfully and affectingly to impress us.

Accordingly, I know not a season of greater importance in the simple annals of a parish than the coming round of this great public solemnity; a season that may be consecrated to the best and highest objects of the Christian ministry. There needs be nothing superstitious, or fanciful, or weak in the deeper solemnity that is visible on that impressive occasion—founded, as it may altogether be, on a deeper and more realizing sense of the great sacrifice that was made for the sins of the world.

But, still restricting ourselves to the use of the Lord's Supper as a sign, there is more represented by it than I have yet set forth to you. It not only exhibits our atonement by the death of Christ, but the ordinance, both in itself and in its circumstances, exhibits the perfect freedom wherewith the benefits of this death are held out to all. I am sensible that this freedom may, in one view, be said to be limited and guarded, and actually is so at what is called fencing the tables; and this I shall more especially consider when I come to treat of the ordinance, not as a sign, which I am doing at present, but as a seal, which I shall do afterwards. Abstractly, then, from the limitation to which I have now adverted, and the nature of which I shall consider afterwards, the partakers of this ordinance come there in virtue of an invitation sounded forth by the minister. He is entitled to say, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." He makes a universal call, and proclaims a universal welcome; and when, in obedience to this call, they do seat themselves at the table, the transaction which takes place between them is one of simple giving on the one side, of receiving on the other. The general call at length passes into a special application. Each stretches forth his hand to the elements for himself, and makes a special application of them to himself—each makes the appointed and appropriate use of the bread and the wine: and you may well assure them that they are not more welcome to these memorials of the atonement, than they are to the benefits of that body and blood which are represented by the memorials. In other words, you may, on this affecting occasion, hold forth to them the lesson of appropriation—assuring each, that he has a warrant for receiving, by faith, the antitypes of this sacrament, as well as the types or symbols which are employed in it, that he may view the body which was broken for the sins of the world as broken individually for him, and the blood that was shed for the remission of sins as shed specially and individually for his sins; and thus, too, by a pure act of giving and

receiving, the doctrine of free grace is embodied in this most speaking and significant of all the ordinances. The minister gives, the communicant takes. Eternal life is a gift on the one side, and faith is the acceptance or the laying hold of it on the other. Christ is said to give repentance and the remission of sins. Men are said to "receive forgiveness," to "receive the atonement," to "receive power to become the children of God."

This last quotation suggests another of the important lessons held forth by the Supper of the Lord when viewed as a sign. The bread and the wine which are there used are not only the memorials of our atonement—they are also the symbols of our spiritual nourishment. As the body is strengthened by the use of the literal elements, so is the soul strengthened for the fatigue of obedience, and the healthy exercises of all its functions, by the counterpart realities to these elements. We read in Scripture of the bread of life which cometh down from heaven, and we read also of the living water, under whose fertilizing influence all the fair and pleasant fruits of righteousness are made to grow in the character of believers. This spake He of the Holy Spirit given to those who believe. So that, while engaged in this most affecting of all our Christian ceremonies, there is another most refreshing and strengthening view which may be urged by the minister on the heart of his communicants. He may tell them of God's free Spirit, as free, in fact, as the forgiveness is. He may press home upon them the lesson, that He who hath given them His own Son will also with Him freely give them all things. He may represent to them, that they are just as welcome to the spiritual influence enveloped, as it were, in the symbols which they are using, as they are to the reconciliation enveloped in these symbols. If like to be overwhelmed because of the difficulties and dangers which lie in the way of their steadfast maintenance of the Christian profession, he may, on this ground, expatiate on the great practical security which they have in the blessed declaration, that the Holy Spirit is given to them who ask it. In a word, he might make this ordinance the vehicle for exhibiting anew the salvation which is by Christ in its two leading particulars—salvation from future wrath, because that wrath has been already discharged on the head of an illustrious sufferer—salvation from present wickedness, because, after He died, He rose again and obtained gifts for men, even for the rebellious.

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Some history on the subject of Transubstantiation is given in the text-book, which I do not feel is necessary or important enough to occupy your time with. I would scarcely advise your reading the controversies upon this subject, as I hold them to be little better than an idle expenditure of time and strength. It figured very prominently in the theological literature of a former era, and even still is sometimes viewed in a venerable exegesis transmitted from one professor to another in our divinity halls. I have, however, detached it from my list of theses on the subject, and as far, then, as I am concerned, it is now lying on the shelf, and I will certainly not disturb its slumbers.

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The second opinion is, Consubstantiation, not important to doctrine, but exceedingly important in the history of doctrine, or rather in the history of the human mind, evincing how slowly it is that the absurdest errors of antiquity, if only long established, give way before the rationalities of a more enlightened period.

Perhaps this lingering of the old prejudice in the mind of Luther, this very gradual and difficult recess, even in the strongest understanding, from error that had become inveterate because consecrated by antiquity and the authority of names, is one of the strongest examples that can be alleged in the history of the human mind of the prodigious tenacity wherewith a false principle or false proposition, once it has got long into general establishment, keeps its ground in the world. The very boldness, and independence, and originality of character which belonged to this great reformer, all tend to enhance the conclusion, and to confirm the more every apprehension which I have felt on the hopelessness of enlightening men all at once, by any demonstration, however irresistible, if directed against either the doctrine and usages of the Church or the institutions of the State. I might, in conformity with this principle, avow that I am not nearly so sanguine as I wont to be of either of these bodies politic, civil or ecclesiastical, providing for their own endurance by the spontaneous recovery of themselves from such abuses as, if suffered to aggravate and to ripen, will infallibly bring both the one and the other to an overthrow. For example, I am far more afraid that the pauperism of England will at length shake the framework of its society to pieces, than I have any hope that by the adoption of right views, and carrying them into safe and gradual operation, the Government of England will at length

clear away this sore ulcer from the commonwealth. I am greatly more apprehensive of its being cleared away in the effervescence of an anarchy than in the march of wise and pacific legislation. In like manner, though the system of tithes has come now in good earnest under the notice and revision of Parliament, I do feel apprehensive that it may have come too late for the Church of Ireland. And besides, you will observe, in perfect keeping with the sentiments which I now utter, it was not the demonstrations of the economists which made Government take up the matter with such determination and closeness of attention as they seem now to be bestowing on the question. It is not at the call of English reasoners, but at the compulsion of Irish pikemen, that the matter has now come to be entertained, giving us most emphatically to perceive what the gross elements are which act most powerfully on the functionaries whether of the municipal or of the State administration—how much it is, in fact, that the forces of immediate and felt necessity, and how little it is that the lights of intellect have sway or precedency over the affairs of men.

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Here follows some argumentation on the subject of Consubstantiation which surely at this time of day may well be spared. I think we need give ourselves just as little trouble with the arguments for or against Consubstantiation, as we need do with the argument for or against the concision mentioned by Paul in his Epistle to the Philippians. I shall only say in allusion to what is mentioned by our author, the indulgence shown to the tenet of Consubstantiation is very different from that which is shown to the doctrine of Transubstantiation. I see no reason for a difference in the treatment of these two, nor do I comprehend how it is that the one should be looked at with complacency while the other is traduced as a monstrous, nay, even as a damnable error. There is a vehemence and a virulence on this subject which I cannot sympathize with; and if there be such an accordance in all things essential between us and the Lutherans as leads us to overlook the palpable absurdity in their creed, let us not give up the hope, that with men of another denomination there may also be such a substantial unity of principle, even though we know it not, between us and men of the same faith with Pascal, and Fénelon, and Marseilles' good bishop, and such men as Anselm and St. Bernard, the worthies of a remoter and darker age.

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On the subject of fitness or unfitness for participation in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, I would have you to remark, in the first place, a certain class of persons who do not present themselves for admission at all, and who arrogate a sort of merit because of their modesty in thus refraining, and that on the plea that they are not yet good enough. I am neither speaking of the openly profligate on the one hand, of whose inadmissibility there is no question, neither am I speaking on the other of the melancholy, who are altogether and honestly in earnest on the subject, and who keep back under a mournful sense of their disqualifications; but I speak of a very numerous class distinct from these, and chiefly to be met with in towns, who do attend church all the year, but refrain from the services of the Communion Sabbath, because they are not just good enough for that, and this not under any sense of despondency or dismay on the subject, but with a certain wholeheartedness, nay, even complacency, because of the principle which they fancy themselves complying with, and the homage they conceive themselves rendering to the sacredness and solemnity of the ordinance, by not daring to approach till they have become better than they are. Now, I would not charge it upon those people that they are living in the neglect of a commanded duty; for commanded duty though it be, it is a duty which will but aggravate the condemnation of those who enter on the performance of it without the right and requisite preparation. This, then, is not the direction in which I would assail them, and yet I would like to dislodge the evident complacency which they are cherishing within them, and that because they have not added the guilt of hypocrisy to the habit of alienation from one of the most solemnly bequeathed injunctions of the Saviour, and one of the most general and firmly established observances of a Christian land. I think that a precisely apposite consideration wherewith to ply the people of this class, is, that if unfit for the sacrament, they are unfit for heaven; and whereas they are ascribing to themselves a kind of merit in abstaining from the ordinance, for which they humbly conceive they are unqualified, they should be told that they are acquiescing in a state of moral distance from all of that grace and goodness by which they are made meet for the inheritance of the saints. The point to urge with them, is not the duty of coming forward to the sacrament, but the duty of putting themselves, and that *instantly*, in a condition of readiness and rightness for so coming forward. They should be told that the man who

lives a willing exile from the table of the Lord, in fact lives a willing exile from all the prospects and preparations of eternity. The man who is unfit for companying with the disciples of Christ in one of His appointed ordinances, is unfit for converse and companionship with Christ Himself; and they should be told to beware, lest by glorying in their abstaining from an ordinance which they fear, and perhaps honestly fear and feel that their footsteps would profane, they may not, in fact, be glorying in a general irreligion of character, and contentedly remaining of such a habit on earth as will render their admission to heaven when they die an impossibility.

But passing from this class, who are too little adverted to in the treatment of this question, we now consider those who actually do partake of this ordinance, or who meditate such a participation. The object of fencing the tables is to exclude the unworthy; and communicants are called on seriously to examine themselves, in order to ascertain that worthiness. I have repeatedly said to you already, what I only now therefore will state briefly once more, that the question of worthiness hinges not on the past history, but on the present purposes. It should be made to depend not on the question—What have I been formerly? but—What do I intend now? And this is the time for a minister not merely pressing home upon the people an upright and honest aim to be all that the Saviour would have them to be, but it is also the time for making full, explicit, unreserved statement of all that Christianity requires, whether in the way of surrender or of performance; for, you will observe, that even though you should gain the acquiescence of your hearers that a *bona fide* resolution to walk as a Christian in all time coming was indispensable to a worthy communion at the table of the Lord, yet with low conceptions of practical Christianity, even though cherishing such a resolution, they may be short of the mark; they may hold it enough that they share in all the decencies of civil observation, and take part in the common ordinances of the gospel, and without, therefore, aught either in respect of aim or in respect of acquisition after the high spiritual obedience of the gospel, its nonconformity to the world, its devotion to the things of faith and of eternity—without aught of this, I say, in their character or composition at all, they may go confidently forward with great satisfaction to themselves, and without the slightest misgiving of conscience on the subject, and yet lapse back again into the same earthly, alienated creatures that they were.

I have, therefore, always considered the sacramental opportunity as a highly proper season for unfolding practical Christianity in the extent of its obligations, and that by way of letting those who purpose to be communicants understand what the length and breadth of the vow is which they contract, and will be called upon to pay—what the amount of the profession is which they are called upon to substantiate; and so such topics as—Better not to vow, than to vow and not to pay; He who sitteth down to build a tower, should first count the cost thereof; He who cometh to Christ, must forsake all; Why call ye Him Lord, Lord, and do not the things which He saith?—these, I say, form very admirable topics on which to make your solemn and searching appeal to the consciences of the people on the coming round of this great periodic solemnity.

Such texts as these will furnish you with excellent materials for what is commonly called the fencing of the tables, which, agreeably to a principle I have often laid down, should proceed, I think, more upon an appeal to the consciousness than upon an appeal to the memory of your hearers, more upon their sense of what they feel and meditate at present than upon their retrospect of the performances of years which are past; at the same time, urging them strongly on the exceeding length and breadth of those commandments which enter into the obedience of the gospel, and also bidding them beware of coming forward on the impulse of a sudden or hasty resolution, charging them, perhaps for weeks before the celebration of the ordinance, that they should make their transition to a new life of Christianity, in all its peculiarity and extent, a matter of strong and fixed determination, with frequent appeals to Him who is the searcher of hearts, that He would save them from all that is rash or delusive in this great undertaking, and frequent supplications to Him who is also the dispenser of all spiritual blessings, that He may perfect strength in their weakness, and give them power to become the children of God.

But there is another and a distinct class of hearers who have a very near interest in the services of this great periodic festival—I mean those who labour under a sense of discouragement and despondency, who are in great heaviness because they feel themselves unable and unworthy of such a participation, who are oppressed by a consciousness both of their exceeding guilt and exceeding infirmity of purpose and principle, and tremble lest by putting forth their hand to the elements of the Supper, they

put forth a sacrilegious hand on that which their very touch, they fear, will contaminate and profane. Why, there are some whose religious anxieties are regularly awakened and lighted up by the recurrence of this occasion; and it is the part of those who are appointed to speak to every man a word in season, and more especially to speak a seasonable word to the weary and heavy laden, to know how they should address themselves to hearers of this peculiar cast and character, lest any should forbid himself whom God hath not forbidden, and pervert an institution which holds out the aspect of welcome and invitation to the mourners, pervert it to the deepening of their scruples and the sorer aggravation of their despair.

Now, in overcoming the scruples of this class, and in bringing that suasion to bear upon them which might carry them over the barrier of their fears, and filling your mouth with arguments so as to countervail the despondency of their conscious guilt and conscious weakness, the best arguments you can employ are those identical ones which set forth the freeness of the gospel, its adaptation to every want of our fallen nature, and the universal welcome it holds out even to those most sunk in depravity and the deepest and the most desperate of all in the abyss of condemnation. This is another specimen of the Lord's Supper as being rich in topics for many a substantial and impressive sermon, affording as it does, in fact, a proper place and occasion for preaching the comforts as well as the requirements of Christianity. It is this, in fact, which gives such a high religious importance to this great festival, for, in point of fact, hearers in general are greatly more awake than on ordinary Sabbaths to the demonstrations of the pulpit; and certain it is, that the most seasonable of these demonstrations are those which serve the purposes of encouragement on the one hand, and of rebuke or warning on the other; and that, not encouragement alone to approach the table of the Saviour, but more elementary still, encouragement to enter into confiding fellowship with the Saviour Himself—and that, not warning alone from an ordinance which the wilfully impenitent do but violate by their presence, and so but aggravate the severity of their coming judgment, but more general and elementary still, warning all men that Christ, the Lord of the ordinance, however accessible to the species at large on their coming for mercy to pardon and grace to help them, will refuse His friendship and His presence to all who would grasp at the mercy while they fling the grace away from them—even that grace

which teaches as well as enables man to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in the world.

But to return to the melancholy and despairing religionist, who, thrown into more vivid apprehension and alarm at the coming round of every communion Sabbath, perverts, by the unhappy peculiarities of his temperament and his views, what ought to be a season of gladness into a season of deepest spiritual dejection and distress. In reasoning with such, you will find by far the most effectual considerations are just the essential simplicities of the gospel of Jesus Christ. You may point to the sensible memorials of their atonement on the table of the sacrament, and assure them, with the utmost truth and tenderness, that there is nothing there which should scare them away—that the bread is but the symbol of that body which was broken for the sins of the world, and for their sins, had they but the confidence to appropriate to themselves what one and all in the world have the fullest warrant to appropriate; that the wine is but the symbol of that blood which was shed for the sins of many, and shed for their sins would they but do what many, and those the worst of sinners, have done, and they might do, would they venture the whole weight of their dependence on that foundation which God himself has laid in Zion. In a word, you argue them out of their fears in the very way by which you would overture to men in general the blessings of the gospel, and press the assurance upon them, that whatever their guilt and whatever their depravity, there is provision to which the most worthless of them are welcome, for cancelling all the guilt, for regenerating all the depravity. You tell them that their past iniquity should form no barrier across their path of entry into the communion table, for the body of Christ hath borne it all, the blood of Christ hath effaced it all. You should further tell them, that their own wretched impotency even to purpose aright, but far more, to perform aright, should form no such barrier; for the same bread and wine which set forth so significantly the atonement that has been made for their past sins, as significantly set forth the strength by which they are enabled to prosecute, and at length to perfect, their future obedience. And so the language you employ to this class is the unqualified language of invitation and welcome. You should cheer them on to the ordinance in the very way that you would cheer them on to a rejoicing fellowship with Him who is the Master of the ordinance. You

state in their hearing the freeness and fulness of the gospel, you demolish the plea on which they keep back by analyzing it in its two leading particulars, and demonstrating the insufficiency first of the one and then of the other. Their guilt you refuse to entertain as a plea, for you can tell them of an overpassing remedy for their guilt, set forth in visible representation on the very table which awakens their sensitive and superstitious horrors. Their weakness you refuse to entertain as a plea, for all who will may, at the hand of Him who presides over the assembly of a communion Sabbath, receive power as well as pardon, and so be sustained in all the toils of virtue and amid all the temptations which beset its path.

