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Ten sermons preached before
the University of Cambridge



TEN SERMONS

PREACHED

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE.



Cambridge:
Printed at the University Press.

TEN SERMONS

PREACHED BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE,

INCLUDING

The Hulsean Lectures for 1853;

AND

TWO OTHER SERMONS.

BY

THE REV. MORGAN COWIE, M.A.,

FORMERLY FELLOW OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE.

LONDON: F. AND J. RIVINGTON.

CAMBRIDGE: J. DEIGHTON.

1853.

TO

THOMAS CHARLES GELDART, LL.D.,
MASTER OF TRINITY HALL,
VICE-CHANCELLOR,

TO THE

REVEREND WILLIAM WHEWELL, D.D.,
MASTER OF TRINITY COLLEGE,

TO THE

REVEREND RALPH TATHAM, D.D.,
MASTER OF ST JOHN'S COLLEGE,

THESE LECTURES

DELIVERED BY THEIR APPOINTMENT
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

*Stoke d Abernon,
Cobham.
November, 1853.*

THE Rev. JOHN HULSE, M.A., by his will bearing date July 21, 1777, founded a Lectureship in the University of Cambridge, to be held by a Clergyman in the University of the degree of Master of Arts, and under the age of forty years: the Lecturer to be elected annually on Christmas-day, or within seven days after, by the Vice-Chancellor, the Master of Trinity College, and the Master of St John's College, or any two of them: the subject of the Lectures to be as follows; "The Evidence of Revealed Religion; the Truth and Excellence of Christianity; the Prophecies and Miracles; direct or collateral proofs of the Christian Religion, especially the collateral arguments; the more difficult texts, or obscure parts of Holy Scripture;" or any one or more of these topics, at the discretion of the Lecturer.

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LECTURE I.

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PSALM CXIX. 18.

*Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things
out of thy Law.*

THE schemes of the Evil Spirit for opposing and undermining the designs of the Almighty for man's salvation—as they are the offspring of a powerful and vigilant enemy—must be conceived with wisdom, and executed with subtilty. The nature of the opposition must depend in great measure upon the progress and vigour of the advances which the kingdom of the Gospel makes into the dark recesses of ignorance and superstition, in which the Prince of the power of the air exercises his gloomy sway. We have not always to contend against the same form of opposition. According as Christ's servants shew prudence, wisdom and zeal—or the contrary—that is, according as the Holy Spirit prevails over our rashness, ignorance and selfishness, or the contrary, so the Gospel of the glorious God makes its way. And the tactics of the retreating foe will be varied according to the places, the vigour, the promptness of the conquering army. At a time when the Church is lukewarm, when morality is low, and there is no practical evidence of the Christian spirit at work, direct attacks upon the divine origin of Christianity may be expected; inasmuch as there is great force in the argument, when it can be urged to our shame, that Christ-

ianity seems to have no real power over the lives and consciences of its professors. But this open attack has but little influence when Christ's disciples are shewing themselves sincere, holy and self-denying—when they labour earnestly for the good of their fellow-men—and when the general tone of society, and the voice of mankind, are rather in favour of piety and devotion, than against them. At such a time, other methods of seducing souls from God will be employed. And we must recognize the busy agency of Christ's enemy in those more insidious attempts which, assuming the truth of Revelation, undermine and attenuate its teaching—professing attachment to Christian doctrines, presently endeavour to fritter away their real strength, to dry up or poison the fountain from whence our spiritual life is to be drawn.

At no time perhaps can it be said that either of these methods, the bold offering battle to the hosts of the Lord, or the secret ambush and the stirring up of rebellion in the camp, will be exclusively resorted to. There is always, alas! sufficient encouragement for both in the perverseness and waywardness of man; but one or the other will prevail more, be more apparent, according as circumstances seem to favour its success.

There have been times when infidelity has reared its head in insolent boldness to ridicule the Book Divine, wherein God's will is revealed to us; when the character of the blessed Redeemer has been calumniated, and the devil's agents,

speaking blasphemous things against God and against Christ, have dared to shew themselves in their true colours, as rebels and apostates; but God reared up, as of old to his ancient people, deliverers, who came out as champions of the Lord's hosts, and smote the enemy with disgraceful defeat. The violent overthrow of settled institutions at the end of the last century was, if not commenced, at least instigated by the infidel spirit which was so powerfully present. And it seems to have been in consequence of its prevalence that pious men devoted their benefactions to the establishment of Lectures, both in this and the sister university, which should be preached in defence of Christianity, against profane scoffers and blasphemers, and which should have for their principal object to resist the encroachments of impiety and infidelity.

The terms however in which the benevolent Founder of this Lecture, which I have been appointed to preach to you, has left his instructions, are conceived with a liberal and comprehensive spirit, and allow of such an extension of his design, according to the circumstances of the times, as shall most conduce to the instruction and edification of mankind.

In this view they enjoin the Lecturer to embrace not only such subjects as shall meet the direct attacks of unbelievers on the Gospel and Divine Revelation generally, but further to elucidate particular doctrines which are made vehicles

of error by the arch-enemy—to point out those subtle perversions of Gospel tenets which obscure the truth, and blind men's eyes to the vital and essential dogmas of Christianity—to explain difficulties in the sacred Scriptures, and, with the help of God's Holy Spirit, to follow in the steps of the Messiah's precursor, John the Baptist, and assist in filling up the valleys, and laying low the mountains and hills—to shew the straightness of that which appears crooked, and the smoothness of that which seems rough, that those impediments to the entrance of the divine grace into the heart, which spring from imperfect comprehension, or distortion, or obscurity of the Word of God, may be as much as possible swept away or lessened, and thus some assistance, however imperfect, be given towards attaining the blessed result, that all flesh may see the salvation of God.

It may be said that such duties are amply rendered already to the holy cause, by the labours of the learned; and to a great extent this is true, and would be a valid objection to a mere republication in books of such answers to objections, and explanations of difficulties; but the case seems to be much altered, when, as in this case, the lectures are to be preached, not as *conciones ad clerum*, but before an audience like that of a University Church, including many who have not yet become acquainted with the great storehouses of biblical criticism, and a greater part of whose

time is necessarily occupied with studies scientific and literary, preparatory to their theological training.

Moreover, the difficulties which arise out of the Scriptures themselves, are those which weigh with youthful minds. It is very often through these that the first breach is made into faith. That which we have been taught from infancy is the bread of life, we should not *suddenly* reject as a stone. The plant of faith, tender though it be perhaps, and weak, having as yet brought no fruit to perfection, may tenaciously cling to the soil of the heart, and refuse to be violently wrenched up. Its leaves, like those of the sensitive plant, may recoil from the rude grasp of the destroyer; but, though it can withstand open violence, it has not immunity from the ravages of the cankerworm; it may dry up, when blighted by insects at first scarcely perceptible, and then its tenacity is gone; it is easily plucked up, and the place thereof knows it no more!

Now the first shock to faith may arise from stumblingblocks in God's Word. The difficulties of the doctrine of spiritual and sacramental union with Christ, drove away from him many of the Jews. His disciples also said, 'This is an hard saying.' 'The unlearned and unstable,' says S. Peter, 'wrest' generally the hard things of Scripture 'to their own destruction;' and this must be by misapprehension leading to erroneous faith, or petulant rejection of difficulties leading to the

absence of all faith. I am not here alluding to another danger to which faith, the tree of life, is subjected, viz. the way in which sin reacts upon the faculties, and convictions having become weak through the violence done to their practical consequences, the unruly will acquires empire over the judgment, and difficulties are imagined or invented—sophistical self-delusions—opiates of the conscience¹. This corresponds more to the hardening of the soil in which the plant has to grow, sterility and barrenness becoming its characteristics instead of fertility. This is to be feared at a more advanced age, and is not so much the danger of the youthful mind.

Nor would I insist much on a principle laid down by early writers², that difficulties in things divine are meant to be trials of faith. Of course in a certain sense this is true: mysteries, avowedly propounded as mysteries, we must recognize as exercises of faith, when they are things that reason cannot reach: but there are also obscurities which may be cleared up; and when this is accomplished so as to produce conviction of the

¹ See *Dr Barrow's Sermon, Of Faith*, Vol. II. Serm. II.

² *S. Augustin. contr. Donatistas Ep.* Ed. Benedict. Tom. IX. p. 342 E. 'Multa propter exercendas Rationales mentes figurate atque obscure posita,' and 'Deus noster non solum manifestis pascere, sed etiam obscuris exercere nos vult.'—*Lib. de Diversis questionibus*, Tom. VI. p. 22 G. 'Alia secretius posita ut quærentes exerceant, alia in promptu ut desiderantes curent.'—*Sermo XXXII.* on Psal. cxliii. 'Pascimur apertis, exercemur obscuris.'—*Sermo LXXI.* on Matt. xii.

unreasonableness of considering them offences—we see another use in the allowed obstacle. These difficulties ought not to be left to try any man.—To such cases as these the general proposition is applicable, that ‘God tempteth no man;’ while it is equally true that he may make trial of our faith by leaving us deep things to meditate on, congruous to his own unapproachable and unfathomable nature. But all difficulties are not of this class; for whatever admits of rational explanation is surely intended to have that explanation brought to it. Right reason must judge of the applicability, or the correctness of the explanation of a difficulty. This may be judged insufficient, or beside the mark, and then the difficulty remains, not increased or insurmountable, but awaiting another more successful attempt.

The office of the reason in matters of doctrine, about which much has been written of late years, both to prevent a too free use of criticism on things supposed to be above our powers, as well as to guard against the absurdity of those who demand an unconditional surrender of private judgment, seems to me to have been laid down by Jeremy Taylor, in his *Ductor Dubitantium*, in few words indeed, but such as commend themselves at once to sensible persons. And as preparatory to attempted explanations of Scripture difficulties, it will be opportune to quote them :

‘We are commanded to try all things: Suppose that be meant that we try them by Scrip-

tures ; how can we so try them but by comparing line with line, by considering the consequents of every pretence, the analogy of faith, the measures of justice, the laws of nature, essential right, and prime principles¹? And all this is nothing but by making our faith the limit of our reason, in matters of duty to God ; and reason the minister of faith in things that concern our duty. The same is intended by those other words of another apostle, “ Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God.” How can this be tried ? by Scripture ? Yea : but how, if the question be of the sense of Scripture, as it is generally at this day ? Then it must be tried by something extrinsical to the question, and whatsoever you can call to judgment, reason must still be your solicitor, and your advocate, and your judge².’

‘ When both sides agree that these are the words of God, and the question of faith is concerning the meaning of the words, nothing is an article of faith, or a part of the religion, but what can be proved by reasons to be the sense and intentions of God. Reason is never to be pretended against the clear sense of Scripture, because by reason it is that we came to perceive that to *be* the clear sense of Scripture. And against reason,

¹ What these prime principles are, will probably be subject of discussion as long as the world lasts, yet their existence is admitted by all. *Rerum plurimarum obscuras et necessarias intelligentias enudavit (sc. natura), quasi fundamenta quædam scientiæ.—Cic. de Leg. i. 9.*

² *Ductor Dubitantium*, Book i. c. 2. Rule iii. 52.

reason cannot be pretended; but against the words of Scripture produced in a question there may be great cause to bring reason¹. 'Wherever the effect would be intolerable, the sense is unreasonable, and therefore not a part of faith, so long as it is an enemy to reason, which is the elder sister, and the guide and guardian of the younger².'

'For as, when the tables of the law were broken by Moses, God would make no new ones, but bade Moses provide some stones of his own, and he would write them over, so it is in our religion, when God with the finger of his Spirit writes the religion of the laws of Jesus Christ, he writes them in the tables of our reason, that is, in the tables of our hearts. *Homo cordatus*, a wise rational man, sober, and humble, and discursive, hath the best faith, but the *ἄστοιχοι* (as S. Paul calls them), the unreasonable, they are such as "have no faith" (2 Thess. iii. 2). For the Christian religion is called by S. Paul *λογικὴ λατρεία*, a reasonable worship, and the word of God is called by S. Peter *γάλα λογικὸν ἄδολον*, the reasonable and uncrafty milk; it is full of reason, but it hath no tricks; it is rational, but not crafty, it is wise and holy; and he that pretends there are some things in our religion which right reason cannot digest and admit, makes it impossible to reduce atheists or to convert Jews and heathens. But if

¹ Ibid. Rule iii. 54.

² Ibid.

reason invites them in, reason can entertain them all the day¹.’

Now it must be observed, that in the present case we do not attempt to solve difficulties or remove obstacles,—as if to pave the way for the reception of the Bible as a Divine Revelation; such a plan would require the investigation of all *à priori* objections, not of such difficulties as may consist with a reverent reception of the Bible as The Book of Truth. It will not therefore be necessary to shew in such cases as we take up in these lectures, that the hard sayings or stumblingblocks discussed are not necessarily antagonistic to the natural conceptions of the Deity and His perfections—but rather shall we endeavour to shew that apparent difficulties may be cleared away, and real difficulties lessened,—assuming the Divine origin of the Scriptures, and, as soon as possible, hastening from the strictly technical part of the subject to those practical lessons which most passages of the Bible convey to us, when considered in a large and comprehensive spirit.

In one sense, and that an important one, those parts of the Divine records which require elucidation by study and reflection, minister considerably to our comfort. For as, before they are cleared up, they are hinderances and shocks to faith; so after our reason is reconciled to them, they be-

¹ *Ductor Dubitantium*, Rule iii. 55.

come its *adminicula*, props and supports. We are the less inclined to waver in our adherence, when any new difficulty is started, if from experience we have found that investigation has cleared up past hesitation. As the Church teaches us in the Collect for the Feast of S. Thomas, who for the more confirmation of the faith was suffered by God to be doubtful of our Lord's resurrection.

There is also another advantage to be gained by such an extension of our design. Practical deductions from the sacred volume not unaptly introduce in the way of remark, reflections on a kind of evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, which, when expanded into a lengthened discourse, fail to interest and impress the hearer; such as the proof which the free action of Divine grace on men's hearts affords to us of the present carrying on of a great spiritual work in the world. There are considerations which *sway* men, without *convincing* them; these ought not to be extended, and by extension attenuated; but lightly touched, pointed out rather than proved; and are of avail to produce reverence and affectionate regard for Christianity in the unprejudiced, unhardened breast—just as the gentle pleasures derived from the contemplation of natural objects are soothing and suggestive of religious thoughts, not powerful arguments, but persuasive in mildness, like the smaller weights of the scale, almost imperceptibly turning the beam in the right direction. These ought not to be rendered valueless by un-

wise attempts at straining them beyond the limit of their legitimate influence.

Few are the men who sit down to balance the evidences of religion mathematically,—to hold a rigid trial of all the logic by which the great conclusion is built up. Christianity does not shrink from the trial:—Christ himself appeals to our judgment guided by right reason,—‘Why even of yourselves do ye not judge that which is right¹?’ but the majority of men do not feel themselves called to such a task,—the great contention of the ambassador for Christ is with men’s indolence, indifference and carelessness. ‘Faith is the evidence of things not seen;’ and in this character it will occupy no prominent part in the system of the man to whom things unseen are matters of indifference. When he has Christian hopes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the anchor of his soul; but till then the evidences of our holy religion, which are the foundations of faith, excite no attention.

It is important to avail ourselves of all the opportunities which present themselves, of urging upon men the reality, truth, vitality of the Christian scheme, by suggestions, and by the removing of palpable obstacles and difficulties, so as to create confidence. A plan not to be followed exclusively, but as an auxiliary to contend with the mental indolence of mankind, to strive against the tempter who supplies such occasions of unbelief and careless indifference.

¹ S. Luke xii. 57.

The Saviour teaches us that the message of life eternal must be received by us as little children. Saving grace is sent to the teachable and humble, to those who are swayed by the affections, by early associations, by authority, by long custom. To clench all these tendencies to the right path, and to clear away possible hinderances to their having a favourable and happy issue, is one business of the Christian preacher; and one which may have a more extensive and wide-spreading influence than even a successful combat with the open enemy without the camp. Wavering loyalty may be confirmed by words which would fail to convince a sceptic; and more souls may be eventually gained to the cause of Christ by strengthening the cords that now bind them to the cross, than by active warfare, taking captive those whom Satan has led away from the house of their baptism.

We are not again, on the other hand, to require of men the teachableness and humility of mind, to which we have alluded, in any sense which would import a feebleness of understanding, a refraining from the full exercise of the intellectual powers. The qualities which are insisted upon by inspired writers, when they compare the hearer who is to be blessed with success to a child, are willingness to receive the truth, trust in appointed and recognized guides¹, openness of

¹ 'Implicit faith, indeed, in our spiritual guides, (such as the church of Rome holds) I own to be a great absurdity: but a due

heart, freedom from guile, not by any means a suspension of the exercise of our faculties guided by right reason. 'Brethren, be not children in understanding, howbeit in malice be ye children; but in understanding be men.' 'Be wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.' And this should be remembered in judging of the explanations offered of any difficulty in Scripture. There is probably no explanation of any obscurity which is not liable in some degree to the criticisms and objections of a captious mind, keenly alive to dialectical subtilities, and predisposed to object rather than agree. This is the disposition which the first preachers of Christianity taught was a great hinderance to the reception of the truth. And it is the same now; the practical conclusions of Christianity are made less influential by our carping and disputing over the reasonings by which they are established. Those who are dainty of palate are not always those who have the best digestion; and how often do we see men of small power of acquisition in science the most captious and querulous over first principles and elementary truths. All these instances point one way: they justify by analogy the assertion, that the mind childlike in purity and freshness, but manly in vigour and free activity, is that which is most accessible to the pleadings of the Spirit of God.

deference and submission to the judgment of the said guides in the discharge of their ministry, I affirm to be as great a duty.—*Dr South*, Vol. II. p. 403. Oxf. Ed.

In connexion with this consideration of the disposition in which a man should be, who, according to God's word, may expect to be set free from doubts and perplexities, we may also notice the influence it will have in bearing him harmless through such difficulties, even when they cannot be cleared away.

The comparison of the Christian's course to an arduous ascent by a road in which are dangers, temptations, and difficulties, has ever been popular amongst the faithful as it was among the ancient heathen, to symbolize the life of virtue and duty¹.

Sincerity must be evinced in such a matter by great eagerness as well as prudence, exertion as well as caution. The Christian pilgrim toiling up the mount of God, with his face Zion-ward, seeking his way while he is going onwards², has to pass by stumbling-blocks, over chasms, under overhanging rocks. There are precipices to be avoided, and enemies to be encountered and beaten back. Of his three enemies, the world, the flesh, and the devil, the latter will suggest doubts of the accuracy of the chart, the Word of God. When his faith is thus assailed, what will be the part of the traveller, who has a *real* desire to get to the journey's end? Will he not while yet

¹ From the *χαλεπή και μακρή ὁδὸς τῆς ἀρετῆς* of Prodicus apud Xen. Mem. II. 1, to the *Pilgrim's Progress* of John Bunyan.

² Jer. I. 4. *They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.*

perplexed, and seeking out the truth, go on his way carefully, according to the best light, information, and guidance, that he has? If the city set on the hill is really before him, and he longs to enter into that appointed haven of rest, he will surely persevere; he may pass on amid the rocks that bestrew the path, overleap the chasm in confidence, though the ground beyond seems dangerous and untrustworthy, and he may then find, as he undoubtedly will in many cases, that what seemed a formidable obstacle when he was looking up to it, appears contemptible when it is passed; that where the road seemed impassable at a distance, it really is sound and firm, and bears the marks of many a previous fellow-traveller's course. Now, transfer this to the case of the Christian, and it reminds us that difficulties and obscurities are according to our apprehension, and not in themselves, great or little, real or imaginary; that it would be insane to let such things rankle in our judgments, till we come to mistrust God's word; that if Christ's blessed promise is before us of many mansions in the house of his Father, we shall rather prepare ourselves in every way to do his will, as far as we can clearly learn it, and study earnestly by all means to clear up what *seems* strange and inexplicable in those things which have been written aforetime for our admonition. As God's Holy Spirit influences our minds, and generally by ordinary means, such as the appointed ordinances of the Church, the exer-

cise of our senses of discerning, the diligent and careful bringing of our powers of reasoning and reflection to bear on every subject with reverent caution, we shall certainly be making real progress in our upward celestial journey, and we shall find, in numerous instances, that as we are going on, in obedience to the Lord's word, we shall see our difficulties disappear; the dark and the obscure will be cleared up, illuminated by the Divine light which shines brighter and brighter as we ascend. In this case is there a true application of the words, 'He that will do his will shall know of the doctrine.' Obedience brings with it a reward. As the ten lepers obeyed our Lord's injunction, 'it came to pass that as they went, they were cleansed;' and obedience with diligence and industry shall certainly succeed¹. Let none, therefore, who find difficulties in God's word be thereby deterred from the practical part of religion, no difficulty reaches to interference with that. Let them while diligently striving to fulfil God's will, also labour in the Scriptures. Let there be no frittering away of time and talent in fruitless² (because they are indolent and desultory) attempts to unravel intricacies, while plain

¹ St Peter says: 'Add to your faith, virtue, &c. If these things be in you, and abound, ye shall not be unfruitful in the *knowledge* of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

ἃ δὲ μανθάνοντας ποιεῖν, ταῦτα ποιῶντες μανθάνομεν. *Aristot. Ethic. II. I. 4.*

² Πόνος οὐδὲν κέρδος ἔχων ἐγκωμίον παντὸς ἀποστέρηται. *S. Chrysost. Tom. v. Orat. 64.*

duties are neglected or suspended. Nor again, let any be satisfied with imperfect knowledge, because, as they sophistically allege, Christianity is too vast and unlimited a subject. Though it be a true proposition that Christianity is a scheme imperfectly comprehended, yet comprehension, as far as it is attainable by us, may be an exact comprehension. If it cannot reach to the whole or to each of its manifold relations, yet at all events let it be *clear* to the extent that it does reach. To assist in some degree the desire for seeing clearly into that which occasions perplexity—for understanding better what seems obscure and difficult—will be the object of this Course of Lectures, and in the execution of this design, I would again remind my hearers that if they should not agree in the explanations offered, or the solutions given, it ought not to have the effect of making them believe the case to be one of any greater difficulty than it was before the attempt was made. On the contrary, one erroneous explanation cleared away is really a step to discovery; let the failure merely induce greater vigour and industry in endeavours to find out the truth:

Sed magis acri

Judicio perpende, et, si tibi vera videtur,

Dede manus, aut, si falsa est, accingere contra.

Lucret. II. 1042.

Yet even if not completely satisfactory, a probable explanation is to be accepted, and the mind not kept in suspense—for in this we must hold

with the Academics and not with the Pyrrhonists—although nothing human is to be laid down with absolute certainty. ‘If a man will begin with certainties, he shall end in doubts,’ says Lord Bacon¹. Happy shall it be for all of us, if the contrary be verified in our case, if a wise enquiry and study of God’s word to clear up our difficulties lead us eventually, as it ought if conducted with discretion, industry, and sincerity, to the *sure* result, and we are numbered among the sons of God in glory, filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding. The one essential aid in our researches, is God’s grace. The guide, and the light by which we see, must all be sent from heaven. ‘Open *thou* mine eyes, that I may see wondrous things in thy law².’ Let us then pray to God earnestly for this divine guidance, while we diligently make use of the faculties he has given us, and we may with confidence expect to find the words of our Lord verified; ‘When He, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you unto all truth.’ May God of his great mercy grant unto all of us this most blessed answer to the prayer of faith.

¹ *Advancement of Learning*, B. I. p. 31.

² ‘Nemo potest Deum scire nisi a Deo doceatur.’ *S. Iren.* vi. 13.

‘The Spirit of Grace is the Spirit of wisdom, and teaches us by secret inspirations, by proper arguments, by actual persuasions, by personal applications, by effects and energies, and as the soul of a man is the cause of all his vital operations, so is the Spirit of God the life of that life, and the cause of all action and productions Spiritual.’ *Bp. Taylor, Sermon before the Univ. of Dublin.*

LECTURE II.

The Subject proposed.

Who Balaam was.

His knowledge of the True God combined with idolatrous observances—as in the case of Laban the Syrian.

Gentile Prophets.

Balak's estimation of Balaam—the prophet's conduct towards the ambassadors.

God's anger with him was for his perverse concealment of the Truth.

His behaviour reviewed, and the reasonableness of the Divine displeasure vindicated.

Balaam's character further shewn from his subsequent conduct.

His prophecy of the Star of Jacob.

Reference to him by the prophet Micah.

His steady resistance to convictions of God's Truth.

Description of those who now acknowledge the Truth of Christianity, but dismiss from their minds all thoughts of consequent duties—danger of resisting warnings—outward appearance of propriety deceitful—Selfishness is to be destroyed.

Balaam's pursuit of things carnal, while he knew the truth and the unchangeableness of God.—His doom.

Our fearful loss if we seek things present and earthly, and shut our ears to the Voice of God.

Balaam an instance of one distorting God's word.

How this is done now.

General lesson of obedience—and honesty in handling God's word.

NUMBERS XXII. 20—22.

And God came unto Balaam at night, and said unto him, If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do. And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab. And God's anger was kindled because he went.

THE history of Balaam, which is the subject of the lessons from the Old Testament for the 1st and 2nd Sundays after Easter, is one which generally arrests our attention in a powerful manner. The interest attaching to it is of various kinds. In the first place we are struck with the singularity of this man of Mesopotamia being acquainted with the true God, and being under Divine Spiritual influence. Then we have some difficulty in seeing the exact fault that Balaam committed in the circumstances recorded in the verses chosen for the text. And his whole character is one which seems so forcibly to set before us the power of the world over one who knew of better things, that in this respect it comes home to us as a warning, and a subject for thoughtful meditation. Under the first two aspects, it may fairly be said to come within the denomination of a difficult and obscure portion of Holy Scripture, and therefore these will form the subject of the first portion of this Lecture, and we shall then, by

dwelling on the character of this singular man, endeavour to extract some godly admonition for ourselves.

Balaam, the son of Beor, is said to have ‘dwelt in Pethor, which is by the river of the land of the children of his people¹.’ In his first prophecy he describes himself as ‘coming out of Aram, out of the mountains of the East².’ In the book of Deuteronomy he is designated as ‘of Pethor in Mesopotamia³,’ and in the book of Joshua⁴ he is called a *diviner* or soothsayer. Perhaps he may have been a Chaldean priest⁵, and the prophecy of the Star of Jacob, may have been preserved among that learned body, till the three wise men came to seek our Lord in his infancy at Bethlehem. The knowledge of the true God may have remained among them since the time of Abraham, who had migrated, in obedience to God’s call, from their country into the land of Canaan; and we need not be at any loss to account for the mixture of divinations and enchantments with this true knowledge, for instances are not wanting of a similar kind. Laban, the brother-in-law of Isaac, had a knowledge of God, and believed in his providential government of human things. He acknowledged the Divine direction which sent

¹ Numb. xxii. 5. Euphrates is called *the River* in Isai. viii. 7.

² Numb. xxiii. 7. ³ Deut. xxiii. 4. ⁴ Josh. xiii. 22.

⁵ ‘It may not seem altogether improbable, that Balaam* the famous soothsayer, was one of these Zabii.’ *Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacr.* i. 3, 3. *Salmusius* reckons the Zabii as Chaldeans inhabiting Mesopotamia.

Abraham's servant, when in search of him, direct to his dwelling, saying, 'The thing proceedeth from the Lord¹. Moreover he acknowledged that God had blessed him for Jacob's sake. 'I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake².' Yet he had *teraphim*, or idolatrous images, whose character we learn from Jacob himself. For after Rachel had stolen them, they had been preserved till God called him to renew his covenant with him in Padan-Aram, and on that occasion of the purifying of his household, Jacob calls them *strange gods*. 'Put away the strange gods that are among you³.' Laban then, though he had a knowledge of God, yet used idolatrous rites: nevertheless to him God vouchsafed to appear by dreams, and in the way of special revelation. 'God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad⁴.' So that we have in this Syrian of Mesopotamia, the same kind of mixed knowledge and worship, as in Balaam's case some hundreds of years afterwards.

This scattered knowledge of the One True Deity is met with elsewhere, as in Abimelech, king of Gerar, and Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, in Arabia; and we should expect that the know-

¹ Gen. xxiv. 50.

² Gen. xxx. 27. In this place *Selden* (*de Diis Syriis Syntagma*, l. 2) translates *auguratus sum*, for נחשתי, as if Laban had learned this from consulting his Teraphim.

³ Gen. xxv. 2.

⁴ Gen. xxxi. 24.

ledge of God, which men had before the dispersion, would not perish in every separated tribe, either immediately, or universally, or simultaneously, but by degrees, partially and at different intervals of time. Among the children of the East, inhabiting still the plains of Shinar, the common abode before the confusion of tongues, and especially amongst those given to the higher contemplations of science, like the Chaldee priests and soothsayers, this knowledge would by tradition remain probably longest. Generally it would get debased by neglect and mixed with errors, until the revelation of God were fixed by a recognized, and heaven-defended oracle, or unless it were renewed from time to time by special messengers and prophets.

Balaam's knowledge of God, then, is explained by his position as a Chaldee¹, and his being of the number of diviners, whose settled habitation was in Aram Naharaim, between the rivers.

But he also enjoyed communion with God of a higher kind. We cannot but conclude from the estimation in which he was held by the surrounding tribes that this must have been habitual, and popularly known. He was a prophet. The Spirit of God moved upon him. His tongue was guided when God so willed it by a knowledge far above his own. Hereafter the supernatural light from

¹ *Dr Waterland* however conjectures that he was a Midianite, the descendant of Abraham by Keturah. *Works*, Vol. v. Serm. 32. Oxf. Ed.

heaven was concentrated in the land of Israel, and the fitful and scattered gleams of heavenly illumination which Gentile prophets had enjoyed, were gathered in. These occasional glimpses of the Divine mind resemble those strange bodies which, as comets, flit across our system, and light up the depths of space about us. The vast sepulchre of heathendom was lit up here and there by a lamp of heavenly fire, mysteriously coming and suddenly departing—the sparks and scintillations as it were of that fire which in Israel's prophets burned with steadiness and increasing energy, till the temporary removal of their kingdom, which led the way to the dawn of the True Light of Life and Immortality.

Amongst Gentiles, however, the estimation in which this man of strange powers was held, must have been according to their knowledge. Thus Balak probably looked upon Moses as a magician; he might have heard, as Moses intimates in the song of triumph by the Red Sea¹, the particulars of the mighty deliverance wrought in Egypt for the sons of Israel, the wonderous signs which had been given in the wilderness. Moses' reputation in Egypt, moreover, must have been of this kind, and hence Balak may have conceived the idea of opposing to him, one who had the like intercourse with the superior powers of the world invisible. Pharaoh had done so, when before him Moses exhibited his wonders, the

¹ Exod. xv. 15.

credentials of his power. He sent for his magicians to try their skill against that of Moses. Balak anticipated from the curse of Balaam on the people, an easy victory over them, for, said he, 'I wot that he whom thou blessest is blessed, and he whom thou cursest is cursed¹.' It is quite in accordance with Eastern notions on the subject of the dominion of the diviner over the affairs of life, to imagine that Balak's trust was in the superiority of Balaam's power over that of the leader of Israel. 'He whom *thou* blessest is blessed : he whom *thou* cursest is cursed.' He wished to have his enemies devoted or cursed as among the Romans², and to this day among the Hindoo tribes. Balaam's sacrifice of seven rams and seven bullocks on three different hills, on three sets of seven altars, all has an air of mysticism and superstition about it, such as generally accompanies idolatrous rites. It was part of his enchantments and divinations, and confirms the supposition made as to Balak's ideas concerning Balaam, the estimation in which he held him, and the kind of assistance he expected from the prophet.