Neither the guilt nor the weakness—both of which so oppress the hearts of the desponding hearers—neither of these is a right obstacle in the way of this participation. The only competent obstacle is one which they have no share in. It is a mental reservation on the side of sin and of the world; it is that secret compromise which men would fain make between their own will and the will of the Saviour; it is, in fact—if we dare make use of that most convenient, though, in many orthodox ears, that most obnoxious word—it is the blinking of the real conditions of the gospel, and in virtue of which we conform to its overtures of a full pardon for sin and a full power of obedience, by the full determination to perform all which it bids us do, and to forsake all which it bids us relinquish. The consciousness of any latent duplicity of this sort, that forms a legitimate reason why any hearer should keep himself away; or if the minister know this to be his real moral state, that also is a reason why he should warn him away. Now, really this is not the reason which operates in general with the perplexed and melancholy inquirer. There are many such who would part with a thousand worlds if they had them to be what they ought—who would make any sacrifice to be right with God—who, to rid their minds of the gloomy and desolate apprehensions by which they are all the year long haunted and agonized, would not think the surrender of all that is dear to nature too great or painful a renunciation. Now, to such as these, you have nothing to proclaim but unqualified comfort—you may tell them, that but for their own sullen and suspicious hearts, there is really not the breadth of a straw between them and their salvation—that God is beckoning them in the gospel to His reconciled presence through the open door of His Son's mediatorship—that the Son himself, if they

but understood His attitude and His words, is knocking at the door of their hearts, and saying all to woo them into confidence that good-will smiles upon them from heaven, and that if they see it not, it is only because they look through the medium of their own diseased imagination. You must labour, by the assurances of the New Testament, to drive in that sullen front of resistance which, perhaps for months, or even for years, you may find to be impracticable; and when the solemnity of another and another sacramental celebration comes round, however vivid or overwhelming the fears may be which are thereby excited, you on the principle that the road to the communion table is not narrower than the road to heaven, should do your utmost to overbear the scruples of the disconsolate mourner, and bring no other texts than those of kindness and most unrestricted invitation to bear upon them.

Before I take final leave of this subject in my present course—for sensible I am, that in the extension and more thorough rectification of future courses, there is the greatest room for enlargement, or at least improvement, not on this solemn topic alone, but on all which I have brought before you—there is one question more connected with the administration of the sacraments which I should like at least to touch upon for a moment. It is a question, I am sensible, of great difficulty and great delicacy, and has been productive of the utmost uneasiness and distress with clergymen of tender consciences—I mean the principles on which they should judge of the admissibility of men to either of the two; that is, on what precise ground they should allow either parents to become sponsors for their children in baptism, or to participate with others in the peculiar services of a communion Sabbath.

There is no difficulty in regard to certain palpable delinquencies of character which do, by the general practice of all the clergymen and judicatories of our Church, infer exclusion from the Church's ordinances. To protect the sacraments from gross and unquestionable profanation, such as would scandalize every Christian heart and even bring down the contempt of the world, there are certain definite criminalities into which if a man have fallen, it would be the general practice, both in and out of the Establishment in Scotland, to disqualify him either for presenting his children to the waters of holy baptism, or sharing in the solemnities of a sacramental Sabbath. Of this class there is no question—their unfitness for Christian fellowship may be

read and known of all men. The clearness of the matter in their case precludes all controversy. And could we just have the same precise and satisfactory evidence of what that is which constitutes the positively good, as of what that is which constitutes the positively bad, all perplexity, and all the distress associated with that perplexity, would be henceforth done away.

There is no difficulty as to how we should proceed with all whom we know to be criminals, which is simply to exclude them—and there should be as little difficulty with all whom we know to be Christians, which is simply to admit them. But there is a vast intermediate number—I have no doubt myself they constitute the vast majority of the species, not merely out of Christendom, but within its limits, who are neither criminals nor Christians, who are fair and respectable, and who can be convicted neither of profligacy nor of fraud—and yet whom you have not only no reason to believe are spiritual men, but of whom you have the decided conviction that they are not so. These make up the vast majority of people in every land—I will even go so far as to say, that they make up the vast majority of communicants in every country of Christendom. In our own country I feel assured they do. I feel no hesitation in avowing it as my conviction, that far the greater number of those who have baptism administered to their children, and the elements of the Lord's Supper administered to themselves, are not Christians in the full sense and significance of the term. The palpable, the undeniable fact has given an infinity of distress to a number of tender-conscienced clergymen; and the question is, how to clear our way among the ambiguities of the question which relates to the inadmissibility or non-admissibility of men to the sacraments—a question of extremely difficult solution, and one which I am far from thinking that we shall soon succeed in carrying a uniformity either of sentiment or of practice thereupon.

BOOK V.—CHAP. VIII.

CONDITION OF MAN AFTER DEATH.

THE PRAYER.

THOU, O God, art a Governor among the nations and families of the world. Thou reignest supreme in nature and history: and the moral world, with the character and fortune of its innumerable spirits, is all Thine own. May we bear a constant respect not alone to Thy power of overruling the history, but to Thy power of sanctifying the heart of each individual; and grant, Almighty Father, that through the aids of Thy divine grace we may be kept steadfast and immovable on the way to heaven.

I beg you distinctly to remark the two principles on either of which a theological system may be constructed: by proceeding on a certain chronological order, the one on the chronological order of the Divine administration, the other on the chronological order of that human process which is described by man in his passage from the dimness of nature to the full light of the gospel, its prosperous sanctification, and at length its blissful consummation in eternity. I prefer the latter myself; and I think, besides presenting the various topics in a more natural succession, even according to the succession of human interests, and of the actual states which follow each other in the progress of man's religious history—besides this recommendation, I say, it has also to plead in its favour the greater humility and philosophic modesty of the procedure. When compared with the other systems, it is like proceeding by analysis instead of proceeding by synthesis. Rather than commence with the lofty and recondite principles of the Trinity, and predestination, and the purposes of God—rather than commence with these as the fountainhead or first principles of the whole theological demonstration, I do hold it vastly better that we should grope our way from one surmising of nature to another, till, on the footsteps of a natural process of inquiry, we have been led to feel a sense of nature's deficiencies—to explore the evidence for the Christian religion—to enter on the contents of its now ascertained revelation—to begin with the doctrine, which nature and Scripture alike depone to, even the depravity of man—a doctrine which has

been well affirmed to be the basis of Christianity ;—proceeding from that, to enter on the counterpart remedies of the gospel, its atoning sacrifice, its sanctifying grace—to assume for the time the divinity both of the Son and of the Spirit, as in fact giving a mightier emphasis to the truths both of atonement and sanctification, but to reserve the scientific establishment both of this sacred mystery and of the transcendental doctrine of predestination to ulterior parts of the course, and then diverging though we have done from the first system, both at the commencement and along the whole progress of our expositions, falling in with it at the conclusion, and finishing just as it does with the final issues of that wondrous scheme by which men, in the darkness and depravity of nature, are restored to eternal blessedness and honour amid the companies and the choirs of God's unfallen family.

On the subject of the eternity of future punishment I do not want you to hold with me the language of a stern dogmatist ; but sure I am that the cause of practical religion will suffer greatly in your hands, if you gloss over or reduce the plain literalities of Scripture on the awful question. We cannot hesitate a moment as to what the distinct understanding of every plain unsophisticated man must be in regard to the sense and doctrine of the Bible on the matter at issue. There can be no misconceiving that ; and without repeating its affirmations, I must say that, once you extenuate and dilute them, you inflict a blow on practical religion of which perhaps you are not aware. For, only think what the great, the mischievous delusion is with the majority of the species. It is not in general that they disbelieve in the realities of a future state ; neither is it that they purpose not, some time or other, to provide against them. Perhaps, in every Christian land, every nine out of ten have an indefinite but vague purpose of turning round and betaking themselves in good earnest to the work of preparation ere they die ; but they cannot and will not put forth the resolution of entering on this decisive movement yet. They are for postponing it a little longer and a little longer ; and it is just this habit of perpetually adjourning the question, of shifting it forward, by succeeding intervals, to a more convenient season, of quieting the present by a resolve which shall take effect at some time or somewhere in the distant futurity before them ;—it is this, I say, which shuffles religion onward by little and little away from ever being seriously felt or seriously proceeded on ;

and thus, on this ruinous principle, are men borne onward through life, till death comes upon them like a whirlwind, and they at length find themselves cheated out of their eternity.

Now, what is the effect that the doctrine of the non-eternity of hell-torments would leave upon human nature? Just to carry the principle of postponement across the barrier of death altogether—just to make it shoot ahead of the termination of our mortal existence—just to adjourn the whole question from the world we are in to the world which is beyond us—just to banish from human hearts the purpose or the wish to make a recovery from sin to righteousness here, and that because taught to believe a recovery may still be competent there—just to annihilate the character of our earthly state, as being a state of probation, and, by lulling men into a security that there is room for repentance and recovery on the other side of death, to turn the whole of their existence on this side of death into a jubilee of impiety and of irreligious defiance.

The Scripture gives us no warrant to believe that our all is not staked, and irrecoverably staked, on the faith and obedience of the present life. Be assured you will paralyze all the motives to practical Christianity, by giving any countenance to the opposite representation; and you will not only indulge in unlicensed speculation, by attempting to dilute and do away the obvious literalities of Scripture on this subject, but you will find it a speculation of most baleful influence on the practice and the general principles of all who are infected by it.

When Scripture roundly and explicitly affirms any doctrine, the whole of my Christian philosophy would lead me simply and silently to acquiesce. After this, I think it wrong almost to defend the proposition, as if the authority of an accredited message from heaven needed any confirmation or support from our reasonings. Yet, let me briefly, and in but one or two sentences, advert to what I hold an important view connected with this matter. When men talk of the disproportion between the sins of an ephemeral life and the penalties of a never-ending eternity, it should be recollected that this is really not the light in which the matter ought to be regarded. There is a law of habit exemplified within the field of every man's observation, and which he does not quarrel with. In virtue of this law, by every act of obedience, a man becomes stronger in the purpose and character of obedience; and by every act of wickedness, the propensities of wickedness lord it all the more strongly and resistlessly over

him. Now, just imagine the continuity of this process to be kept up between time and eternity, and that, if we carry with us unreclaimed impiety and disobedience across the limit which separates the two worlds, we shall carry with us into our future state the habits and the passions, and all the vitiated principles of rebellion against God; and the punishments which come on the back of these will not be punishments for the sins of the present life, but fresh punishments for the fresh sins to which the inveteracy of our diseased moral nature is ever hurrying us—an inveteracy only to be cured on this side of death, and so affording a most impressive argument for our strenuous, and, withal, our immediate repentance.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. I.

FOUNDATION OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE PRAYER.

WE desire, O God, to acknowledge that preserving hand by which we are sustained from day to day, and from week to week, and the precious season is lengthened out to us of our discipline and our preparation for eternity. May we know what it is to live above the world while we live in the world; and, upheld by the faith of the gospel, and making diligent use of all its expedients for carrying forward the work of sanctification, may we be enabled to follow on in that right and consistent way through all the cares and all the difficulties of life. Do Thou especially guide and animate the labours of those who aspire to the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and may the fruit of their studies and their exercises here be a signal blessing through them to the Church of our Lord and Saviour.—Amen.

It is a great question how far this unity of faith ought to extend. It is evident, that the greater the number of the Church's articles, the more limited and exclusive it will be. And I know not a more interesting question of Christian policy, than in how far it is advisable to give up certain points, and that with the view of opening a wider door of admittance to the Church, and of breaking down certain barriers of separation, which would give way indeed of themselves on the reconciliation of certain differences not being made indispensable to Christians being members of the same communion, or their being admitted into

the fellowship of the same denomination. You will perceive, indeed, from what I have already adverted to, that this is a distinct matter from the question of a religious establishment, which may give up certain of its articles, and yet remain an establishment still—which may give up certain of its peculiarities in regard to patronage and church government, and yet, with its provision for a national clergy, remain essentially an establishment, though a less exclusive, or a more liberal, or, if you choose so to express it, a more lax and latitudinarian establishment than it was before.

It is evident, that the precise length to which a Christian denomination should go in defining its boundaries, the degree to which it should multiply its conditions, is a thing of arbitrary determination, depending on the reasons which might be brought to bear on it, and essentially connected with the limits which separate what is of major from what is of minor importance in matters ecclesiastical. For example, there were questions on which schisms broke out in former ages, that would give little concern to theologians of any description in the present day; and, on the other hand, there is no Church, however much it may have multiplied its articles of faith, or, which is quite synonymous to this, however close and narrow it may have drawn the limit around its own party, which does not nevertheless allow a latitude and a liberty in some things—things on which, though members of the same denomination, they can agree to differ; and it is precisely on the consideration, how many the things are on which we may still agree to differ, that, if determined more largely than at the settlement of the existing Churches in Christendom, would throw open the doors of the Establishment wider than they are at present to the general community.

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The controversies about Church Government have been exposed to much illogical treatment from the want of a right discrimination between the lawful and the obligatory. The distinction which I now make is different from that of Paul between the lawful and the expedient. I use another word than expedient at present; and I beg you will attend to the import of the difference between that which is lawful and that which is obligatory. Many things are lawful for me to do which I am under no obligation of doing; for, though lawful to do them, it may be equally lawful for me to refrain from doing them. The lawfulness of doing a particular thing does not necessarily imply the unlawful-

ness of not doing it ; as, for example, it may be lawful to celebrate the Sacrament of the Supper in a sitting posture, yet not unlawful to celebrate it in a kneeling posture ; whereas, if, instead of lawful, it were obligatory to celebrate it in a sitting posture, then it would be unlawful to celebrate it kneeling. In other words, though you prove the lawfulness of a given practice, you do not on that account prove the unlawfulness of a different or an opposite practice ; but, once make out that a practice is obligatory, then all other practices diverse from it, or opposite to it, are held in the face of the obligation, and therefore positively unlawful.

Now, even though the Independents should be able to allege, which I am very far from conceding to them, that their mode of church government had the warrant of scriptural example, this might establish no more than the lawfulness of that constitution, but not, most certainly, the exclusive obligation of it. There might be the warrant of a scriptural example, and so far this may be called scriptural authority for Independency ; but I would not hold such an authority as this as establishing the divine right of Independency. For when we speak of the divine right of any particular form of church government, I imagine that by this is meant, its being obligatory that we should adopt that form, and that only ; or, in other words, by the adoption of it we do right, and by the adoption of any other we do wrong.

I am not pronouncing at present on the merits of any particular ecclesiastical constitution ; but I want you, in the mean time, to estimate the difference, in point of argumentative effect, between a proof that a certain form is lawful, and therefore may be adopted, and a proof that a certain form is obligatory, and therefore must be adopted. If you make out the latter verdict in favour of any one form, this were a sentence of positive condemnation on all the others ; but if the former verdict be the whole length to which you can go in favour of any particular form, then the adoption of it may be right, and the adoption of the others be right also.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. II.

PROPHECIES AS TO THE CHURCH OF ROME, EPISCOPACY, AND PRESBYTERY.

THE PRAYER.

WE again present ourselves before Thee, O God, with the language of acknowledgment; but do Thou rebuke all hypocrisy away from our professions, that we may not be of the number of those who draw near with their lips and honour Thee with their mouths, while their hearts are far from Thee. May we know what it is to worship God in spirit and in truth; and cause Thy light and Thy strength to descend upon us, that we may be fortified against all temptation, and enabled to walk in the way of Thy pure and perfect commandment. Be with us now and ever.—Amen.

Even though much more richly furnished with the details of prophetic interpretation than I am, there would be no room in a general theological course for entering at any length into them; and from this we should further feel ourselves precluded, did we limit ourselves, as we ought, to the certainties, or at least to the very high probabilities, that meet us on this most interesting walk of investigation. But let me at least recommend a large course of reading upon this subject; and I do promise you a very pleasing and powerful confirmation of the Christian argument as the result of it. Even those books which may be least spoken of, and have been well-nigh superseded by the lucubrations of later expounders, such as the works of Hurd and Bishop Newton, particularly the latter, will not only greatly interest you by their perusal, but add to the strength of your convictions. Newton gives a whole volume to the single book of the Apocalypse; and though unable to vouch for many of his specific interpretations, yet it is impossible, I think, to rise from the perusal without a strong and firm impression of the accordance between even this symbolic and highly figurative book and the literal history of the world from the commencement of the Christian dispensation. I am far from saying that the prophecy casts a clear and confident light on the unfulfilled events; but we doubt not that the fulfilled events will at length cast a most clear and confident light upon the prophecy. But we must not

deny, that much remains to be verified, that the reformation of three centuries back has not yet accomplished the great object of the overthrow of Antichrist. It may have shaken the antichrist of Popery or High Churchism, but the antichrist of infidelity remains unbroken, nay, I think, is growing in strength and audacity in the midst of us. The elements of change and of conflict are visibly at work. Christendom is far as ever from a condition of sure and prosperous tranquillity; nor do I think we shall arrive at it by a pacific process. There is, if not a military, at least a strenuous mental warfare, of which we already hear the far notes of preparation—a war, if not of arms, at least of opinions; but whatever days of suffering or of violence may be coming, we do believe of the indestructible Church of Christ, that it will only be cradled into firm and perpetual establishment by the storms which are raised for its overthrow.

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I must confess that the testimony of Epiphanius is highly accordant with my own views on the question of church government, which seems historically to have been changed and adapted according to the purposes of what may be termed Christian expediency; and instead of being decisively settled in Scripture, left very much to the discretion of Christian men. In as far as we are at liberty to judge from his account of the matter, there seems to have been no regular Episcopacy at first, and that men, instead of starting with it from the days of the Apostles, at length found their way to its more full and formal establishment through centuries afterwards. I at the same time agree with the author of the text-book, in conceding to the defenders of this order in church government, that they derive a plausible support to themselves from this very testimony, seeing they might allege that the limited extension of Christianity precluded, and for a considerable time, the complete and regular establishment of the Episcopalian order; but that it says much for the lawfulness, if not the positive and scriptural obligation of such an order, that whenever the requisite enlargement of the faith admitted of it, we behold the full complement of bishops and parochial clergy under them.

I am willing to admit this in proof of the lawfulness, but not in proof of the divine right or the exclusive obligation of Episcopacy. The analogy utterly fails, in my apprehension, between our binding observation of it, and our binding observation of the

Christian Sabbath; for the Christian Sabbath has to allege the universal observance of it from the very commencement of the Apostolic age, and not from the third or fourth century after it. And, what is greatly more decisive, the law of the Sabbath is an unrepealed law of the Jewish decalogue, enshrined there among the immutabilities of truth and justice and essential piety, and therefore requiring a formal or express repeal for doing it away. The Jewish priesthood, again, bearing resemblance to Episcopacy in respect to the gradation of ecclesiastical rank, has no sanction whatever from within the law of the ten commandments, but was expressly superseded by the priesthood of Christ, was set aside along with all other temple observances of the Jewish ritual, and left the Christian economy of a church government to be modelled on the general principle of what made most for the extension of the gospel, and most for the good of the people's edification.