However Balaam had acquired his reputation, whether by craft in times past, or by having really been favoured with revelations from God, it is evi-

¹ *Origen* says, *Hom. XIII. on Numbers*, that Balaam's power consisted only in cursing, because he acted under the influence of the devil only, and could not bless; but surely this is contrary to what Balak thought of him.

² See *Macrobii Saturnalia*, Lib. III. c. 9, where the form used in devoting Carthage is preserved.

dent that on this occasion God appeared to him and spake by his mouth. The most difficult circumstance in the story is generally taken to be that which has been read in the text. When king Balak's messengers arrived, he told them that he would consult his God, and tell them the result of his enquiry. 'Lodge ye here this night, and I will bring you word again, as the Lord shall speak unto me.' The answer from God was, 'Thou shalt not go,' and he faithfully reported this to the ambassadors. 'The Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you, get you into your own land.' On being further entreated by a second embassy, he says, 'If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord, to do less or more;' but he begs them to tarry and see whether God had a message for him that night again, and then we have the words of the text. God says to him, 'If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them.' He went, and it is said, 'God's anger was kindled because he went.' On the arrival of the first messengers his conduct is apparently blameless: he enquired of God, found that they had come on an errand which he was not allowed to fulfil, and sent them away. But we may remark that he does not appear to have given them the whole truth which he had heard from God, 'Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people, for they are blessed.' He only told them the first part of his message from God, 'The Lord

refuseth to let me go with you.' He did not tell them that the God whose name he was privileged to invoke, had pronounced the people blessed, and therefore his power of divination was useless to the king their master. He kept back that Balak wished for what was absolutely impossible. He merely said that he was not permitted to go with them; from which Balak might naturally infer that he was far from being unable or unwilling to perform the duty required of him, but that there was an impediment in the way, short of absolute impossibility, one which perhaps a greater reward, a promise of higher honours, a more noble embassy might succeed in removing; for the belief in supernatural powers never seems to have created in the minds of those who had it, any great opinion of purity of motive in those who were privileged. Balak then endeavoured to overcome this difficulty in the second time of making request to the prophet. 'He sent yet again princes, more and more honourable than the first,' with this pressing message; 'Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me, for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me. Come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.'

If Balaam had been an upright honest man, his answer truly would have been, 'I cannot transgress the command of God. He has warned me that I may not curse the people. They are

blessed. The answer I have received is one which comes from an unchangeable God, who will not repent, and therefore I cannot render this service to the king your master:’ but he tempts God by inquiring a second time, ‘Tarry ye here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more.’ The word of God came to him as before, only now God says thus, ‘If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them, but yet the word that I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.’ The import of which communication surely seems to be this: ‘If the men be urgent with thee, thou mayest go with them; but thou knowest that I have told thee that the people are blessed, and that thou canst not curse them; therefore thou shalt not be at liberty to do what Balak requires of thee; the word that I speak unto thee, that shalt thou say.’ Balaam then in honesty and sincerity ought to have waited till they urged him, and then should have warned them that he could not do their bidding. If they insisted on his going he might go, but it could not profit them. They demanded of him to curse the Blessed of the Lord. *If* he went with them, he could only say what the Lord said, and that was, ‘Thou shalt not curse them.’

Now so far from all this, he rose up, and went with them with all apparent alacrity. He never warned them, as God had revealed to him, that compliance with the demand they made was impracticable. To all appearance, and in their estima-

tion, he *was* going to render them the required service. The enemies of Israel were led by his concealment of the truth, to conclude that the God of Balaam was against the invading tribes. The apparent backwardness of the prophet had been overcome by the larger offer of honour and reward, and he, who refused at first, and sent the messengers away, now joins them without any intimation that he had been, and was still, totally unable to fulfil the object they had in view in sending. This was evidently Balak's impression, he seems to have had a contemptuous opinion of Balaam's mercenary spirit, and urges him with a proud and petulant question, 'Did I not earnestly send unto thee to call thee? Wherefore camest thou not unto me? Am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour?' The king evidently refused to consider that there was any meaning in the saying of the prophet, that a divine influence had prevented him from coming at once. He regarded the backwardness exhibited as a sign of distrust in his power and his word pledged to Balaam,—a mere pretence and deceit to extract a larger reward.

If we consider this effect of Balaam's conduct, we must conclude that a great *deceit* had been practised by him. He knew that Balak required what was sinful in him to do,—what in fact he could not do,—yet he might go, according to the Divine permission, if this were all clearly stated. If the men had urged him, and he had laid before

them what he knew, and forewarned them that the journey they pressed him to take could not by any means answer their expectations, and they *still* insisted, he was authorized to go. But so far as we can judge from the narrative, Balaam entirely omitted this part of the divine communication to him. 'He rose up early and went with them.' And the king, instead of being in the least surprised at his first reluctance, taunts him with it as unbecoming the power and honour of the throne of Moab.

I do not think, if we weigh well what Balaam's conduct should have been, we can avoid coming to the conclusion that the permission to go must be limited in the way I have described. And therefore, when he went, omitting to inform those who came for him of the conditions with which his permission was clogged, God was angry with him for his subterfuge and deceit, and though he might plead the words of God, *partially* understood, as authorizing him; yet he wilfully and obstinately disregarded the full meaning of the revealed counsels, and *therefore* on this account and in this view, God's anger was kindled because he went, and he was reprov'd in the most singular manner by God's opening the mouth of the beast whereon he rode, 'He was rebuked for his iniquity, the dumb ass speaking with man's voice, forbade the madness of the prophet¹.'

If we pursue the history, we find the same

¹ 2 Pet. ii. 16.

prevalent idea. Balaam, with full knowledge of God's goodwill towards the people, *twice* tempted God by seeking counsel from him before he made his prophetic declaration. With his certain conviction that the people were blessed, he allowed the king to endeavour to extract the curse from his lips at *three* several times. And when his prophecies were nearly all uttered, and Balak in his indignation smote his hands and addressed the faithless prophet in threatening tones, 'Flee thou to thy place, I thought to promote thee to honour, but lo, the Lord hath kept thee back from honour,' Balaam yet lingers, and tells him of what shall be hereafter. He still hoped to receive the wages of unrighteousness. But in this he was again signally foiled. The divine energy which had filled his spirit when he sought for his enchantments, burst forth in fiery language of denunciation on the enemies of Israel, and amidst the threatenings of God's vengeance, was there a picture drawn of the prosperity of Israel; and besides their deliverance from the neighbouring enemy, the coming of that Great One is foretold, who was to save his people from their sins, and overcome their spiritual foes.

This remarkable prophecy is, I think, rightly described by Bishop Warburton in his *Divine Legation of Moses*, as importing something more than is ordinarily understood by its terms¹.

This prophecy may in some sense, says he,

¹ Warburton's *Divine Legation of Moses*, B. iv. § 4.

relate to David ; but without question it belongs principally to Jesus : the metaphor of a sceptre was common and popular to denote a ruler like David ; but the star though it also signified in the prophetic writings a temporal prince or ruler, yet had a secret and hidden meaning likewise : a star in the Egyptian hieroglyphics denoted *God*¹ : the same figure is used in the prophet Amos : and hence we conclude that the metaphor used by Balaam of a star was of that abstruse mysterious kind ; and is so to be understood, and consequently that it related only to Christ, the eternal Son of God.

After this, Balaam still perseveres. He gave Balak such counsel as most effectually tended to the undoing of Israel. It was by his advice as we read further on, that the Midianitish women were made snares for the people. For when they were taken prisoners, Moses said : ‘These caused the children of Israel, through the counsel of Balaam, to commit trespass against the Lord in the matter of Peor².’

We hear no more particulars of him in Holy Scripture till his death, when he is reported among the slain of Midian³, by the children of Israel ; though he is referred to in the New Testament by S. Peter⁴, S. Jude⁵, and S. John⁶

¹ Ἄστηρ παρ’ Αἰγυπτίους γραφόμενος Θεὸν σημαίνει. *Hieropol. Hierog. Lib. i. c. 1.*

² Numb. xxxi. 16.

³ Numb. xxxi. 8 ; Josh. xiii. 22.

⁴ 2 Pet. ii. 15.

⁵ Jude 11.

⁶ Rev. ii. 14.

in the Revelation, and by all with a mark of infamy attached to his memory. There is indeed a singular passage in the book of Micah¹, where Bishop Butler thought that we have the words of the controversy between Balak and Balaam. The 6th chapter of that prophecy commences with a solemn appeal to all the earth to hear God's controversy with his people: in the first place the Almighty urges them with the remembrance of his former kindness, how he brought them up out of Egypt, sending before them Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Then follows the fifth verse, 'O my people, remember now what Balak king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal; that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord.' Then follows the controversy about the means of pleasing God, and atoning for sin.

'Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?'

The answer is:

'He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?'

¹ Micah vi. 5.

Bishop Butler, whom Bishop Lowth follows, would make the question that of Balak, and the answer that of Balaam. I confess I do not see how the case applies. Balak is nowhere represented as seeking to find favour with God. Nor is Balaam's answer to him at all with reference to his personal qualities. It does not relate to any supposed desire on Balak's part to enter into covenant with God. It seems to me that the fifth verse coheres more naturally with the preceding, and that when God reminds his people how mercifully he had hitherto dealt with them, how he had brought them out of the house of bondage, he also reminds them of the signal discomfiture of the Gentile prophet Balaam, and his employer Balak, seeking to turn away his favour from the people, and that from that verse the general expostulation proceeds, as in fact the verses are divided in our Authorized Version.

Let us now pass on to draw from the character and fate of Balaam some instruction and reproof for ourselves.

The chief feature of Balaam's conduct is his steady resistance to conviction of God's truth. What induced in him this resistance, was covetousness and ambition, i. e. selfishness in its most extended signification. He loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. He sought the honour that cometh from man, and did not regard that which cometh from above. And though he

knew what was true and right, he rigidly set himself against it. The death of the righteous he had light enough to know was a desirable death: he could only utter a vague, empty wish for such a blessing. He set at nought God's counsel, and would none of his reproof. He knew, and wondered, and despised and perished. And he is become in apostolic warnings, the beacon by which to deter men from the love of this world, from running greedily after those rewards and honours, which are the portion of this life only. Now, we cannot but conclude when we reflect, that this character is one not uncommon. Many members of the Christian Church hear the glad sounds of reconciliation for years, and believe in their truth; they acknowledge that in the practice of Christianity alone, can there be good hopes of eternal salvation; the faith of Christ approves itself to their understandings and their judgments: it is recognized, but they go no further. They steadily resist the convictions of their better moments; they will not relinquish pleasures, or honours, or riches; they will not give up any ease or any comfort. The practice of religious duties—the exactions of a Christian life—they will not endure. A general apathy, and carelessness of the results of self-indulgence, and neglect of personal holiness, have seized upon them, and they give themselves up to worldly pursuits, while they acknowledge the truths of Christianity, and will confess that their course of life cannot warrant reasonable expecta-

tions of a happy futurity. It is true that they do not hold these as concomitant ideas. It is not in the midst of foolish amusements, that the votary of pleasure ever recalls to his mind the scenes of Mount Calvary. It is not in the gorgeous pageant, that the proud in wealth sees before him his Master, poor, lowly, in want and despised! It is not in the heated chase after power and place, that the ambitious calls to his recollection his Saviour—a servant, humbled even as a man, and rejected with cruel scorn by his own children. They feel that the reflections arising from such contemplations are inconvenient and misplaced, and they dismiss them. It is sufficient for them, if they occasionally and with weariness take up a pious book, or indulge in a serious meditation. Yet they take care that such employments, such meditations, shall be as few and scarce as possible. They know that much time should be spent in religious exercises, if the soul's health is to be cared for, yet they determine to banish the thought, and, even in spiritual matters, to let the morrow care for the things of itself. They exhibit in these, that recklessness and that indifference, which, in worldly concerns, ever meet with the deserved contempt of the wise and prudent. They are prodigals of the time which should be spent in repentance and amendment. The extravagance and senseless folly of the spendthrift, which they condemn, they exhibit in their own persons, as far as their chief interests are con-

cerned, and yet they know, and at times they must feel, that all is going wrong. They sometimes hear the joyful sound, which tells how the death of the righteous may be attained, but all this they put away from them—they will none of it. ‘Gloomy and disagreeable thoughts,’ think they, ‘are those of future retribution. Let us away with them! Let us eat and drink, for not to-day, but to-morrow we die. Let us not now think of things so unpleasant, so unsuitable to our habits.’ And thus, without being infidels (the accusation would shock them), they are partakers of all the infidel’s recklessness of the future. Yet their cup is dashed with wormwood. The still small voice is occasionally heard, whose sound is not that of peace. They cannot always escape from this. It is the last slender cord that binds them to the Tree of Life. These are men of whom I would take Balaam as a type. Are there none amongst us? Are there any of us who like Felix have trembled, when, in solemn earnestness, some one has reasoned before them of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come? Are there any on whom the reproof of God’s ordinances, or the power of his word, have produced a momentary wavering? Have they ever been *disturbed* while going on in their course? And have they, like the heathen governor, slighted the warning, and said, that a more convenient time would come for a consideration of these things? Have a care what you are doing, brethren, if any of these

remarks tell upon you. You are then running in the way of Balaam. You have a knowledge of God, but you set at nought that knowledge, and will not act upon it, because your attachment to things temporal is stronger than your desire for salvation after death. Surely this is a fearful case, if persisted in. *Christians*, you call yourselves! You may, to all outward appearance, pass for such in the careless crowds who surround you. You may be had in honour as those who are regular in their devotions, whose privileges are largely made use of. You may be thought by the world *religious* and exemplary, while you know all the time that your heart is *not* God's, and that if you were to die this day, you have not any hope of acceptance. This is a terrible thought! Let us search out our own hearts, brethren, that we be not deceived. If covetousness and selfishness reign there, in vain are we called Christ's brethren. In such a matter the opinion of the unthinking and careless is inconsequent: and the evil may shew itself in a thousand forms; it may be manifest in us, by making us lovers of our own pleasures, covetous, proud or ambitious, but all these have *one root*, selfishness: the disposition which it is the chief object of Christianity to destroy. And it *must* be eradicated from the breasts of all who will not bear to be reckoned among the enemies of God. Balaam, the son of Beor, had held converse with the Almighty. In him the divine afflatus worked

mightily, quickening his sight, enlarging his capacities, sharpening his faculties so as to enable him to apprehend the deep things of God; the mighty storehouse of God's future providences was dimly, but really opened to his gaze. He saw the bright harbinger of future bliss—the STAR OF JACOB—to be hereafter the Sun of Righteousness, illuminating with his genial rays, all nations that dwell upon the earth. He had singular—extraordinary privileges. But great as was the favour bestowed upon him, great also was the despite that he shewed to the Spirit of God's gift. He knew better than any about him the awful truth of the words he uttered.

‘God is not a man that he should lie; or the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?’

Yet while he bore testimony to the *Power* and the *Immutability* of God, his secret wishes rebelled against the conclusion that he should have drawn, and sorrowfully and wistfully coveting the rewards of divination, he endeavoured to counteract the truth of the God of truth, to change the designs of the unchangeable God; and his doom was that his deprivation of heavenly rewards should be enhanced, by his seeing the scene of glory afar off, like the rich man in the parable; by his beholding at an impassable distance the great things that God hath prepared for them that love him; by knowing the blessedness

of which he was to be deprived, that the righteous hath HOPE in his death.

Let us take warning from his covetousness and its reward. The Holy Spirit strives with us. We feel within us at times the throes and pangs of the divine energy, struggling with our propensities till Christ be formed in us. Our worldly pursuits are all calculated to engross our affections and dazzle our eyes. The world entices us with its rewards and honours and pleasures, to refuse compliance with that Voice of God, which we know to be true and unchangeable. Its thousand arms are outspread, its charms are set, and its enchantments are woven. Shall WE, with knowledge of God's requirements of our *whole* hearts, deliberately endeavour to be the world's *now*, and yet hope to be God's *hereafter* ?

Choose ye whom ye will serve, is the voice of holy Scripture. Let us not then, like Balaam, profess belief in God's unbounded sovereignty and immutable purpose, while we seek to thwart his laws. We are to live for heaven, not for earth. Here we are pilgrims, we belong to the kingdom above; we are really on our road, in the threshold of the great palace, but not to delay there, admiring and coveting its inferior splendours; houses full of silver and gold must not tempt us from the onward path: to loiter and let these things detain us is to lose *Immortality*.

And, lastly, there is yet one other serious warning to be taken from Balaam's story. We

have said that he might plead God's word *partially* apprehended in justification of his errand, but it was only *partially*, not fairly and honestly.

Surely in this he is an example of those whom S. Peter describes, as wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction. This is also done amongst us, when a few favourite sayings from Scripture are pressed with their *full*, sometimes *forced* meaning, without reference to the general tenor of God's word¹.

When men have a purpose of their own—a religious system to maintain—they can always from holy Scripture get some countenance for their errors; but they should remember, that as the Scriptures *can* be wrested and perverted, so also have we examples of such perversion, and one of the most remarkable is that of Balaam, who studiously avoided the plain and palpable meaning of God's message to him, in order to seize upon those few partial and separated words which favoured the design in his heart.

And what an end has all this wilful obstinacy and deceit? He was slain among the enemies of God's Church! This man of superior powers and perilous knowledge.

Oh, let us strive earnestly to avoid that end,

¹ Ἐν προσποιήσει ἐξηγήσεως τὰ ἑαυτοῦ παρεισάγουσιν. *S. Basil.*

'We must not distort the Scriptures, as Hilary saith, "non affere sensum ad Scripturas sed referre," not to devise a sense for scripture, but to give it its proper sense.' *Bp. Andrews, Pattern of Catechistical Doctrine, Part I. c. 5, § 3.*

dark and bitter, which the worldly and the perverter of holy Scripture shall meet! Let us do it by keeping ever before us our Lord Jesus Christ, as our ensample of godly life, who in all things *did* the will of him that sent him; who bid us search the Scriptures, because *in them* is the knowledge of eternal life, that when our course is ended, we may really die the death of the righteous, and not in sad and hopeless despondency have to surrender up our souls to a future full of dismal foreboding and gloomy apprehension.

May our evening star be the STAR of JACOB; the sign of peace, joy and hope!

On us, as on the Israel of God, may the divine goodness be poured out, that we may realize, in their full and spiritual meaning, the blessings which Balaam prophesied of Israel, abiding in his tents according to their tribes:—

‘How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! As the valleys are they spread forth, as gardens by the river’s side, as the trees of lign aloes which the Lord hath planted, and as cedar trees beside the waters.’

See *Sherlock’s Miscellaneous Tracts; Answer to Chubb. Dr Shuckford’s Connection*, Vol. III. pp. 133–314.

LECTURE III.

THE extension of God's covenant to the Gentiles apprehended imperfectly by the Apostles at first.

Consequent difficulties.

S. Paul's argument with the Galatians.

The *promise*, not the *Law*, the foundation of the covenant.

This promise made to Christ.

Usage of words *Thy seed*, collective and particular.

S. Peter's application of the promise apparently contradicts S. Paul's. How the two are reconciled.

What should be our conclusion, when explanations of apparent verbal obscurities are unsatisfactory.

The argument about the word 'Mediator,' (vv. 19, 20); 'because of transgressions,' its meaning discussed. Summary of argument.

Practical conclusions:

- (1) The sureness of salvation, based on God's promise, laid hold of by faith.

The power of the Christian Preacher derived from conviction of its infallible certainty.

- (2) How Christ is the end of the Law to us.

The object of the Gospel is the subjugation of man's Will.

In Self-examination, we should call our Wills to judgment.

Are our desires earthly, or heavenly?

GALATIANS III. 16 and 19, 20.

To Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. . . . Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

IT was natural, when Christianity was first promulgated, that the Jews should have expected, that all men who became Christians should also be absorbed into their religion. The carefulness of our Lord to fulfil all righteousness, and the scrupulousness which the Apostles at first shewed to conform to all the ritual observances of the Law, were calculated in some degree to make them think so. It was only gradually that the Apostles themselves became aware of the great expansive power of Christianity. It required the special direction of the Holy Ghost to convince them of the conclusions to which they were finally led in the Council of Jerusalem. They only learned by degrees the real object of our Lord's submission to the Law for man's sake; that he might, having fulfilled it, throw down the wall of partition by which the people of God had been kept in. That the glory of the Lord which had shone only hitherto upon the family of Abraham was to be revealed unto all nations,—

they might have apprehended ; but they did not readily become persuaded of the abolition of what they conceived the great work of God, the Law of Moses, with its ceremonies, its festivals, its minutiae of conduct and requirement. And when the Apostles had themselves become aware, in its real extent, of the enlargement of the covenant to all mankind, and the consequent rejection of the restrictions of the Law, they had to contend with the difficulties which resulted from the contrary persuasion of the Jews ; not only was it at first a matter of discussion and perplexity among themselves, but as Gentile converts were gradually called into the kingdom, they became exposed to the erroneous teaching of men, who, unlike themselves, had been before under a covenant with God, and wished that all others should pledge themselves to the bonds of the elder dispensation. These teachers urged the Galatians with the danger of losing the privileges of being Abraham's children, unless they became circumcised, and took upon themselves the subsequent obligations which God had imposed upon Abraham's descendants.

To meet this error, S. Paul teaches, first of all, that the Gentiles were to have a share in the blessing of Abraham, not through the Law, but, independently of it, through *Jesus Christ*. That they were to inherit the promise to Abraham, not by incorporation into the family of the Jews, but in virtue of *another* covenant on God's part with

Abraham, one different from that by which the Jews held themselves distinguished. This he proves by reminding them that there was a promise, made to Abraham and to his *seed*. He saith not *seeds*, as of many, but to thy seed ; which seed, says the Apostle, is *Christ*.

It is important then that we should verify this quotation made by the Apostle, for his whole argument seems to assume that God's promise was made to Abraham's seed in the singular number and not in the plural, so that not the descendants of Abraham generally were intended to be heirs of the blessing, but one descendant pre-eminently so. Now there are many promises of God to Abraham in which the words *Thy seed* are used. In every one of them the word is used in the singular number ; but in some cases it is used as a noun *collective*, and that undoubtedly in the majority of such cases. In all these the promises are made to the Jews, the lineal descendants of Abraham. All those, namely, which refer to the temporal possession of the land of Canaan, are made to Abraham's seed in terms which forbid our applying to them the commentary of the Apostle. Such as, 'Thy seed after thee in their generation,' (xvii. 7). 'All the land will I give to thy seed for ever,' and 'I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth,' (xiii. 15). 'In multiplying I will multiply thy seed, and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies,' (xxii. 17). All the promises of temporal prosperity may therefore

be set aside ; in fact we reduce the cases for consideration to the single one, ‘In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,’ (xxii. 18) which is a repetition of a promise made in ch. xii. 3, without the words *thy seed*: ‘In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.’ Now if it be objected, that the words *thy seed* in this promise must be taken in the same collective sense as the singular ‘thy seed’ of the preceding verse, we shew a clear difference in their usage by coupling together these parallel passages of Scripture ; in the latter of which the promise is made personal to Abraham, without any implied extension of its recipient, and in which form it is also quoted by S. Paul in this very chapter as the preaching of the Gospel to Abraham¹.

So that the promise to which the Apostle refers in the argument about the words *thy seed* in the singular number, must be that contained in ch. xxii. 18, ‘In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed.’ And the limitation which he puts upon them (which seems at first sight rather strained, inasmuch as the word *seed* is *never* used in the plural number at all, even when it refers to the Jews²) is justified by joining it with the pre-

¹ Warburton (*Divine Legation*, B. VI. § 5, 1,) does not seem to me to allow the full force of the Apostle’s reasoning in this place. He denies that there is any revelation of the redemption of mankind in this promise to Abraham ; and restrains the revelation of redemption to the offering up of Isaac.

² It is used to denote a single person, as in Gen. iv. 25, ‘God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew,’ referring to Seth.

vious form in which the same promise had been made; viz. 'In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed'—referring in a more exclusive and personal manner to the patriarch himself.

The collective sense of the words *thy seed* is, no doubt, also contained in this latter promise when Christ is considered the heir; for all the faithful are included in him, as all the Jews were, at the time the Apostle wrote, the descendants of Abraham in their forefather Israel. So that though the argument applies to distinguish Christ from the people of Israel, the collective meaning is still preserved; the Christian Church in one case, and the Jewish Church in the other, being represented by their federal heads, Christ, and Israel. The chief difference is that the promise to the descendants through Israel *had* been fulfilled, and the Jews, collectively taken, were the seed of Abraham to whom the land and temporal blessings had been promised; whereas our Saviour, though in one sense the federal head of the Church, and thus a representative of all the faithful as the descendants or heirs of Abraham, yet in another sense, is *the* peculiar descendant of Abraham according to the flesh, inasmuch as in Him personally, and in Him only, is verified in its loftiest sense the promise, 'in thee shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.' It cannot be pretended in any sense, that in Israel, taken collectively, this promise is fulfilled. It is emphatically in the seed of Abraham, which is Jesus

Christ. So that in this respect God saith not, 'In thy seeds, as of many, but in thy seed, which is Christ.'

The remark made at the beginning of this lecture must here again be remembered, viz. how difficult it was for the Apostles themselves to understand the blessing of Abraham being through Christ unto the whole world; for we find S. Peter, preaching to the Jews, using exactly the same words of the promise, and apparently as if it applied to the Jews only, 'Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed.' Here we clearly notice a symptom of that difference of exposition between S. Peter and S. Paul to which the latter alludes in writing to the Galatians. S. Peter applies the promise generally to the Jews. Rightly in one sense, no doubt, because they are included in it, but in an apparently exclusive manner, as they would naturally expect him to do. But even here the Holy Spirit overrules his application of the text by the subsequent words, 'Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.' The word *first* denoting not any exclusiveness of claim or pre-eminence, but merely priority of announcement, as S. Paul himself allows, 'To the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.' The subsequent teaching of the Holy Spirit made it clear

to S. Peter that the Gentiles were, as well as the Jews, heirs of this covenant, through Jesus Christ, and then he became reconciled to the extension of the privilege which at first he and others believed was contracted and limited, when they went 'preaching the word to none but unto Jews only.' Moreover we notice that S. Peter here, as well as S. Paul, expressly limits the seed spoken of to Christ. And we may perhaps interpret the whole passage in this sense,—not that S. Peter tells the Jews they were the inheritors of Abraham's promise directly, but by the sending to them *first* the promised seed which is Jesus Christ, they received the fulfilment of the promise made to their great progenitor. 'Ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers, when He said to Abraham, And in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed,' for now is first come unto you, the promised seed, viz. Jesus Christ, whom he hath raised from the dead, as was prefigured in your forefather Isaac, and He is come to bless you, to bring you that blessing which hereafter is for all nations, viz. that He will turn you away from your iniquities.

This explanation of the Apostle's argument about the use of the words, Thy seed, in the singular number, seems to me satisfactory, but we may pause awhile to consider what we should do if no method could be found of reconciling the argument to the facts of the case.

There is clearly a middle course between

two extremes—some men in such difficulties of Scripture, would have us immediately recognize a divine superiority which is above all criticism; and others treat the Sacred Records with the same rough handling as they would the writings of uninspired men, are ready to emend, omit, transpose, and imagine interpolations, as they may sometimes reasonably do in the latter case. Surely neither of these methods is without very serious objection. To put me into the dilemma of believing a contradiction, compelling me to follow and admit an inference from premises which do not warrant it, or else to surrender the inspiration of Scripture, is following the preposterous line taken by Roman Catholic expositors on the text, ‘This is my Body,’ of which those men, who blindly idolize the letter of the Scripture, are the most strenuous of opponents. But as God is not the author of confusion, I cannot believe that in cases where reason, the gift of God, compels me to see inconsequence, or misapprehension, I am obliged to shut my eyes, and resign myself to a misty credulity. On the other hand, I do not venture to alter the Sacred Text, and manufacture a meaning of my own. While we admit the sober use of a judicious criticism, we must keep ever in mind the fact that these writings are in a certain undoubted sense *inspired*, and that we must reverently accept in them things sometimes difficult and hard to be understood. If, then, I should find no solution which

should justify to my mind the argument of the Apostle in the verses considered, if I could find no promise to Abraham where the words, *thy seed*, admitted of an interpretation in the singular number, I should confess that I could not explain the passage; but I should not pretend to be satisfied with having no account to give of the difficulty, taking refuge in an indolent security of the sureness of the Word of God: remembering that 'the letter killeth, the Spirit giveth life,' I should endeavour to get the general argument of the Apostle from the passage in question, and hope that in God's good time, a solution of the difficulty may be proposed. My faith in the Holy Scriptures would lead me to embrace heartily the teaching conveyed, without forcing any part of the text to my own ideas, but leaving the stumblingblock honestly and fairly acknowledged, admitting the existence of an anomaly, just in fact as we must sometimes do in natural philosophy. Problems may be proposed to which we cannot give a solution, but that does not shake our faith in prime principles, nor does it make us talk of all these things being above our comprehension, hidden meanings, and such like. But we try to the utmost of our ability to give an account; and if we fail to find satisfactory explanations, we trust that some other investigator may be more successful. So in Scripture difficulties, if no rational account can be given of them, we must not begin to question the inspiration of Holy

Writ—not rashly propose to mutilate and alter—still less must we take refuge in vague and inconclusive generalities of sacred things being mysteries, and so on, which only suggest in an intelligent enquirer a suspicion of incompetency in him who mentions them: but while candidly confessing the difficulty, labour earnestly to understand more of the Scriptures, and trust that either by fresh light shed on the subject, or by the labours of a more penetrating judgment, God will make clear that which is a present source of perplexity.

To return,—the promise of God to Abraham had then respect unto Christ, and not to Isaac or Jacob; and therefore the law which affected the descendants of Israel according to the flesh, could not interfere with or annul the promise so as to cause any avoidance of it. This promise being of a blessing to *all* nations, does not, therefore, come to them through the law, it depends upon the unchangeable God's irrevocable word pledged to Abraham.

‘What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come, to whom the promise had been made.’