You will not fail to perceive from what a dimly conjectural region it is that the authorities on all sides of the question respecting church government are gathered; insomuch that I cannot enter with any very keen or decided earnestness into the controversy at all. It is extremely difficult to work up one's mind into anything like a state of adequate sympathy with the vehemence which is felt and uttered upon these subjects; and really without the light or the apparent importance of any great principle being concerned in the argument, it requires an artificial sort of formation not at everybody's command, to go all the lengths which many do upon these matters. It has been exceedingly well said by the judicious Andrew Fuller, of the Baptist denomination, on whose last visit to Scotland in 1813, I felt my humble country manse greatly honoured by harbouring him for a day and two nights within its walls—it has been exceedingly well said by this able champion and expounder of our common Christianity, that the points on which the disciples of the Saviour agree greatly out-number, and in respect of importance very greatly outweigh, the points on which they differ—that for many ages the attention and the zeal of Christians have been vastly too much expended on the points on which they differ; but that now, it is to be hoped, the sentiments which they hold in common will be far more the objects of their steadfast and harmonious regard. Proceeding on this principle, I can as yet, with the utmost stretch of charity, or, as some would term it, of latitudinarianism, hold no fellowship with

Unitarians in respect of doctrine, nor with Catholics in respect of government—the errors of the latter on the subject of government, in as far as they dethrone the Scripture from its supremacy over the faith and consciences of men, being, in fact, the indefinite source of all sorts of error in regard to the doctrine. But apart from these, and perhaps from one or two more who can be named, I think we might recognise in almost every denomination a personal Christianity, which is not even brought to hazard by the peculiarity either of their articles or their forms; and without disputing the superior expediency of one kind of government to another, I do think that, considering the manifold ties of common sentiment and principle between us and the evangelical sectaries of Christendom, it were better that we drew more closely together, and that the movement, at all events, instead of being one of wider distance and separation, were in the way of kindlier and more intimate converse than we have hitherto held.

BOOK VI.—CHAP. III.

NATURE AND EXTENT OF POWER IMPLIED IN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

THE PRAYER.

O God, Thou art the Ancient of days, Thy years are from everlasting, and of Thine endurance there is no end. Thou comprehendest all time, and fillest all space with Thy presence and with Thy power. It is only by the notices which Thou hast given in Thy works and which Thou hast given in Thy word, that we can climb our ascending way to the abode of the Eternal. And we desire, instead of meddling with matters too high for us, that we should be satisfied humbly to learn and faithfully to apply. Deliver us from the power of all lofty and delusive imaginations, and enable us to bring every thought of our hearts into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And seeing that the time is short, and that our few little years will soon be summed up, may we give ourselves henceforth, with all devotedness of heart and of purpose, to the studies and the preparations of immortality.

I think Dr. Hill on the whole understates the independence of the Church. The State can at any time withdraw from the Church its temporalities; but the Church is perfect mistress of the terms on which she will consent to receive them. In Scotland, the Church permits no interference whatever by the

civil power in things properly ecclesiastical.* Her doctrine, her discipline, her modes of worship, are all her own; and in regard to that fancied subjection of the ecclesiastical to the civil which is involved in the question of patronage, let it be remembered, in the first place, that the holders of this power are limited in their choice to the persons whom we, in the act of licensing, have judged worthy of preaching the gospel; and what is more decisive still, ere the presentation can take effect, the Church must lend her concurrence, and may, by the votes of her ministers, either reject the deed or sustain it. There is, in the first instance, the convenience of a simple executive in the nominations; and, secondly, a guard against the possibilities of a corrupt nomination either in the authority given to the popular call, or in the independent judgment of our courts sitting in deliberation on the question, whether the specific appointment of this man to this parish is or is not for the good of Christianity? This is the real working of the machinery of our ecclesiastical system in Scotland; and however much we may have departed in practice from what an increasing number both of the clergy and of the people hold to be a more excellent way, that way still lies open to us, and there is a patent and a practicable avenue by the constitution of our Church to every desirable reformation. As I have repeatedly said in your hearing, the connexion between Church and State may be altogether as pure as it is prolific of a thousand blessings to society, and those blessings of the highest order, opening, as it does, a door for the ministrations of the gospel to millions of people who, under any other system, would be suffered to remain on the outfields of paganism, and yet leaving the Church to the exercises of her own independent judgment and conscience in regard to all the lessons and all the ordinances of Christianity.

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I rather feel as if the author in this place (p. 479) had omitted the great object and meaning of the Apostle when he affirmed that the power which he exercised was given to him for edification and not for destruction. It is quite true that there is nothing in the exercise of church government which should destroy or overbear any of the objects specified in the text-book, such as liberty of thought and the right of private judgment; "not that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy." But the thing specially pointed to and provided for,

* This was written during the Session 1831-2.

I imagine, in the power not being given for destruction but for edification, is its not being competent to exercise it so as that any person who happens to be the object of it shall be treated or held as an irrecoverable outcast while there is any hope of his being reclaimed, and more particularly, that there shall be a mixture of tenderness along with the severity which is exercised towards him. This harmonizes beautifully with the direction given to the church of Corinth as to the manner in which they should proceed with one of their delinquents, to treat him with kindness, lest he should be swallowed up of overmuch sorrow. The discipline exercised in the Christian Church was, as the Apostle terms it, for the destruction of the flesh—not for the destruction of the spirit, but that the spirit might be saved. This object is never lost sight of; but this object would have been both lost sight of and lost, had the Church assumed a position of resolved and impracticable hostility towards any who had been connected with her. She was not thus to close the avenue of return and repentance against any who are strayed children. She was not to let down any expedient for winning them back again; and this she would have done had there been no mixture of goodness with severity. “Ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself lest thou also be tempted.”

It would serve greatly to clear and to enlighten us in the matter both of church ordinances and of church government, if we as much as possible kept by the distinctive spirit and principles of the gospel in our mode of conducting them. I have already endeavoured to apply this principle in the matter of admission to the sacraments, making the access to them, on the one hand, as free to all as the great and saving benefits of Christianity are free to all, and making, on the other hand, the guard in the way of our approach as strict to all as the guard which our Saviour Himself set up in the way of those who proposed to enter on the profession of His discipleship; on the one hand, saying, “Come to me, all;” but, on the other hand, saying, “He who cometh unto me must forsake all.” In like manner, on the subject of discipline there is or ought to be no excommunication which may be termed final—no absolute sentence of banishment for life from the Church—no utter destruction of all hopes of reinstatement—no such treatment of offenders as might sink their spirits into the helplessness of utter despair. The Church should hold out no greater aspect of severity towards

such than the gospel itself does; and we know what its constitution is in this respect. While there is life, there is hope. "If he repent, forgive him."—"Come now, let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as the snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."—"I will heal their backslidings; I will receive them graciously; I will love them freely." There is no sin beyond the reach of our Saviour's atonement, and none therefore should be beyond the hope of recovery; there should be no impracticable barrier in the way of restoration within the limits of the visible Church upon earth. Such extreme cases may very seldom occur in the simple annals of a parish; but in all cases let there be along with severity a mixture and a mitigation of Christian tenderness. Let us never give up the peculiar weapon of Christianity, which is love, that moral engine which is found to be so omnipotent of operation over the hearts of men, which even in the actings and reactings of human beings in society, has been found of such mighty and resistless effect with the worst of criminals, and which, looking down from heaven to earth even on the guiltiest of us all, is found to have in it the efficacy of that specific charm by which at once to reconcile and to regenerate the species.

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There is a very important principle which I should like merely to present to your notice, and which, I am sure, if acted on to the extent it ought to be, would conduce mightily to the peace of the Church, and without endangering its purity. Considered as the subjects of civil government, there is a duty of obedience incumbent upon us, from which we are not absolved by the errors, and even to a considerable extent by the tyranny of our rulers. The tranquillity and order of the body politic would be in perpetual hazard, and would be placed in truly a most precarious condition, if on the moment that rulers departed from their duty by ever so little, subjects were absolved from theirs, and all was to go into anarchy and derangement on the event of one of the two parties having deviated, however so little, from the strict line of moderation and propriety which they ought to have held. It is far better that the duties of the two parties should, if I may so express it, considerably overlap each other. I mean that it should require a great degree of injustice and tyranny on the part of the governor to justify such a resistance of violence and rebellion on the part of the governed

as might lead to the dissolution of society. Now, be assured, though you may not perhaps have attended either to the analogy or to its great practical importance, that the same principle is in a certain, and that a very considerable degree, applicable to the matters of ecclesiastical government. It is clear from the example of our Saviour, that notwithstanding the many flagrant delinquencies of those who sat in Moses' seat, yet He felt the tie of those obligations which bound Him to the established institutions of the country, and has bequeathed to us a model of the regard and deference which He himself did yield to them. I am far from saying that there is not a certain degree of tyranny in a state which would justify rebellion, and that there is not a certain degree of corruption in a Church which would justify schism; but beneath that degree there may be injustice in the administration of the one, and also beneath that degree there may be corruption in the administration of the other, under which both rebellion and schism would be unlawful. There would be no stability in a civil commonwealth if, on every provocation by its rulers, the members thereof might justifiably resort to arms; and there would just be as little in the Church, or Christian commonwealth, if, on every provocation, however slight, the members thereof were at liberty, or it were lawful for them to fly off at a tangent. There is in both cases a certain duty of subordination, which, without necessarily leading either to a hurtful acquiescence in tyranny in the one case, or to a hurtful acquiescence in corruption in the other, is most conducive to prosperity and peace, whether in things politic or in things ecclesiastical; and I would therefore have you to remark the sound and well-conditioned temperament of those who will stand their ground as members of a Christian society, and maintain their adherence to it, notwithstanding many of those appearances which would make schismatics and separatists of other men, of those who will not on light grounds add to those public divisions which have been the occasion of scandal to our common Christianity, and who, while alive in feeling, and deep and decided in principle about all that was essential, would bear a thousand mortifications in small matters rather than force a disruption in the peace and order of the Church.

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I am quite sensible of the rapidity, and therefore the slightness of my examination on this last department of the Course. I have done little more than specify topics for your own more

full and deliberate examination ; but I regard it the less in a question of Church government than I would have done had I passed hastily or superficially over a subject which belonged to the essence of doctrinal theology. I am thankful that three years' rotation of this advanced class is now accomplished, and that in describing it anew, I shall at least be relieved from the labour of a first preparation. I feel quite sensible, however, that much remains to be reillustrated and remodelled, and that justice to the different themes which successively meet us on our way, would require a perpetual, a continued exercise of fresh and original attention, even to the end of life.*

* These Notes were originally prepared during the Sessions 1829-30, 30-31, 31-32.

END OF NOTES ON HILL'S LECTURES.

FOUR ADDRESSES

DELIVERED AS

PRINCIPAL OF THE NEW COLLEGE, EDINBURGH,

AT THE

OPENING OF THE CLASSES

IN NOVEMBER 1843, 1844, 1845, AND 1846.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

AT THE

OPENING OF THE FREE CHURCH COLLEGE,

NOVEMBER, 1843.

THE PRAYER.

THOU art, O God, from everlasting to everlasting. We cannot unravel the mystery of Thy being, and are even admitted to observe but a small part of Thy ways. Yet we desire to bless Thee that Thou hast impressed on that part so legible a transcript of Thy wisdom as to leave us without excuse if we seek not after God. Our souls would follow hard after Thee, and may we know what it is to lay a confident hold upon Thee as our Friend and our reconciled Father. For this purpose may we learn of Thee and of Thy will from Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent into the world, and give us that knowledge of Thyself and of Him which is life everlasting.

Our College, in respect of its actual professorships, may be said as yet to be exclusively theological, though with the prospect of being so extended as at length to embrace other professorships for certain of those sciences which are capable of a closer application, and admit of a more distinct bearing on theology, than is at all set forth in the course of our existing universities. It is the aim, and will be the study of the Church's Education Committee, so to regulate the preliminary as well as the strictly professional classes, to be attended by those of our students who are preparing for the ministry of the gospel, that all shall be

made more directly subservient than heretofore to the object of qualifying for the duties of this high and sacred vocation. A few general remarks will sufficiently evince the view that we ourselves entertain of those changes which ought to be made on our academic system, in order that the literature and philosophy of the antecedent schools might best pave the way for those lessons of heavenly and divine knowledge which are usually given forth by the masters of the Theological Faculty.

We shall be all the more readily understood if we can draw your attention to the very obvious distinction that obtains between the powers of the mind and the acquisitions of the mind. The faculty of acquiring knowledge is a wholly distinct matter from the knowledge itself; and if any method of discipline could be devised by which best to improve and invigorate the faculty, this might form the best preparation for speeding onward and multiplying our acquisitions not in one department only, but in many, perhaps in all the departments of universal truth. It is thus that by one and the same preliminary training, we might form—not the best naturalists, not the best jurists, not the best economists, not the best theologians; but we can imagine, that in virtue of this training, and before he who is the subject of it has turned himself to one or other of these sciences, or made a single acquisition in any of them, he has now been put into the best possible estate of armour and equipment for traversing and obtaining the mastery over them all, whichever of these departments in the territory of human knowledge he might choose to enter. There might be conceived an education common to all the learned professions, and anterior to them all, the object of which should be to strengthen the general powers of thought, and thus to prepare for a good commencement, merely by putting the instrument of acquisition into right order, even before a single acquisition has been made in any one of the branches of professional learning. It is thus that in the earlier stages of a university education the main object might be the exercise and invigoration of the mental powers, while, in the subsequent stages, after that the general body of learners have broken up into separate portions, each having fixed on their own profession and entered on their own special walk, the object should be to accumulate the lessons of its particular science; or, in other words, to multiply and lay up in store the mental acquisitions which are to be gathered from that distinct province in the field of human knowledge.

But we shall perhaps make ourselves more intelligible, if, coming down from these generalities, we instance the actual precursory classes which are usually attended, prior to, and with the object of being preparatory for, those which are strictly theological.

Do not then let it obscure the distinction that we have already announced between the powers of the mind and the acquisitions of the mind, that the improvement of the former and increase of the latter, are generally combined into a twofold benefit, as the fruit of one and the same study. For example, in the study of those languages which are usually taught at college, one might realize both these advantages. The scholarship which one is made to undergo in the prosecution of them, might be viewed either as a series of exercises or as a series of lessons. If viewed as exercises, they serve to discipline the mind, and so to strengthen its powers; if viewed as lessons, they serve to inform the mind, and so add to its acquisitions—the acquisition here being the knowledge of what the equivalent words and phrases in Greek or Latin are to the words and phrases of our own vernacular tongue; or when it is that the former either fall short of or exceed the latter in the force or felicity wherein some given sentiment or given meaning is embodied. If, for the sake of the discipline, we were asked to state a preference between these two languages, we should confess a difficulty in fixing on the one rather than on the other; but if, for the sake of the acquisition, we should instantly fasten upon the Greek—inasmuch as an immediate access to the original books of inspiration is of transcendently higher value than immediate access to all the Latin theology, whether of Christian Fathers or Continental Divines. But we are not prepared to recommend any curtailment in this department of the preliminary education—though, if compelled to retrench anywhere, we could part with the Latin more easily than the Greek; or, to make even a further reduction, we should give up the classical for the sake of your more familiar and profound acquaintance with the Hellenistic Greek, both of the Septuagint Version and of the New Testament. But these are ulterior changes, which I hope will never be forced upon us from any other cause than from such an enlargement in some other quarter of your theological studies as to present us with a choice of the more for the less valuable, and that, too, in such abundance as that the former cannot be overtaken but by an abandonment of the latter. Meanwhile, let it be understood, that though there

be ample room for your preparatory studies in the Greek being turned into a more professional direction than at present, there will be no relaxation, but rather an increase, in our demand for your proficiency in that language which has been signalized as the great vehicle of the Christian revelation.

It will better illustrate the meaning of our distinction between powers and acquisitions, when I speak of the mathematics as a preliminary to your theological studies; for it is chiefly, if not entirely, as a discipline that I value the antecedency of this science to your entrance on the business of the Hall, and scarcely, if at all, as an informer, or for the sake of those truths wherewith it possesses the mind. I am not aware that, as an expounder to the people of the lessons of the gospel, I am much the better for knowing that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles; or that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the squares of the two containing sides in a right-angled triangle. But I have a strong persuasion, that both the power to apprehend and the power to convince may be mightily strengthened—that the habit of clear and consecutive reasoning may be firmly established by the successive journeys which the mind is called on to perform along the pathway of geometrical demonstration. The truth is, that, as a preparative, whether for the bar or for the pulpit, I have more value in mathematics for the exercise which the mind takes as it travels along the road, than for all the spoil which it gathers at the landing-place. Here, then, we have the distinct example of an education that we desiderate for our students of theology, not for the sake to them of its lessons, but for the sake of its exercises; and though, in the universities of Scotland, it has not been the habit to exact as indispensable an attendance on the mathematical classes, we hold it of prime importance that the students of the Free Church should undergo, at least for one session, the discipline of its various lessons, and that in all the rigour and purity of the highest academic model.

Our demand, too, for a preliminary attendance on a class of logic, is more on account of its processes than on account of its results; we deem it, too, greatly more valuable for its exercises than for its lessons. The specific acquirement of this class is to have learned by it the rules and the methods of right reasoning. Yet, to have studied for one year the lessons of geometry we hold a better preparation for becoming practically and in effect a good reasoner, than to have been made acquainted with all the prescriptions of logic; but, like geometry, it is itself a discipline, and

it is more for this than for its instruction that we prize it. It is not in the material products of the labour, but the labour itself, that the use of a gymnasium lies, in giving both strength and expertness to the corporal faculties; and thus it might not be the substantive lessons of a school, but the regimen of a school, that constitutes its best and highest recommendation. In this way a class of logic, like that of the late Professor Jardine in Glasgow, might prove an admirable gymnasium for nurturing into greater expertness and power the mental faculties: and when, beside the method of reasoning, there is cognizance taken there of the reasoning faculty, and so the mind is led to a reflex view of its own processes, this forms the commencement of a habit of the most signal benefit throughout the posterior education of a scientific theologian, and a habit, too, that practically will avail him to the last, after that, having entered on his professional career, he comes to deal in the lessons of subjective Christianity, and may then speak most convincingly even to the hearers of a simple congregation, just because, versant in the mysteries of his own spirit, he speaks most clearly, and so with greatest effect, to the consciences of men.

We have thus done little more than announce; for, within the limits of a single address, there is not the time to argue or expatiate on the views now given in favour of the three first preliminary classes—that is, of Greek, and Mathematics, and Logic—not so much as forming a course of instruction, but rather a course of gymnastics for the mind, and by which it is prepared to enter on the business of the two remaining preliminary classes, where the chief aim is to obtain, not the power of acquiring knowledge, but the positive acquisitions of knowledge—to learn what are the phenomena and laws of the material, and what the phenomena and laws of the moral world; or, in other words, to store the mind with those substantive truths, those substantive informations, which, one after another, come within the reach, and are appropriated by the scholar, in the act of traversing the physical and the mental and the ethical sciences. It is here that we feel most induced to innovate on the existing methods of academical education, and it is now, therefore, that we would prefer the most earnest demand on the attention of those who hear us.

First, then, we prefer the antecedency given by Aristotle to the physical over the mental sciences; and we should alternate the present order, making the natural philosophy come first, and

afterwards the mental or moral philosophy, just as the physics come before the metaphysics in the ancient courses of education.

But, besides this, and more important than this, instead of attempting to lay before our theological students such a systematic view of any of the physical sciences as is now given at our existing universities, I would select from each of them those truths or topics which can be made to have a special bearing on the subject-matter of our profession, and form out of these a course of rich and varied materials, replete, it might be, with interest, and affording scope for such new and important views as are ever casting up when one traverses any of the territories of human thought by a new line, or looks to any given object of contemplation from a new point, and in a different relation. Let me instance Paley's Natural Theology. For the construction of that masterly treatise, he did not, that I am aware, study in the usual systematic way of it the science of anatomy, though his argument is mainly based on the informations of that science—that is, on such of its informations as were of avail for his special purpose of setting forth the hand of a Designer in the manifold and exquisite adaptations of the human framework. Such are the high merits of this composition, that we would not object to make Paley's Natural Theology one of our text-books. But would you, because it happens chiefly to be an anatomical demonstration of the being of a God—would you, on that account, make it imperative on our students to attend a course of anatomy? The truth is, so universally has the Creator imprinted the traces and footsteps of Himself on the whole of His varied workmanship, that each department of nature, and so each science having that department for its object, has a natural theology of its own. Botany, for example, could furnish one or two beautiful chapters; yet who, on this account, would ever think of demanding from our students the testimonials of their attendance upon its academic lessons? Natural History, in its various branches, is far richer in evidence for a God than natural philosophy; yet we do not, on that account, make it a thing of imperative obligation that any of its classes should be attended by our students. I am not for proscribing natural philosophy; but I am for selecting and giving greater prominence to those of its doctrines which serve best to fortify or to illustrate the argument for a God. I would do this much justice to natural philosophy, but I would do the same justice to each of the physical sciences. I would select from each the best contribution which it offered to the cause of Theism;

and, instead of attendance on any one of its classes taught in their present general and absolute form, and without any special relation to our all-important theme, I would have—not a class of natural philosophy—not a class of natural history—not a class of botany, or anatomy, or chemistry; but I would substitute for all these, as one of the preliminary and indispensable stages of our curriculum, a Professorship of the Physical Sciences in their connexion with Theology, the object of which should be to point out the signatures, and set forth the glories of Him who sits enthroned on the riches of the universe.

But, to come rightly in possession of your materials for such a high argument, should not you arrive at them in a strictly scientific manner; or are you entitled to make use of them without having made a study of the respective sciences from which they have been taken, and that fully and philosophically? Just as much entitled as the thousands of our general population are to avail themselves of the information of the almanac, when they proceed on the certainty of a coming eclipse, though not one of them can so calculate the period as to predict the conjunctions and oppositions of any of the celestial bodies. Let us go back to natural philosophy, and instance one of the most illustrious of its doctrines, that the actual law of gravitation is the only one which can insure the stability of our planetary system, it being demonstrable that, by the deviation of but a thousandth part, all would speedily go into disorder, and the present goodly mechanism of the heavens be broken up in the course of a few ages. Such is the demonstrable truth; but is it necessary, ere we turn it to its theological uses, that he, the professor, or you, the students of theology, must have mastered the demonstration? Then, instead of one session at the natural philosophy, you must labour for years to surmount the arduous mathematics of La Place and La Grange, and find your way to their results through the very pathway which was so laboriously trodden by these great masters, instead of being satisfied with the collective testimony of the scientific world. I venture to say that, at this rate, no one science which is at all cognate with or related to any other, could possibly get on. The labourers in the respective departments must give and take from each other—all undergoing the labour of their own processes, but making over their results to be used as a common property for the general good of mankind. In borrowing from other sciences, it is with their results, and not with their pro-

cesses, that the student or cultivator of any one science has to do ; and he rests his confidence in the truth of that result as a most legitimate and warrantable ground of evidence, when he rests it on the truthfulness of the general voice emitted by astronomers at large, or by naturalists at large, when they depone to what the articles are of their universal faith ; and thus it is that we theologians may lay our immediate hand on that beautiful law in the celestial physics which has just been announced to you, and turn it to a theological purpose, without being compelled to find our way to it by the calculus of a high mathematics, just as Paley took instanter the materials that were furnished to him by professional men wherewith to frame his lucid and masterly demonstration, without himself taking up the knife of the anatomist, and thereby finding his way to them. At the point of junction between theology and the other sciences, it is quite competent for theology to lay hold of the results which the others make over to her, and for the soundness of which they alone are responsible—herself, at the same time, being responsible for the use which she makes of them, that is, for her own processes, when she carries forward the information that she has thus gotten to ulterior conclusions of her own.

Will it be said that by this change we would superficialize the education of our students? Our object is directly the reverse. It is to make their preparatory bear more abundantly than now on their professional learning, and this with the view not of making them more superficial, but of making them more profound and accomplished theologians. The days were when all the lessons of natural philosophy could be overtaken, and yet leave enough of unexpended strength and time for the loftiest and most arduous achievements in sacred literature. But in the march of discovery, these lessons have now accumulated a hundredfold, and it would require the best years of a man's life to attain the mastery over them ; so that the question is imperatively laid upon us, Shall we still grapple with this whole subject in a general and absolute class, with the sure result of a stunted and meagre theology, or shall we make a selection of its lessons, to be taught in a class which shall be relative and rudimental to theology, so as both to strengthen the basis and elevate the superstructure of that science, which we shall labour to minister in all its perfection, both for the purposes of defence and of distinction to the students of the Free Church of Scotland? Let us not stand in dread of superficiality, because we

take no more from the physical sciences than what of the strictly proper and professional those sciences have to give. We do not need to go forth upon their domain in quest of the profound or elaborate—we shall have enough of this within our own borders. After we have received all that we want at their hands, we shall call for the severest draughts on the attention of our scholars, if we but adequately expound the distinction between final and efficient causes, or the important distinction, not till recently adverted to, between the laws of matter and the dispositions of matter; and still more, if we can succeed in clearing away from the theistical argument the cumbrous dialectics of a former generation; and lastly, if we can dispose of such infidel plausibilities as have been conjured up by Hume and La Place—the one profound in metaphysics and the other in astronomy, yet both of them superficial in theology notwithstanding—as if the very labour and time they had expended in their own favourite walks had just unfitted them all the more for the patient and profound treatment of theological questions. We are aware of the association that exists between the popular and the superficial, and of a very prevalent impression that the Free Church of Scotland is, in respect to the learning of her ministers, on the highway of being degraded and vulgarized. We leave this degenerating process to others. Let it be ours to make head against it; and should the men who combine the rigidly scientific with the purely ecclesiastical, such men as the Brewsters and Flemings of the present day, ever fall into our hands, let it be our care that they and such as they shall preside over the lectureship which we now recommend; and by so guarding the access to our theological seminary, let it go forth and be palpable to all men, that in the Free Church of Scotland the union between the conjunct interests of science and of sacredness is held to be inviolable, and that with us a sound faith and sound philosophy are at one.

I must now be very brief and general in the exposition of my views on the last of the preliminary classes, which I would have to be a class of mental and moral philosophy, but modified, too, as the former, from the absolute and the general into the relative form—that is, a professorship of the mental and moral sciences in their connexion with theology. Between the two classes natural theology might be fully overtaken—a mighty disencumbrance to the junior professor of divinity, because leaving him free to enter at once on the evidences of Christianity.

And when, between them, the light of nature has been held up to the question of a God, then, in the hands of the ethical professor, the law of nature may be extended from the social duties to the duties which man owes to his Maker; and so prove, what the moral philosophy of our day has signally failed in, a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. And then as to the mental, in contradistinction to moral science—as to what Dr. Thomas Brown calls the physiology of the mind—the reduction of the absolute to a relative class will not necessarily call for such abridgments as those we have proposed on the natural philosophy. For, in truth, so manifold are the adaptations between the subjective mind and the objective Christianity which is addressed to it, that we know not a better preparation than the study of the mental processes or laws, both for your philosophically appreciating the internal evidences of our faith, and for your exploring, with the eye of a scientific observer, the depths and the recesses of experimental religion. As far as the rationale of that high and hidden process, even our sanctification by faith, can be laid open, let all progress be made in it, when it will appear that the direct experience of the advanced Christian, whether as verified in his own person, or as adverted to in Scripture, is in striking coincidence with the discoveries of those who make the working of the human faculties the object of their reflex contemplation. I cannot at present particularize—I shall do it afterwards, and within a few days, in one of my introductory lectures to the theological class. But meanwhile, recurring to the charge of ours being a slender and superficial education—because we would translate the absolute into the relative and rudimental—let me instance the single case of President Edwards. I know not if he was a man of large acquisitions on the field of metaphysics, and imagine that both Leibnitz and Hume were before him in their extended survey of the mind, with its various faculties and operations. Each of the two, we conceive, would have been better prepared for conducting a general or absolute class on the mental philosophy; while Edwards would have been incomparably better than either for the superintendence of a relative class on mental science in connexion with theology. And is there any who would apprehend a meagre superficiality either in the professor or students as the effect of such a scholarship—more limited, we admit, than the other in point of extent, but all the more intense and profound, as if from the greater concentration of the intellect on the fewer

topics which engaged it. And accordingly, when the orthodox system was assailed at one of its most important positions, this called forth the great American divine, who acquitted himself the noblest of its champions, though he had no value for science, and scarcely ever studied it but in its subservience to theology, and for his more thorough equipment for the battles of the faith. And it is thus, that when relieved from the servitude of such classes as have hitherto preceded the study of divinity, but do not in the least prepare for it, and when such other classes as we have ventured to suggest are substituted in their room, that we may look for a succession of labourers on the field of authorship, who, girded for the work and the warfare, will at once deepen the foundation, and elevate the superstructure, and strengthen the bulwarks of our science.

Edwards is far the highest name which the New World has to boast of; and if aught can enhance our reverence for the achievement by which he distanced so immeasurably all the speculations of all the schools in Europe, it must be that his was an achievement consecrated by the deepest spirit of religion, and performed by a man who, almost unconscious of science, or at least unconscious of all its honours, was prompted to the task, which he has fulfilled so admirably, by his devotedness to that cause which, as a Christian minister, he felt to be the dearest and the best. There is indeed a striking contrast between the unlettered people among whom he laboured as a pastor, and the philosophers whom, as an author, he held converse with, and something most touchingly beautiful in the adaptation that he made of himself to both, giving rise to a corresponding contrast between the plain ministrations of his Sabbath, and the profound musings and inspirations of his solitude. His book on the Freedom of the Will, with a homeliness of style that represents the worth and the simplicity of his private life, by the firm staple of its thoughts, and the whole texture of its wondrous argument, is an undying testimonial to the superior and unrivalled strength of his metaphysical talents. Never was there a happier combination of great power with great piety; and were it not for the higher examples in the surpassing volume wherewith Heaven has directly furnished us, I would hold it as the brightest eulogy, both on the character and the genius of any clergyman, that he copied the virtues and had imbibed the theology of Edwards.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS,

NOVEMBER, 1844.

THE PRAYER.

O God, Thou hast said that all Scripture is profitable. Do Thou open our understandings to understand it. Thou hast exalted Thy word over all Thy name. To it may we give earnest heed, till the day dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts. Teach us to sit with the docility of children to the lessons of the Bible; and along with the visitation which impresses upon us the spirit, do Thou also bless the learning which opens to us the letter of the divine testimony.

On the one hand we read of the simplicity that is in Christ—of the danger lest we should be corrupted from it by a vain philosophy—of the science falsely so called—of the mysteries in our holy faith being revealed unto babes, and hidden from the wise and prudent—of an illumination by the Spirit of God transcendentally above and beyond all the possible illuminations of human learning—of a discernment which nature cannot reach, and which only cometh by the visitation of a light from on high, when the day dawns and the day-star arises in the heart—of the gospel being preached to the poor, and that, too, not in the words which man teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, so that they become rich in faith and heirs of the everlasting kingdom, while the rich and the accomplished in this world's knowledge remain in outer darkness;—on the one hand we read of these things in the Bible, and yet, on the other hand, we are told of the importance of a learned ministry; and to provide this, have schools and colleges been instituted throughout all Christendom; and if not the whole encyclopædia of human learning, at least a great part of it, must be traversed, ere access can be had to its pulpits. And so in many minds there is the feeling of a certain discrepancy between the sayings of God's word and the doings of most of our modern Churches. It is thus that some explanation is called for to harmonize the different, if not the opposite representations, that we may understand the respective places or functions which belong, on the one hand, to the education given at universities, and, on the other, to that teaching of God's Spirit whereby the most unlettered of men might be made wise unto salvation.

It is the misfortune of a single address when it cannot fully overtake the topic which itself sets out with—the precise difficulty in which we are now landed, under the pressure of which we shall dismiss the formal preliminaries of argument, and enter at once upon such examples as might serve to convey our meaning in a way the most brief, and as far as possible the most comprehensive.

The most apposite illustration, then, which we can think of, is furnished by the question—a vital and fundamental one in theology—that relates to the component parts of Scripture, and on which there hinges the all-important decision of what the books are and what the books are not which are entitled to have their place and their standing in an infallible directory of human faith. On the solution of this question it depends what the compositions are which we should receive as inspired, and what the compositions which we should reject as apocryphal—a question this on which the Catholic and Protestant Churches have determined variously. Now, each separate book at issue, or that is at all involved in this controversy, has a separate history of its own, which can be traced upward from age to age through a series of testimonies till we reach the period of Christian fathers and apostolic men, and come to the days of the New Testament—nay, can ascend to still older depositions than those of Christ and His immediate followers, as high as to the very confines, or rather within the limits of the Pentateuch. It is thus that the books of Scripture have come down to us with a force of historical evidence which abundantly sustains their title to a place in the sacred canon; and it is the want of this evidence which has determined the Churches of the Reformation to exclude the Apocrypha. But it is an evidence this which they could only come in sight of by means of erudition, or through the medium of the lore and the languages of antiquity. In this way of it you will perceive, that the signatures of divine authority for each book are gathered from the contemporaneous, or along the pathway of the successive authorship—that is, from places external to the book. But this does not hinder there being another way of it. There is not the least incongruity, nay, it is in perfect keeping, and what might be expected, that the same book which has the external, should have internal signatures of its divinity also; so that while it is only for the scholar to explore and ascertain the one evidence as it lies among the documents and the traditions of former ages, it is for the saint, with his eye intent

on the word, and his soul enlightened by the Spirit of God, to discern the other evidence as it beams, in the light of its own effulgence, on the vision of his now clarified intellect from the pages of inspiration. The question has been much and earnestly agitated, on which of these two evidences it is that the canon of Scripture has been settled?—a most interesting question, truly, and requiring for its solution the employment of certain most important and great ecclesiastical principles, as the authority of a Church, and the right of private judgment, and the use of human learning in Christianity, and the deference due to the sense or the discernment of such men as are to be found in the humblest classes of society, and whom the Apostle had in his eye when he said, That he who is spiritual judgeth all things, and is himself judged of no man. Many of our most eminent writers on the side of the Reformation maintain, that it is the internal evidence, or the truth shining in the word, which fixes the canon; though for myself I agree with Richard Baxter, that under the guidance of this evidence alone we could never have found our way through the mass of human authorship to the discovery and selection of those sixty-six different books which make up the code or collection of the Old and New Testament; but that in the first instance it was the learning of the Church which rightly determined the canonicity of Scripture, and that mainly on the strength of external evidence; and that then, in the second instance, where the liberality of the Church, now become Protestant, opened up a free access to Scripture for all the population, and enjoined, even from early boyhood, their heedful and daily perusal of it, that then the internal evidence came into play, and nobly re-echoed the same lesson with the external by its miracles of conversion and of saving knowledge among the congregations and families of the land. But it is not essential to our object that this controversy should be settled, or that we should announce the side which we take upon it. Enough for us if it be granted that both these evidences may exist, the external and the internal; and where, we ask, is the discrepancy between them?—the one, it may be, as indispensable in the providence of God for keeping alive in our world the knowledge of the Bible's claims, and this across the dreary millennium of the dark ages, as the durability of the ink and the parchment was indispensable for keeping alive the knowledge of the Bible's contents, and transmitting them downwards uninjured and entire along the line of many generations. In virtue of the

one the learned of high scholarship could single out the books of Scripture from among the other relics of antiquity, and concentrate upon them the attention of all the Churches; in virtue of the other, the unlearned of humbler scholarship could, in reading these Scriptures, when brought home to their hearts by God's own Spirit, be made to taste of their power and preciousness. The way to harmonize these two elements is not to conflict the one against the other, but to compound the one with the other. Without the exploration and testimony of the learned we should not have picked out or collected the Scriptures from among the debris of the middle ages, or been able to say what the books were in which the word of God was to be found. But, again, without the exposition of these books from the pulpits of a free Christianity, or without the perusal of them in the homes and among the families of the people, the way would have been still untrodden by which the entrance of God's word giveth light unto the simple. It was learning, the high and accomplished learning of our early reformers, which pointed the way to the temple of knowledge; it is education, the sound and scriptural education of our schools and churches, which trains our people in the habit of repairing to it. It is neither the one nor the other—neither the sight of the temple nor the way which leads to it; but it is the light in the temple itself, the light of God's own word and of God's own Spirit, which makes the people wise unto salvation. They may read their Bibles at the bidding of authority, the authority of their ministers or parents; but they do not believe their Bibles at the bidding of authority, for in nothing whatever can they possibly believe but in that which they see with their own eyes, or is made palpable, it may be through an operation from on high, to the light of their own understandings. It is well that the learning and the education brought them there, and so placed them in the way of that visitation from above which befell them there. If really converted, if actually brought out of darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, it has been done, proximately and effectually done, by the teaching of the Holy Ghost, though instrumentally and subserviently the teaching of man has had to do with it. If men would only not look at things with half an eye, we should both have a greater completeness and a greater harmony in our Churches; and neither a fanatic jealousy of learning upon the one hand, nor, upon the other, the portly contempt of an erudite theology for the doctrine of a spiritual illumination. The learn-

ing of our universities would be more amply provided for; and these, instead of so many icebergs for bringing down the temperament of society, even to the coldness and apathy of spiritual death, would be the fountainheads of a living water to refresh, and be for the healing of the nation.