προστέθη¹, it was *added*, or ἐτέθη, it was

¹ Προστίθεσθαι has sometimes the meaning *irrogare, infligere*. See *Goeller, Thucyd.* II. 37. So that we might construe ‘the Law was laid upon them on account of their sins.’ The only other place where προστίθεσθαι is used by S. Paul is in Heb. xii. 19, ἧς οἱ ἀκούσαντες παρητήσαντο μὴ προστεθῆναι αὐτοῖς λόγον, ‘which they that heard, begged the word might not be inflicted upon them any more.’

established, as Mill, Griesbach, and Scholz read, *on account of transgressions*. Two explanations are given of this latter expression. The first is, that it affirms the law was given to preserve the Jews from idolatry. The other, in accordance with S. Paul's teaching elsewhere, that it was given to make manifest the nature of sin. Of these two interpretations Bishop Bull¹ adopts the former, and it seems with reason. It is asserted by Jewish writers that the law was given for the extirpation of idolatry: and the ancient Christian writers all held this opinion;—that God gave the Jews at first the Decalogue only, till they had made the golden calf, and that afterwards he laid this yoke of ceremonies upon them to restrain them from idolatrous rites². There is, moreover, this objection to the latter interpretation, that

¹ *Bp Bull, Examen Censuræ. Ans. to Stricture xix. § 5.*

² See *Warburton's Divine Legation*, B. iv. § 5, 2, who refers also to *Spencer, De Legibus Hebræorum*.

Whitby quotes *Maimonides, More Nevochim*, II. c. 32. 'For when God sent Moses to redeem his people out of Egypt, it was the usual custom of all the world, and the worship in which all nations were bred up, to build up Temples in honour of the Sun, Moon, and Stars, and to offer divers kinds of animals to them, and to have priests appointed for that end. Therefore God knowing it is beyond the strength of human nature instantly to quit that which it has been accustomed to, and so is powerfully inclined to, would not command that all that worship should be abolished, and he should be worshipped only in Spirit: but that He only should be the object of this outward worship, that these temples and altars should be built to him alone,' &c. See also *Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryph.* c. 19. *Irenæus, Lib. iv. adv. Hæres.* c. 15. *Cedrenus, Comp. Hist.* p. 239, all quoted by *Whitby*.

when we read, ‘By the Law is the knowledge of sin,’ we know that this refers to the last commandment of the Decalogue, ‘Thou shalt not covet,’ and not to the Ritual Law, which S. Paul here designates as ‘The Law.’ The nature of sin is made manifest by the Moral Law, which is of perpetual obligation, and not by that law which was only established till Christ should come, and which therefore had an end. If we understand the words, ‘on account of transgressions’ to mean, to make manifest the nature of sin, we lose sight of the fact that it is the perfect Moral Law of God which fulfils this office, and which, so long as we need to have this conviction of the sinfulness of sin wrought in us, continually remains as the standing witness to bring the sinner to the confession of his unworthiness, and his need of the all-sufficient atonement made by the Saviour of men. Without enquiring to what extent the Ritual Law may have served this end or not, it seems much more reasonable to understand, with the primitive Church, these words to import that the Law was added on account of Israel’s transgressions, and to keep the people from idolatry. Bishop Bull gives several quotations which most clearly shew the opinion of ancient Christian writers on this point¹. Moreover, this interpretation of the words agrees well with the following

¹ Καὶ ὅτι διὰ τὰς ἀμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ ὑμῶν, καὶ διὰ τὰς εἰδωλολατρίας, ἀλλ’ οὐ διὰ τὸ ἐνδεὲς εἶναι τῶν τοιούτων προσφορῶν, ἐνετείλατο ὁμοίως ταῦτα γίνεσθαι.—*Justin Martyr, Dial. cum Tryph. c. 22.*

Διὰ τὸ σκληροκάρδιον τοῦ λαοῦ ὑμῶν πάντα τὰ τοιαῦτα ἐντάλλ-

sentence, ‘till the seed should come, to whom the promise was made.’ This indicates in no obscure terms that the Law spoken of was to have an end, and therefore that it must be the ceremonial Law and not the moral.

In the following descriptions of it also S. Paul sets forth reasons for its inferiority and consequent displacement by the ratified promise in Christ, ‘It was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator.’ The sense I apprehend to be this, The Law was given to keep Israel from idolatry, and was only to last till Christ should come; it was delivered to the people by angels, and not immedi-

ματα νοεῖτε τὸν Θεὸν διὰ Μωσέως ἐντειλάμενον ὑμῖν, ἵνα διὰ πολλῶν τούτων ἐν πασῇ πράξει πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν αἰεὶ ἔχητε τὸν Θεὸν καὶ μῆτε ἀδικεῖν μῆτε ἀσεβεῖν ἄρχησθε. *Id.* c. 64. Quoted by Bp Bull, in loco citato, to which I add,

c. 27 of the same dialogue: ὥστε ὃν τρόπον τὴν ἀρχὴν διὰ τὰς κακίας ὑμῶν ταῦτα ἐντέταλτο, ὁμοίως διὰ τὴν ἐν τούτοις ὑπομονὴν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐπίτασιν διὰ τῶν αὐτῶν εἰς ἀνάμνησιν αὐτοῦ καὶ γυνῶσιν ὑμᾶς καλεῖ.

Irenæus, B. iv. c. 29. ‘Non oportet mirari si et in veteri testamento idem Deus tale aliquid voluit fieri pro utilitate populi, illiciens eos per prædictas observationes ut per eas salutem Decalogi observantes [sint], munera deit ei, et [detenti] ab eo, non revertentur ad idololatriam nec apostatæ fierent a Deo.’ (Quoted by Bp Bull.)

‘Sacrificiorum quoque onera et operationum et oblationum negotiosas scrupulositates nemo reprehendat: quasi sibi Deus talia proprie desideraverit, qui tam manifeste exclamat: Quo mihi multitudinem Sacrificiorum Vestrorum? Et Quis exquisivit ea de manibus vestris? Sed illam Dei industriam sentiat qua populum primum in idololatriam et transgressionem ejus modi officiis religioni suæ voluit adstringere quibus superstitione seculi agebatur, ut ab ea avocaret illos, sibi jubens fieri, quasi desideranti, ne simulacris faciendis delinqueret.’—*Tertullian adv. Marcion.* Lib. ii. c. 18.

ately by God himself; it was conveyed to them represented by one person, a mediator, viz. Moses. In all these respects it is vastly inferior in dignity and independence to that promise which God himself gave absolutely to Abraham, without any intervention, for where only *one* is concerned, there is no place for a mediator, and that **ONE** is in this case God.

I would therefore translate the words :

‘It was ordained by angels at the hand of a Mediator, but there is no Mediator in the case of a single person, and the One (here referred to) is God.’

A promise is given absolutely and is not in the nature of a covenant: there is no need of any Mediator in the autocratic and independent enunciation of a promise on the part of *One*, and here that *One* is the Almighty himself.

In all these respects then S. Paul magnifies the promise above the Law :

It was not spoken by angels, but by God himself. It was not in the nature of an agreement between two, requiring a daysman or mediator—it rested solely and entirely on One, and that One, God.

So that the words ‘a mediator is not a mediator of one,’ would be understood, as signifying that in the case of one promising, there is no need of a mediator: an enunciation of a general truth that an agreement between two admits of some intervening person; but where only one binds

himself without condition, there can be no such intervention. And then the following words $\acute{o} \delta\epsilon \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma \epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$, as if the Apostle had said, 'and in speaking of *One*, in this case I mean God as the One.' The $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ to which I have referred in laying down the general proposition is $\acute{o} \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ God. Thus explaining the word $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ as he had before explained the word $\mu\epsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\tau\eta\varsigma$.

Bishop Bull adopts a meaning which seems to me forced. He agrees with Grotius in understanding the word $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\acute{o}\varsigma$ as from the neuter $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$, so that he interprets thus: 'A mediator does not interfere between those that are at one, i.e. who agree well together—but God is one, i.e. ever like himself, unchangeable.' I cannot find any justification for the use of the word $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ as 'unchangeable,' and moreover it seems that $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ must be translated in the same sense in *both* sentences.

The general meaning of the Apostle, however, is undoubted, and agreed upon by all who differ about the translation of the words. We may therefore, after thus arriving at a sense which seems more exactly that conveyed by the original, proceed to draw some conclusions of a general description, profitable for our own instruction in righteousness.

The first practical consideration in connexion with our present subject, is the infallible sureness of Christian Salvation; being based upon the promise of God, and not upon any bargain or agreement between God and man.

This is peculiarly the result of the confidence we have in the doctrine of justification by faith. While the procuring cause of our Salvation is the merits and atonement of Christ, the condition might still have been 'Do this, and live,' instead of 'Believe, and thou shalt be saved.' But instead of good works being the condition primary of salvation, we have now faith standing in that relation—a faith indeed made perfect by works—depending for the proof of its living vigour and activity upon our obedience; while on the other hand, that obedience itself is not estimated according to man's performance of his duty, but according to the motive that prompts him. If that motive be *faith*, a sincere and hearty trust in Christ Jesus our Lord, and if we put away from us all idea of personal merit, relying only on what Christ himself has done to conciliate God's favor towards us; while we strive, with all our power, to shew ourselves members of Christ, and imitators of his perfect compliance with God's will,—THEN the foundation of our hopes is *sure* and *certain*.

Our salvation is based upon the promise of God to Abraham, as the Father of the faithful, verified in the actual coming of the promised seed, in whom this blessing was to be secured and completed. And this certainty of salvation is one of the greatest favours we enjoy from God under the New Covenant.

It is conviction of the immutable basis upon which salvation rests in the Christian Religion

which arms the ambassador for Christ with his power, for calling on men to follow up the high destiny set before them in the Gospel. When urging the young and ardent to remember in what grace they stand, what a living and true way is open before them, when setting before them the glories of the Celestial Kingdom, and the noble reward of faith, self-denial, and exertion, he feels that the blessings he has to offer, and the aims he proposes, are not only the noblest, and the most exalted, but that they have one characteristic that all other objects of ambition fail in, viz. an undoubted and infallible certainty.

He recollects that for fame, the student will labour on with feverish pulse, and toil by the midnight lamp, though nature seems to flag, and come short of the powers which he exacts from her. He knows that ambition and the love of glory give vigour to the arm of the warrior, sustain him on the battle-field, and carry him through hunger and thirst, starvation and fatigue. The statesman is nerved to encounter the fierce blast of envious faction, by the consciousness of patriotic resolve, and a hope of the approving sentence of posterity.

In all cases, the men of energy and action are braced up to the manful struggle by a noble desire for a name: a name that shall live for evermore.

The Christian preacher exults in the knowledge that he alone can promise to the expectant

and anxious searcher after enduring happiness and perpetual life, the true object of their search—Immortality; and he can stand forth, with the credentials of his Master, loudly proclaiming without one particle of hesitation, doubt, or uncertainty, everlasting life to all who believe, life eternal even to the dead.

‘He that believeth in me though he were dead yet shall he live.’ ‘I will raise him up at the last day.’

And his confidence is based upon the sure promise of an unchangeable God, who hath sworn by Himself, that He will never leave us or forsake us; upon the solemnly pledged word of the Almighty and the Omniscient, whose unbounded power assures us of his ability to perform, and whose absolute truth forbids the suspicion of his failing us.

Hence without misgiving, he can call upon men to shew in the search for salvation, that vigour, endurance, renunciation of present ease, superiority to the poor opinion of the vulgar, that perseverance and undaunted resolution which are extracted from them by hopes of the uncertain rewards of human fame.

He can promise with certainty the rewards of success; he can threaten with certainty the penalties of failure: for he knows that he who sitteth above the water-floods is a King for ever; that his word is gone forth pledged to the Gospel message; that he cannot deny himself. The Gospel that he

preached afore to Abraham has now come unto us, as it is in all the world, bringing life and immortality to light, and placing within the reach of all, even the humblest of the sons of men, rewards greater than the boldest aspirant has yet conceived.

And in the second and last place, we may observe how the full object of the Moral Law is provided for, and carried out under the Gospel. Though we have been obliged to exclude it from being understood, where S. Paul speaks of the Law having an end, yet we must not forget that Christ is the end of the Law generally, in more senses than one, and specially in this, that the Gospel, the Religion of Christ, is the real and true embodying of the deep and heart-searching principle of that Law. Faith is to produce in us the *subjugation of our Wills to Christ's will*; and this subjugation of the Will is the great triumph over the world. The regulation of the desires and intents of the heart cannot be accomplished by external bonds. It requires a deeply-seated internal leavening principle *in* man. What can struggle with the unruly Will, contend with the desires of the heart, uproot and destroy all wishes of a carnal tendency, but some powerful indwelling principle, which shall prevail over a man, and subjugate him by effecting a kind of metamorphosis? This the Christian Religion teaches; the Holy Spirit begets in us faith; faith grows into trust and confidence, assimilates the man's tendencies

to those of his Master—the object of his faith. It produces a generous self-surrender to the guidance, and the Will of the Saviour. And, brethren, by this must we examine ourselves to see whether, after having been admitted into the fellowship of Christ's Religion, we are really deriving advantage from our incorporation.

Is the *Will* being brought into subjection to the Law of God? It is not so much the question here whether we abstain from sin in act; many motives conspire to keep us from being sinners, preserve us from the actual commission of iniquity; motives which have swayed men, where the Gospel has never been preached. We cannot then judge of our real state in the sight of the searcher of hearts by our outward conduct. It is the Will that must be called to the bar, and examined, if we would have sure witness; and it is the Will that must be *sacrificed*; for this is the only offering that we can make. We are to take the yoke upon us, not have it imposed; our Wills presume too often to hold out against all the attacks of reason and grace. They too often resist every force of persuasion, every allurement of favour, every discouragement of terror. In this also, God requires reasonable service, as well as in the matter of doctrine. We must subdue ourselves. God indeed will give us power, if we be willing, and faithful; but we must be volunteers. The Almighty summons us by his word; he attracts us by his Grace; but we must *freely* come to him.

We ought then to look within to see if there be accordance between our Wills, and the pure and perfect Will of God ; whether the mind is in us that was also in Christ Jesus ; whether, in fact, being by title citizens of heaven, we have love, sympathy, communion with that which is celestial.

Are the shadows with which our imaginations people the future, those that can ascend with us to the realms of God ? What is it which we really wish for, in our hearts, above all things ?

If it be earthly, of this world, terminating below, then we must yet have to pass from Death to Life ; but if it be of heaven, if pictured upon the dim mist of futurity, the visions on which we love to dwell are of Christ and His glory, of the Church triumphant, and ransomed saints, and angelic throngs—if our hearts are God's—then we may hope for a successful issue to the present struggle : for the final subduing of our Wills to Christ's Will in all things ; and thus being His, we shall truly be Abraham's seed ; and therefore heirs of the promise of universal and everlasting blessing.

LECTURE IV.

MEN are to be influenced by the Holy Spirit in the Christian dispensation.

As this agency is new, the terms in which it is announced may be hard to understand.

Conviction of Sin, of escape from its penalty, of the condemnation of evil.

- (1) Sin of unbelief. How to be measured. Wonderful evidences of the truth of Christianity. How S. Peter appeals to them. What they were.
- (2) Justification through Christ's present pleading in heaven. *δικαιοσύνη* equivalent to *δικαίωσις* in many places of the New Testament. Present exercise towards us of Christ's mediatorial office.
- (3) Condemnation of Sin. *κρίσις* equivalent to *κατακρίσις*. The triumph of the Cross is the condemnation of the world. Our knowledge of this condemnation is to preserve us from evil.

Exposition resumed.

Application to present times.

- (1) How little we think of sin. The general tone of society. Change produced by the Holy Spirit's influence. Unbelief to be imputed now, where there is no practical result of holiness.
- (2) Tendency of men to trust in a vague idea of their own decency of conduct, and God's mercy, without reference to the intercessional office of Christ. Change produced in man when he leans only upon the merits, and present pleading of his Saviour.
- (3) Conviction of God's condemnation of evil is to work active holiness in us. Separation from the world. Strangeness of this result when compared with the ordinary opinions of mankind. Change wrought by the Holy Spirit's influence.

This wondrous power exerted continually to produce the Christian character. That character described.

Vastness of the Spirit's field of action. The progress of a living and true Christianity a proof of God's dwelling in the Church.

S. JOHN XVI. part of v. 7, vv. 8—11.

If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you ; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment : Of sin, because they believe not on me ; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more ; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

ONE of the peculiarities of the Christian Religion is the direct agency of the Holy Spirit on men's hearts. Not only are life and immortality brought to light under the Gospel ; not only is the true way pointed out with certainty, the remedy for sin made clear, and God's counsels, which had been hidden from the creation, brought into the open light of day and proclaimed to all ; but the mode in which these Divine Truths were to influence the heart of each true believer in Christ is new and peculiar.

The better things which God had reserved for us, and in these last days hath made known to us by his Son, are to be effectual for our Salvation more assuredly and more certainly than before. There is not only a new external rule according to which we are to live, a new ground of security in the perfect atonement made for our sins being plainly and evidently set before us, but there is also an internal operation provided for impressing these great mysteries upon our souls. The agency of the Holy Ghost is proclaimed by whom the law

of Christ is fixed in the heart and in the affections. 'This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts.' 'I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.' 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.' And when our Lord was prophesying of the near and immediate fulfilment of these words, he says: 'When he, the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.'

In the bringing in then of this new agency—new, that is, in the universality of its action, for of old God spake by his Spirit unto the patriarchs, prophets, and his chosen instruments, but not unto all who desired to be so illuminated,—when it came to be generally applied to all God's children of the New Covenant, we must not expect that the terms of the announcement should be free from difficulty. As the truths themselves, which Christ taught us, being from heaven, require an effort on our part to rise to their sublimity, to dive into their profundity, so we may naturally expect to find the new and subtle agency of the Holy Ghost described in language not immediately to be apprehended.

The verses from the Gospel of the day which have been read are of this kind: Our Lord is instructing his disciples in the mysteries of the Kingdom, telling them that he was about to de-

part, that his departure was not a cause of sorrow like an ordinary separation of friends on earth, but the actual inauguration of the new scheme of Redemption. He was to go and send unto them their future Guide and Teacher, that he might abide with them for ever. ‘Me ye have not always; but if ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth.’

The office of the Holy Ghost is then described in three particulars: ‘He shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment.’ It may seem presumptuous to hope to give a certain meaning to a passage which has been already the subject of many elaborate commentaries, yet when we are truly told that of all the interpreters scarcely any two have deduced from it the same shade of meaning, the attempt may not be considered unnecessary. Without entering upon a critical examination of other interpretations, I will proceed at once to explain what I think to be the true meaning of this important portion of Holy Scripture.

He shall *convince* the world, ἐλέγξει; it has been shewn very conclusively, that the marginal rendering *convince* is more accurate than the rendering in the text of our Bibles *reprove*. By many, an allusion is supposed to the word *Paraclete*, which has the signification of *Advocate*. The Holy Ghost, as the Advocate for God, pleading

with the rebellious race of men shall, under this new Covenant, *convince* their hearts, shall work in them full conviction and persuasion of certain truths.

And the first of these is *sin*; He shall *convince* the world of *sin*, 'because they believe not on me,' i. e. the sin of unbelief. 'If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloke for their sin.' Wherever the Gospel is proclaimed, on the part of the man who disbelieves this message of God to mankind, there is sin; and it is the first office of the Holy Ghost to produce in the conscience a persuasion of the sinfulness of this unbelief.

The man being thus convicted of sin by the Divine Spirit, there remains yet to be taught to him the means of escape from sin, or the penalty of persisting in it. The conviction must be wrought in him of righteousness and of judgment.

I understand the word righteousness as rather importing the mode of becoming righteous, and thus as justification. The sinner, humbled under the sense of his sin, has wrought in him by the divine operation of the Holy Ghost the conviction of righteousness or justification, because Christ is gone to the Father, i. e. as our Intercessor, is now present with God to intercede for us, and we see him no more, apprehending this truth by faith. Convinced that we ought to believe in Christ's mission, and that without him we are yet in our sins, we next acquire the con-

viction that our escape from the state of sin is by faith in the mediatorial and intercessional office of Christ, now exercised in heaven for us; whither He is ascended, having finished on earth the work which His Father had given Him to do.

And besides this, we are to have wrought in us the conviction of judgment; that the remaining to take part with this world is to take up our portion with the prince of this world, who has been judged or condemned by the glorification of Christ. When God declared from heaven that His name was glorified by Christ's submission to the coming crucifixion, our Lord proclaimed to all about Him, that the voice from heaven came not for Him, but for their sakes. 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.'

The triple conviction then is of *sin*, on account of unbelief; of *salvation*, or the means of escaping from the consequences of sin, through the present intercession of Christ to be apprehended by faith; of *judgment*, that if we remain to take our part with the world, we must incur the condemnation already passed upon the world and its prince. The sinner convinced of sin has two alternatives; he may lay hold of the remedy provided in the Gospel, and be justified through Christ pleading for him in heaven, and may secure this blessing by faith in his absent Saviour, thus following up the conviction of righteousness which the Holy Spirit has wrought in his heart; *or*, he may re-

main in the world out of which he is called into the family of God—against which conclusion he is warned by being assured that the condemnation of the world is already passed—the certainty thereof being wrought in his soul by the Holy Ghost urging him with the conviction of judgment.

Each of these particulars will admit of a wider explanation, and may be corroborated by other places of Holy Scripture.

First of all then, of the sin of unbelief, none will pretend to deny the sinfulness of rejecting an evident message from God. The whole question would turn upon the *fact*, whether or no, the word preached is of God or of men. Does the warning and the proclamation of reconciliation come from the Father of men? And the degree in which each one who rejects it or disregards it, is guilty in the sight of God, must be in proportion to the clearness and positiveness of the proofs offered. Now the Apostle in writing to the Hebrews does not overlook this. He compares the evidence offered for the Gospel with the evidence given by God to the Elder Covenant. ‘The word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward.’ ‘It was ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator,’ i.e. Moses, and the prediction of prosperity or woe, according to obedience or disobedience, was fully verified. This was the evidence of the truth of the Old Covenant. And he proceeds, ‘How shall we escape if we neglect so

great a salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost.' Having before proved that Jesus the Son of God was far superior to the angels, by whom the first word was spoken to man, he sets forth the Gospel as spoken by the Lord; and then, that the evidence of the Apostles, the eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses of the Saviour, was confirmed by the Holy Ghost with signs, and wonders, and miracles, and divers gifts.

Faith was to come by hearing, and the word spoken to be known to be the Word of God, by the public testimony given to it in the miraculous powers of the Apostles and Apostolical men. So that these works were to produce in men conviction of sin so long as they did not believe, and heartily embrace the message of reconciliation offered by Christ Jesus our Lord.

This was exactly the mode in which the first Christian Sermon produced its effect. S. Peter standing up among the multitude on the Day of Pentecost, when they were amazed and confounded at the sudden effect of the Holy Ghost's descent on the Apostles, called upon them to recognize in this outpouring of supernatural power, the hand of God; first of all asserting the testimony which he and his companions were able to bear of the Resurrection of the Lord, and then

pointing to the gifts of the Holy Ghost as the proofs which Christ himself, exalted by the right hand of God, had shed forth, to enable them to *convince* the hearers.

The ultimate proof then to all to whom the word of salvation was sent, was this manifestation of the Spirit's power. Unbelief is proved to be a sin of enormous magnitude, because God wrought such mighty works on behalf of the Gospel, and to establish its truth in the hearts of men. And wonderful indeed was the interposition of God. The operations of nature and providence were subjected to the control of his chosen messengers. The name of the Lord Jesus invoked over the paralytic restored him suddenly to full activity and vigour. The veil that separates futurity from mortal eyes was withdrawn by the imparted gift of prophecy. The tongue that could convey intelligence only to those of the same tribe and country, was now wonderfully quickened with the facility of new speech, and the difficulties of various language swept away for the confirmation of the faith. And men who till then had wavered and doubted, and who in the hour of trial had forsaken their Master, are endowed with new energies. The timid has become bold as a lion. The faith which was as a grain of mustard-seed, has become the greatest, the sturdiest of trees : no storm of persecution can henceforth shake it. The slow of speech has the fervour and eloquence of the Archangel. The cold in heart burns with the love of

the Seraphim. The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven has quickened every energy, enlivened every faint emotion, given power to every weak resolve. And a small band of fishermen, of barbarous language and uncouth manners, unlearned men of a hated and despised race, went forth and converted thousands to the Faith of Christ. The first inclining of their hearts, the change wrought upon them when they believed, the first consciousness of disobedience to God's command, was wrought in all these converts' minds by the Divine Spirit fulfilling our Lord's prophecy and convincing them of sin.

The next point to be considered is the conviction of righteousness. He shall convince the world of righteousness, 'because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more.' I have in the first place, in order to develop the meaning which I have put upon these words, to justify from Holy Scripture, the signification of the word Righteousness, as importing the method of becoming righteous, or *Justification*, that *δικαιοσύνη* may be understood as meaning *δικαίωσις*.

Thus in the Rom. i. 17, 'Therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith as it is written, The just shall live by faith.' The word *δικαιοσύνη* here clearly means the method of justification. Therein is God's method of justification revealed, to be commenced and carried on by the principle of faith, as it is written, Man's spiritual life shall be by faith. In Rom. iii. 21, 'The

righteousness of God without law is manifested. Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe ;' where S. Paul is arguing that now the method of salvation or justification is made clear to be by faith, the word *δικαιοσύνη* has again the force of *δικαίωσις*. In this place indeed, it is *δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ*, which is spoken of, and therefore it may be objected that though in such a collocation it may be necessary to understand *δικαιοσύνη* as *δικαίωσις*, yet that is no analogy for interpreting it in the same manner where it is, as here, taken absolutely *περὶ δικαιοσύνης*.

Let us then refer to another passage, Philipp. iii. 9, 'That I may win Christ and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.'

In both these places the evident meaning of righteousness is that which we ordinarily attach to the word justification. Not having such justification as I could procure by means of the Law, but having the justification which is through the faith of Christ, the justification which is the gift of God on the condition of faith. The latter expression, righteousness of God, having, as in the former cases, the meaning of the mode of justification which God has revealed, the righteousness which is opposed to it, the righteousness by the law, is also used in the sense of 'mode of becoming

righteous.' S. Paul repudiates the idea of being justified by the law (τὴν ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην such justification as I could procure by obedience to the law); he relies entirely on the justification which God grants to man through faith. Again (i. 11) S. Paul exhorts the Philippians to be filled with *the fruits of righteousness*. What can this mean, but the fruits of the state of justification? We must here take the καρποὶ δικαιοσύνης as καρποὶ δικαιοσύνης or δικαιώματα. Righteousness itself is a fruit, if we understand by righteousness an accomplished act, and not a *state*. In this place, again then, I think we have to understand by δικαιοσύνη the state of justification. A great number of references might be made to places where all critics do so understand the word—and the same interpretation holds—and I therefore conclude that δικαιοσύνη may, in this place, be held to have that meaning¹.

¹ See *Hammond on the New Testament*, fol. p. 442, 2. 'In this sense we often find δικαιοσύνη, Rom. ix. 30, ἔθνη κατέλαβε δικαιοσύνην, The Gentiles laid hold on righteousness, i. e. on the evangelical way; and c. x. 3, ἀγνοοῦντες Θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην, The Jews not knowing this course of justifying sinners set down in the Gospel, sought to establish their own (Judaical) righteousness, and were not subject to God's righteousness. So again, v. 6, ἡ ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοσύνη, the righteousness from or by faith, that is this Evangelical way, which is by faith or the gospel, and is opposed to the διακονία θανάτου, the promulgation of the Law, which brought nothing but death to every act of wilful sin. So the Apostles are called διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης, 2 Cor. xi. 15, Ministers of righteousness, i. e. of this way of justifying men in Christ, which elsewhere are called Ministers of the New Covenant, noting righteousness in this notion to signify this New Covenant or this Evangelical way, under it explained,

In the next words our justification is made dependent on, and is connected with, Christ's ascension into heaven and session at the right hand of God. As is more largely expressed by S. Paul: 'He is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us;' and there 'He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.' Christ the first-begotten from the dead, and having from the time of his Resurrection the Spiritual body (by which hereafter we are to be distinguished when raised incorruptible, following in the steps of our forerunner) ascended into heaven, being *risen again for our justification*. The atonement made by the high priest was perfected when he entered into the holy of holies carrying the blood of the burnt-offering. Our hopes of Salvation rest upon Christ now pleading for us in heaven¹; 'Now to appear,' says S. Paul, 'in the presence of God for us.' 'We have,' says S. John, 'an advocate with the Father.' Christ's merits and death atone for our sins; but the offering of them to God the Father on our behalf is the actual exercise in respect to us of Christ's mediatorial office. In both senses is it affirmed in

v. 24, by *δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι*, our being justified freely by His grace or mercy, without any such precedent obedience of ours that may in any way challenge it.'

¹ 'When we say that we are justified by Faith, we point to the Son of God sitting at the right hand of his Father, interceding for us.—*Melancthon, Corp. Theol.* p. 424, quoted in *Bp Bull's Harmonia Apostolica, Diss.* II. 5. 5.

the Bible, that the Spirit's agency intervenes : for S. Paul says, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, that Christ ' offered himself without spot to God through the eternal Spirit ;' and so the conviction of this truth, that our justification is through the mediatorial and priestly office of the Redeemer, is wrought in the soul of every Christian by the Holy Ghost. He convinces the world of righteousness ; he forcibly, and irresistibly, urges upon the conscience this mode of justification ; so that the sinner who knows his hopeless state without Christ, and his consequent danger, may, by faith, lay hold on the hope set before him in the justification which Christ has secured, being ascended up on high, where he ever liveth to make intercession.

The third point is the conviction of judgment *περὶ κρίσεως*. This word means, according to the generally received interpretation of many places where it occurs, *condemnation*. Many instances are given in all ordinary books of *κρίνω* equivalent to *κατακρίνω*. It will be sufficient here to refer to some places where *κρίσις* is used in the sense now proposed for it. S. Matt. xxiii. 33 : ' How can ye escape *ἀπὸ τῆς κρίσεως τῆς γέεννης* the condemnation of hell ?' S. Mark iii. 29 : ' Shall be in danger of eternal condemnation,' *αἰωνίου κρίσεως*. S. John iii. 19 : ' This is the condemnation,' *αὐτὴ ἐστὶν ἡ κρίσις*. S. John v. 24 : ' He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that hath sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation,' *εἰς*

κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται. And in the same chapter, v. 29: 'They that have done evil shall come into the resurrection of condemnation,' εἰς ἀνάστασιν κρίσεως. This will probably suffice to remind you how frequent the usage is, and to shew the reasonableness of the sense put upon it in this passage. The reason given is, that the prince of this world is judged or condemned. 'He that believeth not,' saith our Lord, 'is condemned already,' i. e. by the triumph of the Cross, the condemnation of the world and its prince Satan, is already passed. The fall of the kingdom of the evil one is vividly described by our blessed Lord, when the Gospel began to be preached, in the words, 'I saw Satan fall as lightning from heaven;' and in this overthrow is involved the condemnation of the evil world, which still is under the dominion of Satan. The two are joined together by our Lord, when he says; 'Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out.' The condemnation of Satan is the condemnation of those children of disobedience in whom he now worketh; and the open triumph of our Lord, over the powers of darkness, is shewn in the Cross, whereby he destroyed him that had the power of death.