And let it not be imagined, that because this historical evidence for the canon of the Old and New Testament has been already so well expounded, it may now be left behind as a question settled and set by, and in regard to which, therefore, the services of a high erudition are no longer called for. For, besides that you should know how and on what ground it has been settled, it is a mistake to conceive, so long as there is a vain, proud, and unquelled spirit, whether of heresy or infidelity, in the midst of us, it is altogether a mistake to suppose of this, or indeed of any question in theology, that it has yet been conclusively set by. The Church on earth is still a Church militant; and it is indeed a most grievous misconception that the triumphant argument of two or three centuries back may now go to sleep—for often may the same hostile attack be reiterated, and as often the same battle have to be fought over again. It is thus that much, very much of the scholarship of Christianity was not only called into being at the first, but must be kept in exercise ever afterwards for the defence of Christianity. It is not that I would summon you all to the high places of the field, there to signalize yourselves by deeds of championship in the battles of the faith; but as war is unavoidable, there should in every Church be a school of preparation for the war, even though for each generation but one mighty captain in the host, but one master in Israel should emerge from it. He, the chief among his fellows, might sustain the controversy, and they, the lettered and intellectual clergymen of our Church, might form the enlightened public who could appreciate his authorship and re-echo his arguments. It is thus that infidelity and error have been so often cleared away from the higher regions of our literary commonwealth, which might else have descended with most blighting and baleful influence on the places underneath. And still there is nothing in this our demand for the loftiest erudition and science in our schools of theology, which conflicts in the least with the perfect sufficiency of the Bible, and the Bible alone, for the spiritual Christianity of all our population. It is for the defence and integrity of this Bible that I would have our scholars to arise in full equipment and force, not only that they

might vindicate its honours, but that they might throw the canopy of their protection over the faith of our cottage patri-archs.

And the same principle, though we have taken an illustration of it from but one case or one question, may be recognised throughout the whole range of our scientific theology, which may be taught in all its branches in purest, and loftiest, and most academic style to the Church's ministers, without prejudice to that other, that higher manifestation, which is the common property of the Church's people—the manifestation of the truth unto the conscience; that precious and satisfying light from above which irradiates the soul of many an inquirer, who, utter stranger though he be to the methods and the scholarship of universities, can yet read with simple earnestness the word of God, and pray with simple dependence for the Spirit of God, and can say, most legitimately and warrantably say, as the result of this process—a process that might be as well realized in the poor man's hovel as in the proudest halls of philosophy—"Whereas I was once blind, now I see." All I want is, that men shall find room in their minds for both these elements, so that the one shall not be held destructive of the other, or be suffered to dispossess the other. It is both true that there is an argumentative and literary evidence outside the Bible, which might require the most accomplished of our *savans*, and he endowed with the highest powers of ratiocination, adequately to expound; but it is just as true that there is a moral and experimental evidence inside the Bible, which it is competent for the humblest of our peasantry rightly to discern. What I want is to vindicate the place and the prerogatives of both; that we might have colleges in full equipment for the one, and for the other the faithful preaching of the word in all our pulpits, and the prayerful reading of the word in all our families. Among the new lectureships of this season, there will be one by my junior and my colleague in the theological department, the great burden of which is to be the rule of faith, when I have no doubt that by the helps of a vigorous logic, and of a profound as well as voluminous erudition, that noble principle will be fully brought out which Chillingworth has embodied among the memorabilia of our profession, even that the Bible, and the Bible alone, is the great standard and depository of the religion of Protestants. And this evolves a most important distinction between the work of the Chair and the work of the pulpit. Here

the rule of faith is demonstrated; there it is acted on. Here the Bible is set forth as encompassed with all those high claims and credentials which invest it with rightful and exclusive authority over the faith and the obedience of men; there the Bible is opened before the eyes of all the people, and its inward contents are brought urgently and immediately to bear upon human consciences, where, in virtue of its self-evidencing power, it makes demonstration even to the simple and the unlearned of its own sufficiency, and its worthiness of all acceptance. And here again may we behold the respective places which belong, on the one hand, to the scholarship and the science of colleges; and on the other, to that simple and scriptural preaching of the gospel to which we stand indebted for all the triumphs of conviction and conversion among the hearers of our various congregations. It is, in the first place, true that in the work and the warfare of controversy, there is a call for the learning and the wisdom of the Church's defenders, when the perversity of gainsayers imposes the task upon them of demonstrating that the word of God is the only rule of faith and of practice; but in the second place, it is just as true, (and the Church's polity would be kept from deflecting either to the right or to the left, if we but maintained a firm hold on both these positions,) it is just as true that it is out of the contact between the word and the conscience that the light or the faith is struck out which is unto salvation; and that this, too, is a faith which standeth not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. It is the professor in the academic hall to whom we should look as the likeliest instrument for the accomplishment of the first service; the village pastor, in dealing with the humblest of his flock, or the Christian mother, with her simple-hearted boy, may be the instrument of the second.

But hitherto we have been drawing our examples from the outworks of the Christian argument, as the external evidence for the books of Scripture, and the historical or literary evidence for the general truth of Christianity; and we can understand how a high scholarship might be indispensable in these departments, and this be perfectly consistent with the fact, that in the real everyday work of Christianization, in the actual business of converting human souls, all that might be needed is to bring the simple sayings within the Bible itself into juxtaposition with the mind of the inquirer. But do not those sayings, it may be asked—composing, as they do, the subject-matter of Christianity

—form the argument and theme of some of your professorships? Is it your only employment to go about the walls and to count the bulwarks of our Church's vineyard, so as to make it impregnable against all the force and violence of assailants from without? Is not ours a nursery for pastors as well as for polemics; and beside teaching them how to war against their adversaries, do we not teach them how to minister the gospel in their respective congregations? Surely if the defence of the vineyard be an object of importance, a still higher object, and to which the former stands but in the relation of subserviency, must be the internal cultivation of the vineyard. And accordingly, is not the Bible, which we have just been representing as the great instrument of conversion, is it not also the great theme, and if not formally, at least substantially, the great text-book of our theological seminaries? Nay, is not Biblical criticism a component part in every system of theological education? and surely this, if anything, should carry us into the very heart and interior of the Sacred Volume—should bring us into contact with that very subject-matter which forms the direct and proximate antecedent to the regeneration of human souls—seeing that, though said to be born again by the Spirit, yet because it is through the Spirit shining upon the Bible, they are also said to be born again by the incorruptible seed of the Word. Here, then, if anywhere, it may well be thought, will the work of the Chair come to be most closely analogous to, and so as to form an immediate stepping-stone for the work of the pulpit. And the felt puzzle or perplexity of many an observer is how to reconcile the treatment of high and recondite scholarship which the Bible undergoes at the hands of the professor, with the simplicity of those Bible statements which, from the mouth of the village pastor, are of mightiest effect in subduing the people under him. Still it might appear as if the great design of our education was to raise champions for the defence of the truth, who might contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, rather than men who, in the direct enforcement of the truth, might sustain the office and discharge the functions of able ministers of the New Testament.

The Church requires both these services, and let it dispense with neither of them—we mean both protection and efficiency; but it is chiefly for the former that what may be called the learned or scholarly treatment of Scripture is required, when dealing with those heretics who labour to pervert and sophis-

ticate the doctrine of the Bible, and garnish their own specious plausibilities with quotations in Greek and Hebrew character. We must then follow the opponents of orthodoxy to the arena which themselves have chosen ; and so, to meet them on their own ground, we are necessarily thrown back on the original language of Scripture. Not so, however, when the object, instead of being polemical, is either didactic or hortatory ; or when, instead of having to vindicate the truth of God against the perverse interpretations of the gainsayers, we have but to press home that truth on the understandings and consciences of the people. When this last is the business on hand, the philological criticism of Scripture is not called for ; for by the universal consent of all the first-rate authorities, there is not a popular version in Christendom, where, with one or two exceptions that can be easily pointed out and guarded against, all that is essential, whether in the doctrinal or preceptive parts of the gospel, is not accurately given. This is a most comfortable testimony, however mortifying it may turn out to those unfeeling pedants who, because of their superior acquaintance with the original and the cognate languages of Scripture, would hold themselves forth as the exclusive depositaries of a cipher by which to evolve treasures and truths from the Sacred Volume before unheard of, and so mightily to enrich and enlarge, nay, perhaps to rectify and to reform the existing theology of our land. Now, it is of capital importance to be told, that this is altogether a vain pretension ; and it cannot be too widely proclaimed, that for the spiritual nourishment of our people, the word of life, as it exists in the secondary reservoir of a translation within their reach, is in all things of moment as available as the word of life existing in what to them are the remote and inaccessible fountainheads of the Hebrew Old and the Greek New Testament. In dealing, therefore, with our hearers, the men and women of any plain or ordinary congregation, we may reason with them just as confidently out of the English Scriptures, as Paul, in dealing with his own countrymen, reasoned with them out of the Jewish Scriptures. We are far, very far, from wishing to exonerate our students of theology from the study, in order to a familiar acquaintance with the Bible, in its original tongues—and this that all of them might be able to withstand, whilst some select and superlative few, though it were even but one man of might and of high emprise amongst them, should be able to lift the polemic arm, and lay

final extinction on the neological interpretations of Germany. Still it is true, that the right polemical treatment of any given passage in the Bible is one thing, and that the right pulpit treatment of it is another and a different thing; and the question comes to be, Is it not of as great importance—I hold it to be infinitely greater—that the lessons of a university should teach us how to wield and to apply the Bible in an assembly of Sabbath worshippers, as how to wield and to make application of it on the field of controversy? Let it not be said that the way to provide for this were the institution of another chair—a chair of pastoral theology. This may come in the course of our successive augmentations; but meanwhile, it were well to expand our conceptions of Biblical literature beyond that single department of it which is merely philological. The question, whether there has been a pure and right derivation of the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into English, is not the only question for a Biblical class. Over and above the phraseology of the book, there is the subject-matter of the book, not as manufactured or worked into a systematic theology, but as lying imbedded there in its native and original form—the primary materials, as it were, of the message where it stands; and which present us with the weightiest topics of Biblical observation, though seldom brought within the range of what is commonly regarded as Biblical criticism—topics, they would have been, of most momentous interest though the same revelation had been made to us in our own vernacular tongue, and which surely are not the less momentous, although having come down to us in Greek and Hebrew they are apt to be displaced and lost sight of amid the learned disquisitions of uncial characters, and ἀπαξ λεγόμενα, and such other kindred matters as are to be found in the Prolegomena and Thesauruses of our most venerable tomes. Let the things of greatest weight and magnitude be done, and as far as possible let nothing be left undone. I therefore rejoice in the fulfilment at length of an object for which I have been calling out incessantly these sixteen years, or ever since my first connexion with Edinburgh—and that is the establishment of another theological professorship; and what is still more promising, is that he who fills it will give so much of his attention both to the authority of Scripture and the sense of Scripture. Between the lectureships of Dr. Cunningham and Dr. Black, in both of which I understand that the sense and subject-matter of the Bible will hold the largest place, I feel as if a great step

were now making in advance towards the perfecting of our theological course.

But our efforts in the way of enlargement and extension do not stop here; and I am glad to announce that, since we last met, attention has been given to the preliminary, as well as the more strictly professional education of our students. And of all the subjects or sciences through which they have to pass in the course of their previous academic training, there is none which bears with greater directness or a more controlling influence upon our own than Moral Philosophy. For it may be said of the law of conscience, as well as of the law of Moses, that it is a schoolmaster for bringing us to Christ; and accordingly the Apostle Paul avails himself of both, in that masterly argument by which he labours to find his way to the understanding both of Gentiles and Jews, for the most distinguishing and peculiar truths of Christianity. It must be palpable to all, how grievously this object has been lost sight of in the ethical systems of our present day; and with the express purpose to repair this deficiency, have we made choice of one who is qualified to prove how closely the conclusions of deepest science are in unison with the deepest views of evangelism. The moral philosophy which throws a deceitful garnish over the character of man, is, *toto cælo*, diverse from the moral philosophy which demonstrates our nature to be an enigma that nothing but a revelation from heaven can solve—a ruin, with it may be some beauteous fragments, which, however, can be only set up again by the restorative processes of the gospel—a moral chaos, though capable it may be of being evolved into a state of health and harmony by some such operation as that of the Spirit who moved upon the face of the waters. Let the fair exhibitions of friendship and patriotism and native humanity, and all the other varieties of spontaneous virtue be what they may, even by the dim light of nature's theology may enough be made known of nature's guilt in the eye of that supreme God who has been forgotten and disowned by it, to demonstrate a breach between heaven and earth, which nothing can heal but the knowledge of Jesus Christ and of Him crucified.

I shall rejoice if by aught I have said I can disarm the prejudice of the humble and the pious against a learned ministry, and still more, if I can disarm the pride of that erudite theology which would refuse, not the Christianity, it may be, but what I most earnestly contend for, the intelligent Christianity, the warrantable, the logically warrantable and well-grounded faith

of the veriest babe in this world's wisdom, and whose only ostensible acquisitions in this world's eye are that he reads his Bible and loves his Saviour. The mind that can look comprehensively at the subject will find place and occupancy for both; and it delights me to find that, notwithstanding the violence of our late transition—a transition not voluntary on our part, but forced upon us by the triumph of power over both the conscience and rights of the Scottish nation—I rejoice to find that our descent, as some would term it, our descent, economically speaking, from the endowments of the State to the contributions of the people, is not to involve in it, as was feared perhaps by some of the enlightened friends of the Free Church of Scotland—is not to involve in it our descent, theologically or academically speaking, from a thorough well-trained and well-educated ministry to a ministry of vulgar, ignorant, low-bred, and low-minded fanaticism. The magnificent sum of £18,000 for the architecture of a college, and that tendered to the cause by only eighteen individuals, demonstrates of itself the unquelled reverence of our people for that high learning which signalized the John Knoxes, and the George Buchanans, and the Andrew Melvilles of other days; and our proper return for so noble a manifestation is, that we lend such a care on our part for a high popular education as shall secure a lettered and intellectual, as well as spiritual Church, that there shall be such a curriculum of high academic study, that ours may, with the blessing of God, prove as erudite and accomplished a ministry as any to be found in Christendom.



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS,

NOVEMBER 1845.

THE PRAYER.

GIVE us, O Lord, to behold the impress of Thy hand upon this visible world. Thou sittest unseen in the heavens, but Thou hast made the heavens declare Thy glory. Thou no longer visitest this earth in a sensible form, yet the earth is full of Thy goodness. We behold not Thy glory as it radiates direct from Thy throne, but we behold a reflection of Thy glory from the face of that workmanship which Thou hast spread out before us. Enable us to read of Thine existence, of Thy power, of Thy righteousness therefrom, and to hold converse with that mighty though unseen Being who sits

behind the elements that He has formed, and gives truth, and movement, and continuance to all things.

The two qualifications of which we hear most frequently as being in greatest demand for the public service of the Church, are piety and learning. There is this distinction, we think, to be made between them. The first we hold to be indispensable for all the office-bearers of the Church; the second, though not indispensable for all, we hold to be most desirable for a very large class, and even indispensable for a certain, and that the highest class of the Church's office-bearers. There are times, but we should say unprosperous times, in the Church's history, when these two distinct elements, the piety and the learning, have met in conflict instead of friendly co-operation, acting as rival, nay, even as adverse and hostile elements the one to the other. There have been seasons of spiritual decay, but withal of high scholarship and talent, when an ungodly, even though it were a professional literature, looked with disdain on humble and unlettered piety, just as it would on vulgar and degrading fanaticism, and so would utterly have nauseated the co-operation of its services. And again, there have been seasons of popular and headlong impulse, when blind, impetuous, indiscriminating zeal threatened to carry all before it, and, could it have had its own mind, would have exiled all human learning from the Church as something heathenish and unholy—alleging the revelation of the Spirit to be the only and most sufficient guidance for all Christians; and so that the lessons given forth at universities, the lengthened courses of attendance and instruction there, were all superseded by the better and higher illuminations which were received directly from above. The exclusive literary spirit—a good and desirable spirit, when not exclusive, and not contemptuous of earnest piety—predominated in the Church of England throughout the prior half of the last century, and since that time has been still more glaringly exemplified throughout the universities and among the churches of Germany. The exclusively zealous spirit—a good spirit too, when not exclusive, and not fanatically jealous of high erudition—has occasionally broken forth amongst some few of the sectaries in England, and still more signally in the same Germany, as when it effervesced into wild and tumultuous excesses amongst their Anabaptists in the days of Luther. These are instructive passages in Church history; and one important lesson to be gathered from them is the

limitation or exceeding infirmity of the human understanding ; as the effect of which, it is constantly vacillating between two extremes, and, because unable to combine one good with another, would place them in hostile array ; so that, either wanting the zeal, the Church shall wither into a state of spiritual death, or wanting the scholarship, the Church shall be disfigured by all the erratic and senseless extravagances of a zeal without knowledge. There is one secret, we are persuaded, which, if only recognised and acted on, would mightily expedite the sacred cause of union among Christians, that noblest object of mutual deliberation and effort in our day—which is, that to effect the reconciliation of parties, who, if not actually warring, are at least keeping aloof from each other, instead of conflicting the reigning principle of the one against the reigning and often only seemingly adverse principle of the other, the way would be, if possible, to compound them, and to find a place of occupancy for both. It is thus that learning and piety ought not to be conflicted, but compounded. They may not always meet in the same individual—the indispensable piety with the useful and desirable learning. But in a Church, made up of many offices and many individuals, there should be the most ample provision and encouragement for both. We feel quite sure that this were the right way of proceeding with the two elements of learning and piety. Both are best ; and those were the best periods of the Church when both were made available to the uttermost, whether for the defence or cultivation of the vineyard. It was thus at the time of the German Reformation, and thus, too, when the great transition was effected from Popery to Protestantism in our own land. Our men of greatest scholarship, and at the same time of greatest ascendancy in the Church, were men of prayer ; and we doubt not that then the ostensible leaders in the movement would know both how to appreciate and how to avail themselves of the piety without learning, whereof there occurred in those days so many bright examples in the eldership of Scotland. We will not speak, on the other hand, in the language of gratulation of those benefits which have been rendered by men of learning without piety, as, for want of the latter ingredient, they were unfit to be members, and far less office-bearers of the Church. And yet it is a befitting theme of gratitude to Him who makes even the earth to help the woman, that our cause has so often been strengthened by the labours of unsanctified intellect. It is not most assuredly for us to judge, though unable to vouch for the personal religion of

Erasmus, or Grotius, or even our own George Buchanan, or Brian Walton, or Chillingworth, or Bishop Horsley; yet, without pronouncing on any of these, let us felicitate ourselves in the thought, that, even with one and the same individual, deep and varied learning, on the one hand, and deep devoted piety, on the other, are not incompatible; and that, from the days of Paul the Apostle to those of Jonathan Edwards, there has been such a goodly array of names in whom the life of faith has been blended with the services, not of a vain but true philosophy—at once the Church's most productive labourers and brightest ornaments.