The Holy Spirit then having convinced us of sin, and of the method of Salvation, in the last place warns us of the consequences of sin *resumed*, or sin *unrepented of*. The man who has had the true conviction of sin, and enters, by God's gra-

cious gift, into the state of justification, becomes a new creature, old things have passed away, the world he has abandoned, he achieved a victory over it when he believed, he enters on a new existence, to him the law of sin is abolished, and he is ushered into a kingdom of righteousness; though not present to his bodily eyes, his Lord and King is now the Saviour of mankind, whereas BEFORE, his master was the prince of this world. The Holy Spirit carrying home to his breast the conviction of judgment, certifies him of the change from evil to good, from darkness to light. To him the prince of this world is judged, i. e. evil is condemned in the person of its author and promoter. Christ hath condemned sin in the flesh, that henceforth we should no longer serve sin. His life must henceforth be a life of holiness, because his acceptance of the justification of Christ is a condemnation of the state of sin. Judgment has been passed upon the prince of this world. To those who return to that kingdom of darkness from which they were taken, there is nothing to be apprehended but judgment. Unholiness in the new state is rebellion. Sin is sacrilege. Love of the world is idolatry. From turning back again to those beggarly elements of the world, the converted sinner is kept by the Holy Spirit of God convincing him of *judgment*—of the signal, open, and most tremendous judgment pronounced by Almighty God against sin—when for *it*, he gave up his own Son to death, therein crushing the

power of the grave and the evil one. And again, to those who resist the Holy Spirit's influences, and who may have convictions, though not effectual convictions, of sin and of righteousness, there is added also the conviction of judgment, 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.'

The third office of the Holy Ghost is then to sanctify the elect by preserving them from sin by fear of judgment, and by renunciation of their old master, the prince of this world; and to condemn the unregenerate by the assurance that God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead, by which act Satan and Satan's kingdom were condemned and defeated.

To resume then—The office of the Holy Ghost is in the text described as exercised towards us in producing conviction of three important particulars,

Conviction of Sin,
Mode of Justification,
Sanctification.

Christ's members are to be roused from the heavy and feverish dream of sin in which they live, till he calls them by his Grace.

They are to be certified of the only justification—the merits of him who once died, but now reigns in heaven, within the veil—the high-priest of our profession.

They are to be kept from sin for the future

by the remembrance of judgment ; the judgment already pronounced, though not yet executed, against the author of evil.

Such seems to me the scope and connexion of the verses on which I have been commenting : let us now turn to the contemplation of the wonders contained in these divine operations. Let us draw from the preceding exposition, thoughts of the present agency of the Holy Spirit in the work of man's redemption—to make us remember how great a work has been carried on to this present day, and is even now proceeding amid the din and turmoil of worldly strife with sure unerring steps—so that we may be compelled to confess that we are subjects of influences and spiritual powers acting in a marvellous manner, independently of all our plans and schemes, our systems and contrivances. And first then let us remember what is contained in those words : ‘ He shall convince the world of sin.’

SIN—the word is in every one's mouth, but how few think of it ! What do we see in the society about us, but disregard of the awful character of sin ? We hear men's *gross sins* often the subject of laughter, offences against the laws of the Great God treated as a light matter, and how little do we think of sin at all, unless it is of this gross and open character ! Love of the world, peevishness, fretfulness, over-anxiety about things present, disregard of the welfare of our fellowmen, we hardly look upon as sins at all. What is the

general character of the moral part of society, but an easy indolent security, little care for the future, a quiet respectability exacted from men by the public opinion of the day? What a change then must take place when the Holy Ghost, fulfilling now the words of our blessed Lord, convinces one of us of *sin*, makes us see that as far as we were concerned, and looking no farther than the indolent temper of our minds, the coming of Christ in the flesh was treated as a matter of unconcern and little import. The powerful influence of God's Holy Spirit must be exerted to make such an one feel that the great sin of all is *unbelief*, or a *practical* disregard of the consequences of being under the Christian covenant, for *this* is unbelief and want of faith in Christ now. It is the neglecting to let his blessed doctrines influence our lives, that constitutes unbelief amongst us. To profess with the mouth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, and has died upon the cross to save mankind, is perfectly consistent with unbelief in its real meaning. We do *not* believe unless our faith shews itself by present earnestness of devotion to God, in prayers, in self-sacrifice, in submission. Now when the Holy Ghost so convinces us of sin, that we feel the awful self-abasement of Job, 'I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes,' then a change must have been wrought in a man, which considering the influence

of things present, the general tone of society, and the indifference and carelessness which prevail, is beyond measure astonishing.

This work the Holy Spirit is *now* carrying on, as the members of the brotherhood are awakened here and there, to a sense of the peril of ungodliness, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the abhorrence of God to *all* iniquity.

Next, He shall convince us of justification. Notwithstanding the constant proclamation of the Christian mode of salvation, is there any thing so common as self-righteousness, as men's satisfaction with low aims, trust in miserable alms-deeds, hoping to be saved because we have done what we could (as we fancy)? Do we not often hear it said, that a person so respectable in his character, so punctual in his engagements, so affable to his neighbours, must be reckoned among good Christians as a matter of course? I have heard a dying man tell me, that though he certainly had at times been inattentive to religious duties, yet on the whole he had led a very respectable life, and therefore he had no doubt God would have mercy upon him. This self-deception and trifling with the message of God to man, is so common, that I feel quite confident of the answer when I appeal to any one of you, and ask if you do not know it to be so.

What a marvellous change then to such a man is that conviction of justification which the Holy Ghost works in his heart, when he urges him

with the fact of Christ's ascension into Heaven and session at the right hand of God ! What has this fact to do with the vain hope of justification by self-righteousness, by *our* good conduct, and contented compliance with things as they are ? But when it pleases God, in his own good time, to those who are seeking earnestly for Divine illumination, to reveal by His Spirit, the true mode of justification by and through our Lord Jesus Christ, *solely* and *universally* ; when we learn that our hope of pleasing God, depends *wholly, entirely, unreservedly*, upon the intercession and atonement of Christ, now being carried on, and offered in heaven, that on Jesus, our Lord and Master, and on Him *alone* must we rely for all our hopes of heaven ; then, I say, there is such a change from the ordinary mode of thought, that we plainly discern the interposition of an Almighty teacher, for none else could convince the soul of man of truths so antagonistic to the nature he inherited from Adam. When thus the Spirit of Truth given him at his first call, burns up brightly in his heart, the effect is as one roused from death unto life, behold all things are become new, his aims and his desires are changed. He is passed from earth to heaven in his anticipations and his retrospections.

Such a work the Holy Spirit of God is now carrying on. Amid the roar of human business, the fleet-passing crowd of occupations, transient friendships, and schemes raised to be frustrated ;

while men are absorbed in political strivings, or contentions of things temporal, the silent, solemn agency of the Spirit of God is transforming, convincing, and subduing the minds of some, so that their hopes for the future are founded entirely on the work of their absent Lord in heaven, and his perpetual session at God's right hand, pleading for us in that blest abode, whither he rose again for our justification.

And again. The Holy Spirit convinces us of *judgment*. The Christian motive to obedience is love of God, fear of God's judgments against sin, a sympathy and union with the Holy One and the Just, against unholiness and injustice. There is no danger in preaching to Christians, in whom God's grace works freely, the necessity of good works. They feel at once how the chord vibrates within them at this touch. Good works are works pleasing to God, and having drawn near to God they are pleasing to them. Even the overcoming the remnant of corruption, which in the regenerate doth remain, and prove a source of sin, and which we have to overcome by the aid of the Holy Spirit, even this is, though painful, difficult, arduous, a matter of delight, a task of pleasure, because it is the will of God, well-pleasing to Him, *His* work. Moreover the conviction of judgment is against the Prince of this world, and therefore against the general character of the world, Satan's kingdom; worldly motives, worldly actions, worldly pleasures, have been condemned by Jesus Christ our

Saviour. The knowledge of this condemnation and judgment of Satan is wrought in us more and more firmly by the Holy Ghost, and to those whose views of the future are bounded by life present, with whom the world's opinion and censure are most important, this estrangement from the world is a thing hateful, the mark of a perverted judgment, say they, 'It is a pity that persons so amiable, and so fitted to shine in society, should withdraw themselves.' But, brethren, when the Holy Spirit has so wrought upon a man, as to *convince* him of judgment, of the condemnation already passed upon all mere worldly views, pleasures, and associations, surely we must recognize here the finger of God. Such a change cannot but be of Divine agency. It is not in man so to alter the natural bent of his tastes and disposition.

In all these things concerning the renovation and salvation of a man, we cannot but recognize, if we would, the mighty agency of Him who ruleth the floods and wieldeth the thunder. No lesser power can cause the fermentation of that leaven, which after being hid in a man eventually leavens his whole nature.

These changes are not wrought by enthusiasm, or unhealthy spiritual action.

The careful attention to all the duties of life which accompanies the Christian's disregard of human anxieties :

His pure enjoyment of the blessings of the

Almighty, which consists with indifference to the absence of generally sought pleasures.

The high principle which guides him and makes him careful to provide things honest in the sight of all men, while he disdains to take his standard of morality from the conventional compromises of mankind :

His ministering to the temporal wants of his brethren, while he tells them that after all, the meat which perisheth is of little concern :

All these which should be the marks of an earnest intelligent Christian, are *far* from the developments of a diseased fancy, or the symptoms of a heated imagination. These fruits of the Spirit are the ornaments as well as the criteria of Christianity. In whomsoever they abound, there, the Holy Spirit has prevailed; and convinced the man of sin, of justification and of judgment; the designs of Christ for his salvation have been effectually carried out; and if he persevere, he shall be joined to those bright spirits who have watched his change from death to life, and who will make the heavens ring with their triumphant songs when God so blesses him that he attains to the Heavenly Jerusalem.

This mighty agency of the Spirit has been going on ever since the day of Pentecost, the birth-day of the Church. It is multiplied indefinitely; a multitude which no man can number, is to stand redeemed and cleansed before the Throne of God; and therefore this great change in the

hearts, affections, desires of men, must have been going on uninterruptedly, here, and there, and everywhere. Notwithstanding the differences of the great bodies of Christians, Christianity, more or less pure, is spreading over the whole world, seated firmly among the more civilized races of mankind, and gradually absorbing all in its mighty embrace.

The Apostolical commission, 'Go and teach all nations,' has been transmitted to thousands. 'The Lord gave the Word,' great has been the company of those who published it; their sound has gone forth into all lands, their words unto the end of the world. The Holy Ghost the Comforter has been from the day of Pentecost, the busy active agent in subduing the souls of men, convincing them of sin, righteousness, and judgment. The Gospel of Christ in slow majestic progress has advanced till, ocean-like, it nearly embraces the whole earth. See all men succumbing to its influence, proud to shelter their own unhallowed schemes under its sacred, its venerated name. See it thus exacting from its enemies the tribute of homage and submission. And dare, if you can, disbelieve in the Divine origin, the Divine furtherance of the Kingdom of Christ¹. The few

¹ Chevalier Bunsen, whose views on many points differ from what we call the Orthodox, but who may be considered the representative of a large class of thinkers, recognizes the real triumph of Christianity, though he writes rather in despair about the present prospects of the great struggle which he sees impending between Atheism and Superstition: while he prophesies decay in existing

who have held up their hands against this manifestation of the Lord of Hosts, seem only to have been permitted to act the part of the tower built upon the sand, viz., to call forth the power of the flood divine to sweep them away in its resistless billows. The machinery set in motion, if it be reverend so to speak, for the redemption of fallen man, is not disproportionate to its object. It does not fail. Its success is commensurate with its dignity. It is the restoration of a world; the re-edifying in Christ of the building marred and defaced by the artifices of God's enemy; and it works by the agency of the Divine Spirit, who brooded over the face of the waters before the present harmony and luxuriance of creation sprang forth, by whose power the mystery of the Incarnation was accomplished, to whom we thus owe the vivifying energy shewn in the germs both of the old and new creations (For thine incorruptible Spirit is in all things);—and He, the Holy Spirit of God, condescends to renew his subtle, piercing, subduing influences in the heart of each, the humblest true believer.

systems, both political and religious, he believes in a 'great regenerating process of reconstruction. The Divine figure of Christ alone stands pre-eminent, and rises majestically over the ruins of the greatest social fabric which the world has ever seen, the shattered homes of the great European Family.'—*Bunsen's Hippolytus*, Vol. II. p. 98.

'Christianity enlightens now only a small portion of the globe, but it cannot be stationary, and it will advance, and is already advancing, triumphantly, over the whole earth in the name of Christ, and in the light of his Spirit.'—*Id.* Vol. II. p. 117.

Brethren, in the approaching commemoration of Pentecost, may it please God to give us worthy thoughts of the agency of the Divine Spirit, that we may all share in the blessings which our Lord has purchased for us, and may finally with all God's saints, form part of the happy throng who have complied with the invitation of the Spirit and the Bride, and have partaken freely of 'the Water of Life¹.'

¹ Rev. xxii. 17.

LECTURE V.

OBJECT of this Lecture—Difficulties which some persons feel about the Mosaic Records of Creation—Ways in which they have been met.

True light in which the Sacred Writings should be considered.

Principles which result therefrom.

Hence accuracy in accounts of physical phenomena not to be required.

General disregard of inferior matters to be expected in a book whose object was so much more important than any of them.

Application.

Object of the law of Moses.—Natural tendencies in men's minds which we may suppose to require to be counteracted.

These required an account of creation—and specially to shew that God created all things—and thence argue a *providence*, and that all was very good—and thence argue that *evil* is *unnatural*.

God's providence denied by ancient philosophers.

The malignity of matter asserted by the Ægyptian Gnostics.

The contrary propositions affirmed by Moses.

Reason for the division of the Record into Days.

That the epochs of creation of all things are not here intended to be shewn, argued,—From the absence of any account of the creation of angels.

The development theory does not contradict the Mosaic account.

Cudworth's Plastic Life of Nature.

Conclusion—The new creation—a more important revelation than that of the physical creation.—Subservience of the ancient record to the new—unimportance of the question *how* God taught his ancient people—our concern is with the great *moral* Truths of Divine Revelation.

GENESIS I. 1.

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

IN commenting on the text which has just been read, it is not my intention to bring before you in this Lecture another attempt, in addition to those which have so often been propounded, to shew that the discoveries of Geological Science are not contradictory of the records of Moses. My object will be a different one, viz. to enforce some views which indeed are not new, but which seem to me to require frequent inculcation as safeguards for the student of the Old Testament, who has become acquainted with the results of modern discovery. And inasmuch as the scientific facts to which I allude, must, as a matter of course, be here constantly taught, and the science is one which has great attractions for those youthful minds which are capable of instruction by deductions from facts through a process analogical rather than logical, it is of importance that the Christian preacher should not fail to bring before the audience of the University church a succinct summary of certain considerations, which have been urged from time to time, in order to set aside the uneasiness which pious persons have felt, when they found the cosmogony of

Moses, as it has been called, at variance with physical facts—which, as much as revelation, are to be attended to, as from that God who is supreme in nature, as well as in the kingdom of grace. He may hope, in this way, to obviate, if not to remove, a difficulty which the Scriptures contain, and which may to many be a very serious obstacle.

Many persons may preserve inviolate the persuasion, that the natural world has God for its author, and that all the complex system we call the Laws of Nature, is subject to his providential control—who yet may find it hard and difficult to apprehend this truth in the way in which Revelation makes it known to us. They feel this difficulty when they are urged with facts which seem to imply successive developments by insensible steps, by which the superior classes of living things have been evolved from the inferior,—when, for producing observed effects in the same way in which they are now being produced by ordinary natural process, periods of time are shewn to be required whose duration transcends our power of clear conception,—when the order of successive creations as related in Genesis seems to be opposed to reasonable conclusions from visible appearances.

Sometimes men have attempted to solve these difficulties by verbal quibbles: for example, we have had discussions about the possible and probable meanings of the word *day*; whether it

may not mean a period of years of any magnitude—and other explanations of this kind have been attempted and urged—all proceeding with the avowed object of adhering strictly to the letter of Scripture—while the greatest uncertainty is introduced into the meaning of the words of Scripture. This seems to be totally unprofitable, and to lead to no result.

Some, on the other hand, set aside the whole as a fiction, a mere invention of Moses to comply with a popular prejudice, which would demand of a new lawgiver some account of the early history of the world, and would not pay more regard to it than to the dreams of the Gnostic Valentinus.

On the whole, no doubt, it is difficult to arrive at any thoroughly satisfactory conclusion, if we suppose that Moses intended to instruct the people in physical science by his history.

The object of the writings of Moses must not however be supposed to be at all of this kind. They are certainly not meant to give us information on matters of natural science. We are told, and told truly, that the Bible is a book of moral instruction. Its whole intention is the testimony concerning the spiritual and moral part of man. It is the record of Redemption. What S. John says of prophecy is true of the whole Scriptures, *The testimony concerning Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy*¹, i.e. the information which is required for

¹ Rev. xix. 10.

our salvation, it is the object and intent of the Bible to make known to us ; and if we keep this in mind on all occasions, we shall only demand from the Divine records, in their commemoration of natural phenomena, that kind of narrative which shall convey to those to whom it *immediately* came the required moral instruction.

There are then two principles to be observed in dealing with such portions of the Bible as the 1st chapter of Genesis. We must endeavour to arrive at a clear idea of the moral and spiritual instruction which we ought to draw from them. And in the next place, we must consider who were the first persons to whom the message was sent, as from God :—we must ascertain, as far as possible, the degree of information, and the peculiar character of the knowledge which it was likely the first recipients of the Divine message had—and then we shall be in a better position for understanding why an account (scientifically accurate) of matters not within ordinary human cognizance, might often have been totally inadequate to the moral purpose which it had to answer, and would have failed utterly to produce such a moral conviction as an enlightened age would have received from records more clearly in accordance with observed phenomena.

Under certain circumstances, it may be thus concluded, that the inspired books would have been totally unintelligible to those to whom they were first given, if they had not been accommo-

dated, in their references to physical facts, to the ideas which they already had. And inasmuch as the moral system must always be considered as more important than the physical, and an accurate knowledge of natural phenomena is not absolutely necessary to the salvation of men's souls, it would be unreasonable to require in holy Scripture such notices of those phenomena as would in the present day satisfy the reader who looks therein for scientific accuracy, or at any rate, for the absence of all that contradicts the well-established conclusions of modern science¹.

On the contrary, an argument for the Divine origin of the Scriptures might not unaptly be drawn from the uniform disregard which we perceive for such things. The higher object of these holy writings is so constantly kept in view, that it seems as if the mere verbal accuracies of geography or chronology *never* received the slightest attention from design; while yet it is interesting to note how the honesty and reality of the writers is attested by those undesigned coincidences which learned men have traced. We conclude also from the indifference shewn to the giving of strictly accurate details of unimportant facts (unimportant,

¹ To know his connexion with the Creator and moral Governor of the world is necessary to the virtue and happiness of man. To investigate the regular laws to which the created world conforms, or the process by which it is reduced to that obedience, is a delightful exercise of the reason he possesses; but it is totally unconnected with those higher interests which a revelation has in view.—*Sumner, Records of Creation*, p. 411. (1850).

I mean, in a moral and religious sense), that in all cases those who recorded these things under Divine direction, had immediately before them this high moral view, to the exclusion of the historical spirit, or that which aims at conveying accurate information ; and even if in certain cases the inspired writers supposed they were annalists or scribes in a more ordinary sense, yet this impression of theirs was corrected by the influence of the Spirit of God. S. Peter tells us, that it was revealed unto them, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister things into which even the angels desired to look ; and thus their ideas were divinely lifted up out of the petty aims of the sublunary system, into the wider and more exalted range of the kingdom spiritual and moral. Their concern was in such matters with the whole race of God's children.

While then in moral lessons the Bible is addressed to all mankind, in its reference to matters physical it will only make such use of the facts as tend to this moral end ; and when the moral end is to be enforced by any reference to natural phenomena, the reference must be of a kind which will produce its effect by appealing to what the senses or the prejudices of the audience can apprehend.

Let us apply this to the case in question.

The great object of the Law is to convict men of sin, and point out the remedy thereof. Redemption from slavery in Egypt was typical to the

Israelites of redemption from the slavery of sin. The corruption of man's moral nature through the introduction of evil, had therefore to be enforced, and its first steps explained. The election of a particular people, expiation for sins of uncleanness and impurity, and constant sacrifice; all these were peculiarities which demanded of the law-giver and leader of Israel some explanation—a reason must be shewn of God's ways, and such a reason as they could readily understand. That there was a natural disability to please God, which all men lay under, except the circumcised, must have required some explanation. This guilty state of man, human reason would say at once cannot be natural. It must have *come to pass* in some way or other that all the nations of the earth were thus in alienation from Him who made them. If man originally had been upright, how was it that he became sinful? Yet he must have been innocent in the early stage of the existence of the race, if God were his maker. But since men are evil, could an evil principle have been the author of man's existence? If so, why should the Good Spirit have any desire to rescue man from his rightful master? Then again, supposing it known that man was created originally by the Good Spirit, but had departed from innocence, and found out many inventions, how comes it that the external world presents him so often with allurements to sin? Is this external world the work of the Good Spirit? or of the evil? So long as 'the corrupti-

ble body presseth down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weigheth down the mind that museth upon many things¹,' must we not conclude that it is rather the work of the evil principle than of the good?

Supposing such questions to arise in the breasts of thinking men, how are they to be met but by some account of the creation of man and his fall; and of the creation of the world by the Word of God; that those to whom the Divine message was sent might know that all they saw, all that reacted upon them, that *all* this was His work; that the God of the spirits of all flesh loved righteousness; that He had made man righteous; that by his own sin he had fallen; that God still loved him, and was intending to bring him back into a position of innocence, and deliver him from the bondage of the will, to which, in consequence of his sin, he had become subject; that the evil should eventually be overcome of the good; that so the Almighty Father was supreme, both in the natural world and in the spiritual? all things having been created by Him, and for a good end; and though for the present a vast destruction had been wrought, yet in the end all should be restored. The Israelite had to be taught that there was a deliverance from sin. The great lawgiver had to impress upon them that the sinful state was unnatural, that creation was very good, that the whole world was in fact *κόσμος*, a world of order,

¹ Wisdom of Solomon ix. 15.

harmony, and beauty, and was, by the intrusion of evil, under constraint¹.

To give this impression it was essential that they should be taught the material creation was the work of God, subject to Him, and dependent upon Him, that so they might know that the ground was cursed, not originally, but for man's sake, and that its redemption and regeneration, as well as his own, were all in the hands of that God who had created it and called it into existence.

Moses had to give an *account* of creation, and such an account as should enforce and convey the moral lesson of the universal dependence of all things upon God, the Strength and Redeemer of Israel, and, that though evil was prevalent, this was not the normal condition of the earth. Assuming this, we expect to find in the Record of Creation these two facts most prominently set forth:

That God made all things.

That all was very good.

The moral deduction from the first would be that all things must now be dependent on His Will; and from the second, that the state of evil is unnatural, and the consequence of sin.

It is not necessary to shew that the records of Moses clearly maintain these two points—they are written upon its face. But in order to follow out the idea which we proposed to ourselves, it *is* necessary to shew that the minds of the

¹ 'The creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption; for we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until the time of redemption.'

thoughtful among those to whom the Divine writings first came, would be apt to entertain ideas contrary to the teaching of Moses. To do this, we must call to mind what conclusions the heathen philosophers drew from the observed constitution and course of nature. It is quite clear, in the first place, that those men whom Cudworth calls the Democritic Atheists, did formerly assert that the evils of pain and trouble in the world, were conclusive against the world being created by God. They argued after this fashion : the Good Spirit must be both able and willing to abolish evil ; but the Creator of this world must have been either able, and not willing, or willing, and not able. For that he is not both able and willing to abolish all evils is clear, because then there would have been no evil. But, since there is such a deluge of evils overflowing all, the Creator of the world cannot be the Good Spirit.

The success of the vicious was always a stumblingblock to the heathen ; and of course in a greater degree than to the Psalmist Asaph, who was able, in the sanctuary of God, to get his doubts solved. Diogenes the cynic, though himself a Theist, yet acknowledged that as Harpalus, a notorious robber prospered, he bore *testimonium contra Deos*. The destruction wrought by the electric fluid strikes all men with terror. In an uninformed age of the world no more evident token of present Deity could well be supposed than this. But when it is plain that the thunderbolt

seems flung at random, and that its fury often lights upon the innocent, what conclusion could men draw about the superintending providence of God? Even if the popular poet could write with truth

Raro antecedentem scelestum
Deseruit pede pœna claudo,

would not the philosophic poet describe the state of the thoughtful on such a subject with more accuracy when he writes :

Quod si Jupiter atque aliei fulgentia divei
Terrifico quatiunt sonitu cœlestia templa
Et jaciunt ignem quo quoiqu'est quomque voluptas
Cur, quibus incautum scelus avorsabile quomqu'est
Non faciunt, icti flammas ut fulguris halent
Pectore perfixo, documen mortalibus acre?
Et potius nulla sibi turpi conscius in re
Volvitur in flammeis innoxius, inque peditur,
Turbine cœlesti subito conreptus et igni.

Lucret. vi. 387—395.

Diagoras the Melian is said to have become an Atheist because a man who had injured him escaped apparently unhurt. And there have been innumerable others who have been so far wrought upon by this consideration of crime going unpunished, that they disbelieved in a God ; or if not so much as that, yet they utterly disregarded His providence and controul of human or mundane affairs.

Then we have the general opinions entertained by the Egyptian Gnostics : that matter was too vile to have been the produce of the First Cause, and the invention of the Demiurge¹, an inferior

¹ See *Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses*, B. iv. Sect. 6. 3.

power, having evil qualities, by whose operations on the eternal matter which had a life and motion of its own, the visible earth and heavens were made.

Inasmuch as these opinions were chiefly developed from the Egyptian theology¹, it seems probable that, even at the time of Moses, its tenets might at any rate have been such as to give apprehension of such errors; and thus it would not be without reason that we are told Moses was skilled in all the learning of the Egyptians; for though he may have been singular among his brethren as to the extent of his knowledge, yet the general influence of the theological system among the less learned would be productive of error, more or less gross, in the direction which that system took. And therefore the directions of the Holy Spirit to him would probably be to counteract and oppose this tendency by the inculcation of certain moral truths in such a way as the people would understand them.

¹ Diog. Laert. Proœm. 10. φάσκειν, (Αἰγυπτίους) ἀρχὴν μὲν εἶναι τὴν ὕλην, εἶτα τὰ τέσσαρα στοιχεῖα ἐξ αὐτῆς διακριθῆναι, καὶ ζῶα τινα ἀποτελεσθῆναι. Archbishop Sumner here supposes that the eternity of matter is asserted as an Egyptian tenet; see *Sumner's Records of Creation*, p. 140. (6th Ed. 1850.)

Warburton, *Divine Legation*, Vol. II. pp. 228—30, shews how the pantheistic doctrine of the pseudo-Hermes Trismegistus was developed from Egyptian sources; and he vindicates the wisdom of Egypt from the imputation. This will not affect the argument in the text, which only requires that there was a probability, or a possibility, of Egyptian tenets leading to errors which Moses intended to contradict.

The *creation* of all things by God is therefore opposed to any idea of the eternity of matter. The assertion of the *goodness* of creation, to ideas of the malignity of matter.

The author of the Book of Wisdom traces in the Mosaic miracles generally, the idea of the supremacy of the Lord Jehovah over the creation ; and the principal display of those miracles being in the kingdom of nature¹, points to the same.

If from these and similar grounds it be conceded, that the tendency in Oriental and Egyptian philosophy is to tenets which are contradicted by the moral deductions from Moses' account of creation, the object of this lecture is satisfied, and there remains only that we should give some similar reason for the periodic division of the record. I herein incline to that view which represents Moses as receiving in the deserts of Arabia successive visions, on six successive days, of the stages in the development of the natural order which we now observe. Such a supposition leaves the word 'Day' to be taken in its ordinary sense ; and it seems to me that the mention of evening and morning, before any allusion is made to Sun and Moon, which has had so many explanations and hypotheses thrust upon it, is a very strong argument in favour of the supposition that we have here an account of visions imparted to Moses between the evenings and mornings of successive days. The moral object of this method of revela-

¹ *Trench, On the Miracles*, p. 38. (3rd Ed.)

tion, I should suppose to be entirely the institution of the Sabbath. A number of questions indeed arise out of this. One important one is the *vexata questio* whether the Sabbath were observed before the Law or not, which is of considerable importance in respect to the present observance of the Lord's Day, and may, on a future occasion, engage our attention.

But, in the view I wish to take of the Mosaic account, this is of less importance; I wish to maintain that we are ever to keep in mind, in perusing these chapters, that the instruction to be derived from them is of a moral nature only, and that the natural philosophy of the subject was not in the writer's mind at all. Moreover, it does not seem improbable that the whole record of creation, as Moses delivered it, is typical, and intended to pourtray things to come, as well as to be a memorial of the past. In this way S. Augustine¹ offers a reason for the institution of the Sabbath, that it was intended to be a type and shadow of that spiritual rest, which God by the example of this cessation, in secret signification, promised to the faithful who do good works.

Another supplementary argument, which I would bring to support the idea that *the time* of creation is not here intended to be communicated to us, is the following.

We are assured by S. Paul that God created things invisible as well as visible. 'By Him were

¹ *S. August. de Genes. ad lit. lib. iv. c. 11.*

created all things which are in heaven, and which 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.’

We have no record in the Book of Moses of the creation of angels, and of the ministers attending in God’s spiritual and ethereal kingdom. Those angels which excel in strength, and which do always in heaven behold His face, and whose peculiar and appropriate dwellings are the many mansions of the celestial abode: these wonderful beings of a nature so sublime, and capacities so excellent, surely must be reckoned among the great works of God; and yet we have no account by Moses of their formation. It is of no use to recur to poetical and fanciful expressions of emanation with the Greek preacher¹, *φώτα δεύτερα τοῦ πρώτου φωτὸς ἀπανγύσματα*, secondary luminaries, flashes from the first Great Light. We are told in many places of the Bible, if any testimony is required after the plain teaching of S. Paul, that they were created; and yet there is no record of this in the account of creation. It is scarcely necessary to allude to the fancy of S. Augustine (*De Civ. Dei*, xi. 9)², that the creation of the angels is intended in the words, ‘Let there be light.’ We may be rather content to range

¹ Gregory Nazianzen. *Orat.* XLIII.