And here, as standing closely related to this subject, we cannot but express our satisfaction with a recent arrangement adopted by the Free Church of Scotland. To meet our unprovided congregations, still so numerous, and withal increasing at such a rate that we may not be able to overtake them for years by an adequate supply of regular and fully-trained probationers, there was a disposition to confer license and ministerial ordination on men of warm and earnest, though unlettered piety, if but gifted with the requisite scriptural knowledge and requisite fluency for the public services of a congregation; and there can be no doubt that the services of such men might be rendered greatly available, and this for a higher purpose than merely keeping these congregations together, even for building them up in the faith, and for sustaining, through the indispensable grace fetched down from heaven by prayer, the spiritual religion of families. And yet the proposal to confer license on these men was resisted, or rather so far modified, that while admittance to the regular ministerial charge is shut against them, save through a prescribed curriculum of college studies, still the utmost advantage can be taken of their labours on the field of Christian usefulness. A distinct office has been assigned for them, and a distinct and distinguishing title conferred upon it. They are to be employed, not in the capacity and with the name of probationers, but in the capacity and with the name of catechists. I confess my partiality for the multiplication and wide employment of such men in the Church. I disclaim all fellowship, either in thought or feeling, with the lordly contempt or intolerance of those learned theologians who, from the eminence of their portly erudition, could look superciliously or with distrust on the labours of such men in the vineyard of the gospel—men who, speaking plainly yet impressively out of the fulness of their Christianized hearts, might operate as a fermenting leaven for good in their respective localities; and,

with the blessing of God upon their work, be the instruments in His hand for the diffusion of a like spirit and piety and Christian worth, all kindred to their own, among the families of Scotland. I do not see how without their aid we shall be able to open a large or speedy access to the hearts and households of our common people, so as to assail with effect the strongholds of corruption in cities, or to penetrate, and far less to pervade, the masses of a sorely neglected population. When I look at the urgency of an interest so pressing and practical as this, I scarcely know how to express my utter sense of repugnancy and distaste, when told of the degradation or the danger which lies in the employment of men as functionaries because they have not had the full university education, or are not able to combat with learned infidelity in sentences of Greek and Hebrew character. The *odi profanum vulgus* of the Egyptian priesthood, who, wrapt in hieroglyphic mystery, forbade the access of all but the initiated to their temples, is not more hateful in my eyes than is that freezing interdict of certain doctors or dignitaries, which, if given way to, would lock up the bread of life from the multitude, and lay obstruction on the free circulation among our streets and lanes of those waters of life which are for the healing of the people.

But how is it that people will not make room in their minds for more than one idea upon this question, which operates to the exclusion of every other, as if it filled up all the little capacity they have, and so monopolized the whole field of their intellectual vision? How is it they will not perceive that two good things may not be incompatible with each other—on the one hand, a most laborious and devoted agency of catechists, and on the other, a highly educated and erudite body of clergymen? They have begun to see this now even in the Church of England, where, instead of regarding their Oxford and Cambridge as the only fountainheads of Christian usefulness throughout the parishes of the land, they, after much hesitation, and in the face still of many struggling antipathies, do at length recognise the possible efficiency of laymen in the work of religious instruction—as may be seen in their increasing patronage of district visitations, and Sabbath schools, and pastoral aid societies. In Scotland we have long been accustomed, through the medium of our elders, to the coadjutorship of laymen in the business of spiritual cultivation; and now that the order of catechists is on the eve of being more fully and formally recognised, and we trust far more frequently

drawn upon for their services than heretofore, who does not see that we can all the better afford to elevate the scholarship of the higher officials in our Church, and indefinitely to raise the standard of their professional education? We are opening up a channel by which to give larger and wider scope than hitherto for the efforts of unlettered piety, and thus make its services available to the uttermost for the Christian good of our people; and is not this the very reason why, without injury to the people, but for the great ultimate benefit both of themselves and of the Church at large, we might now proceed to the great work of perfecting the education of our licentiates, to whom we look for the main and the permanent supply of gospel ministrations? We have heard some of our friends give utterance to the apprehension lest, by the employment of catechists, our Church should be vulgarized. It will be our fault if this employment of them be not followed up by the very contrary effect; for in virtue of this expedient, we shall feel ourselves all the more at liberty to neutralize, nay, more than neutralize, the dreaded mischief, by a counteractive operation in our colleges. Let us first discharge ourselves, as we best may, of the justice that we owe to the urgent religious necessities of our vacant congregations; and on this deep, though some would call it, this shallow basis, but we say, on this deep and sound basis, on the foundation of that sacredness, which is the beginning or first principle of wisdom, we should rejoice that there arose a lettered and intellectual Church, not to shed a withering operation around it, or cause a blight to descend from its eminences on the piety of our cottage patriarchs, but to enlist the higher as well as lower classes of society on the side of that common Christianity which is one and the same for both; so that the very highest minds of the country, and whose suffrages are of such ascendant influence over the public at large, might do homage to that evangelism which forms the sustenance and moral health of our general population. And we mistake it, if we think that, among a people thus done justice to, there will be aught like a fanatical repugnance to the high scholarship of their ministers. On the contrary, among our well-taught peasantry there is a reverence for college education; and we know not of many congregations, where the reputed learning of the clergyman would not be liked and rejoiced in as a matter of felt complacency even by the poorest of its members. Let us but do our uttermost for the spiritual wants of the people, and with such an instrumentality as we can

at present command; and instead of having aught to fear from their hostility to our literary institutes, will there be a demand and a preference for those higher ecclesiastical labourers, whom, at our colleges and our halls, it is our business to prepare for them.

Having thus adverted to the variety of offices in the Church, let me for one moment farther advert to a desire sometimes felt in such strength and urgency as to act with moral compulsion upon the young more particularly, in their choice of the clerical profession. Would that the spirit of Christian usefulness were increased a hundredfold amongst us, and that an affection for human souls were to become the operating principle, which should draw forth a vastly greater number of labourers than now come forward, to the harvest of a population far too plenteous for the workmen that we have yet been able to supply. But let it not be said that we are laying any barrier in the way of a consummation so desirable by the high scholarship that we require for clergymen. Our vindication is, that there are offices besides that of an ordained minister, and by the discharge of which most important contributions might be made to the Christian good of families, and to which offices we do not annex the condition of an academical education or a lengthened attendance upon colleges. You will thus see that our demand for the high learning of clergymen, and our encouragement of the piety that without such learning is the best qualification for elders, and catechists, and Sabbath-school teachers, that these two, so far from being in a state of antagonism, according to our view of it, do, in fact, lend mutual support and consistency the one to the other. And it is thus that when consulted by those who aspire to the ministry, and complain of the difficulties which the curriculum throws in their way, our reply often is, that though these difficulties do exist, and may be insuperable in one direction, there are other directions for Christian philanthropy besides, which I should like to see occupied in tens and fifties and hundreds by the religious and intelligent laymen of our Church, that a varied and extensive agency may arise in the midst of us fully equipped for the work, and girded for a strenuous and determined warfare against the irreligion and profligacy of our age.

Let it be our hope, therefore, as it is assuredly our earnest desire, that we shall ever so conduct the methods of this institute as to make it palpable to all, that to popularize our Church is not necessarily to vulgarize it, but that our future ministers shall go forth of our class-rooms with as high accomplishments in

scholarship and science as any in Christendom. The experience of the two last sessions, or two first since the Disruption, amply sustains this anticipation. The first, the indispensable qualification for the gospel ministry throughout all its departments, is devoted personal religion. But as Paul, the most learned of all the apostles, while as holy and humble as any, was also the most efficient of them all, and not less qualified for holding converse with the barbarian, because pre-eminently fitted for converse with the Greek, so let it ever be our high aim so to train and to equip our aspirants for the ministry, that whilst each is richly furnished with the wisdom of sacredness from on high by which to speak powerfully home to all consciences, and revered for his piety shall be everywhere an honoured and welcome visitor among the habitations of the poor, he may furthermore be equal to the task of confronting, as Paul did at Athens, the pride of a hostile and contemptuous literature, and of adapting his argument whether to the prejudices or the powers of all classes in society.

Having thus far cleared my way to the entertainment of such topics as are purely collegiate and academical, let me now explain the arrangements of the winter.

I dare not incur the hazard of exciting the pathos and profound regrets of this assembly by saying all I might on the bereavement which a mysterious though all-wise Providence has been pleased to inflict upon us by the death of Dr. Welsh. This institute, of which he was so distinguished a member, will ever associate with his memory a sense of grateful obligation for high services. The College fabric now on the eve of its commencement, and to which, I might add, our choice and rapidly increasing and even already our well-stored library, might be regarded as all his own. And beyond the circle of our Free Church, there must be the general feeling of a heavy loss, in that he was arrested on a most promising career of authorship, when engaged in supplying what might well be termed a great desideratum in British literature, a good Church History. His first volume, all that was published before his death, will ever abide a standing monument to the erudition, and classic taste, and scholarlike accomplishments of its author. Would to God that the lesson of mortality given forth by so near and affecting an example of it—that lesson which of all others is the oftenest repeated, yet the soonest and the oftenest forgotten—were to tell with all the force and feeling which it ought on the hearts of survivors, more

especially on those survivors who, years before him in the journey of life, are now pressing hard on the confines of both worlds, on the twilight of their earthly existence, and on the dawn of their eternity.

The arrangements wherewith this lamented vacancy has been followed up are well known to the public, and I may confidently add, well and universally approved by them. Erudition alone might suffice for the preparation of a mere history; but it requires the combination of erudition and logic to give what the French call an *histoire raisonnée*. In the hands of Dr. Cunningham the history of theological opinions will become historical theology—a most enlarging and liberalizing study, and peculiarly fitted to emancipate the mind from the thralldom of an excessive deference to human authority. Let us hope that in the contemplation of those systems and controversies which have passed in such rapid succession from one age to another of the Church, we shall learn better than we have yet done to call no man master, and to take our theology, not from the fitful and fluctuating speculations of mere adventurers on the field, not even from the most honoured fathers and founders whether of a reformed creed or a reformed polity, and whose ponderous volumes, it may be, are of highest name and greatest ascendancy in our schools;—but making our fearless appeal from these, that we shall learn to take our theology direct from that unchanging word of God, the Sun of Revelation—that great and stable luminary in the spiritual firmament, which is the same to-day, and yesterday, and for ever. One precious result of a comprehensive and well-weighed historical theology, the exhibition unfortunately as yet of endless divergencies, would be the discovery of some connecting principle by which to recall them—some rallying watchword that might harmonize the jarring elements, and expedite that blessed union to which at the present time there is at least a disposition to converge. Heaven grant that by a descent of the wisdom which is from above, the secret may at length be evolved by which to combine the two high and sacred interests of first pure, then peaceable, so as to fulfil the prayer and prediction of the Saviour, and from which we learn that on the unity of Christians there hinges the regeneration of the world. We shall not despair.

Of the new Professor in the junior class of theology, I need say nothing. His printed testimonials are to be found everywhere in his own precious works, both of doctrinal and practi-

cal theology, known and read of all men. I will not speak of my own personal satisfaction in breathing the same atmosphere with those who combine properties which are often to be found apart—the deeply evangelical with the purely and thoroughly academic; but I will express my hope that the number of first courses we have had within these walls—two last year, the junior theology and ethical science, and two now, the junior theology again and church history—will have some effect in breaking down the inveterate Scottish habit and Scottish preference for the business of our higher university classes being conducted wholly and exclusively by the delivery of lectures from the Chair, without any cognizance being taken, whether by examinations or exercises, of the students whom we are addressing—all action on the one side, but no reaction on the other, at least none that we have any knowledge of, so long as this system is persevered in of holding it enough that our instructions are thrown broad-cast among the listeners, or perhaps among the non-listeners, with no further care or culture on our part. I am quite aware of the weighty and energetic protest lifted by Professor Jardine of Glasgow, in his *Outlines of Philosophical Education*, against this practice; and perhaps, instead of the inveterate Scottish, I should have termed it the inveterate Edinburgh habit and preference for what I might well call the broad-cast husbandry. I have long thought that we might borrow with advantage a lesson both from Glasgow and from the English universities, so as to infuse a great deal more of the practical into our own courses; and, therefore, I do hope that in our theological and church history and ethical classes, and eventually our class of logic, the lectureship will not be superseded but superadded to by such methods of converse between the teachers and the taught as will secure a busy reciprocation of mind with mind in the two parties; and so the comfortable assurance that the lessons, on the one hand, have been thoroughly understood, and the learners, on the other, are really making progress.

Ethical science, which had at one time a place within the field of theology, should still be regarded as conterminous therewith, having the same close relation to our science which the law bears to the gospel, and embracing therefore the same high office of a schoolmaster for bringing men to Christ. Its direct object, so very direct that it might almost stand for a definition, is to teach what man ought to be; and then it remains for ob-

servation to tell what man actually is—exhibiting a distance and deficiency so immeasurably beneath the high standard of the absolutely right and good, as should make him feel that he is an outcast from the favour of God, and under the guidance of the wisdom that is from above might shut him up unto the faith. The habit is to regard the ethical as rudimental to the divinity classes; because, in virtue of the natural theology expounded in the former, the professor in the latter is so far relieved from the necessity of discussing the credentials of his subject. But to a certain extent it has to do with the contents as well as the credentials of our science—our great initial theme, when we enter on the subject-matter of Christianity, being the moral depravation of our race, which, along with the cognate topics of human guilt, and of the responsibility or judicial reckoning to which we stand exposed, is in part shone upon by the light of nature as well as the light of revelation. We are further aware, that in ethics, as well as in logic, there is a mental science which has been grievously perverted to the object of unsettling the foundations of both. There is a certain vicious transcendentalism both in the ethical and mental speculations of Germany, which at one time threatened the same mischief as did the Scripture criticism of Germany. We believe that the latter mischief is now effectually disarmed. It has been said of profound learning, that it has the property of Achilles' spear, in healing the wounds which itself had inflicted. If lofty talent *will* take its wayward direction on the side of sophistry and mysticism, then may it require a talent alike lofty, on the side of reason and truth, to overmatch and neutralize it. It will indeed prove a noble achievement; and I am not without the high hope that, within these walls, something will be done which might help to realize it, to disarm that wizard power wherewith the infidelity of our continental speculatists is now operating partly on the ignorance and partly on the imagination of the reading public in our own land; and, in the light of a resistless demonstration, to make it clear as day that a sound philosophy is at one with a sound faith.

But to be fully equipped for this high service, we should have a professorship of logic as well as of ethics, and logic, too, with a special application to the science of theology. I do not mean that, to make room for this application, you are to impair the completeness of the lectureship, or to depart in the least from the methods of a strict philosophy. I know it to be the apprehension of many, that theology cannot be brought into contact or

fellowship with any of the sciences without superficializing them, as if they had been thereby brought within the infection of something ignoble, of something fitted to enfeeble or dilute the staple of all the hardy intellectual products which it is brought to bear upon, and so for the rigour and the precision, and the purity of demonstrations, fashioned after the high academic model, to substitute the meagre and showy representations which any popular declaimer might conjure up from a very slender substratum of truth or of argument. It is all very possible to inflict such degradation upon the sciences, but in a thousand other ways than by a contamination from our dreaded theology, to which there attaches, in its own nature at least, or by any necessity, no such weakening or withering influence as is here ascribed to it, as might be proved by its manifold achievements in the field of controversy, when an irrefragable logic has been enlisted on the side of the Christian argument—a logic competent to grapple with the fallacies of Hume, or to lay prostrate, as has been done by the masterly hand of Butler, a whole host of plausibilities that had long been gloried in by the enemies of our faith. On the moment, indeed, that one enters upon such a vindication, the names of Turretin, and Leibnitz, and Samuel Clarke, and Jonathan Edwards, and a hundred more, rush upon the memory, to confute the charge of there being aught in theology essentially to relax the powers, or that is in the least prejudicial to mental exercises and a mental discipline of the highest order. But, without dwelling either on the illustrious works or illustrious names that stand associated with the literature of our science, let me state one great remaining achievement, that, if not yet adequately done, I should like to see perfected in a chair of logic—not of logic as limited, by Whately, to the process of deduction alone, but of logic as comprehensive both of the inductive and the deductive; or, to speak more technically, of the logic that concerns itself with the truth of the premises as well as soundness of the inferences therefrom; or, in other words, that verifies the minor and major proposition, as well as rightly arranges the terms of the syllogism, and rightly educes the conclusion. Give me such a logic that takes cognizance of all which belongs to evidence, and will therefore demand a firm inductive basis for the settlement of every question which comes under the category of the *quid est* or lies within the domain of observational truth. Thus prepared, let the historical evidence for Christianity, and in favour of its witnesses, based on an expe-

rimental knowledge of man, be put into the balance with the doctrinal objections against Christianity, based on our assumed knowledge of God and of His ways; and then let us say, whether, on comparing the solid inductive basis which the former rests upon with the total want of aught like an adequate inductive basis for the latter, the faith of Christianity does not stand in the same position to the infidelity which is opposed to it, as the modern science, which rests on the philosophy of Bacon, does to the airy and unsupported hypothesis of the old schoolmen.