² Ubi de mundi constitutione sacræ litteræ loquuntur, non evi-
denter dicitur utrum vel quo ordine creati sint angeli: sed si præter-
mitti non sunt, vel cœli nomine, ubi dictum est, In principio fecit
Deus cœlum et terram: vel potius lucis hujus, de quo loquor, signi-

this creation as the same father more consistently does in the 12th Book of his *Confessions*, under the general words of our text, which, taken in their widest and largest view, affirm that all things, visible and invisible, were created by God. Now that beings so important, and probably of such diversified ranks of intelligence, though created, should yet have no record of their creation, affords a presumption that in other things, which still less concern our moral and spiritual state, we may have no record of many of God's great and excellent works; and therefore, that the account of Moses is not intended to give us *details* of the creation of all things.

I would dismiss all thoughts of *when* and *how*, as matters not involved in the moral object of the Sacred Book. 'Knowledge of the time and the manner,' says Dr Barrow¹, 'perhaps doth exceed our capacity, or doth not suit the condition of man to understand them, or it doth not much concern us, and not much conduceth to our edification.' And if this be true with respect to the spiritual and invisible world, and all that this includes—the more noble, and the more wonderful part of creation—does not this come in aid of our supposition that, throughout the chapter, we must

ficati sunt; et seq.—S. Augustin. De Civ. Dei, xi. 9. Benedict. Ed. Tom. vii. pp. 278—9.

Nequis autem contendat et dicat non sanctos angelos esse significatos in eo quod scriptum est, *Fiat lux, et facta est lux; et seq.*—Ibid. Lib. xi. c. 32. (p. 297).

¹ *Sermon on the Creed.*

look for moral ends terminating in the destiny and well-being of the human race, and chiefly in those of the Jews; and that what is written here, as well as elsewhere, is for our *admonition* and instruction in *righteousness*, and not for our information on subjects physical and natural, out of which result no direct benefit to men's spiritual interests?

There is yet one point which seems to me to require notice, and which may, I think, be satisfactorily met.

The development theory, notwithstanding the refutation of those who are most competent to the task, is one which, in the present day, lays hold largely of the public and popular mind. And it is worth while to consider whether it need be supposed to contradict Revelation, if it should be established scientifically¹.

This inquiry appears to me similar to that

¹ I have no intention in what is here said to advocate any particular views with respect to the question of development. But the *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation* has gone through ten editions, and there is no doubt that many persons are much influenced by it. I am quite incompetent to support it or refute it, but I wish to shew that whether accepted or not, there is no need that any religious anxieties should be called forth. Some geologists appear to me to call in the Sacred Record against the view of the development advocates. This I protest against. My object is to keep the Bible entirely out of such controversies, and in this particular case to shew that a person, who may feel strongly inclined to adopt the development theory, (as far as it regards the inferior orders of existence, and stopping short of any notion of *man* being a development, of an inferior species) is not on that account necessarily an infidel.

which Cudworth has undertaken with respect to the 'plastic life of nature,' which, perhaps, agrees more with what we now call the *vis insita naturæ* in all things falling under present observation, but which, if extended throughout the past, is rather a quality of growth and increase impressed upon the universe by its Almighty Author at the first creation.

When God has endowed the natural world with certain qualities and properties, which, during certain prescribed intervals of any magnitude, are to lie hid, and grow in the womb of nature, and, at certain times of maturity, to bring forth and germinate, each successive stage of the development of the universe may well be called to those who are made acquainted with the results of these principles by sudden glimpses, an epoch of creation, although to the Omniscient it may be only the coming to light of one of the hidden energies impressed originally on the system¹.

Consider the slow and gradual process that there is in the generation of all things. This would seem to be but a vain and idle pomp, or a trifling formality, if the agent were omnipotent. Is not this an argument against the supposition that everything in nature should be done immediately by God himself? Does it not lead to the conclusion that there is a plastic nature under Him, which, as an inferior and subordinate instrument, executes that part of his Sovereign Will

¹ *Cudworth's Intellectual System*, passim.

which consists in the regulation and order of matter, yet in such a manner that there is also a Higher Providence to be acknowledged, which presides over it, and often supplies its defects, and sometimes overrules it, forasmuch as the plastic nature cannot act *electively* nor with *discretion*? And by this means the wisdom of God will not be shut up, nor concluded wholly within His own breast, but will display itself abroad, and print its stamps and signatures everywhere throughout the world. So that God, as Plato (after Orpheus) speaks, will not only be the beginning and end, but also the middle of all things; they being as much to be ascribed to his causality as if himself had done them immediately, without the concurrent instrumentality of any subordinate natural cause. Notwithstanding which, in this way it will appear also to human reason that all things are disposed and ordered by the Deity, without any solicitous care, or distracting providence.

Now extend the idea which Cudworth has in this manner expressed, to the whole period of creation, and it seems that, if the development theory should ever be established on solid grounds, at any future time, we should not read anything in it that would contradict the great moral lessons we are to learn from the Mosaic account of creation.

The gradual coming into operation of those subservient¹ or co-operative² causes, which the

¹ ἔμφρονος φύσεως αἰτίαι αἷς ὑπηρετούσαις ὁ Θεὸς χρῆται.

² ξυναιτίαι αἷς συνέργοις ὁ Θεὸς χρῆται.

Deity Himself willed, and impressed upon matter, giving rise to new periods of the world's history : and when these periods are successively exhibited with respect to their new characteristics, they may be most intelligently described as successive stages of creative power.

As it was difficult in old times for men to distinguish between the assertion of a plastic nature, subservient to the Divine Will, and some blind occult quality which superseded it ; so now it will probably be a matter of difficulty with many persons to distinguish between the extension of the plastic nature to the formation of successive epochs in the geological history of the world, and the denial of the Mosaic account of creation.

In order to obviate this, it should be remembered, that if our supposition of the true view to be taken of that account be correct, and that it contains, as it were, glimpses in visions at distant epochs of the world's history, the representation must have been given in such a way as to produce the effect of spontaneous complete creation ; and if the vision were accompanied by a voice, recorded in the words, 'and God said,' this would be the enunciation of the principle which had been in germ heretofore, but was now developed, and exhibited in full operation.

Such a consideration as this seems to me fitted to dissipate any dissatisfaction which the mind might feel, when urged with the theory of development. Those who are well acquainted with the

science may be able to dismiss it at once from their minds, as unsupported by facts, but there are many who will not be able to do so; and for such we have offered these observations to clear up what would in their case be a serious difficulty.

Finally, I would urge the student of the Bible to consider the following remark. If we have no difficulty whatever with respect to the *future*, in receiving that Word of God which tells us, in spite of prophecies apparently indicating exact periods in the world's history, 'Of the times and seasons knoweth no man,' why should we hesitate to apply the same to the past, notwithstanding some written records which appear to indicate epochs? If our Lord reprov'd the apostles for enquiring into the coming events, 'It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power;' we may surely be content to be ignorant of the vast periods which have no concern at all with us, except in this one respect, that we *are* informed of, viz. that all was from Him, formed by the Right Hand of Power, and therefore must now be subject unto Him.

I have before said that *all* in these records should be intimately bound up in our minds with the testimony concerning Jesus; and how much more grandly and impressively does the opening of S. John's Gospel impress this upon us than even the noble simplicity of the first chapter of Genesis, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word

was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.'

Here we have a higher and more stupendous revelation than of any material creation, a dim insight into far distant realms of light; and the vindication of the authorship of the material creation to Him who is our spiritual life is plainly set forth by S. Paul, when in his Epistle to the Colossians he writes those remarkable words, 'who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: for by him were all things created.' Or as S. John writes to the church of Laodicea, 'The faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God.' One lesson of creation as Christians, is, that the new creation, regenerate human nature, has for its author the author of the first creation.

Christ our Redeemer was also our Creator. As he was the Word by whom the Almighty Father made all things in the beginning, so now by the Divine Spirit, does He quicken the dead in trespasses and sins, and again fill that which is void and empty with spiritual life.

Keeping all in subservience in our minds to the one great idea of Christ redeeming us from sin, we shall not be led into anxious doubts and controversies about questions to no profit, but remembering ever that the word from heaven is to be 'a lamp unto our paths, and a lantern to our feet,' we

shall not put it to any other uses than those for which God gave it to us—to enlighten our souls, and lead us to everlasting happiness.

What matters it how that information comes to us? whether it be encumbered with reference to the ignorance of past ages or not? Were not the souls of those to whom the word of God came in those days as precious to Him as our own? And because He has granted to us power to read more deeply the book of nature than they had, are we, ungratefully, to reproach the Spirit of God, for having instructed them as *they* were *able* to bear it? It is of small concern with what physical references the Word of God comes unto us, let us seize on its spirit, and its everliving realities, for the raising of our own spirits out of the material into the eternal and imperishable.

Whilst the cup of immortality is in our hands, let us little heed the material of which it is constructed. The precious jewel within the casket is the talisman of an endless life in glory; let us not be anxious about the emblems or the workmanship of the outer covering.

‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. It is the Spirit that quickeneth. The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.’

LECTURE VI.

OF Miracles.

Different ways in which we should undertake their examination.

Antecedent probability of miracles the first question—the second, the discussion of particular cases.

M. Bunsen's two views of Miracles.

Importance of the subject.

First view examined. 'Laws of Nature.' Meaning of the words.

There is a moral system as well as a physical.

The immutability of the former not to be transferred to the latter.

The probability of natural physical laws being preserved not greater than the probability of the natural laws of sensation and perception being preserved.

Affections of the individual consciousness not capable of being *evidence* to others.

Case to which these considerations are to be applied, stated.

Disturbances of natural laws, when abnormal, cannot be referred to *our* standard of great and little.

Importance of the preservation of the ordinary methods of sensuous influence—especially in things which are witnesses of the superior moral system.

Remote consequences of disturbances in the physical system not more important than in the moral.

Those who receive heterogeneous impressions from natural objects absolved from the ordinary responsibility of morals.

Recapitulation.

The subject involves the whole idea of revelation by inspiration.

Our Lord's appeal to sensible miracles.

Without them there is uncertainty.—Instance of Mormonism.

Second view of Miracles propounded by M. Bunsen.

Accepted—but the accompanying dictum opposed.

Records of Miracles, in an accepted Revelation, not to be treated with a hostile criticism.

We receive the Old Testament because of the attestation of Christ and the Apostles.

Such attestation removes objections to difficulties therein.

The Old Testament must be received as a whole with all its wonders and marvels.

ISAIAH VII. 11.

Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above.

THERE are two different ways in which we must consider miracles, or the abnormal interferences with the ordinary course of things, which we call the Law of Nature.

If arguing about the probability of a Revelation from God, or if discussing the pretensions of any teacher who claims to be heaven-sent, and who proffers miraculous evidence of his authority, we naturally ask if the miracle is one which is publicly performed, of a dignified purpose—whether it is befitting the character of a Divine messenger—whether it is free from all suspicion of being merely temporary, merely the effect of some sudden fascination of the physical organization acted on through the imagination, or preternaturally stimulated by a powerful will.

But when we have accepted the Book Divine, and acknowledged it to be the record of a revelation from on high, we do not examine the account of a miracle recorded in it with the same reserved, and perhaps hostile feeling. We are then to examine whether it is distinctly recorded to be an interposition of the Almighty. We consider what was the design of which it comes in aid, and when we can clearly see what instruction it gave,

how it must have affected the minds of those who witnessed it; and if we can also see that there was very great and urgent need of Divine testimony at the time, then we ought not to seek further, and bring to bear upon the particular case, considerations which are antecedent, and are applicable against the notion of miracles in general.

The general antecedent probability of miracles being performed in testimony of a Divine Revelation must be the first question; and in the next place, whether there be sufficient historical evidence of the truth of the miracles recorded in Holy Scriptures, as a whole, to induce belief in the divine origin of those Scriptures.

The first is a philosophical question, one to be investigated and answered by general reasoning. The second is historical, and rests upon testimony.

When they are both settled, and the record of the revelation which embodies the facts and doctrines connected with it, is admitted to be genuine, authentic, and credible, we come to examine its several parts; and, as is to be expected in a communication to man from God, by chosen messengers and appointed teachers, we find in it difficulties of various kinds. Confining ourselves on this occasion to those which result from the records of miraculous events, let us consider how we ought to treat them.

Two views have been propounded as to the mode of the preternatural action of the Infi-

nite Mind upon the body, and upon nature in general.

‘The one supposes any such action of the Infinite to exist only by the instrumentality of the finite mind, and in strict conformity with the laws of nature, which, as God’s own laws, it considers immutable. It therefore considers miracles, which appear to contradict those laws, as misunderstandings of the interpreter, who mistakes a symbolical, or poetical, or popular exposition, for a scientific and historical¹.’ ‘This,’ writes the author whom I am quoting, ‘is now acknowledged to be the case with the celebrated miracle of Joshua and the sun. If the miracle regards the human body, that view ascribes it either to the same misinterpretation, or to the influence of a powerful will upon the physical organization of another individual, or lastly, to the operation of the mind upon its own body.’

‘The other sees the divine miracle in the alleged fact, that these laws have been set aside for a providential purpose.’ The author proceeds, ‘As the subject is primarily an historical one, the safest rule seems to be to judge every single case in the first instance by the general rule of evidence. An unprejudiced philosophy of history, at all events, will not allow this question to be placed on the same level with the everliving, self-proving miracle of history, which nobody in his senses denies, but rather say about the other with Hippolytus,

¹ Bunsen’s *Hippolytus and his Age*. Vol. II.

“Such miracles are for the unbeliever, whom often they fail to convert, and must be considered as useless when unbelief ceases.”’

These extracts from the ‘Philosophical Aphorisms,’ in Chevalier Bunsen’s *Hippolytus and his Age*, bring before us the question which it is proposed to discuss in this and the next Lecture; and I cannot but think that it is one of extreme importance. It has respect to the foundations of the faith. Any vagueness or doubt about those is of terrible consequence; and though learned and pious individuals may be tempted, in their desire to reconcile philosophy and dogmatic Christianity, to throw a haze over these questions, allowing different persuasions to be equally efficacious, because equally conscientious, yet it behoves them to beware lest by sublimation they fritter away all substance, lest they intricate what they endeavour to extricate, and lose in general and undefined ideas the reality and verity of a Divine Revelation, confirmed to man by the evidence of signs and wonders, the gifts of the Holy Ghost;—lose it, I mean, not perhaps for themselves, but for others. While doing all honour to the critical acumen and evident deep desire for the prevalence of evangelical practice, of the author of these remarkable books, to which I have been referring, we may yet take exception to the doctrines upheld and favoured, as having tendencies to which their propounder does not allow full weight.

The first view of miracles which is presented

to us, seems to be full of dangerous and untenable assumptions.

‘The preternatural action of the Infinite Mind exists only by the instrumentality of the finite mind, and in strict conformity with the laws of nature, which, as God’s own laws, it considers immutable.’

The first characteristic follows from the second; for if it be granted that such preternatural action *must* be in strict conformity with the laws of nature, and if such laws be immutable¹, any ap-

¹ It is the proposition maintained by Spinoza in his *Tractatus Theolog. Politic.* c. 6. *De Miraculis*. I will put down here the four heads of that treatise.

I. Nihil contra naturam contingere, sed ipsam æternum, fixum et immutabilem ordinem servare, et simul quid per miraculum intelligendum sit.

II. Nos ex miraculis nec essentiam nec existentiam et consequenter nec providentiam Dei posse cognoscere, sed hæc omnia longe melius percipi ex fixo et immutabili naturæ ordine.

III. Ex aliquot Scripturæ exemplis ostendam, ipsam Scripturam per Dei decreta et volitiones et consequenter per providentiam nihil aliud intelligere, quam ipsam naturæ ordinem, qui ex ejus æternis legibus necessario sequitur.

IV. Denique de modo miraculæ Scripturæ interpretandi, et de iis quæ præcipue circa miraculorum narrationes notari debeant, agam.

Under the first head he argues :

Cum virtus et potentia naturæ sit ipsa Dei virtus et potentia, leges autem et regulæ naturæ, ipsa Dei decreta, omnino credendum est, potentiam naturæ infinitam esse, ejusque leges adeo latas, ut ad omnia quæ et ab ipso divino intellectu concipiuntur se extendant. And soon afterwards :

Clarissime sequitur—Nomen miraculi non nisi respective ad hominum opiniones posse intelligi, et nihil aliud significare quam opus cujus causam naturalem, exemplo alterius rei solitæ explicare non possumus, vel saltem ipse non potest, qui miraculum scribit aut narrat.—*Spinoza, Opera* (Ed. Paullus). Jenæ. 1812. Tom. I.

parent interference with them cannot be *real*, and the phenomenon can only be produced by an influence on the finite mind, which is made to be conscious of Divine action in some way or other, not independent of itself. We must also notice in the proposition a little ambiguity. It cannot be meant that *we are to judge* of the conformity of the alleged action to the laws of Nature, because then we ought to substitute for the 'laws of nature,' the words, 'as far as we know of the laws of nature¹:' in such a case, under the name of miracle would be classed the foretelling of the eclipse by Columbus to the inhabitants of the West Indian islands. To say that interferences are in strict accordance with the laws of nature, does not much help any practical conclusion, if it refers, as it may, to things beyond our range of observation and cognition.

But taking the general proposition, which is in fact that of Spinoza :—

The laws of nature may be either necessary and immanent, or not. From the unity of purpose and omniscience which we suppose to reside in the Divine Being, it may be argued that they are *necessary*, so long as matter exist at all, because all possible conditions of the existence of natural things must have been at once present to the

¹ *Contra naturam non incongrue dicimus Deum aliquid facere quod facit contra id quod norimus in natura. Hanc enim etiam appellamus naturam, cognitum nobis cursum solitumque naturæ, contra quem cum Deus aliquid facit, magnalia vel mirabilia nominantur.—S. Augustin. contr. Faust. i. 56. 3. quoted by Trench, Miracles, p. 14.*

Divine Mind when the laws of the universe were conceived. But the laws of the universe are twofold, *moral* as well as *natural*; and the laws of morals may well be admitted to be immutable, because of their inherent congruity with the nature and qualities of the Divine Being: while we cannot persuade ourselves that in the physical laws of nature there can be any such inherent and absolute immutability, unless we believe in the eternity of matter and its independence.

He that made can also destroy, He that gave laws may have given them with especial view to their occasional suspension for the sake of affecting the human mind with the idea of present Deity; and this dispensing power, so far from being inconsistent with the idea of general permanence, may be actually involved in it originally¹. It is impossible not to recognise the distinction which has been drawn between laws *positive* or imposed, and laws *necessary*. The moral system of the universe, depending on the moral attributes of the Deity, must indeed be immutable, because it is dependent upon the nature, qualities, and attributes of the Divine Infinite Mind; but no such absolute indefeasible congruity can be assumed in that which is created and made, which is temporal, and at any rate, possibly to have an end. Now the Revelation does actually insist upon the termination of the present state of the universe; it assumes in many places

¹ See *Babbage's Ninth Bridgewater Treatise*.

the passing away of the present visible system ; and therefore teaches us to look upon what we call natural laws, as temporary and not permanent. And therefore we conclude, that to set up an immutability in them, because they are God's, is extending to the laws of the physical universe, that which can only be safely predicated of the moral laws of goodness, justice, and truth, and is in some sense a circumscribing of the powers of the Omnipotent.

Then the moral and physical systems are not to be regarded as co-ordinate in all senses ; we must recognise in the moral system a superiority ; and the operations of the physical must be subservient to it. The two systems, the moral and physical, sometimes act in unison, sometimes in opposition to each other ; and as the order of nature does certainly, in many cases, interfere with the operation of moral laws, there is nothing to shock probability in the idea that a great moral object should be effected by an interruption of physical order. Two currents even when running in the same direction may interlace and produce an apparent confusion, much more when they run in opposite directions.

It has been noticed before by writers on this subject that the objections which men have made to miracles, considered as interruptions of natural laws, are found nearly all to arise from forgetfulness of the existence of moral laws¹.

¹ In this remark is also included the correction of popular lan-

So far for the general proposition involved in calling God's natural laws—immutable. It is a different thing to discuss in what degree it is more probable that these laws should be suspended, than that the human mind should be so influenced as to produce an impression of Divine action equivalent to such interference. Granting that as far as the individual consciousness is concerned, the moral effect which is the object of the miracle, (and which could have been produced by the former) may be produced also by the latter, it may be urged: *first*, that the same miraculous interposition is required, and nothing is gained in the way of economizing the Divine power; for the supposed inconsistency exists in this case as well as in the former.

Why should not the laws of perception, sensation, and reflection, be rightly considered *as* immutable natural laws *as* the physical law of gravitation? At any rate so far immutable, that the suspension of them for a particular purpose, should be as probable or improbable as the suspension of the laws of attraction: so far immutable, that the perturbations caused designedly in sub-

guage which calls miracles *violations* of a natural law. See Sharon Turner's *Sacred History of the World*, Vol. II. p. 494. Trench writes also well in this passage: "In the miracle this world of ours is drawn into and within an higher order of things; laws are then at work in the world, which are not the laws of its fallen condition, for they are laws of higher range and mightier perfection; and as such they claim to make themselves felt, and to have the pre-eminence which is rightly their own."—*Miracles*, p. 17.

servience to the higher moral system should be not less improbable in them, than in natural laws of another kind ?

And *secondly*, when these demonstrations of the Divine Will are intended also to teach future ages, it may be questioned whether they are as conclusive, being mere phantasms, as they would be if real facts.

Now whatever was written aforetime was written for *our* admonition. These Divine influences are not partial, isolated, of private interpretation ; these hard sentences of old are not to be hidden from the children of the generations to come ; they are to be preserved in order ‘to shew the honour of the Lord, his mighty and wonderful works that he hath done.’ And a great uncertainty is introduced into these manifestations of God’s will when we are led to view them as in themselves non-existent, but merely as affections, and therefore possible hallucinations, of men’s minds. The school which holds these views supplies an example, shewing how quickly men pass from questioning the reality of a miracle, as an interruption of the laws of nature, to a complete denial of it¹. To consider the miracle of Joshua and the Sun merely a poetical figure, is to deny the miracle altogether. But if admitted, it may be regarded either as a literal truth as it now

¹ *Pareau* classes together as figurative expressions, the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai, the stopping of the Sun by Joshua, and the taking up of Elijah into heaven.

stands, a prolongation of the natural day ; and for this much may be said : or, perhaps on solid grounds it may be urged, that some effect was produced on the senses of the armies of Israel either by a meteoric resemblance to the prolongation of the day, or by some preternatural quickening of the energies of the invading armies which enabled them in fact to compress action requiring a longer time generally, into a smaller period.

In such a case as this it is of no consequence at all to the faith of the enquirer, how the miracle was wrought ; but it is of immense consequence that we be not led to fritter away altogether the idea of God's interposition in a substantial sensible manner, leaving permanent traces. For was there not a cause ? Is the terrible destruction of the idolatrous tribes an act which suggests itself to us as pleasing to the merciful God ? Though for the wickedness of these nations God drove them out from before his people, yet must we not suppose, that it required strong proof to persuade the invaders that they were really fulfilling God's will ?

The preservation and isolation of a chosen seed for a particular purpose is the great fact to which the Old Testament bears witness historically. And that the fortunes of that singular race were specially watched over, and cared for by the Almighty Father, is a fact requiring confirmation by undeniable testimony, not only to us, but to them-

selves; and, especially when this chosen race were called to unexampled deeds of blood, it must have been necessary to impress strongly upon them that they were ministers of God's vengeance, and not insolent and cruel conquerors of the tribes who inhabited the fairest portion of the earth. Must not the pious Israelite who knew of the Deity's own proclamation of himself as a God 'rejoicing in mercy,' have required some strong demonstration of God's will, before he could with inhuman ferocity put to the sword everything that breathed, which belonged to the Canaanite?

Now that such testimony was given, is, of course, a fact which rests upon historical grounds. And it must be first of all investigated, whether or no there be reason for trusting the Jewish annals, as authentic records of past events connected with their migrations and settlement; and, if there be, I cannot see any reason for rejecting as a poetical myth such accounts as that of Joshua and the Sun.

But to this we shall return again. It is alluded to here to keep before us the particular fact on which our present general reasoning is to be brought to bear. I am not yet urging how we may suppose that miraculous event could have been wrought; but, inasmuch as it primarily asserts a suspension of the ordinary law of nature, universal gravitation, we introduce it as an instance.

This law is also asserted to have been suspended when Elisha caused the iron to swim, in order that the axe-head, borrowed by the young

prophet, might be restored to its owner: and in the case of the parting of the waters of the Red Sea, and of the Jordan, near Jericho.

Now surely, in such cases, there is no greater improbability or difficulty, no greater interruption of natural laws, than in the healing of the sick by Christ and the Apostles. *Miracle* sets aside the idea of *more* or *less*, greater or less probability. There is no great or little with God. The delicate mechanism of the antennæ of an insect, and the vast accumulation of planetary systems forming the starry host, are but modes of the same wonderful power; and I can discern no more difficulty in the reception of the fact that the alternation of day and night should have experienced some temporary interference, all physical trace of which was obliterated from human curiosity in its *effects* on the solar system, than that a few loaves and fishes should have been multiplied so as to satisfy five thousand persons, and leave an overplus larger than the original supply.

The objections made to miracles being actual interferences with physical laws, must arise from a consideration of the multiplied relations which subsist among all created things; from whence an improbability is argued of any interference, whose consequences must be so far removed from the immediate object for which the alleged interference is caused. Now, on the one hand, it may be replied, that this is to circumscribe the power of God, as if such remote consequences could not

be prevented. We have no right to impute to these abnormal cases, all the consequences which would flow from them if they were normal. On the other hand, to imagine a miraculous action on the individuals who supposed themselves witnesses of these wonders, in which the laws of sensation, perception, and reflection, are interfered with, is to break down all certainty in human knowledge; and thus involves, to as great an extent, consequences remote from the original object.

Man's moral responsibility requires that the way in which he is acted on by external objects should be generally uniform. An uncertainty introduced into these, tends to make all teaching vague and indefinite, and loosens, to an alarming extent, the cords of our anchorage in matters moral and spiritual. It would produce general scepticism, making men wander, like the crazed poet, under supposed inspiration.

*Auditis? an me ludit amabilis
Insania?*

The idea of miracle being intended to produce a moral result of conviction is lost sight of, if this interference is with the man himself, actually playing with his mental powers, and deluding him with fancies that he sees things which he does not see, and hears things which he does not hear. The human being is then degraded into a warped mechanism, and the preservation of the natural laws which regulate the being whose destiny is immortal, is postponed to the preservation

of the natural laws which regulate the motions and relations of the unintelligent creation, which is to perish, and consume away¹.

And besides, what is the value of establishing an immutability of natural laws, of which our powers of cognition are uncertain and mutable?

By universal consent we absolve from moral responsibility those whose faculties mislead them. When the corruptible framework, in which we now dwell, is, through disease, rendered incapable of transmitting correct perceptions to the judgment, we are no longer able to exact from men accountability for their actions. We can have no practical, clear, and distinct notion of moral responsibility, unless the ordinary modes of influencing the judgment by external things is, on the whole, permanent; and specially so when the main object of the phenomena is connected with such responsibility. The cases in which, for great and good ends, with respect to the individual, he may be preternaturally influenced by means of some play

¹ Miracles are the most striking and convincing evidence, because the laws of matter being better understood than those to which mind is conformed, the transgression of them is more easily recognised. They are the most simple and obvious; because whereas the freedom of the human will resists the imposition of undeviating laws, the material creation, on the contrary, being strictly subjected to the regulation of its Maker, looks to him alone for a change in its constitution.—*Newman on Apollonius Tyaneus. Enc. Met. Vol. x. p. 626.* In the notes to this Essay will be found references to almost all the writers of any consequence on the subject of Miracles. It is well to see how Mr Newman could exercise a sound judgment on the question of the ecclesiastical miracles, before he became entangled in the meshes of the net which now holds him.

upon his senses, can only be looked upon as anomalies having reference to the individual himself, and incapable of becoming *evidence*, even if they can be sources of instruction, to *others*. If this were the case of miracles, we might apply to them, with greater reason, the words of Hippolytus, slightly altered: ‘Such miracles are for the individual whom they may fail to convert, and with respect to any others they must be useless.’

We may notice also how men seem to have been themselves suspicious of this deception of the senses, and to have asked repeatedly for some *sensible* miracle, as if a vision were not in itself sufficient evidence of a Divine revelation, being, perhaps, resolvable into the ordinary powers of an excited imagination. (See Judges vi. 36—40)¹.

Now, viewing the miracles recorded in Holy Scripture as proofs of God’s interposition for great moral ends, not terminated in the individuals themselves, and so forming part of a great moral system, which, from the beginning to the end of the world, is carried on with a view to God’s glory, and the redemption of man, we think it unreasonable to adopt any such account of them as shall reduce them to a mere instrumentality of the finite mind, which, if we understand the words rightly, means that the judgments of the persons influenced were in some manner or other affected, so as to produce in them convictions of suspensions

¹ *Newman’s Apollonius Tyaneus. Enc. Met. Vol. x. p. 626, note.*

of natural laws, which suspensions never actually took place; for we cannot recognise any indefeasible immutability in the laws of nature, which is alleged as the chief objection to considering miracles as suspensions of these laws. We conclude, on the other hand, that there would be the greatest uncertainty in all cases if we depend merely upon men's accounts of the affections of their own judgments to the exclusion of facts, and in opposition to them. And if such testimony be valid, yet the disturbance of the laws by which external things generally act upon men's minds seems as great a difficulty, if not a greater, than the disturbance of the physical laws of the universe, because it is a perturbation of the superior moral system; and it renders uncertain men's experience of God's system of moral government by a general uniformity of action of the external world upon the faculties.

It must not be overlooked that this question goes to the whole extent of revelation by inspiration. For if the minds and tongues of certain men have been under special guidance of God for the instruction of mankind, and the Divine message so conveyed, involves matters not attainable by human reason unassisted, we must have some proof of the Divine authority of the messenger, which is of a different kind to the mere action of the infinite consciousness upon that of the individual; and, since these revelations are specially asserted to be, not for the men of that

time only, but for the whole race, we must ask for testimony to their mission different from that which a man can produce from his own consciousness only. 'If ye believe not me, believe the works,' was the expostulating answer of our Lord to his objectors. 'The works that I do bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me¹.' This is the answer to a demand which naturally arises. We want something external to the individual, something which will bear examination, as in the case of the man being restored to sight who was born blind. The evidence must have a real existence, so as to be capable of convincing all men, independent of any personal consciousness. How are we to distinguish between real and supposed inspiration? Is every one who comes with a message from God to be believed on his own assertion? Why, the case is provided for by special enactment: '*If thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken.*' Surely we are here directed to seek for, and demand some actual, tangible, sensible miracle, either of prophecy or of supernatural power—some fact which is to be apprehended in the same way as facts generally are.

When men omit to require such proofs, and are

¹ See the objection to this interpretation of ἔργα, as used by S. John, answered in *Trench on the Miracles*, p. 8, note †.

content with the mere testimony of individuals to some personal conviction, which has no external proof, they are liable to the most frightful delusions. The shocking scandal of the Mormons is an instance in proof. While we have been arguing about the mode in which testimony from the Divine Infinite is likely to be given to any revelation, this instance seems to have been sent providentially. Thousands of persons have been deluded into the reception of a falsehood, which if it were not so pernicious in its results would be simply ludicrous, by mere influence, without any pretensions to open and public miraculous power: and though we can have no doubt that in many cases there have been shameful and deliberate wickedness in the agents of this foul superstition, yet it seems unreasonable to doubt that many of the converts have supposed themselves under the Divine guidance, and made great sacrifices in consequence; and all this merely from the personal testimony of men, whose abandoned life and infamy of character scarcely bears inspection, to their own inspiration.

Surely we are justified in entering an earnest protest against the view propounded of the evidence of Revelation, when we see the door it opens to uncertainty in matters of the very highest import, in which we specially desiderate certainty.

Turning then to the other view of miracles we accept the definition of this preternatural action of the Infinite Mind upon the finite, by means of the

suspension of natural laws for a providential purpose; but we are again compelled to demur to the next proposition, that the safest rule seems to be to judge every *single* case in the first instance by the general rule of evidence.

It was with reference to this assertion that in the commencement of this Lecture, we urged that the historical evidence of the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the Scriptures must be settled first; and then, when we have arrived at a conclusion that they are to be considered trustworthy narratives, we are not to bring against each individual instance of a recorded miracle—the weapons of a hostile criticism.

‘From a variety of causes,’ says a modern writer already quoted, ‘it happens that miracles which produced a rational conviction at the time when they took place, have ever since proved rather an objection to Revelation than an evidence for it, and have depended upon the rest for support; while others which were of a dubious and perplexing character, have in succeeding ages come forward in its defence. It is by a process similar to this that the anomalous nature of the Mosaic polity, which might once be an obstacle to its reception, is now justly alleged in proof of the very miracles by which it was then supported¹.’

The historical annals of the Jews do not come to us, as does the Gospel, professing miracles as

¹ *Newman's Apollonius Tyaneus. Encyc. Met.* Vol. x. p. 627, who quotes *Sumner's Records of Creation*, Vol. 1.

proofs of God's superintendence and design; we now receive the ancient Scriptures because of the testimony which our Lord and his apostles gave to them, and therefore the supernatural occurrences recorded in them are rather in the category of the miracles just alluded to, which derive their support from the narratives and records, and not the records their support from the miracles.

In conclusion, let me remind you that in this discussion we are not arguing with infidels who reject Christianity, we are reasoning with those who believe Christ and his apostles to have been special messengers of God most high, sent to men for the purpose of bringing them knowledge of the truth,—the truth that was to make them free. Christ and his apostles refer constantly to *the Scriptures*: 'The Scriptures testify of me;' 'The Scripture was fulfilled;' 'What saith the Scripture?' there were men to whom the word of God came, 'and the Scripture cannot be broken;' 'The Scripture must be fulfilled.' These are the phrases in which our Lord refers to the books which at that time were held sacred by the Jews, i. e. to the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and surely with those who recognize in Christ Jesus the great regenerator of human nature, such testimony must be conclusive as to the estimation in which we ought to hold these writings. Are they spoken of as mere national records, liable to all the error which other historical accounts may involve? Can we after such testimony refuse to give them a

higher place? Is it right to treat them with no more ceremony than the early history of Rome, or the legends of monkish historians? Is it not probable that these books may contain in them things which demand of us submission of our impatient reasonings, acquiescence of our reluctant judgments? And is it not reasonable and prudent, after the testimony which our great Redeemer has given, to refrain from hasty conclusions, which tend to the rejection of the miraculous parts of the history, because of the difficulties which suspensions of natural laws (as far as we are acquainted with them) occasion in our minds? Ought we not rather in dutiful and thankful submission to Him, whose life of unwearied benevolence was crowned by a painful death for our salvation, to receive, as on the testimony of God himself, all that He has pleased to record for us of His dealings with mankind in ages past, and convince ourselves of things hard to be understood by the remembrance that the Scriptures of the Old Testament have received the attestation of Him who was God and man, who knew what was in man, and therefore could anticipate the murmurs which some would urge against the wonderful records of supernatural events, which those Scriptures contain?

Instead therefore of demanding the crucible of the critic for each of these events singly, we think that the testimony of Christ to the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures of the Jews, is sufficient

to assure us—that they cannot contain any thing but what is true, and though in the lapse of ages verbal inaccuracies may have crept in through the carelessness of man, yet as a record of facts, and a manual of instruction, the Old Testament must be taken as a whole,—a divinely prepared, and divinely preserved, record of God's will and God's ways with man, which may not be torn asunder, and have its fragments detached for the purpose of discrediting them, without the presumptuous meddler incurring the penalty denounced against him who shall take away from the words of the Book. 'Every word of God is pure;' 'He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God;' and, 'He that is of God heareth the words of God.'

These words must be of awful import, if they be God's; let us recognize them to be so, with the great king of Babylon :

How great are his signs! how mighty are his wonders!

And with Asaph :

I will remember the works of the Lord : surely I will remember thy wonders of old.

I will meditate also of all thy works, and talk of thy doings.

Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary. Who is so great a God as our God?

Thou art the God that doest wonders ; thou hast declared thy strength among the people.

* * The reference to *Pareau*, p. 138, is *Institutio Interpretis Veteris Testamenti*, p. 235.

LECTURE VII.

RECAPITULATION of the subjects of the last Lecture.

Statement of the present question.

Connexion of the narrative—leading to the conclusion that facts are intended to be related.

Objection from the poetical form being used—from the absence of quotations of the miracle in the other parts of the Bible.

General reason given for the latter circumstance.

Habbakuk iii. 11 referred to—and the context.—Eccles. xlvi. 4.

Appropriateness of the miracle.—Sun-worship, generally among the Syrian tribes. The ‘Great Stone’ in Gibeon.

Hypothesis offered as to the ‘Book of Jasher.’

Reasons against the supposition of a myth incorporated into the narrative.

Conclusion—involving also the previous supposition—if adopted.

If there is doubt about the author intending to relate a fact—yet no antecedent improbability of miracles should be brought into the argument.

Objections to a common error—viz. that of supposing that there is anything *gained* by setting aside a miraculous account.

On the contrary, it is shewn that the absence of miracles would be a *loss*.

How the miracle was wrought.

Objections to suspension of the rotatory motion of the earth, considered and answered.

Real source of difficulty is that ‘heart of unbelief’ which the Gospel subdues.

Christians who have had such extraordinary mysteries revealed to them, can hardly be staggered by any exhibition of sovereign power.

The Church of God superior in its essence and accidents to all material creation.

JOSHUA X. 12—14.

Then spake Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon ; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher ? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man : for the Lord fought for Israel.

THE observations which were made last Sunday were intended to pave the way for a consideration of the miracle recorded in the verses just read. We then considered the two views of miraculous interference which M. Bunsen has given us in his 'Philosophical Aphorisms,' and we endeavoured to shew that the first view, which he seems to regard with the greatest favour, is untenable, viz. that which regards miracles not as physical sensible facts, but as mental affections merely of the witnesses and actors therein ; and we embraced the second view which he propounded, viz. that miracles are actual suspensions of natural laws for a providential purpose ; but we had then again to object to the assertion, that each particular case ought to be investigated on its own grounds, and received or rejected, on the

result of this critical process applied to the separate case, considered singly and as an isolated fact, and we reproduced the remark of an acute reasoner, who reminds us that many miracles which were formerly wrought in attestation of God's special designation of individuals, as extraordinary messengers from Himself, have become since the time of their occurrence, rather a hindrance than otherwise to the reception of the Divine Revelation.

Of such a nature no doubt is the miracle now to be considered. If we discuss the claim which the book of Joshua has to form part of the sacred canon, we do not rest this upon the fact of its containing miraculous events. Opponents urge that such accounts are like the fabulous wonders of early history among all other tribes. They point with exultation to the successful demolition which Niebuhr accomplished with respect to the vain traditions of a people much more important than the Jewish; and they ask, why the national records of an exclusive and conceited nation should not be subjected to the same searching investigation—why the presumptuous appropriation that this people made of God's special favour should not be set aside at once, as too contemptible even to be argued against by a philosophic mind? We should not then think of bringing to the task the miracles as witnesses; we must establish the record in some other way; and when that is done, it will be done in spite of such dif-

difficulties of miraculous action, instead of by their aid. There would be required three several stages in the process.

In the first place, it would have to be shewn that the book ought to be in the sacred canon.

In the second, that the passage in question is undoubtedly a genuine portion of that book.

In the third, Does it affirm a miracle or not? Is there any honest and reasonable way of understanding the writer, which does not involve the idea of calling in supernatural power; so that without straining the text, or forcing the meaning, the author may be fairly understood to be speaking in a poetical sense, figuratively—or is the passage meant to assert, and teach us that in a signal, open, and publicly understood manner, the laws of nature were suspended for a particular purpose?

The discussion of the two first points is not necessary in this place. The book is admitted to be a genuine and authentic part of the Holy Scripture, and no one regards the verses as a spurious interpolation. But the latter question is exactly of the kind we have proposed for these Lectures.

We are therefore, under this supposition, to assume the genuineness, authenticity, and credibility of the Sacred Volume, including the book of Joshua, and then to proceed reverently to discuss the meaning of any difficulty which it presents.

Now in the first place, we have our miracle

coupled with another event of a more ordinary kind, but specially provided on this occasion to convince the people of the superior power involved in the contest they were then carrying on :

And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

Now there is nothing remarkable in the agency here employed ; showers of destructive hail being well established phenomena—even of the violent kind here alluded to. If such a disaster were to occur at any time, it would not be matter of surprise to us, however great an interest we might take in the story of the losses caused by the storm. We should not see in it any proof of extraordinary Divine agency. But we are especially told that in this case God wrought a destruction upon the earth ; that this was from Him, in vengeance on the wicked who opposed Him, and His laws. So far there was however no undeniable proof, although there might be a presumption, that in this case the Lord their God fought for Israel. But not being of a miraculous nature, inasmuch as it was the employment of a natural phenomenon to effect the Divine purpose—though it might be an encouragement and warning to Israel to persevere, and gain the fruits of that goodwill which God intended hereby to prove to them in a certain degree,—yet it could not be

appealed to in the way of testimony to shew that the God of heaven was clearly on their side¹.

As we read on, there seems nothing but what should bring to us the impression of a fact, intended to be the proof which we miss in the former occurrence, and related as a manifest token of God's present interference.

'Then spake Joshua'—'and he said in the sight of Israel'—'and the sun stood still.'

Then comes the reference to the book of Jasher as it is commonly read, and afterwards, resuming, 'So the sun stood still; and there was no day like that, that the Lord hearkened to the voice of man.'

It is true that the words may be arranged in parallel sentences after the manner of Hebrew poetry, and by so doing, taking the book of Jasher to be a popular record of national lays—it has been supposed to be a quotation from such a collection—and thus to be nothing more than a figurative expression shewing, by a bold emblem, how rapid was the success that attended the arms of the victorious Israelites.

But in the first place, the introduction of the story, 'then spake Joshua,' and subsequently, after the allusion to the book of Jasher, the resumption of the historical form, 'So the sun stayed,' seems to imply, even on the supposition of a quotation, a

¹ *Hobbes* says that perhaps the quantity of hail in the atmosphere may have caused unusual refraction in the sun's rays, and so lengthened the light-time.

reassertion of a fact by the author of the book, in the most positive and distinct terms.

But the objections must be examined a little more in detail: our object is not an unconscientious partisanship of received views, but an honest investigation of the truth: we ought to consider with fairness and candour all that may be justly urged against an interpretation before we persist in it¹.

We must confess that if the record in the book of Joshua be that of an actual fact, it is remarkable that it is not alluded to subsequently in a more marked manner by prophetic, apostolical, or evangelical writers in the sacred canon of Scripture. In fact, there is but one place where we can suppose it to be referred to, viz. in the prayer of the prophet Habakkuk. It is also alluded to by the son of Sirach, in the uncanonical book Ecclesiasticus. Before we quote these places, let us consider if a reason may not be given for this want of reference. The miracles recorded in the book of Judges, and those of the prophets, especially Elisha, are not much referred to in the New Testament. The believer in the special character of the Jewish nation, and the inspiration of the authors of their sacred books, may reason thus:

The Jews lived in a perpetual atmosphere as, it were, of miraculous occurrence². Isolated

¹ This seems to me to be a simple truism. We have no sympathy with the dictum, *Rationi nefas est audientiam dare adversus Revelationem.*—*V. Lateran Council. decret. in sess. viii.*

² *Divine Legation of Moses*, B. v. § 4. 1.

miracles do not seem to have influenced them in the later periods of their history, so much as miraculous persons performing a series of miracles, and so, by the effulgence of Divine power, calling attention to God's present attestation of his superintending providence. A vast array of wonderful events attended their deliverance from Egypt, their progress in the wilderness, and their bringing into the land of promise. Compared with the frequency of Moses' miracles, so perpetually alluded to in the Psalms, and in the New Testament, those of Joshua seem but few; and, after his time, there are not many mentioned till we come to the time of Elijah and Elisha, whose special mission, at a time of scandalous heresy, recalls to us vividly the peculiar destiny of the chosen seed. The next grand demonstration of miraculous power is by our Lord himself and the Holy Ghost working through Christ's confederate Body, the Church. And in the intervals of those most marked periods we have, indeed, occasional miracles recorded to have been wrought to convince and reprove those who departed from God, but not generally with the effect which we suppose would result. Thus Jeroboam, sacrificing on a forbidden altar, is reprov'd by the man of God from Judah; his withered hand, and the rent altar, however, do not seem to have produced any permanent effect either on his conduct or that of the people. Even those isolated instances, which, like the sacrifice on Mount Carmel, must

have produced their effect of present witness to the Divine Will, did not, from the nature of the case, create the impression of permanent witness to the Israelites. The Divine Teacher, known to have a heaven-sent power of invoking supernatural aid, seems to have been what they specially looked for. And one individual event, where God had interposed for their advancement and establishment, was not so likely to be appealed to in future ages, as was the succession of miraculous events which characterized the lives of their principal teachers and prophets, standing forth among the rest, like Saul among the people, conspicuous, permanent, and patent to all who enquired into the subject. In this way we notice, that in Hezekiah's writing, after he recovered from his sickness, there is the same lack of reference to the remarkable sign given—the reversal of the shadow on the sun-dial of Ahaz¹—where, according to our expectations, there would have been some remembrance made of it.

I think, however, that in the prophet Habakkuk² the reference is very clearly to the staying of the sun; and, since it has been objected to, it will be well to quote the place, to shew why it is supposed to refer to our present subject.

The prophet is mentioning the great signs which had been shewed when God smote the enemies of his people:

¹ It was well known at Babylon; see 2 Chronicles xxxii. 31.

² Habakkuk iii.

‘Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers (as at Horeb). The mountains saw thee, and trembled (as at Sinai). The overflowing of the water passed by (as at Jordan). The deep uttered His voice, and lifted up His hand on high. The sun and moon stood still in their habitation (as at Gibeon and Ajalon). At the light of thine arrows (the hailstones at the going up to Beth-horon) they went, and at the shining of thy glittering spear:’

And the following words recall to us what was in the mind of the prophet:

‘Thou didst march through the land in indignation; thou didst thresh the heathen in thine anger. Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation for thine anointed.’

In the Book Ecclesiasticus¹, the son of Sirach, recounting the deeds of Joshua, says, ‘Did not the sun go back by his means? and was not one day as long as two?’ At any rate, then, the popular persuasion of the reality of the miracle was as old as this; and with those who are willing to adopt the traditions of the Church this will be some argument for the sense to be put on our text.

As to the appropriateness of the miracle, it has been observed of it, as of the miraculous plagues in Egypt, that it was well qualified to strike terror into the idolatrous nations, as well as reassure the Israelites. It was important that the people of God should know that the Lord was superior to the gods of the nations, and, therefore, any mi-

¹ Chap. xLvi. 4.

raculous interference which should convey this warning to both the belligerents, was clearly well suited to the occasion. The Amorites and Canaanites seem to have worshipped the sun and moon, and, as well as the European tribes, personified under different names. Baal, Selden tells us, was the sun, Ashtoreth the moon, and Moloch, or Achad, known as Mithraz among the Persians, was also the sun¹. Such idolatry is alluded to in the ancient Book of Job (xxxii. 26, 27), and expressly forbidden by Moses (Deut. iv. 19). The sun-worship, under different emblems, is so prevalent throughout the history of these nations, that we can have no difficulty in believing it to have prevailed among these Amorites and Canaanites: and therefore the public manifestation of *God the Lord's* power over the gods of the heathen, could not be more appropriately made than by this suspension of their course at the call of God's messenger. The insolent boasting of Rabshakeh in after times shews the spirit in which such a warning would have been received then: 'Who are they among all the gods of the countries that have delivered their country out of

¹ *Selden. Prolegomena, in libro de Diis Syris, c. III. De Cult. Extran. Primord. p. 56.*

Corollarium adjicimus de Belo sive sole apud Edessam a vetustissimis sæculis culto... Julian Apostata in hymno ad Solem οἱ τὴν "Ἐδέσσαν ἱερὸν ἔξαιῶνος Ἥλιον χωρίον.—*Selden. De Baal, cap. 1. ad finem.*

Effigies utriusque et Achadi et Molochi easdem fuisse fere memorant Scriptores vetusti, et ad unum Solem exprimendum factas, &c. et seq.—*Selden. De Moloch. Syntagma, 1. c. 6.*

my hand?' And, as it is noticed of the Egyptians specially by Moses, 'The Lord executed judgment upon the Egyptians' gods,' what more natural than that this judgment should have been shewn on the present occasion?

Some have conjectured that Gibeon means Hill of the Sun, and Ajalon, Valley of the Moon, and that therefore, probably, these places may both have had temples dedicated respectively to those luminaries; and this would explain the reason for the choice of the places; and Joshua's assumption of authority over them was the more signal from their being made to rest, as it were, upon the very places where false worship was set up with foul and abominable rites.

In corroboration of this we may notice that, in the Second Book of Samuel (xx. 8) mention is made of the great stone which is in Gibeon. This being so well known as to be referred to in this manner, must have been some remarkable natural or artificial rock. Is it not likely that it should have been an object of worship¹? for such was the

¹ *Maximus Tyrius*, Serm. xxxviii. Ἀράβιοι σέβουσι μὲν, ὄντινα δὲ οὐκ οἶδα· τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα εἶδον, λίθος ἦν τετράγωνος. (*Diss.* 8. in Ed. Davisii.) *Arnobius contra Gentes*, Lib. vi. 'informem lapidem.'

Etiam vetustissimus erat Græcorum mos, saxa sive quadrata sive rudia, saltem aliam quam saxi speciem præ se non ferentia pro simulacris ponere, neque aliter quam simulacris divinum honorem exhibere; quod testatur imprimis Pausanias in Achaicis ubi de Mercurio in Pharis loquitur: τὰ δὲ, inquit, παλαιότερα ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι Ἑλλησι τιμὰς Θεῶν ἀντὶ ἀγαλμάτων εἶχον ἀργοὶ λίθοι.—*Selden, De Diis Syriis*, Prolegomena, c. 3.

emblem of the rites of Baal, even to the time when the young Syrian priest of the sun, who became Emperor of Rome, transported to his capital the black stone from its eastern shrine¹; and may not this be a trace of connexion between Gibeon and the idea of sun-worship?

Then the words which we translate as an appeal to the book of Jasher, as if the words of some poetical collection were quoted, and the book referred to as an authority, deserve a little more attention. There are two places in our translation where the word occurs, in the present, and also in 2 Sam. i. 18. Here it is inserted after a miraculous event, 'Is not this written in the book of Jasher?'

May not a proper translation be, 'Is not this written in a book of *truth* or *right*?' The same word is translated in the book of Deuteronomy twice by these, 'that which is right:' 'thou shalt do (*hajasher*) that which is right.' Professor Lee²

¹ Simulacrum ejus (s. Heliogabali) Herodianus aut fuisse Lapidem magnitudine immani, basi circulari in conum desinentem.—*Ib. Syn-agma*, II. c. 1. ἀνεργαστὸν Ἡλίου εἴκονα.

The sun was represented at Emesa in the form of a great stone, which, as it appeared, had fallen from heaven.—*Guizot's Notes on Gibbon's Decline and Fall*, Vol. I. c. 6.

Lord Lindsay, in his *Travels in the Holy Land*, mentions somewhere remnants of huge stone structures resembling Stonchenge, which probably were Phœnician, and ruins of temples for the service of Baal.

The custom of worshipping rocks among the Canaanites seems to be alluded to by Moses, Deut. xxxii. 30, and 37. See *Borlase's Antiquities of Cornwall*, p. 161.

² *Hebrew Dictionary*, in voce.

remarks, that having the article before it, it cannot, according to ordinary construction, be a proper name; and if the proposed translation be admissible grammatically, there is everything to recommend it from the context; for I would then take it in this sense. After an assertion of the occurrence of a most extraordinary event, how natural to anticipate an objection by the question, ‘Is not this written in a book of one who speaks truth?’ How agreeable to the usual oriental style of writing! I mean that the historian, after recording the wonderful fact, feels that those who read it will be astonished above measure; and meeting the feeling of incredulity, he reminds them that the book is a book of true record. ‘Is not this written in a book of truth?’ In the same way S. John at the end of his Gospel, contradicting the prevalent report of the promise of an endless life on earth made to himself, and then anticipating the objections that would be made to such disturbance of popular belief, avers his fidelity and truth: ‘This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.’ Also after the record that he gives of the blood and water issuing from the pierced side of our Saviour: ‘And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true, and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe¹.’

¹ The Chaldee paraphrast says that this *liber rectitudinis* is *liber legis*.—See *Franciscus Vatablus* in Josh. x. among the *Critici Sacri*.

When the same words occur in the book of Samuel, it is with reference to David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, and in that place, the remark might be made to diminish the surprise which a Jew would feel at David's lamenting over the death of his bitterest enemy, Saul.

On the other hand, it may be urged that this reference in the interrogative manner is exactly of a similar kind to those which we find in the historical books of the Kings and the Chronicles of Israel and Judah ; and that in the 1st chap. of 2 Samuel, the reference is made for a poetical composition, as it is assumed to do here for a poetical account of the conquest of Canaan ; that these facts point rather to some book which was intended, and which was very well known.

These are undoubtedly strong points, and would leave me doubtful whether to take the record literally, or consider it a poetical reminiscence of the rapidity of Joshua's conquests, were it not for the following two considerations :—

1st. It seems to me to convey a very degrading idea of inspired books, if we suppose that they may in fact be erroneous, that they refer to books embodying false views of past events, that they adopt these untrue records and incorporate them into themselves. I cannot think the objections of captious persons are to be met by explaining difficulties in a way which seems to recognize an incomplete Divine Inspiration. If these books are liable to the same errors as other books of

history, and sometimes in avowed narrative take up fabulous legends, how can we suppose them of general application, or gather from them the sure and certain words of eternal life?

2d. I observe that those who look upon the passage as a poetical quotation are not quite agreed where the poetry begins. Bishop Lowth supposes it to begin in the 12th verse¹; Herder, in his 'Spirit of Hebrew Poetry,' at the 11th verse².

I am thus not inclined to admit that the passage is an evident transcript of some collection of popular lays. Such lays are capable, according to modern experience, of a very successful imitation in after times, and hence the confirmed idea that such lays really existed.

I come therefore to this conclusion: that, waving the doubts about the passage being a poetical quotation, and admitting it to be so, for the present argument, I am yet compelled to maintain that the author of the inspired book of Joshua stamps

¹ The Book of Jasher is twice quoted, first in Joshua x. 13, where the quotation is evidently poetical, and forms exactly three distichs:

Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon,
 And thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon.
 And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed her course,
 Until the people were avenged of their enemies.
 And the sun tarried in the midst of the heavens,
 And hastened not to go down a whole day.

Lowth's Prælections, p. 306, note.

² See Herder, *Geist der Hebraischen Poesie. Sammtliche Werke*, Vol. xxxiv. pp. 236—238. Carlsruhe, 1826.

the fact with his testimony as true. He might perhaps refer to a sacred hymn of triumph, and quote its words, while rehearsing the events of the great conquest which the armies of Israel had achieved; and this would be done with a moral and parænetic intention. He reminds them constantly that it was not their own arm and their own sword that had won them the land, but that the Divine power had wrought through them, and not only *through* them but *with* them, by visible, tangible signs; instructing them ever in the fact, *That the Lord fought for Israel.*

With respect to the sacred songs, by which in later times the royal Psalmist and others endeavoured to rouse the feelings of devotion of the people, we should notice, that what appears figurative is often literally true: 'The sea saw that, and fled; Jordan was driven back.' Words like these in any other writings we should of course take in their figurative sense; but how different is the case when we remember the ancient records of Israel, and call to mind the wonders of old times; how God brought forth his people out of Egypt, and specially warned them that they should keep in mind constantly the wonderful instruments of their deliverance!

'Ask now of the days that are past, which were before thee, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and ask from the one side of heaven unto the other, whether there hath been any such thing as this great thing is, or hath been

heard like it? Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live? Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the Lord your God hath done for you in Egypt before your eyes? Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the Lord he is God; that there is none beside him.'

The history of a people to whom such words could be addressed in real and potent truth, must of necessity contain many things which to those who ignore their heaven-appointed destiny, will seem strange and mythical, though they be, verily and essentially, *facts*.

On a careful consideration of the passage, and keeping in mind that I am reading an inspired book, I do not see any overwhelming evidence which should induce me to reject the traditional view of the meaning of the author. I think that the context is not so undoubtedly of a poetical form, as to make me conclude for certain that it is an extract or quotation; and I find a reasonable meaning for the supposed reference to the book of Jasher, which reference seems to have been one chief ground for the supposition that the passage is poetical. Having arrived at this point, I think I see that even if it be a quotation, there is such a positive assertion and recognition of the *fact* by the

inspired writer that I cannot suppose it a figure of speech.

At the same time, after what I have said before on the subject of miracles, I am not afraid to confess that some of the difficulties in the way of a literal understanding of the text have great weight, and though for my own part I come to the conclusion that we have here the record of a miracle¹, I should not consider such persuasion *necessary*, or that one who came to a different conclusion had not some show of reason for his opinion; but it is of importance, that we do not reject the miraculous account, *because* it is miraculous; that we do not bring in as an argument against it, the presumption which is alleged against any suspension of the laws of nature.

There is a vast difference between rejecting the idea of miracles altogether, and rejecting in a particular part of the Bible the common interpretation. If in the verses we are considering, we do not find that a miraculous event is recorded, *cadit quæstio*, we shall not have to argue the general question of miracles in order to maintain the text; because we conclude that none is here reported or related. But if we arrive at the

¹ *Mr. Trench*, in his work on the *Miracles*, p. 38, in enumerating the miracles of the Old Testament which are concerned with external nature, does not notice this remarkable case. I was at first led from thence to conclude that he had adopted the view which regards it as a poetical figure; but in p. 56 he speaks of the miracle as if he understood it literally. The references are to the 3rd edition.

opposite conclusion, the only remaining enquiry of any importance (and that of very inferior importance) is, *how* the miracle was wrought.

Before, however, we proceed to this, let us remember that the view of miracles which we endeavoured to refute in the last Lecture, would have come in here as an argument. It would lead a disputant to say, You allow that the meaning of the passage is not with absolute certainty what the popular interpretation has made it; we now press you with the argument derived from the immutability of natural laws against the miracle, and then we feel sure that you must give it up.

If we have set aside the argument derived from the immutability of the laws of nature, we are now in this position: that when we find a suspension of these laws asserted in the Scriptures we are in no degree staggered by it. The fact is not one which, in itself, comes as a difficulty to be got over or explained away, if possible; and therefore there is no real advantage gained by those who come to the conclusion that the author of the Book of Joshua does not here assert a miracle, but speaks poetically. Some men seem to think that the explaining away a miracle is a *gain*. I am not sure but that it would, in such a case as this, be a *loss*.

Assuming the preservation and separation of the Jews as a peculiar people by the special providence of Almighty God, which is the main end

of His recorded ways towards them, we think that their establishment in the land of Canaan must be taken as one of the principal points in their history. It was also one which required some distinctive mark of God's approbation and designation, in order to distinguish it from the settlement of any other tribe. There were peculiar promises to their progenitor Abraham preserved in the memory of his descendants; faith in which is mentioned by S. Paul as the proof of Joseph's confidence in the Covenant. Such a tradition, sanctioned by an inspired Apostle, must be undoubtedly true; but we reasonably look for some contemporary confirmation of this truth by some undeniable proof, because we find that almost all ancient tribes in their new settlement pretended, as in the case of the great Dorian migration, that they had a claim to the land by ancient possession or right. It does, then, seem reasonable to require of the history of the Jews that it should record proofs of God's attesting openly, by manifest tokens, the asserted claim of their leader, that the Lord fought for Israel. We desiderate rather, that if the Jews are so singular a race, and their history is so important to the great end—the regeneration and redemption of man—the great landmarks in their history should bear traces of this special designation; should have a visible stamp put upon them by which all men might know their specialty, and that their fortunes and their history

should be thereby distinguished in some signal manner from the fortunes and the history of other nations.

So far, then, from coming to the Jewish history with a prejudice against all miraculous accounts, I come to it with a prejudice in their favour, and with a demand for them. Regarding only internal evidence, a narrative about any other people becomes less credible when miraculous events are paraded; but a narrative of the history of the Jews is less credible when such events are wanting. If informed that the nation was preserved for a particular purpose connected with the destinies of the human race, then we ask, how are we to know this? There is no other way, it seems to me, in which we can possibly answer the question, than by finding in the history of this people marks of God's special interference, to preserve them, to regulate their progress, to convince the surrounding nations of the fact that they were God's own.

We have, in the narrative, the constant assertion that the Lord fought for Israel. Moses, in the Book of Deuteronomy, tells them that it should be so: 'The Lord your God goeth before you: he shall fight for you according to all that he did for you in Egypt.' God specially provided that they should know that it was not their own arm that helped them, but His right hand and His arm, and the help of his countenance. When they went up against His command, and fought against

the Amalekites, they were discomfited, because the ark of God departed not out of the camp.

Is the whole of this history a fable? Are we to give up all the accounts of God's dealings with this people? Are we to believe that the whole is an imposture? Surely there is no halting-place between two opinions in such a matter as this. Either God did, by signs and wonders, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched-out arm, interfere to bring the people through the wilderness and into the land of Canaan, or the whole must be a cunningly devised fable. And if, through His special providence, God wrought all these things, what would be the proof of such protection but certain signs which might convince them that the Author of Nature was their God; signs which should be done in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, declaring, with unmistakable certainty, that God was among them of a truth?

If the Jews were God's people, and the Bible is a book of truth—the inspired Word of God—then we ought to look in its pages for the proofs of those things—proofs given by God both to them and to us. And thus we shall be more inclined, in a place like that we are considering, to take the literal meaning as true, because we can clearly see the want of a sign; and, I must repeat what I urged in my last Lecture, that the utter destruction of the Canaanite, if commanded by the God of mercy and truth, requires some open demonstration from Him of its being commanded; and

the pious Israelite could not have reconciled his idea of God's mercy and lovingkindness with such a command, unless the evidence were overwhelming.