We should now be drawing to a close. We have yet made no appointment for a chair of logic; but for the first time we have gone beyond the domain of the moral and intellectual sciences, and can now announce the accession to our numbers of a distinguished *savant* and labourer in the philosophy of the material world. I look on the voice of a conscience within us as the phenomenon which speaks most powerfully of a God to the ear of nature. But when we go beyond ourselves, or rather, beyond the spiritual department of ourselves, and look around on all that is palpable to the eye of the senses, there is a distinction full of import, I conceive, to the cause of natural theology, a distinction but recently made, and, if I may judge from the still more recent works on theism, not yet sufficiently appreciated—I mean the distinction which obtains between the laws of matter and the dispositions of matter. To illustrate my meaning, let me again refer, as I have often done, and always with a most grateful recollection of the lessons which I have received from him, to one of the fine generalizations of Professor Robison, when, in the arrangement he makes of the physical sciences, he designates natural philosophy as the science of successive, and natural history as the science of contemporaneous nature;—it being the office of the one, or natural philosophy, to register the events which take place in the material universe, and classify them into laws; and the office of natural history to register the objects which have place therein, and classify them according to their resemblances. Now, if it be true that they are the dispositions and not the laws, which furnish far the most striking, and frequent, and palpable indications of design in the world around us, then, as the dispositions come by Robison's definition within the department of natural history, and the laws within that of natural philosophy, it will be seen how natural history is far more replete than natural philosophy with the evidences for a

God; and how far the largest contributions to the cause of theism which have been gathered from the field of external nature, are supplied from the former, and not from the latter of these two sciences. Let us avail ourselves of the distinction made by Professor Robison; and then within the limits of a single sentence there might be condensed the weightiest argument for a God which can be gathered from the contemplation of visible things. It might be given thus—that if the arrangements of an existing natural history were destroyed, all the forces or laws of our existing natural philosophy were unable to replace them. And therefore, if it can be demonstrated that ever a time was when these arrangements were not, or when our present organized races, whether of the animal or vegetable creation, had no existence, it is at the commencement of these, or the origination of those plants and living creatures by which the earth is now peopled, that we obtain the nearest view, as if in the light of an experimental manifestation, of the fiat and interposal of a God. And it is here that geology—that science on which infidelity at one time founded her highest hopes—steps forward to do us noble service, presenting us with the very data on which to base our argument, so as mightily to strengthen and sustain the evidence for a natural theology, which is rapidly converging, in proportion as her speculations make way for her discoveries, or her fancies for her findings, towards a thorough agreement with the theology of revelation.

In the lessons of Dr. Fleming you will be presented with geology in its most recent form—a mighty recommendation in the case of a science which till lately has been the sport of a thousand fluctuations; but which now, I believe, has found a surer footing, and is making rapid progress on the solid pathway of observation. So long as she keeps this pathway, be assured that you have nothing to fear from her discoveries; and, as I know few things more delightful than to meet with the confirmations of our faith in the study of those connexions which obtain between secular and sacred history, I promise you an enjoyment all akin to this when the harmonies are pointed out to view between the volume of nature and the volume of revelation. But, over and above, I have the confident feeling, and it is a confidence in which I am sure you will all participate, that in the academic lessons of one whom, without fear of contradiction, I would characterize as the first of British zoologists, we shall be presented with such a view of organic nature—that

department which, of all others in the panorama of sensible things, most teems with the evidences of a Deity, as will fortify the mind against the crudities and flippancies which might have passed current and done a world of mischief in days of comparative ignorance, but which, now when they are repeated, and plausibly or eloquently set forth, as a few months ago, by the unknown author of a work entitled "Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation," meet with a crushing exposure at the hands of men who are at once sound in philosophy and sound in faith. Accordingly, it delights me to observe in the advertisement of Dr. Fleming's Lectures on Natural Science, that its truths will be employed in the illustration of the Scriptures and the establishment of the first principles of natural theology. And here I cannot resist the allusion to a retrospect common to each of us, when, at the outset of our professional career, we lived and laboured in contiguous parishes, and after the intermediate movements of a course chequered with variety, during which, for many years, we, in our distant and diverse walks of employment, had well-nigh lost sight of each other, we find ourselves conducted by the hand of Providence to be fellow-workers, side by side, on one and the same field of usefulness—and this at the bidding of a principle, and for the support and promotion of a cause alike dear to us both.

But here I must again recur to the imagination or the fear of many, that to theologize the sciences, if I may use such an expression, were to superficialize them; or, in other words, and as I heard it put the other day, that for full and academic courses on the respective branches of human learning, we of the Free Church College were to satisfy ourselves with lectureships, with mainly the design and after the fashion of the Bridgewater Treatises. There cannot be a greater misconception. We admit it as a glorious truth, and in which all theologians might well rejoice as most honourable to their high theme, that on every science, and every subject, indeed, of human contemplation, a natural theology might be raised—so instinct are all things with God. And accordingly there is a natural theology of anatomy, as has been most felicitously expounded by Dr. Paley; and to the full as interesting, though not yet so thoroughly explored, a natural theology of botany; and, in short, a distinct natural theology might be shewn to arise in beauteous efflorescence from each and every one of the sciences. Yet we zealously affirm, that a professor of any of the sciences may impregnate

it with all its theology, and this without the abridgment or extenuation of any of its lessons. To establish this assertion, we shall not, although we might, appeal to the undoubted truth, that by a reference to final causes, the progress of discovery, as in anatomy, has been greatly accelerated. We have still another principle to allege in vindication of our argument, and, as we can afford to state it but briefly, we crave your attention to it. We ask whether it would not speed your acquaintance with the works of any master in human art; whether you would not discover all the sooner their otherwise hidden beauties, and describe with all the greater fulness and fidelity their characteristic peculiarities, did you but know what the reigning idea was—the leading design and characteristic genius of the great master-spirit, as of *Rafaele* or *Michael Angelo*, from whom they emanated? There is a felicitous expression, I think of *Dugald Stewart*, who speaks of the style of the Divine workmanship; and our confidence is, that were this workmanship more studied with a reference to the Divinity who framed it, were the great central idea of Him who devised all and directs all more present to the mind in the contemplation and study of His works—were creation surveyed and investigated, both in its phenomena and its laws, with a more habitual and deep sense of its Creator—we are persuaded that such a habitude of mind, so far from obstructing our inquiries, or displacing any of the lessons of philosophy, would act with a powerful and presiding influence on the mind of the student, so as both to give a higher tone and a firmer staple to all his mental acquisitions. Neither the explanations nor the uses of nature will be less fully or less forcibly given, because of a perpetual and deeply felt reference, whether in the mind of the lecturer or his hearers, from nature to nature's God. On this subject we can make one triumphant appeal to what might well be termed the Augustan age of philosophy in Europe, when *Newton* and *Leibnitz* exhibited throughout all their speculations and studies, so profound a sense of the Divinity who both formed the philosophers and gave to their philosophy all its materials—a most refreshing contrast to 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.

Let it not be understood, then, that our course of natural

science will be less complete because pervaded throughout by the recognition of a Deity; or that it will be either less copious in the description of phenomena, or less rigorously academic in the demonstration of causes, because of its references to Him who is *causa causarum*—that Being who, to adopt the eloquent language of Robert Hall, sits enthroned on the riches of the universe. It will of course be understood, that what we have said of the other classes, in regard to the practice of examinations, does not apply to a class where attention to the lecture-ship is ever kept on the alert by the exhibition of illustrative specimens; and when at the termination of the hour there are ample opportunities not only to examine these, but for putting questions to the professor. Even in the other classes the examination is restricted to our own professional students, and not applied to the general students unless they signify a wish for it.

Before I conclude, I have one observation more to make on the subject of partial and insufficient courses, and this from a cause that is now beginning to be felt even in the very highest of our universities. The courses, then, have everywhere fallen behind the sciences, and this for the very obvious reason that the sciences have all shot ahead of the courses; or, in other words, they have, in the rapid progress of new discoveries and doctrines, attained to such a colossal magnitude that it is impossible to overtake them. The days were when the encyclopædia of all that was really worth in learning could be fully traversed before the student entered upon theology; but philosophy in all its branches has now reached to such a height and depth and length and breadth, and is expanding at such a rate every year in all these dimensions, that a full course of philosophy as preparatory to any one of the professions, be it legal or medical or theological, is wholly out of the question, so as imperatively to call for a new modelling of the preliminary courses. We may still perhaps keep by the old classes; but these classes can never carry us through more than a very humble portion of their now immensely augmented sciences. Take natural philosophy for an example: why, it is but the other day that, in the College of Glasgow, this class, to ease itself of the repletion under which it laboured, hived off, and very properly, another professorship, admirably adapted to the growing wants of the age—we mean its professorship of Engineering. We of the Free Church College in Edinburgh will not think, I believe, of following this example.

There will be no lessons, I should imagine, on engineering ever given within our walls. But it is not unlikely—being at this moment an open question—whether we shall have our own class of natural philosophy; and I shall only say that, if decided in the affirmative, then ought it to be our high and honest aim, without vainly attempting to pursue this mighty subject into its manifold applications, to have it taught in as purely an academic style as in any of the older universities; and so as that ours might not only be a seminary for well-trained theologians, but that men of science and accomplished *savans* might have respect to it for the purposes of general education. However this may be determined, I cannot but express it as my earnest hope, that natural history, and this for the sake of its far more abundant contributions to natural theology, will henceforth be held by us as an essential preliminary to our theological course.

I cannot close this attempt to reconcile the two objects of spirituality and science in a Church, without adverting to the utterance of the Psalmist—“Bless the Lord, O my soul; and *all that is within me*, bless his holy name.” Let not the homage of the intellect, that power which, next to conscience, stands the highest and most illustrious among the faculties of the inner man—let not the nobler and loftier part of our nature be withheld from this act of consecration to Him who is the Father of our spirit, and gifted it with all its endowments. And having surrounded us with such a glorious and diversified theatre on which to expatiate, let us not forget the purpose for which He hath made His great and wonderful works, even to be remembered and sought out of all those that have pleasure therein.

PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS,

NOVEMBER 1846.

THE PRAYER.

O God, we rejoice that Thou hast not left Thyself without a witness. The revolving year is full of God. Thou comest forth in the beauty and verdure of spring; Thou comest forth in the height and glory of summer; Thou comest forth in the richness and luxuriance of autumn; and Thou comest forth in the tempest and in the whirlwind of winter. We thank

Thee for the light and evidence of nature; but above all, we thank Thee for the surpassing light and evidence of revelation. And we rejoice that when nature but told us of our danger, revelation hath told us of our deliverance. May we find all our comfort in the faith of its blessed testimonies; and when like to be overborne by a sense of guilt, or the apprehension of vengeance, may we flee for refuge to the hope set before us in the gospel.

The first Principal I ever knew, my earliest patron, was Dr. M'Cormic of the United College of St. Andrews, the near relative, if not the descendant, of a like functionary, the famous Principal Carstairs, and author of his *Life*—a book, however, of no brilliant repute, but still extant, and to be found slumbering on the shelves both of our own and other libraries. Though not a man of very profound learning, he had much to obtain for him the good liking of all his colleagues; a person of rare conviviality and humour, the ever-welling fountain of a thousand pleasantries, and whose flashes of humour were often flashes of intelligence—a matter not to be wondered at, for if wit lie in the perception of incongruities, one cannot well discern the incongruity of things, without at least some, and it may be a considerable discernment of the things themselves. One day, when in the midst of his compeers at a festive, but at the same time academic board, he came forth with this definition of the amount of scholarship necessary for making a good Principal: that he should know more of all the sciences than all the other professors put together, but with this exception, that he should not know so much of any one of the sciences as did the professor of that science. I should like you to fix in your minds the precise position which the person thus defined is made to occupy, as it is a position from which such a survey might be made, and such lessons might be learned, as will prove not only of signal use in the walks of a higher philosophy, but will serve for the guidance of those who are still toiling at the work of acquisition, and are even but yet a little way forward from the commencement of their college studies.

First, then, it may be conceived of such a position as I have now tried to illustrate in your hearing, that it is not a very high one. The person who occupies it is but second-rate in all the sciences, although third-rate in none of them. He may be a man of accomplished but not of deep learning, and it may be thought too, not of deep philosophy, with a sort of thin-spread universality reaching over the whole encyclopædia of human

knowledge, and perhaps downward a certain way among its upper strata, but never to the bottom or the lowermost strata of any one of its sections. Some may thus be disposed to regard him as a superficialist, and not a *savant*, as one who takes a bird's-eye view of the sciences, without going far into the recesses of any. Yet is it such a view as might bring within his reach, and so reveal to him, what others now among the depths of their respective subjects might altogether miss; nay, what the likelihood of their never coming within sight of is in very proportion to the intense and exclusive engagement of each with the specialities of his own department. For one needs not go to the bottom of any one science before that he can discover the relations and resemblances between them, or is able to assign those generalities which are common to them all—a great and lofty achievement, and the proper office of what has been termed the *scientia scientiarum*, perhaps the best and most available definition that has yet been given of metaphysics, whose place is that of command, and of widely comprehensive survey over the whole field of human knowledge. It is thus that a walk is struck out, in the prosecution of which one finds room for the strenuous exercise of his largest and most powerful faculties, even though he keeps outside from all the other sciences, or rather from the peculiar arcana of all the other sciences but his own; a walk not of airy transcendentalism, but in which something better than recondite speculations, solid discoveries might be made, which do not fall in the way of the mere astronomer, or the mere geologist, or the mere mathematician, of whom it is very possible that the farther on in their respective pursuits they are, the farther away from that domain which lies before the eye of him who might well be termed the generalissimo of the sciences, though he has neither cast his sounding-line into the lowest depths, nor yet mastered, in all their fulness and variety, the doctrines and details of any one of them.

But before proceeding to the uses of this contemplation, let me quote a few of those instances in the history of philosophy which prove that it is nothing fanciful, but that it has an actual and experimental basis to rest upon.

We first, then, appeal to Lord Bacon as a great master on the field of general science, and rightfully so, though glaringly deficient, nay, palpably wrong, in many of the particular sciences; insomuch, that while he pointed out the way of investigation to others, he miserably failed in attempting the way

himself; and thus for the results of that sober, and vigilant, and careful experience which he recommended with such effect to the disciples of his school, we have but his own crude and confident speculations. It is true that he did not claim a mastery over all the sciences; nor do the methods of induction apply either to moral or mathematical truth. But the father as he was of the inductive philosophy, one might have expected beforehand, that upon this his own domain the efforts which he made would have both stood the test and been crowned with the triumph of his own principles. Instead of which, look at the very first of his hundred lessons of what he calls natural history. The subject of it is percolation; and there he tells us to "dig a pit upon the sea-shore, somewhat above the sea-water, and sink it as deep as the low-water mark, and as the tide cometh in, it will fill with water fresh and potable; for that the sea-water passing or straining through the sand, leaveth the saltness." Had there been a college for the observational sciences in these days, I certainly should not have made Lord Bacon the professor of chemistry. But hear him further: In one of his miscellaneous tracts on human philosophy, written in praise of knowledge, he holds a reckoning with the astronomers, and plainly evinces his contempt, not merely for the ancients, who dealt in cycles and epicycles, but for the Copernicans of his own day, whom he styles the carmen or charioteers that draw the earth about; and therefore I should not have made him professor of natural philosophy. Yet with all these blunders in the particular sciences, such in general was his *scientia scientiarum*, that he would have made the very best Principal, better even than Sir Isaac Newton, had he lived in the same age, who, on the other hand, would have shed immortal honour on the Chair of natural philosophy. And to keep a little longer by the same method of illustrating these mental varieties between man and man, Leibnitz, the contemporary of Newton, would have been a better principal than he—an office he would have sustained most admirably, even though the mental sciences had been superadded in his university to the physical, with theology to the bargain. And coming down to our own times, the fine generalizations of Humboldt mark him out for this academic supremacy, even with such men as La Place and Cuvier for his colleagues, though greatly inferior to the one in the mathematico-physical, and to the other in natural history. These magnificent sketches of his, as set forth in *Kosmos* and

other of his works, less profound, it must be admitted, than they are comprehensive, evince such a commanding, though it may be a comparatively outside view of the natural sciences, as to bespeak a thorough judgment, both of the bearing which these sciences have on each other, and of the places which they respectively occupy. There is room for a similar estimate of different men and different minds, engaged not with several sciences, but with the several sections of one and the same science. It is conceivable, nay, it is often exemplified, that a man not so profound, not so thoroughly conversant in any of these sections as some one or other of his fellow-labourers, may yet, in virtue of that comprehensiveness which gives a truer discernment of the whole subject in its more general characteristics and larger features, be better qualified than them all for the history of the science. I cannot figure of Montucla, that he went so far as either Newton, or Euler, or the Bernoullis in their respective walks of investigation, although his *History of Mathematics* may very possibly be a more perfect work of its kind than could have been produced by any of the far more illustrious geometers and analysts whom I have now named. And to pass from this to another scientific history, though only of a few weeks old, the *History of Mental Philosophy*, by Morell, it is not necessary to imagine that he has pervaded the whole authorship of Des Cartes, and Malebranche, and Leibnitz, and Kant, and Fichte, and Schlegel, and the other writers, French and English, who pass under his review; or, in other words, it was not necessary that he should have traversed and filled up these manifold departments of study, so as to master, in all its doctrines and details, the intellectual system of each—and this to prepare him for coming forth with the masterly view which he has given of their respective speculations. And yet it is such a view as will mightily enlarge the acquaintance of the British public, both with the history and present state of philosophy on the continent of Europe—nay, as will in all probability supersede much of the reading that would have been otherwise expended direct on the foreign authors themselves; and help on to the secure establishment of a philosophy that will at once defend us from this perpetual onset of wayward and fantastic theories which have hitherto so unsettled the minds of men, and, putting both scepticism and speculation at rest, will insure for us a safe and confident progress in all the sciences.

But it is high time to educe the lessons, if any, which might be drawn from the contemplation that now engages us. And

first, we learn from it not the varieties only, but the limits of human genius.