As to the manner in which the visible appearance alluded to was brought about, we must either suppose a suspension of the Earth's rotation for twenty-four hours, and of the centrifugal force resulting therefrom; which supposition the fact that the Moon was stayed seems to countenance; for as the Sun remained to give light, there was no necessity for the suspension of the Moon's course, or for any mention whatever of the Moon¹; *or*, we may suppose that some meteoric appearance was seen, which produced to all the inhabitants of that land the effect of the prolongation of the day.

To the first supposition it is objected, that such a convulsion of the system could hardly fail to have been an object of remark and record; and that from ancient accounts of eclipses it has been found that the length of the day is invariable, with remarkable precision.

But it must be replied, that there *are* dim traces of some disturbance of the solar day, among the uncertain legends of ancient history. Herodotus relates one which was told him by the Egyptian priests, of this disturbance of the Sun's motions, and expressly adds, that no effect was produced on the natural productions of the earth by this strange perturbation. And a similar story

¹ See *Alber's Commentary*, Vol. III. p. 362. *Pesthini*.

is told in the *Politicus* of Plato¹. These fables being found both in Egypt and in Greece, little as they are worth, yet refute the charge of the entire want of traditional knowledge of an interference with the Sun's daily motions. And in the second place, the calculation of the invariable length of the mean solar day, from observation of ancient eclipses, only goes back to 720 B.C., and therefore does not in the least reach the case².

It must stand or fall on the credit of the Bible, if we arrive at the conclusion, that the words actually and really point to a miracle. That such suspension of the Earth's rotation can be effected by the Omnipotent Author of the universe, admits of no doubt. That it is not improbable that God should work a miracle by the hands of his servant Joshua, is also a proposition that admits of no doubt with those who believe in the special designation of the Israelitish nation. That the present occasion was one which called for some signal display of God's approval, we have also endeavoured to shew. The only remaining difficulty, that the consequences of the suspension of the earth's rotation would be so serious as to make it improbable that *such* a miracle should be wrought, we meet by an alternative; either by observing that the prevention of any remote consequences may be involved in the actual interference, foreseen by Almighty wisdom,

¹ *Herodotus*, II. 142. *Plato, Polit.* p. 269, A. See Appendix.

² *Poisson, Traité de Mécanique*, Vol. II. p. 196.

and prevented by Almighty power ; or the whole visible appearance may have been meteoric, and not extended to the motions of the system. But, to my own judgment, the former reply is the most satisfactory.

Disjoin the investigation from any idea of miracles being difficulties, and there seems no reason why we should not understand the narrative literally, when we have come to the conclusion that it is the intention of the author to relate a *fact*.

The real source of hesitation is the persuasion men force upon their minds, that it is improbable God should suspend the laws of nature, and therefore emanates from the general scepticism which it is the object of a Revelation to destroy. That God now governs the world, is the first lesson that the sinner, who has been ignorant of Him, must learn. And though he may be convinced of this by the ordinary operations of the Creator and Ruler of the universe, yet he admits it only in a general sense, acquiescing too often inconsiderately in such a belief of the truth as is almost consistent with the notions of Epicurus.

But if it please God further to reveal to him the Gospel, and he believes in the wonderful mysteries of the Incarnation and the Atonement, then his conviction of the love of God for human kind must have become such that no Divine interposition which has reference to this great de-

sign, can any longer seem improbable or incredible. And the temporary interference with the physical laws of the universe which first staggered him, shrinks into insignificance, when he remembers the mighty work which was wrought upon the earth—that great mystery of godliness of which all God's spiritual creatures, and all the ranks of the heavenly intelligences, had been in expectation,—when 'the Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us,' and the redemption of man was accomplished with circumstances that caused even the convulsion of inanimate creation.

With this in our minds, can any thing be too hard for the Lord? Is any exhibition of sovereign power incredible or improbable when for us, in this small planet, unobservable by myriads of the host of heaven, so transcendent a salvation has been wrought?

When these thoughts press upon me, I feel that it is in the highest degree unworthy of Christians, to question whether or no there be inherent improbability in those signs and wonders which have been chronicled in the Word of God. And if the Oracles of life eternal speak to me of extraordinary proofs which God gave of His power and His care in ages past, I recognize with awe the finger of God; I put away from me, with zealous indignation, any presumptuous ideas that His own laws should restrain Him from such demonstrations of His care for man.

On the contrary, it seems to me the most

consoling and comforting of doctrines, that God, by incorporating us into the body of His Son, has lifted us up far above all the visible creation; that all this universe may find its doom, while the faithful Christian shall remain; and that we rest upon words which cannot perish, when we trust in the teaching of God as it comes to us in the Bible. He in whom 'we live, and move, and have our being,' has told us of a destiny in store for us, which shall endure throughout the ages of ages; and when all these things shall be dissolved, this promise shall stand firm and lasting as the throne of God itself:

'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.'

LECTURE VIII.

Of the Title—Son of God.

Our Lord's justification of His assumption of it.

General Unitarian objection to our Lord's special claim.

His humiliation considered as an argument for His Divinity.

Of His being in the form of God.—The visible appearances of the Divinity before the Incarnation.

Of His not grasping His full honours when He had to undertake the Redemption of man.

Of His emptying Himself of His glory.

Of His taking the form of a servant.

Of His adopting human nature.

Of His humiliation as man.—Importance of this consideration, how Christ set aside those feelings which we are apt to consider undeserving of blame.—His submission to injurious treatment, and undeserved suspicions.

Of His humbling Himself unto death—the chief evil.

Recapitulation.

Application of the Scriptural account of Christ's humiliation to the question of His Divinity.

Difference between this account, and what we might have expected, in the case of a distinguished teacher of a sublime morality.

The highest office to which a man can be called is represented in our Saviour's case as humiliation.

Practical appeal to the consciences of all who strive against sin.

The deliverance of men from the *bands* of sin and sinful habits, only to be accomplished by a Divine Power.

PHILIPPIANS II. 6—8.

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.

THAT our Lord Jesus Christ is proclaimed to us in Holy Scripture as the Son of God, is undoubted; but the meaning of the words some men have endeavoured to involve in obscurity.

The Church has maintained that our Lord was a Divine person, an emanation from the Father, from everlasting. There are, however, certain passages in the Bible in which the title 'Son of God' is applied to others besides Christ. The angels are called 'Sons of God;' Adam is called the 'Son of God;' Christians are called 'Sons of God.' And there are also places where our Lord seems to justify his own assumption of the designation, on grounds which might lead us to infer that he made no higher claim than what was conceded to ancient prophets. When the Jews accused him of blasphemy because he had made himself God, Jesus answered them, 'Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are Gods? If he called them Gods unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world,

Thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God?’

The portion of the Old Testament to which our Saviour is supposed to refer, is the 82nd Psalm, an address to the judges of Israel by Asaph. He calls upon them to remember whose authority they have, and therefore to act with perfect equity; and reminds them that, though, as wielding this authority, they had been called Gods, yet they must also die and perish, like all other princes, and themselves be judged by the Judge of all the earth.

Our Lord then justifies his claim to be the Son of God, on grounds lower than what we might expect at first; but on examining the succeeding words, we see that He does claim a superior position to these judges, inasmuch as he speaks of himself as *sanctified and sent into the world*; which are terms implying at any rate something singular, and removed from the case of ordinary men.

But objectors go further than this, and urge us with the fact that the idea of ‘Sons of God’ is a universal one, in all mythologies; and that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament in this respect agree with the universal instinct of mankind, and hence that it is probable that Christ only proclaimed himself as *a* ‘Son of God,’ and not *the* ‘Son of God;’ and then they would reckon Him indeed as one of the great benefactors to mankind, perhaps the chief; but will not allow that there is any claim made in the Bible for his

partaking of the power of the Godhead, or any ground to justify the Church in speaking of Him as very God.

It seems to me that this Unitarian view may be answered in the most satisfactory manner when we consider what the New Testament records of the *humiliation* of Christ. And inasmuch as this subject is one which ought to have a practical effect upon ourselves, I have selected the text as a passage requiring some elucidation, and as subservient to the great object of defending this stronghold of the Christian faith,—that Christ is very and eternal God.

The *general* teaching of Holy Scripture on these important points is what we want to lay hold of in order to work firm conviction in men's minds. We should keep this in view rather than endeavour to build up important conclusions on verbal criticisms of individual texts.

Thus I consider it a strong argument to allege in favour of the eternal and divine Sonship of Christ, that the Bible represents his life on earth as a *humiliation*, as an abdication of a higher position rightly held, for a particular object: and in recalling what the Scriptures teach us generally on this subject, we shall not fail to notice how strangely and incomprehensibly the Divine records must speak on the matter, to those who will not recognize in the Saviour any nature superior to our own in its essence, even when they allow to the utmost his individual and personal superiority among the sons of men.

Thus, the apostle speaks of our Lord Jesus Christ as '*being in the form of God.*'

He tells us that with this being '*he thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation.*'

That he became '*a servant.*'

That he took man's nature.

That '*as a man he humbled himself.*'

That '*he became obedient unto death.*'

That this death was '*even the death of the cross.*'

These are so many points requiring special consideration. And in speaking of this mystery, I wish to use the theological language of the orthodox faith, setting forth by the light of Holy Scripture, what IT teaches us, and so influencing the minds of the faithful to hold fast by this article of their creed.

First. Christ was '*in the form of God.*'

This was previous to his humiliation. We are then to enquire what is meant by being in '*the form of God.*' From the subsequent expression, '*form of a servant,*' it has been concluded, analogically, that as Christ really and truly was '*a servant,*' and also was really and truly '*a man*', the expressions '*in the form of,*' and '*in the likeness of*²,' mean the very thing itself. If Christ really was a servant, and is said to have taken the form

¹ The force of the antithesis is well pointed out by Dr Wells.

² See Hammond *in loco* who quotes Phavorinus as most observable for the explication of this place. Of θέμις and γαῖα he quotes the verse of Æschylus, πολλῶν ὀνομάτων μορφή μία, and says μορφή τὸ καθ' ἑαυτὸν ὄν καὶ κοινωνίας ἐτέρου εἰς τὸ εἶναι οὐ δεόμενον and

of a servant, so when he is said to have been 'in the form of God,' must we conclude that he was really and truly God. In this case the word '*form*' is taken as equivalent to *being*, or *essence*, and the expression 'being in the form of God,' is taken to mean being essentially and truly God. But a more direct and literal interpretation of the words would be as follows: Before his humiliation and in his pre-existent state, Christ, the Word of God, who was with God in the beginning, manifested himself to men in terrible majesty; clothed with light, speaking out of the midst of the fire, and attended with thousand times ten thousand angels. We know that on some occasions the Divine presence which appeared to the patriarchs and prophets was really our Lord Jesus Christ. Christ himself says that he had appeared unto Abraham. In the book of Numbers and in Exodus¹ we are told that the Israelites tempted God, saying, 'Is the Lord among us, or is he not?' and they were punished for their unbelief by being destroyed by serpents. S. Paul, in the 1st Epistle

again, *μορφή κυρίως ἢ οὐσία*, quoting this place as meaning *ἐν οὐσίᾳ Θεοῦ γινωσκόμενος*.

He also quotes Theophylact, *μορφή γὰρ Θεοῦ ἢ οὐσία λέγεται*.

Burton also adopts this, quoting Josephus as using *μορφή* to signify the *nature* of God, in asserting that the heathens deified the worst passions of the mind: he uses the phrase *εἰς Θεοῦ φύσιν καὶ μορφήν ἀνέπλασαν*. *Contr. Apion.* ii. He also calls God *μορφήν τε καὶ μέγεθος ἡμῶν ἄφατος*. See Appendix II.

Whitby however seems to me to argue most conclusively that *μορφή* means *condition*, and not *essence*.

¹ Exod. xvii. 7; Numb. xxi. 6.

to the Corinthians, tells us that ‘they tempted CHRIST, and were destroyed of serpents¹.’ Christ therefore in His Divine nature was present with them in the wilderness, and was tempted by them. The angel promised by God to lead the people, and keep them in the way, was one of whom he warns them to beware in the words, ‘He will not pardon your transgressions; for my name is in him.’ To this angel then is ascribed the power of remitting sins, which belongs only to that God against whom they were committed. *God’s presence*, moreover, was promised to lead the children of Israel; without this Moses prayed that they might not go at all, and upon it he relied to convince the people of his Divine mission.

Moreover, when Isaiah saw the Lord in the temple, in glorious majesty, we are told that it was Christ whom he saw in glory². All these records have led to the belief that the Divine Being has appeared in former times in a visible shape, only as the Word of God; that the wonderful manifestations which God vouchsafed of old to the chosen few, were really appearances of the Divine Son, and that in this sense Christ was ‘in the form of God:’ viz. that whenever by any visible or tangible appearance the Deity was pleased to reveal himself in time of old, it was the Son who appeared, but appeared *as God*, surrounded with light unapproachable; as to Daniel, ‘in a throne

¹ See *Whitby’s* Note on 1 Cor. x. 9.

² Isai. vi., and S. John xii. 41.

like fiery flame, and his wheels like burning fire; or as to the children of Israel, when 'the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire upon the mountain;' or surrounded by a multitude of the heavenly host. To this glory our Lord himself may allude when he prays to the Father; 'Now, O Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was¹.' When then S. Paul says that our Lord Jesus Christ was 'in the form of God,' he may mean that heretofore all manifestations of the Son were as Divine—in the form, appearance, and with the attendant majesty of God Almighty.

And this is strengthened by the truth, that since his humiliation Christ has been 'received up into glory' again; and so appeared to S. Stephen when standing at the high priest's bar; to S. Paul, at his conversion, a light 'above the brightness of the sun,' dazzling his eyes for a time, until miraculously restored. So he appeared to S. John in Patmos; and thus is he also to appear before the assembled worlds, 'in the glory of His Father, with His holy angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance.'

Between these two periods, in that of his humiliation, this bright overwhelming Divine Majesty is veiled, the 'form' of God being laid aside,

¹ And moreover an ancient lexicographer informs us that the word here translated *being* more properly means *pre-existing*.

Τὸ ὑπάρχειν οὐχ ἀπλῶς τὸ εἶναι σημαίνει, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάλαι εἶναι καὶ ΠΡΟΕΙΝΑΙ, φθάνειν.—*Suidas, Ed. Kust. Vol. III. p. 532.* Quoted by *Bp. Middleton.*

for that of a weak and perishing man. Let us take then these first words as asserting that heretofore Christ had manifested Himself to mankind only in His Divine character, ‘in the form of God.’

We next come to the words ‘*he thought it not robbery to be equal with God*’¹. The words contain a form of expression unusual in the New Testament; but notwithstanding there are many instances in later Greek writers where it occurs, from which the meaning can be ascertained without uncertainty. Carrying on the idea which we have adopted in the preceding words, it will signify that though Christ in his former appearances ever represented Himself in the form and likeness of God, yet coming now into the world for the salvation of mankind, He did not covet or desire to appear in that majestic splendour and authority, but rather chose to come in the similitude of a servant, and in the form of a man.

The words, as they are read in the English Version, seem to imply *a claim* made by our Lord to be equal with God; but this idea of *a claim*, is foreign to the idea conveyed by the Greek words. It is asserted and assumed in the preceding words, ‘being in the form of God,’ that our Lord was really and truly Divine, and that he manifested himself as such; but having done so, he did not deem that the work of redemption was one on which he should assert his Divine right and na-

¹ οὐχ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεῷ.

ture; he did not judge it fitting that his Divinity should be made manifest. Though at times during his ministry he did, in plain and positive assertion, teach that *God was his own or proper Father*, 'making himself equal with God,' yet the general description of his manifested character on earth is to be read in that sad record of the prophet, 'a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief,' 'oppressed,' and 'afflicted,' 'despised and rejected of men.' And the words translated 'he thought it not robbery to be equal with God,' convey to us that it was part of the Divine counsels that in the act of man's regeneration and restoration, the divinity of the Son of God should not be openly and plainly set forth, but that the glory of the Divine essence should be veiled in human flesh. While yet he was 'the brightness of his' Father's 'glory,' and 'the express image of his person,' and 'upheld all things by the word of his power,' 'being in the form of God,' he laid aside his glory, and was made flesh; he was content for a while to forego the honour and power of God, having determined that his equality with the Father was not now to be asserted¹. The

¹ ἄρπαγμὸν ἠγήσατο, he coveted earnestly.

ἄρπαγμα ποιεῖν τὴν ξυντυχίαν, to snatch at the occasion.

οὐκ ἔρμαιον οὔτε ἄρπαγμα ἠγείται τὸ πρᾶγμα, he does not look upon this as a great offer, or a thing greatly desirable.—*Heliodorus*, Lib. vii. pp. 322, 340.

ἄρπαγμα ἠγείσθαι, *rem optatam persequi, et studiosissime occupare.*—*Semidius*.

Bp. Middleton quotes *Greg. Naz.* Vol. i. p. 377, praising *S. Athanasius*: οὐ γὰρ ὁμοῦ τε καταλαμβάνει τὸν θρόνον, ὥσπερ οἱ

expression made use of, which is translated, ‘he thought it no robbery,’ when illustrated by a similar use in other writers, teaches us that the true meaning is such as has been here represented. It therefore asserts, that in the eternal counsels of God it had been determined that at this time when human redemption was to be achieved, the equality of the Father and the Son should not be plainly asserted, the Son of God should not in his appearance on earth arrogate his full and undoubted honours, but should for a time, and till the work was finished which His Father had given Him to do, be content to set aside His Divine prerogatives, and enter upon the lowly condition of a servant.

‘He made himself of no reputation.’ Some would translate this, he emptied himself¹, viz. of his glory; but the use of the word, though it does certainly literally mean this, is quite in accordance with the Bible version, ‘he made himself of no reputation,’ i.e. he underwent a diminution, lessened himself; it is the full explanation of the preceding phrase, and the consequence of the same. He determined not to put forth his Divine Majesty, on the contrary, he made Himself void of all such supernatural honour.

This emptying of Himself in respect of His great power and glory, may also have reference

τυραννίδα τινὰ ἢ κληρονομίαν παρὰ δόξαν ἈΡΗΙΑΣΑΝΤΕΣ, καὶ ὑβρίζει διὰ τὸν κόρον. See Appendix II.

¹ κενώω, to lessen, or diminish. ἐκένωσε, he vilified himself, he lessened himself, he humbled himself.

to what we are told in the Gospel of the submission of the will of Christ to that of the Godhead. Where we must evidently understand that the will of Christ, *as man*, was made subject to the will of the Almighty Father, or to His own Divine *will*. Our Lord himself refers to this antagonism and subjection of the human nature to the Divine, when he says, 'I came not to fulfil mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.' 'I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.' My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work: thus making Himself as man 'of no reputation,' as regards the Divine Being.

The text goes on to bring before us special circumstances in the steps of Christ's humiliation. Thus we get the continuation of the previous idea of the subjection of Christ's human will.

'*He took upon Him the form of a servant.*' He was the servant of God, and therefore obedient to the will of God. Isaiah speaks of Him thus: 'Behold my servant, whom I uphold,' which is God's announcement of the coming of Christ to the world; and again, 'Behold, MY SERVANT shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted, and extolled very high.' 'By his knowledge shall MY righteous SERVANT justify many.' Christ therefore came into the world as the servant of God, subject in His human nature to the Divine will. But not only as a servant in respect of His Father,

but he became a man, and 'as a man he humbled himself;' for He was amongst His disciples 'as one that serveth.' He tells them that He came 'not to be ministered unto, but to minister;' and S. Paul, 'though he were a son, yet learned he OBEDIENCE by the things which he suffered.'

Christ's humiliation, however, would be but faintly expressed by this first act. He might have been described as in the form of a servant if he had taken the nature of angels, for 'are not they all ministering spirits,' and the servants of the most High God? But 'he took not hold of angels,' He did not descend from the highest of all conditions to this angelic state. Who can tell the distance that intervenes between the Deity and these bright spirits? 'He chargeth even his angels with folly'—those angels which 'excel in power.' Even such an abasement of Himself would far exceed any estimate which we can form; but far more than this, Christ was made 'in the likeness of man.'

This is the great mystery of Godliness, that the 'Word was made FLESH.' God sent His own Son 'in the likeness of SINFUL FLESH,' *to be a partaker of FLESH AND BLOOD*, because the children are partakers thereof. 'Thou madest him,' saith the Psalmist, 'lower than the angels,' even a man, 'born of a woman,' 'born under the law.' Conceive this strange and wonderful dispensation. God the everlasting Son, who had pre-existed in the outward majesty and form of God,

to become man, to partake of our infirmities, to undergo temptation, to suffer hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness. He had not where to lay his head, was weary and exhausted, wept at the grave of Lazarus, and groaned at the contemplation of the last bitter conflict with evil. In all things like unto us, 'sin only excepted.'

But even this was not enough; for as a man Christ humbled Himself. David speaking prophetically in the character of Christ, says: 'I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.' And as such the prophet, speaking in the name of the people, says, 'he was despised, and we esteemed him not,' 'his own received him not.' His condition was not that of a man had in reputation, of one who enjoyed such consideration as falls to the lot of the world's heroes. On the contrary, he was, *as a man*, one who was humbled. We have mentioned already his sharing in the *common* sorrows, the *common* weaknesses, the *common* wants of humanity; but there was more than all this. And when we remember that Christ is propounded to us as an example, that we, with all mankind, should follow the example of His great humility, it will be well for us to consider some points in which worldly considerations weigh with us that we may see the depth and the strength of Christ's humiliation. The words already explained 'he made himself of no reputation,' here again claim our attention. The work which Christ had come to

perform was one which engaged the contemplation of angels, and beatified prophets, and kings. It was a work that might well have challenged the profound obedience and reverence of all created things, of all the human tribes who then walked the earth. We know that when God brought the First-begotten Son into the world he said, 'Let all the angels of God worship him;' and if, when become man, God had commanded the universal prostration and obedience of all men; had ordained, for Christ, a reception in the world in harmony with His great design, we should not have wondered at such a subjection; we should rather have hailed it, as the Divine testimony to the established but hidden Deity of our Saviour. But how different was Christ's appearance on earth! Even 'as a man he humbled himself.' WE desire reputation, WE wish our virtues to be known, and at least allowed, if not commended. But WE do also seek men's commendation. If poor, we can even put on a pride in our poverty. The cynic would not have thought his pretended contempt of public opinion of any moment, if it had not procured for him credit and estimation. A voluntary humility and poverty has often covered much pride and boasting. The satirist holds up to scorn the ancient heathen maxim, 'Of what use is knowledge unless others know you to be wise¹?' The estimation in which we are held by our fellow-men is never a matter of indifference to

¹ Scire tuum nihil est, nisi te scire hoc sciat alter.—*Pers.* I. 27.

us; and a man's reputation, in every position in life, is a thing to which he is keenly sensitive. Now Christ humbled himself in THIS respect. His benevolence was attributed to an evil motive. When he miraculously healed the sick, it was attributed to the power of evil spirits. When he claimed to be heard in self-defence, he was taunted with bearing witness to himself; and therefore subjected to the inference that his witness was not true. If he prevailed at all in convincing the people that his mission was from God, he was suspected of seditious designs against the Roman power. After feeding the multitude in the desert, he perceived that they sought him from no desire to hear the Word of God; but from selfish calculation on his omnipotent beneficence. None gave him credit for having a high and Divine mission, 'neither did his brethren believe on him.' Those who were his nearest and most faithful attendants forsook him in the hour of trial. He had not the *ordinary* consolations of friendship or sympathy when in trouble; 'they all forsook him.' He patiently submitted to the petulant questioning of Pharisees, the sneering objections of the Sadducee, the crafty trickery of the Herodians; he allowed the perjured witnesses to testify against him without remonstrance, endured the sarcastic mockery of Pilate who disbelieved in *all* truth, and in the agonies of death was insulted by His enemies and mocked by the impenitent thief. Surely, remembering all these

things, and many other circumstances of his painful and enduring life, we shall see how, *as a man*, he humbled himself:—we shall remember, that if WE would take Him as our pattern, we have much to learn in the way of setting light by human opinions, in the way of patient endurance of contradiction, in the way of submission to harsh, injurious, unfounded suspicions, and unjust treatment; for even Christ humbled himself *as a man*, and left us an example which is far beyond any that the annals of human kind can supply. Most especially would I dwell upon this because it is the enduring grief WHEN SUFFERING WRONGFULLY, that is ‘thankworthy.’ ‘What profit is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye take it patiently?’ Is not the common feeling of mankind very different from what S. Paul commends? We say, generally, under circumstances of difficulty and mortification, ‘I suppose I must submit, for it is my own fault.’ This submission and humility is not *Christian*. It is not submission to merited chastisement that portends a Christian spirit; it is the enduring *undeserved* ills, submission to false accusation without murmuring, the endurance of contradiction by the vile and worthless without retort; and patient waiting for such deliverance as God may be pleased to send. Though of the royal line of David, Christ submitted to be called a *Nazarene*. He did not assert his claim, which would at once have frustrated the injurious inference drawn

from his being reputed of Galilee, 'out of which no prophet' was to arise. When the false witnesses testified of him that he had spoken lightly of the temple, in saying that if it were destroyed, he would raise it again 'in three days,' he did not rebel against the false construction put upon his words. These are instances of that spirit which so fully verified the prophetic anticipations, and so truly justify the apostolic descriptions of Christ's humiliation as a man, *that* humbling and beating down the feelings which though apparently (and even generally considered) unblameable, yet give rise to pride and petulance of spirit, and so are antagonistic to the perfect Christian character. Let this suffice for a consideration of the words, 'as a man he humbled himself.'

But Christ humbled himself 'unto death.' Death, that mysterious, sudden, complete change;—mortality, the being subject to death, is the great evil of man. Cold, pale death! on it poets have exhausted their imagery, it is the sum of all that we can figure to ourselves most desolate, most hopeless. Watch the couch of a dying friend; so long as the eye shews signs of animation, or the pulse flutters, or the limbs quiver, there is life, there is hope, there is a sympathy between us and the being who lies before us; but in a few seconds what a change! when the spirit has fled, how altered the features, how strange the expression! What a change also in our feelings! The

warm affection which we felt gives way to an awful feeling of reverence. Respect to the dead body for the sake of what it once was, is the predominant feeling¹. It is no longer the tender sympathy and anxiety for a suffering friend. And soon we are glad to part from this memorial of the departed, for it is painfully evident that no longer is the lost one there. ‘Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.’ This breaking down of the tenement of the soul, the dissolution of that which once was so fair to look upon, the graceful form which attracted the admiration of all beholders, or the crumbling away of the arm which once wielded the sceptre of a great empire, the silencing of the voice which swayed the destinies of millions—all this is a hard and bitter thing to bear and reflect upon—this consequence of sin—mortality. Yet even this our Lord under-

¹ It is in anticipation of the *resurrection* of the body, that Prudentius supposes the honour is paid to the dead.

Venient cito sæcula, cum jam
Socius calor ossa revisat,
Animataque sanguine vivo
Habitacula pristina gestet.

Quæ pigra cadavera pridem
Tumulis putrefacta jacebant,
Volucres rapiuntur in auras,
Animas comitata priores.

Hinc maxima cura sepulcris
Impenditur, hinc resolutos
Honor ultimus accipit artus,
Et funeris ambitus ornat.

Aurelii Prudentii Kathemerinon.

Hymnus in Exequiis. p. 110.

went. He was 'obedient unto death,' that he might deliver us from the bondage of the fear of death; that he might reveal to us resurrection and immortality, the restoration of the body to an incorrupt and glorified existence, eternal in the heavens. 'He humbled himself,' for *these* great ends, and to make an atonement for our sins, 'even unto death;' and lastly, even in this submission to the greatest ill, he found a means of deepening the humiliation of his human nature. It was 'even the death of the cross.' He died as a criminal, in the company of the vilest of malefactors, an object of derision and scornful insult. So that we see in this the completion of the deep humiliation of our Lord *as man*.

I will now resume what we have said in amplification of the text. In order to enforce upon us the duty of humility and self-abasement, to destroy all high thoughts and those imaginations which exalt themselves against and impede the progress of Divine truth in our souls, the apostle bids us consider our blessed Lord, who though he had previously existed 'in the form of God,' and displayed himself to men on many occasions in terrible majesty, clothed with light, surrounded by the host of heaven, and with the visible external signs of universal sovereignty, did not think that his equality with the Almighty Father should be paraded before the sons of men, when their redemption was to be achieved; he would not *then* ride forth, as he shall hereafter, 'conquering and

to conquer,' with all his Father's glory, which he had 'before the world was;' but he 'made himself of no reputation,' laid aside this glory, and took upon him 'the form of a servant.' Moreover, of all the subjected powers, he chose not angel's form, but one still lower, that of man; and was 'found in the likeness of men.' In this depressed and lowly condition he sought yet further to humble himself, and set before us an example of humility; for 'as a man he humbled himself,' he took a despised position among men, and finally, when he underwent the common lot of mankind, and became a tenant of the tomb, he still further submitted to the most injurious treatment at the hands of his creatures, chose an ignominious and cruel death, and so closed the scene of a self-abasement unparalleled.

Now let us consider this with respect to the doctrine of Christ's eternal Sonship, and see how it bears upon that difficulty with which we set out.

The question is, whether He of whom these things were written, is spoken of as an ordinary mortal man, or whether He is clearly indicated to be of a nature superior to ours. Surely it must be admitted that we have two distinct stages of humiliation here pointed out: the *greater*, when, from some state of superiority, Christ condescended to become man; and the next, wherein, as a man, he was self-depressed. The latter is compatible with the Unitarian view to a certain

extent, but the former certainly not. I say only to a certain extent, because Christ is represented in Scripture as voluntarily laying down his life, and as declaring not only that he had power to lay down his life, but, still more incomprehensibly if he be not Divine, as having power to resume His life, after he had laid it down. And therefore remembering this, we must not allow that Christ's death is to be taken as an ordinary death: the humiliation involved in such an act as death, on the part of one who of himself asserted such a wonderful power, is a humiliation far beyond what we can conceive of any the most exalted of men; so that we ought not to think of the persecutions and trials of other teachers of morality and virtue, and compare them with the sufferings of our Saviour, in order to diminish what has been supposed to be the peculiar humiliation in His case. These things, even if they approach in some degree the bitterness of soul which, as man, our Lord must have experienced, have yet but little in common with it. In reality, as far as their excelling in patience and virtue under adverse circumstances goes, they were enjoying a reward; for no one can doubt, that the inward testimony of conscience in such men must be a source of happiness, and make them feel *elevation* of soul, though their temporal circumstances are depressing; but in the case of our Saviour this is represented as the contrary. His life, in the flesh, even while shewing forth all the graces of that Spirit, which

was poured out upon Him without measure, is represented as a constraint, a condescension, a setting forth of himself in a manner inferior to what he actually was. The highest pitch of excellence to which man can rise, corresponds, in our Saviour's case, to something far ABOVE mankind, veiled and lowered DOWN till we can comprehend it. Earth and heaven join by Christ's condescension, not only by his assumption and elevation. This is something different from any idea of his being a Son of God among many; and though it is true that in the new creation, men are begotten again of the Spirit, and therefore share the Divine nature, yet this fact is one which it seems impossible to conceive unless we have the idea of the condescension of the Divinity to bridge over the vast gulf that cuts us off from the throne of God. It seems plainly incredible that any mortal should of his own power ascend to the higher sphere of being; but credible, though wonderful, that the Divine should descend to the lower sphere. The whole doctrine of Christ's humiliation for the exaltation of the redeemed, is one vastly more credible, and more reasonable, than that which aims at shewing an upward tendency in man, which has no limit but the Deity. The apotheosis of heroes, though the idea be noble, is the taking up of some inferior qualities unfit for the perfect purity and happiness of heaven; but the letting down the chain to earth that we may seize upon it, and thus be

drawn up, and not ascend by our own power, is one more suited to our frail and weak nature.