We have seen that each distinct labourer on the field of human knowledge, whose vocation, which we shall suppose him to prosecute successfully, is some one of the particular sciences, that he, of course, is the most conversant, and therefore the most to be trusted, both with the peculiar doctrines of his own science, and the peculiar evidence on which it rests ; insomuch that, as he journeys onward upon his own separate pathway, he gets beyond the ken even of him who, on the other hand, is the far better qualified for a general view of all the sciences. But if beyond the ken even of him who occupies this central, this commanding station of survey and superintendence over the whole domain, how much farther, I ask you to consider, beyond the ken of another labourer, the master of some other science distinct from his own, radiating as it were in another direction, and diverging towards a remote portion of the territory which he cultivates with utmost assiduity, and it may be with the most brilliant success? Do you not perceive that, in very proportion to the intensity of his regards, and so to the fulness and amount of his acquisitions or even of his discoveries in the one science, may he not be the more, but all the less incompetent to pronounce or dogmatize on the methods or the truths of another science? In the vast and ever-extending, as well as every day more prolific field of human knowledge, there is a growing and more clamant necessity than hitherto for more frequent divisions and subdivisions of mental labour, and when each in his own section prosecutes his own task very much out of sympathy and out of sight from all the rest, free of disturbance, and safe from the inroads of the other labourers in other places of the field. Nor am I aware of any general disposition on the part of scientific men to make incursion beyond their own domain, on the separate but rightful and proper domain of any of their fellows ; or, if they do, sure I am that an enlightened public would not listen to the voice which they lifted there as a voice of authority. The mere astronomer would not be heard on a question of geology ; nor would the mere anatomist, known to be such and nothing more, be heard in a question of geometry or economics. But each would be deferred to as supreme in his own department. Now, all we lay claim to is, that even our science, the science of theology, shall have the benefit of this very obvious principle. Instead of which, like an unprotected common, it lies open to

incursions from every quarter of human speculation, and this without one condescending regard on its own distinct evidences—its own independent literature—its own massive and most erudite authorship—its own argumentations and appeals both to the felt exigencies of the human conscience, and to that historical testimony of past ages which, in every other question regarding the facts and narratives of antiquity, would be held as wholly irresistible. All this goes for nothing with the infidels and demi-infidels who pour in upon us from all the sciences, and who have turned our theology into a sort of play-ground, on which, broken loose from law and logic, they shall hold their saturnalia. And the injustice we complain of is, that should any of these have earned a brilliant reputation in their own department, as La Place and M. Comte in France, or the psychologists of Germany, their adverse testimony, or even contemptuous insinuation, will countervail the authority of men who have earned, and rightfully earned, as brilliant a reputation in ours, and that too on the field of an investigation which has formed the business of their lives—the Clarkes, the Butlers, the Lardners, the Paleys of our own land. For the disparagement of theology, every principle of equity has been inverted; and while philosophy has done us no harm by the strength of its arguments, it has, in the person of some of its most renowned masters, the enemies of our faith, wielded a most dangerous fascination, by which to poison and unsettle the minds of thousands and tens of thousands in general society.

But the name of Bishop Butler reminds me of another danger against which it is my duty to warn you. I have just apprized you of the danger which lies in the infidelity of men about whom there has been cast the glare of a scientific reputation, and this arising from the devotion of our own ignorance, which ignorance has in certain senses been well termed the mother of devotion; or, in other words, from our implicit and idolatrous deference to the authority of great names, this greatness having been achieved on other fields than those of theology. But I would have you to understand, and be on your guard against a like danger, even when the greatness has been achieved on the field of theology itself. Butler I have sometimes called in your hearing the Bacon of Theology; and certain it is, that as the one, in the construction of his *Novum Organum*, which points out the right way of philosophizing, had his eye over many sciences; so the other, in the construction of his *Analogy*, and by which

he has reared an impregnable bulwark against the assaults of infidelity both on natural and revealed religion, had to expatiate over a still wider field of survey and superintendence; the arena of the one's speculation being the world, and of the other both the world and the word—these two volumes from the hand of God, the volume of Nature and the volume of Revelation. It is true that, for the execution of Butler's task, there sufficed a more slender acquaintance than Bacon had with the particular sciences, though his was slender enough, as we have already seen. Yet, deficient and meagre in detail as the special acquisitions of both were, each of these great masters could, from the materials in his hand, frame his own immortal lesson, and bequeath it to posterity for the guidance of all future generations—the one resolving the investigation of all experimental truth, with the view of ascertaining the laws of nature, into the question of, What findest thou? the other resolving the investigation of all scriptural truth, with the view of ascertaining the ways of God, into the parallel question of, What readest thou? Both, in fact, agreed in this, that they awarded a supreme authority to findings over all the fancies of incompetent speculation—their only difference being, that the findings of the one are gathered from the arena of the world, and of the other from the arena of the word. If the former tells us, in the person of his most illustrious disciple, Sir Isaac Newton, that *Homo non est magister sed interpres naturæ*, the other, if not by words, yet in effect, tells us in his own person, that *Homo non est magister sed interpres scripturæ*. Yet, as we have observed already, to institute the Analogy of Butler between nature and the Bible, required, on the one hand, no very profound acquaintance with either the special laws or the special phenomena of nature; and accordingly, in this department, beside a very general reference to our modern astronomy, we recognise little more than a sagacious and intelligent observation, whether of the ordinary processes that are going on around us, and which might be read of all men, or of certain broad and palpable phases in the state of man and of human society. But the important thing, and on which I found my present lesson to you, is, that the construction of that Analogy, with its masterly argument, just required, in the other department, as little of a profound acquaintance with either the special doctrines or special sayings of the Bible; and so it follows, that the high service which Butler rendered to our cause, and by which he earned for himself so glorious a reputa-

tion, should not so dazzle and overpower, or so lord it over your understanding, as that he shall become your supreme and universal dictator in the science of theology. The truth is, that just as Bacon smiled contemptuous on the disciples of the Copernican system, calling them the charioteers of the firmament, because they would have our world to move in space, and yet, by following in the track which he himself had pointed out, have they established this to be the universal order of creation; so is it possible that Butler may have so far misapprehended the disciples of the Evangelical system, as in the substitution of his own more attenuated views for theirs, to have overlooked a great and essential principle in the scheme of Christianity. It is not unlikely, nay, it is often exemplified, that he who has reared a noble monument of defence around the credentials of Scripture, should have imperfectly studied the contents of it; and let me therefore warn you, lest the admiration of Butler should seduce you into a like admiration of that classic and lettered, but withal cold and unspiritual theology in which Butler shared, and which characterized the leading men of the Church of England at the commencement of the last century.

It is conceivable—the very conception which we tried to illustrate at the commencement of our address—that one might be acquainted with the generic properties of all the sciences, the common resemblances that obtain betwixt them, and yet not be acquainted in any great degree with the specific properties which belong to each of them, so as that he might speak with a voice of rightful authority on the more extensive field of knowledge, and yet on the more special fields of knowledge, or the narrower sections of the whole territory, should have no authority at all. It is with things generical, the resemblances or even the distinctions and differences among the several sciences that Bacon deals in his *Novum Organum*; and it is with things still more generical, the resemblances as also the distinctions between the word and the world, that Butler deals in his *Analogy*. Each in his respective walk has educed a great and enduring lesson, and one of pervading influence throughout all philosophy on the one hand, and throughout all theology on the other; yet neither, however conversant in the lessons of what might be termed the *prima philosophia*, is therefore entitled to assume the pre-eminence of a dictator or master over any of the particular sciences; and far less is the labourer, however brilliant his discoveries or acquisitions in some one of the sciences, entitled on that account

to domineer or dogmatize within the limits of another science distinct from his own. But this observation might be carried farther. For as the whole of the intellectual domain, the whole body of universal truth, is resolved into separate sciences, so is each science resolvable into so many branches or subsections of its own; and it is a truly possible thing, that he who has entered upon one of these departments and made it all his own, might be as unsafe a guide in every other of the departments as the veriest school-boy, alike unpractised in all, and ignorant of all. If a former consideration should be of avail in protecting you from the infidelity of such as La Place, the present consideration should be of as good avail in protecting you from the heresies of such as Lardner—great among the credentials, but truly little, I should say sadly unintelligent and wrong among the contents of Scripture. What I want is, that you should call no man master; and that in these days, when successive systems are rolling in upon us from the Continent of Europe, and a tide of speculation is setting in which threatens to displace all our ancient faiths, whether in theology or science, from the foundation they are now standing on, you shall not be overborne by the authority of foreign names, or unsettled from your old convictions by the outlandish phraseology of dark and oracular sentences; but that in the exercise of a resolute and independent judgment, you will continue as heretofore to study each science on its own distinct evidences, and deal with each question on its own distinct merits, lest, mistaking the *ignotum* for the *magnificum*, you should suffer a high-sounding transcendentalism to seduce you either from the ways or from the words of truth and soberness.

There is a certain *prima philosophia* of this sort now springing up in Germany, or rather a certain heaving aspiration towards it—of spectral and portentous form, and to the imaginations of many possessed of a certain wizard power, by which to subordinate, nay, to supersede every existing school, and set aside all the foregoing systems of other days; in a word, to new-model the whole scheme and platform of philosophy, and to regenerate all the sciences. If I may say it without profaneness—"All old things are to be done away, and all things to become new."

But let me apprise you, that neither the code nor the constitution of this great intellectual monarchy has yet been conclusively settled. There is still a world of diversity and strenuous

conflict among numerous competitors for the throne; and this after the rapid and ever-shifting succession of such competitors for more than half a century. Meanwhile, the collective mind of Britain, and I speak of its higher mind or reason, that which seeks and soars among the loftiest summits of the temple, and now occupies the uppermost regions of our literary commonwealth, instead of putting forth its own independent energies, or daring of itself to scale these mysterious altitudes, looks wistfully to the quarter where it is that the controversy is going on, and waits for tidings from afar. In this attitude of expectancy, some, and these I fear not a few, would suspend all our old methods of inquiry, till they have learned whether the sentence to be given forth may or may not pronounce upon them as altogether worthless—they are paralyzed by the mighty pretensions of an occult philosophy which they have not yet studied, couched in a cabalistic nomenclature which they feel themselves as yet unable to comprehend; and so, distrusting all the scholarship of the land we live in, would they ground their arms for a season, and keep our own literature and our own philosophy at abeyance. As in the interregnum of a remote and subordinate province like Canada, or an island in the West Indies, they are at a loss how to proceed till the arrival of their new governor; and so without a mind and without a mastery of their own, they will not venture or attempt to fashion their own views of truth and of the universe, but look and long for the next importation from Germany.

In these circumstances I hail the appearance of a book fitted of all others to enlighten and enlarge the mind of this country, and that, too, on a subject of which we stood pre-eminently in need of information—Morell's Historical and Critical View of the Speculative Philosophy of Europe in the Nineteenth Century—a work of surpassing interest and power, in which with giant stride he expatiates over the whole territory of mental science, alike accomplished for the historical survey of its discoveries and doctrines, and for his own independent estimate of their truth. According to the state of their previous conceptions, it will elevate in one class of thinkers their respect for the German metaphysics, and it will repress in another class their idolatrous veneration for them. I believe the effect on the whole will be, that by taking off the veil from the *ignotum* of this subject, he will reduce the ideas which many previously had of its *magnificum*. For myself, I confess my relief from a certain undefined

apprehension of something adverse in those speculations, and which for a time might prove formidable to the cause of theology. Adverse they undoubtedly are, yet to us not formidable, notwithstanding that in respect of their bearings on our own peculiar subject, they seem to have the whole authority of this truly able and accomplished author upon their side: for him, too, whenever he touches on our professional theme, I hold to be seriously in the wrong; and that upon his views, tinged as they are by those of the authors whom he describes, and who have too much infected him, the whole of theology would be placed on a most precarious basis. This I deem of sufficient importance for the lectureship of at least a week;* and if I have time and strength for it, to be delivered immediately before or immediately after the Christmas holidays, when, notwithstanding the charge which he has preferred against the natural theology of Scotland as having dwindled into puerility, I shall attempt to demonstrate, as God might enable me, that ours is the more excellent way.

But though to this extent I am willing to be diverted from my regular course of lecturing, I do not want that all of you or even that most of you shall be diverted to any extent from the regular course of your studies. I trust I may have made myself sufficiently understood on the respective functions of principal and professor, to convince you, that while he who sustains both these offices should, in the latter capacity, keep steadfast on the pathway of his own peculiar lessons, and suffer nothing to interrupt the ordinary succession of these, but when the urgent necessities of self-defence call on him to repel some menacing hostility that has arisen from without; in his former capacity, again, it is his especial vocation and duty to have a watchful eye upon all such inroads, and to see that no unwarrantable invasion shall be made by any one science upon the proper and rightful domain of another. I am thus under the weight of a twofold obligation to undertake the task which I have just announced to you; and as to the part which yourselves have to take in it, some of you will recollect what I have often urged in your hearing, that while indispensable for all that they should be qualified to expound in the hearing of our people the doctrines of the faith, it is desirable—nay, the Church-militant on earth is deficient in some of her essential equipments if she be without them—most desirable that some on the high arena of literary championship and debate should be pre-eminently

* These Lectures will be found embodied in Art. I. No. XII. North British Review

qualified to fight the battles of the faith. As one principal might suffice among the general professors of a college, so a few controversialists stationed in its watch-towers and bulwarks, might suffice among the many pastors of a Church, busied in the cultivation of the inner vineyard. And, as the instance of what I mean, I have more than once spoken thus of Scripture criticism, strongly recommending to all their attendance upon its lessons as given here, and with the expressed hope, at the same time, that so many—a select number, a gifted few—amid that variety of tastes and endowments which the hand of Nature impresses upon her children, with their special and constitutional adaptation for this walk of study, would afterwards arise to be the future Griesbachs, and Hugs, and Michaelises of Scotland, and so able to cope with the Neologists, and with the infidel and demi-infidel Biblists of Germany. But another instance might be given in the study of the mental philosophy, regarding which I am glad to say that there are not a few (and thanks for it to the more recent arrangements of our Free Church College) on the likely way to its best and loftiest attainments; so that in now recommending an immediate perusal of Morell's book, I do it with the confidence that a goodly number of those here present will forthwith enter upon the task. It is not that I expect, and not that I desire, that one and all of our theological school should be fired with the ambition of reaching either to a transcendental Scripture criticism, or a transcendental metaphysics; but the same education which raises to a high average proficiency in both these departments, will carry upward, above and beyond the average, the spirits which are kindred to each of them; and as with the one, so with the other, I do hope, I do most ardently desire—I should esteem it one of the highest services which our Institute could render to society, and among the proudest of its literary honours, did there issue from these walls in those days of conflict which are coming, when many of ourselves shall be reposing in the dust, profoundly asleep to all the noises of the living world above us, some master minds that could measure strength with every system of philosophy on the Continent, and by the weight of a more powerful and ponderous demonstration than was wielded by any, could rebuke and overbear all the infidelity that was to be found in them.

Meanwhile, though as plain and puerile they may characterize your pursuits, let me bid you persevere in them. They would fain make you believe, that hitherto you have been dealing with

nothing but superficialities, and have never yet found so much as a door of entry into the recesses and profundities of their inner world. Continue as you have begun, and do as ye have hitherto been doing; and be assured, that with the voice of that conscience which speaks so powerfully in your bosoms, and those glories of a universe patent to every eye, and which shines so palpably around you; and be farther assured, that in the Bible, that wondrous monument of past ages, with its firm authentic place in history, and its telling power upon your hearts, though unskilled to the end of your days in the idealism of Germany, and in all its categories, be assured, nevertheless, in the possession of vouchers so ample as these, that both your natural and your Christian theology are safe.

But, while I propose to deliver, in the course of our coming session, the brief lectureship of perhaps about a week on Morell's History of Philosophy, and in the hope that so many of you as are inclined to it will meanwhile give your best attention to the work, it is not for any extra professional object that I have thus resolved, but mainly for the protection of our own science; inasmuch, that for those who are not inclined to it, and who, it may be, constitute the majority of our theological students, I would not expect, and most certainly do not recommend, that they should in the least interrupt or suspend their ordinary readings. Their very ignorance of the German idealism, and indifference to the subject, the very confinement of their mental philosophy to the doctrines and metaphysics of the Scottish school, are guarantees in themselves against the deleterious influence of these outlandish speculations. It is for those who are smitten with a taste for the systems of the Continent, and I have no wish to discourage it, nay, should rejoice if some two or three were to sound them to their very depths, for then I am sure they could all the better expose the illegitimacy of their adverse applications to the Christian faith; it is to ward off a deleterious influence from their minds, that I feel it incumbent on me to enter on a computation of the distances and bearings between this transcendentalism, on the one hand, and the theology of the Bible upon the other. This I apprehend to be all the more necessary, that I do recollect of some who, chiefly in the University, and before our Disruption, were a good deal carried, as if by a sort of fashionable infection, which might have been seen in the phraseology of their discourses, and I will add, however mortifying to one's own self-love, and all the more mortifying that they were

really superior and aspiring young men, who gave forth the symptom which I am now to describe in their obvious inattention to the lessons of the Chair, as if they had only been plain Scottish boluses, having vastly too much in them of the homebred and the commonplace to be at all suited for those higher appetencies which nothing else can satisfy but the more exquisite and *recherché* articles of a foreign preparation, just as if we had been serving up milk for babes, instead of strong meat for men of a full-grown understanding, or speaking from the outer court to those who had already been initiated in the mysteries of the inner temple. What I want to make out is, that the unintelligible does not always imply the solid, or even the profound; and, far more momentous than this, that the simple verities of the Christian faith rest on a foundation deep enough and strong enough to uphold them against the more recent, or, I should rather say, the ever-shifting philosophy that now sets in upon us from abroad.

Many of you know my value for the intelligible, and my conviction of the magnitude of that service which lies in transmuting what is profound, and only understood by a few, into what is plain, and so that it may be understood by many. We know well the penalty that awaits the successful execution of such an aim, that, had he abstained, he would have been still ranked among the profound thinkers of the day; but, because he has not only made the endeavour, but fulfilled it, he sinks down to the level of a very plain and ordinary personage. Nevertheless, I will rejoice in it as the best achievement of philosophy, when it has made its products patent to every eye, and accessible to the world at large.

END OF VOL. VIII.

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