Such an idea is that which the Bible gives us. It represents One coming down from heaven, having celestial authority, having *in Himself* Life, that life which He came to bestow. And the superiority of this Being, whose errand upon earth was so full of love and condescension, is set forth to us by emphatic declarations of His service in this matter being an act of deep humiliation. This philanthropy, outweighing all which Grecian fancy attributed to Prometheus, the type of goodwill to mankind, as much as the ocean outweighs the dew-drops, is by the inspired Apostle represented to us as an assumption of an inferior, depressed, and lowly office.

Can such expressions, can such constant teachings, admit of the supposition that our Lord was no more than some highly-gifted son of man? or is not the whole system contrary to such an hypothesis, and suggestive of the truth that man is unable to pass the boundary that hems him in, and that it required a Divine Being to interpose to break the bonds, and lead the way upwards to the abodes of purity and power.

And lastly, to confirm the scriptural notion of a Divine Deliverer, we will but appeal to the consciences of all who feel the burden of sin, and its enthralling power. The scriptural teaching as the church receives it, of a Divine Redeemer, and of the buying out of mankind from under a

curse, involves the application of this Divine operation to each man who is to be saved; and this we are taught is the office of a Divine agent, the Holy Ghost. The whole work must be of God. Man's duty is to seek to have the work wrought in him, and to bend to the celestial influence, to remove all impediments to the free course of God's Spirit, and with the strength imparted to him already, to endeavour as much as possible to struggle against the tempter, that he may verify the promise, 'To him that hath shall be given.'

I ask you, my brethren, who are striving, who are now at war with those evil tendencies which in all of us have to be overcome, if you do not derive from your own consciousness a conviction of the absolute necessity of a DIVINE power to aid you;—if at the end of each day, when you think over how little has been done of good, how much of sin has been admitted, how slow to piety we are, how prone to earthly and carnal pursuits,—if you reckon up this with yourselves faithfully—could you have any hope, could you with any well-grounded faith pray to God to deliver you from evil, unless you knew that He in whom you put your trust was really God; that He now, in the fulness of His inaugurated Intercessorial power, and in the power of an endless life, is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him?

This feeling of helplessness, and of the abso-

lute need of a Divine Deliverer, is the sure safeguard of the Christian in the matter of his faith in the Divinity of Christ. He finds that he wants a power lent to him, that shall carry him off from this earth; a power that shall enable him to leave behind him the dross and penury of his fallen nature; he has within him, when brought into the contest with evil, a sinking of heart which is remedied *only* by the knowledge of the eternal power and Godhead of the Saviour of men, who then, by the Holy Spirit, manifests Himself to him as his only Saviour, his only help, his only trust, his only defence.

It is trust in the *Divinity* of the Lord Jesus, that fills his believing heart with confidence when he remembers the words :

‘Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’ ‘These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.’

In thus bringing to a close the duties of my office for the present year, I must crave your indulgence for the many imperfections which will be found in my endeavours. I have had in view, by a choice of several subjects, not connected, instead of preaching courses of Lectures on the same leading idea, to gain more effectually the attention of the audience, which from the periods

assigned to the Hulsean Lecturer, is necessarily of very variable extent. Especially in the present month when the students recommence their residence, I felt that it would not tend to induce regularity of attendance at the University Church, if they should find that the preacher was referring to previous arguments which they had not heard, and assuming conclusions for which they were unprepared. At the same time, I perceived that the intentions of the Founder of this Lecture were not of a limited character, and that they were quite in conformity with the plan which I wished to adopt. With humble prayer to God to forgive all sins of omission and commission in the execution of my duty, and again entreating your favourable consideration of the manner in which important subjects have been discussed, I now bring my Lectures to a close.

APPENDIX TO LECTURE VII.

I APPEND to this Lecture an extract from *Winer*, which expresses the settled conclusion of a certain school on the subject of the miracle in Joshua x. 12, &c. And I have then given the parallel instances referred to, with some observations.

Winer's Biblisches Realwörterbuch in Josua.

Cap. 10. 12. (vgl. SPINOZA Tract. Theol. Pol. c. 6) ist durch Missverständniß eines alten Liedes (der Verf. citirt gleich selbst vs. 13. die Liedersamml. *הַיָּמִים הַהֵלֵלִים*) in die Erzählung¹ übergetragen, (EICHHORN a. a. O. 393. HARTMANN üb. Pentateuch, 312 f. PAULUS, Conserv. ii. 169. Uebrige noch ungedr. Werke d. Wolfenb. Fragm. 163. HERDER Geist d. hebr. Poesie 229. PLUM histor. interpretat. quarund. hebr. poes. metaphorar. inpr. loci Jos. 10. 11. seqq. Hafn. 1790. 4. HEZEL, Schriftforsch ii. 127 ff.) Parallelen sind *Odys.* 23, 241, f. Vulg. *Iliad.* 2. 412 ff. *Callim. Dian.* 181 sq. Sowie für die Vorstellung, dass die Sonne, um Ein unglückliches Ereigniss zu verkürzen, oder um Eine grässliche That nicht zu beleuchten, *früher* untergeht². *Iliad* 18. 239. *Agatharch. bei Phot.* Cod. 250, p. 721. *Herod.* 7. 37. s. *Anton.* Compar. libror. Sacr. V. 7. et scriptt. profan. P. iv. Gorlic. 1817. 4. EWALD Israel Gesch. ii. 251. Es war daher geschmacklos, an einen wirklichen Stillstand der Sonne zu denken, (SCHMIDT bibl. Mathem. 448. DEYLING Observ. 1. 100, seq. BUDDEI Hist. V. 7. 1. 830, seq.) und (wie die ältern Ausleger thaten) dieses Wunder mit dem gesetzmässigen Naturlaufe vereinigen zu wollen³. Auch ein scheinbarer,

¹ Ueber die angebliche Rückbeziehung von Hab. iii. 11. auf diese Erzählung s. Delitzsch. z. d. St.

² Einen Solchen frühern untergang der Sonne und Verkürzung des Tages trägt Targ. Jonathan. Gen. xxviii. 10. in die von ihm mythisch ausgeschmückte Geschichte Jacobs ein. Umgekehrt verlängert sich eine Nacht, um den (wollüstigen) Genuss eines Gottes länger währen zu lassen Plaut. Amphit. prol. i. 1. 116. sq.

³ Mit den Principien des Kopernican Systems Suchte jenen Stillstand J. J. Zimmerman (Script. s. Copern. od. Astron. Beweisthum des Copernic. Welt-

etwa durch optische Täuschung veranlasster Stillstand (PEYRER. Systema Theolog. præadam. p. 215. CLERIC. und DATHE zu Jos. a. a. O.¹) ist nicht anzunehmen. Höchst Seltsam und Kaum des Anführens werth ist der Einfall RITTERS, (Henke's Mag. VI. 1 ff.) der Sonne u. Mond für *signa militaria* nimmt. S. dag. Bauer Mythol. 2. 21. Verunglückt aber Erscheint der öfter wiederholte Versuch (HÜPEDEN in d. Brem. Verd. Biblioth. 5. 395 ff. STEUDEL in d. Tüb. Zeitsch. 1833. 1. WEIGELE Ebend. 1834.¹) durch interpretation der entscheidenden W. W. das Wunderbare aus der Erzählung zu entfernen. Noch vgl. J. H. Wepler Vers. üb. d. Stillstehen d. Sonne u. d. Mondes. Cassel. 1780, 8.²

The passages referred to as parallel to *Josh. x. 12* are as follows.

Odyssey, xxiii. 241. When Penelope has recognized Ulysses, and receives him as her husband, the poet likens this to a return of a ship into port after being tempest-tost.—She embraces him, and cannot remove her arms from his neck :

ὡς ἄρα τῇ ἀσπαστὸς ἔην πόσις εισροώσῃ,
δειρῆς δ' οὐπω πάμπαν ἀφίετο πήχεε λευκῶ.

The morning arrives too soon for them, and to prevent this unseemly interruption Minerva keeps back Aurora :

καὶ νύ κ' ὄδυρομένοισι φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως,
εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ἄλλ' ἐνόησε θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη.
νύκτα μὲν ἐν περάτῃ δολιχῆν σκέθεν, Πῶ δ' αὖτε
ῤύσατ' ἐπ' Ὀκεανῶ χρυσόθρονον, οὐδ' ἔα ἵππους
ζεύγυσθ' ὠκύποδας, φάος ἀνθρώποισι φέροντας.

The whole passage is suspected of being spurious, because Homer never represents Aurora as having horses or a chariot, though Lycophron gives her a winged steed—Pegasus.

gebäudes aus heil. Schr. Hamb. 1706. S. 63 ff.) durch die Annahme in Verbindung zu bringen. "Jos. habe nur begehrt, dass die eigne Bewegung der Sonne um ihre Axe, wodurch die Planeten rege u. beweglich gemacht werden, solle eine Zeitlang inne halten u. die Erde sammt übrigen Planeten zum Umlauf nicht stimuliren, damit die Erde der den von ihr verursachten Umlauf den Untergang der Sonne nicht verursachte!" Vgl. auch *Scheuchzer Physica Sacra* II. 455, sqq.

¹ Eine ausserordentliche, durch Gottes Allmacht bewirkte Strahlenbrechung nimmt au GOLZ die Stillstehende Sonne n. Grundsätz d. Kopernic. Syst. vertherdigt. Berlin, 1833-8.

² Ein Sonnenstillstand in der islam Sagengeschichte ist zu Hilla au einer Moschee verewigt *Ritter Erdk.* XI. 789.

And the sense of the narrative is well sustained without it.

Iliad, II. 412. Here Agamemnon is represented sacrificing before the battle with the Trojans; and he prays that, before the sun goes down, he may sack the city of Priam.

Ζεῦ κῦδιστε, μέγιστε, κελαινεφές, αἰθέρι ναίων,
μὴ πρὶν ἐπ' ἥλιον δῦναι, καὶ ἐπὶ κνέφας ἔλθειν,
πρὶν με κατὰ πρηνές βαλέειν Πριάμοιο μέλαθρον
αἰθαλόεν, πρῆσαι δὲ πυρὸς δηΐοιο θύρετρα.

This is not so much a prayer for the *lengthening* of the day as a wish that Troy may be taken before the natural sunset. It may of course be understood in the former sense, and so Herder seems to have taken it :

Es kann seyn dass Joshua den Wunsch laut geäußert, dass sich der Tag verlängern möchte (haben wir nicht solche wünsche der Helden im Homer? liegen sie nicht so ganz im Feuer des Schlachtgeistes?) und als sich dieser bestätigte, als es ungewöhnlich lang licht blieb und der Himmel, selbst noch zuletzt durch ein Hagelwetter Israel zu Hülfe zu kommen schien; was war natürlicher als dass der Siegesgesang dies Prachtgemälde eines Tages ohne seines gleichen zusammenstellte, den Helden redend einführte, Jehovah selbst unter seinen Befehl gab, Sonn' und Mond zu Theilnehmerinnen des Sieges, zu Bewunderern seiner Tapferkeit machte.—*Geist der Ebraischen Poesie. Sammtliche Werke.* Carlsruhe, 1826. Vol. xxxiv. p. 238.

Callimachus, *Hymn to Diana*, 181 :

ἐπεὶ θεὸς οὔ ποτ' ἐκεῖνον
ἦλθεν παρ' Ἡέλιος καλὸν χορόν· ἀλλὰ θεῆται
δίφρον ἐπιστήσας, τὰ δὲ φάεα μηκύνονται.

“ So splendid a herd the sun can never pass by, but, stopping his chariot, he contemplates them, and the daylight is prolonged.”

To express the wonderful qualities of the oxen of *Tymphaïs* (τυμφαιΐδες), the poet represents the sun as stopping to admire them, so that the day is lengthened.

The last line however is omitted in one good MS., the *Codex Venetus*. See Ed. Blomfield, annot. *in loco*.

Iliad, XVIII. 239. Juno, to protect her favourite Greeks, sends the sun down earlier after they have recovered the body of Patroclus :

Ἡέλιον δ' ἀκάμαντα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη
πέμψεν ἐπ' Ὀκεανοῖο ῥοὰς ἀέκοντα νέεσθαι.
ἠέλιος μὲν ἔδν, παύσαντο δὲ δῖοι Ἀχαιοὶ
φυλόπιδος κρατερῆς καὶ ὁμοίου πολέμοιο.

Agatharcides, in *Photii Bibliotheca*, Cod. 250. The passage referred to I had some difficulty in finding in the long extracts which Photius gives from this writer; but I can only suppose that the following is that which Winer refers to, and yet it seems strange to refer to this book for a circumstance which might be quoted from works of more common occurrence :

τὸν δὲ ἥλιον διὰ τὰς Ἀτρεῶς εἰς Θυέστην πράξεις, τὴν μὲν δύσι ἀνατολὴν ποιῆσαι, τὴν δὲ ἀνατολὴν, δύσιν

The same is recorded in Plato, *Politicus*, § 12. The ξένος from Elea amongst other legends of old time recalls that of Ἀτρεὺς :

περὶ τῆς μεταβολῆς δύσεώς τε καὶ ἀνατολῆς ἡλίου καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἄστρον, ὡς ἄρα ὅθεν μὲν ἀνατέλλει νῦν, εἰς τοῦτον τότε τὸν τόπον ἐδύετο, ἀνέτελλε δ' ἐκ τοῦ ἐναντίου, τότε δὲ δὴ μαρτυρήσας ἄρα ὁ θεὸς Ἀτρεὶ μετέβαλεν αὐτὸ ἐπὶ τὸ νῦν σχῆμα.

Herod. VII. 37. When Xerxes was setting out with his army :

ἄρμημένω δὲ οἱ ὁ ἥλιος ἐκλιπὼν τὴν ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἔδρην, ἀφανὴς ἦν, ὅντ' ἐπινεφέλων ἐόντων, αἰθρίης τε τὰ μάλιστα ἀντὶ ἡμέρης τε μὴ ἐγένετο.

This failure of the sun's light one would at first have supposed to be an eclipse. *Petavius*, *de Doctrina Temporum*, x. 25, shews that this could not be the case at this time. There was no eclipse at Sardis that year, but there was a remarkable one in the year preceding at Susa; and probably it is this that Herodotus refers to. If it be not an eclipse, but some other natural phenomenon, there is no similitude whatever to the case in hand, of an appeal to heaven followed by a *consequent* derangement of the order of nature.

I do not find in any of the parallel instances quoted anything like the record in Joshua, of a man calling on the Divine Being to stay the course of the sun, and the assertion of the fact that, in consequence of such a call, the sun actually stood still. So that if we were to consider the record in Joshua a poetical figure, it still stands *per se* for boldness, and, introduced in this manner into the midst of a plain narration of facts, it would be strangely out of place.

I observe, moreover, that the account of the capture of the cities in c. x. may be arranged in parallel sentences; and if we are from this to conclude that this is poetical, we may find eventually the whole of the narrative frittered away.

Some persons have arranged the parables of the New Testament in many instances in parallel antithetic sentences. Are we to conclude from this that our Lord delivered them in verse? Or ought we not rather to infer that the genius of the Eastern languages, the ἥθος of Eastern writers and speakers, is of this kind, that the balancing of ideas and sentences in narration, or in parænesis, is characteristic of their Oriental idiosyncrasy of race?

The passage referred to, p. 117, as one where Herodotus gives an account of an old tradition of an alteration in the sun's motion is the following, ii. 142 :

ἐν τοίνυν τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ τετράκις ἔλεγον ἐξ ἠθέων τὸν ἥλιον ἀνατεῖλαι ἔνθα τε νῦν καταδύεται, ἐνθεῦτεν δις ἐπαντεῖλαι. καὶ ἔνθεν νῦν ἀνατέλλει, ἐνθαῦτα δις καταδύναι. καὶ οὐδὲν τῶν κατ' Αἴγυπτον ὑπὸ ταῦτα ἑτεροιωθῆναι, οὔτε τὰ ἐκ τῆς γῆς, οὔτε τὰ ἐκ τοῦ ποταμοῦ σφί γινόμενα, οὔτε τὰ ἀμφὶ νούσους οὔτε τὰ κατὰ τοὺς θανάτους.

To which add Martinii *Historia Sinic.* i. 137 :

Per hæc tempora diebus decem non occidissee solem orbem conflagraturum mortales timuisse scribunt¹.

There are also legends of lengthened days in *Statii Theb.* i. 325, and iv. 307.

¹ See *Scaliger*, de Emend. temp. p. 193.

APPENDIX TO LECTURE VIII.

THERE is a complete Catena of Ante-Nicene references to this passage, and of the inferences that the fathers drew from it, given by Dr Burton in his *Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ*, under Clemens Alexandrinus, pp. 118—138.

I have, however, adopted Whitby's interpretation of ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, and I do not think that Dr Burton's quotations from the Fathers at all make out the point which he wishes to infer from them.

He says, 'I shall endeavour to shew that being *in the form of God*, means that he was essentially and substantially God.'

Let us see how he endeavours to establish this.

'This we have already seen to be asserted by Clement of Alexandria, when he says, in allusion to this text, that "the compassionate God divested himself." ἐκέκρωσεν δὲ ἑαυτὸν ὁ φιλοκτίρμων Θεός.

The words alluded to are in p. 117.

'S. Clement. Cohort. ad Gentes, c. i. p. 8. He quotes Phil. ii. 6, "who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" and instead of adding simply, as S. Paul does, "but made himself of no reputation," or "divested himself," (which would be a better translation of the original,) he says, "but the compassionate God divested himself;" by which words it is plain that Clement applied to God what is said of Christ, or, in other words, he considered Christ to be God.'

To this latter deduction there can be no objection; but this is something different to the conclusion that S. Clement drew his conviction of the truth from the words ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ. No doubt S. Clement believed that Christ was very God. Still he might not have supposed this truth to be contained under the words in question.

In another place he says, *Pædag.* l. ii. p. 99, speaking of Christ, Θεός ἐν ἀνθρώπου σχήματι—σὺν καὶ τῷ σχήματι Θεός, which Dr Burton translates, *God in the form of man*,

—and, *in form also God*. A correct translation, but one not touching our present question. The phrase ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, according to the meaning we have adopted for it, implies that Christ was ἐν σχήματι Θεός, inasmuch as we suppose it to mean that he adopted in his ancient manifestations the outward appearance of a Divine Being, that he shewed himself to them, as God, his true nature before the Incarnation. Although the passage may refer to Phil. ii. 6, it is not a quotation of it.

‘Tertullian argues that *the form of a servant* must mean that Christ was really a man, because *being in the form of God* means that he was really God. He is arguing here against the Marcionites, who allowed the divinity of Christ, but denied the reality of his human body.’ *Adv. Marcion.* v. 20. p. 486.

This is the strongest argument advanced by Dr Burton. It is undoubted that Tertullian does argue that reality is intended as much in one case as the other, and the conclusion is applied fairly, that those who admit the reality in the one, must also admit it in the other; and this is fortified by another passage quoted from S. Athanasius in a note, *Apol.* ii. 1. Vol. 1. p. 940: ὡςπερ ἡ μορφή τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς τοῦ λόγου θεότητος νοεῖται, οὕτως καὶ ἡ μορφή τοῦ δούλου, ἢ νοερά τῆς ἀνθρώπων συστάσεως φύσις, σὺν τῇ ὀργανικῇ καταστάσει ὁμολογεῖται.

Hippolytus is the next author quoted, *Com. in Gen.* ii. p. 29: ἐπειδὴ ὁμονογενὴς τοῦ Θεοῦ Λόγος, Θεὸς ὑπάρχων ἐκ Θεοῦ, κεκένωκεν ἑαυτὸν κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς, καθεὶς ἐθελοντὴς ἑαυτὸν εἰς ὅπερ οὐκ ἦν, καὶ τὴν ἄδοξον ταύτην σάρκα ἡμπέσχετο. This passage shews that Hippolytus believed in the divinity of Christ, in his humiliation, and in the Incarnation; but it does not seem to have any specific reference to the interpretation of the words ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, so as to enable us to decide whether Hippolytus understood μορφή as *essence*, or *outward appearance*.

Origen, *Hom. in Gen.* viii. § 6. p. 82: Ipse namque sibi Dominus ovem providebat in Christo—et ipse se humiliavit usque ad mortem; whence, says Dr Burton, ‘it is plain that Origen considered the person who humbled himself to be the same person who is called God by Abraham.’

Most true : but still no reference to the peculiar sense of the word *μορφῆ* in the phrase we are considering. The same is the case with the next reference, Origen, *in Jud. Hom.* iii. i. p. 464 : Si quis igitur, Christi humilitate contempta, qui propter nos cum Deus esset, homo factus est, et humiliavit se usque ad mortem.

The next quotation from Origen seems to make strongly in favour of the sense put on the word *μορφῆ* in this lecture : Ζητήσεις δὲ εἰ ὅτε μετεμορφώθη ἔμπροσθεν τῶν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἀναχθέντων εἰς τὸ ὑψηλὸν ὄρος, ὥφθη αὐτοῖς ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, ἣ ὑπῆρχε πάλαι ὡς τοῖς μὲν κάτω ἔχων τὴν δούλου μορφὴν, τοῖς δὲ ἀκολουθήσασιν αὐτῷ μετὰ ἕξ ἡμέρας εἰς τὸ ὑψηλὸν ὄρος, οὐκ ἐκείνην, ἀλλὰ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ. *In Matth.* Tom. xii. § 37, p. 558.

The use of the word *μετεμορφώθη* also seems to me to support the proposition that by *μορφῆ* we should understand *condition*, not *essence* : ἡ δούλου μορφῆ surely means the *condition* of a servant. We may say that Christ *exhibited himself*, in his humiliation, to mankind, as a servant ; so in his pre-existent state when he exhibited himself to man, it was in the condition, or outward form of Deity, his rightful condition.

The quotation from Novatian which follows is one which bears most directly on the point we are discussing. It is from the treatise *De Trinitate*, c. xvii. p. 717 : Si homo tantummodo Christus, in *imagine* Dei, non in *forma* Dei relatus fuisset : hominem enim scimus ad *imaginem* non ad *formam* Dei factum.

This distinction between *forma* and *imago* seems at first sight to be very forcible, but certainly, on reflection, it cannot much help us. Would it not be very difficult to assign a *precise* meaning to the phrase, *man was formed in the image of God*? The expression must surely be understood to mean that man was endowed with spirit, with the intellectual power, with a mind capable of appreciating virtuous and noble qualities—that man was a *moral* being. It would be revolting to imagine any personal or corporeal resemblance; but when the word *forma* is applied to God, *in forma Dei*, it seems at once to point to the meaning we have assumed, viz. such visible appearance as it pleased the Most

High to vouchsafe to those whom he favoured with direct revelation of Himself. That Novatian, who had been a philosopher, should have imagined a subtle distinction, is natural; and after all, his argument is a just one, that man is not said to be *in forma Dei*, and therefore *in forma Dei* means something peculiar to the Deity. It does not however follow that *forma* means *essence*, it may have its ordinary meaning, *condition, outward appearance*. (Hesychius, *μορφῆ ἰδέα, εἶδος*.)

In the next passage Novatian's reasoning is, that one who is God may well be said to be *in forma Dei*, but still he gives no explanation of the expression: 'Et merito in forma pronuntiatus est Dei, dum et ipse super omnia et omnis creaturæ divinam obtinens potestatem, et Deus est exemplo Patris; hoc ipsum tamen a Patre proprio consecutus, ut omnium et Deus esset, et Deus ad formam Dei patris ex ipso genitus atque prolatus.—*De Trinitate*.

So *Dionysius of Alexandria*, p. 209: ἡ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ μορφῆ ὁ Λόγος αὐτοῦ, καὶ σοφία υἱὸς Θεοῦ, καὶ Θεὸς αὐτὸς ὠμολόγηται, ἐν πρόσωπον ὧν αἰεὶ, καὶ μία ὑπόστασις προσώπου.

The meaning of *Dionysius of Alexandria* seems to me to be obscure. Dr Burton translates it, 'But the form of God is His Word, and wisdom is acknowledged to be the Son of God, and God himself, being always one person, and one substantial person.'

There is another place quoted by Dr Burton referring to Phil. ii. 6, but it does not refer to the words ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ.

The following quotation, πῶς ὁ Πατήρ ἐν τῷ υἱῷ αὐτοῦ Χριστῷ Λόγῳ, καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ Πατρὶ, ὁ ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ ὑπάρχων, Dr Burton translates, 'By Christ being in the form of God, is meant that the Father is in His Son Christ the word, and Christ in the Father.' If this is its meaning (which I feel unable to say), of course the passage directly asserts a meaning of the words ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ.

There is no other quotation given which is supposed to justify the meaning of *μορφῆ* as *essence*.

After carefully considering them all, I did not think there was any very strong evidence for the conclusion. They seem indeed all to assume, and fairly, that by being

spoken of as ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ, our Lord was really and truly God; but they do not, I think, give any explanation of the phrase.

The expression ἄρπαγμα ἡγεῖσθαι, or ἄρπαγμὸν ἡγεῖσθαι, is well explained. It is illustrated by the following:

ἄρπαγμα τὸ ῥηθὲν ἐποιήσατο ἡ Ἀρσάκη. Arsace eagerly caught at what was said.—*Heliodorus, Æthiop.* viii. 7.

τὸν θάνατον ἄρπαγμα θέμενοι τῆς τῶν δυσσεβῶν μοχθηρίας, thinking death a great prize on account of the savageness of their wicked enemies.—*Euseb. H. E.* viii. 12.

οἶον ἄρπαγμὰ τι τὴν ἐπάνοδον ποιησάμενοι, thinking their return a great prize.—*Ib. De Vita Const.* ii. 31.

Ælian, *V. H.* iii. 17, uses a similar phrase: ἐγὼ μὲν γὰρ τὴν σὺν αὐτοῖς ἀπραγμοσύνην, καὶ τὸν τῆς ἡσυχίας ἔρωτα καὶ ἀρπάσαιμι ἐπιδραμών. I should think myself very lucky if I could share their ease and tranquillity; I would clutch at it eagerly.

Ruffinus, (*V. 2. Vol. iv. p. 553*) calls it *magni aliquid deputare*, yet most Latin fathers translate ἄρπαγμα ἡγεῖσθα, *rapienam duxit*.—*Tertullian, Adv. Prax.* c. 7. p. 504. *Adv. Marcion*¹, v. 20. p. 486. *De Resurrect. Carnis*, c. 6. p. 329. *S. Cyprian, Tert.*² ii. 13. p. 290. *Novatian, De Trin.* c. 17. p. 717.

The foregoing are all from Dr Burton.

ἄρπαλέα apud Eustathium—τὰ πάνυ περισπούδαστα, quæ quis omni studio ad se rapiat, sibique vindicet.—*Bengelii Gnomon* in loco.

See the passage quoted by *Dr Peile* in his *Annotations* from Bishop Middleton at length. The references at the foot of the page are all taken from Dr Peile, who does not, however, notice Whitby's remarks on the passage.

See a note of *Bishop Pearson on the Creed*, on the words τὸ εἶναι ἴσα Θεοῦ, p. 224, (1) Vol. ii. Oxf. Ed. (1833).

¹ In this place Tertullian translates ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ by *in effigie Dei constitutus*.

² S. Cyprian translates ἐν μορφῇ Θεοῦ by *in figura Dei constitutus*.

SPIRITUAL CITIZENSHIP.

A SERMON

FOR

THE FEAST OF THE ASCENSION OF
OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

A SERMON,

&c.

PHILIPPIANS III. 20.

Our conversation (or citizenship) is in heaven.

THE events of our Lord's burial, resurrection, and ascension, have been carefully made significant of events in the life of every Christian in the admonitory teaching of the Church. Thus on Easter Eve, we are bid to pray 'that as we are baptized into the death of our Saviour, so by continual mortifying our corrupt affections we may be buried with him, and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass to our joyful resurrection.' On Easter Day and the following Sundays, we pray for God's 'special grace' 'to promote in us good desires,' 'to put away from us malice and wickedness,' 'to serve God in pureness of living and truth,' 'to endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of Christ's most holy life,' 'to maintain the state into which we were admitted when made to partake of the new covenant,' 'to love God's will, and have our hearts fixed on that alone which can give true joy.'

And to-day we pray that we may in 'heart and mind ascend with our Lord into heaven,' to *dwell* or *abide* with Him there.

In these invocations, we recognize that Christ's burial is to signify to us our baptism, his resurrection the change from the life carnal to the life spiritual, and his ascension, our spiritual citizenship.

This idea of the death and burial of Christ representing to us our baptism, is recognized and assumed all through the office for the Administration of that rite. Thus, before the consecration of the water, 'O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in this child may be so buried that the new man may be raised up in him.' In the thanksgiving for the regeneration of the child, 'humbly we beseech thee to grant that he being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man and utterly abolish the whole body of sin, and that as he *is* made partaker of the death of thy Son, he *may* also be partaker of his resurrection.' And in the exhortation after the service, 'Baptism doth represent unto us our profession, i. e. to follow the example of our Saviour Christ and to be made like unto him, that as he died and rose again for us, so should we who are baptized die from sin and rise again unto righteousness.'

In all this the burial of Christ, the putting off in the tomb, the frail mortal tabernacle in which he sojourned upon earth, is assumed to be representative to us of our baptism, and the assumption is made on the authority of the apostolical expres-

sions, 'Buried with him in baptism.' 'Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.'

The consequent analogy between the resurrection, and the Christian's call to newness of life, is thus originated by S. Paul: 'Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' The indwelling Spirit imparted to us in baptism will, if not resisted, grieved and quenched, work in us this great work: 'If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit which dwelleth in you.' Our life is 'in Him.' We are said to be 'dead' and 'our life hid with Christ in God.' Having been 'buried with him,' says S. Paul, writing to the Colossians, 'in baptism,' we are 'risen with him through the faith of the operation of God,' and in the same epistle occurs the development of the idea which we have taken to be symbolized by the ascension: 'If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things of the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God,' i. e. we enjoy a citizenship above, our polity is celestial, we are represented as having passed from death unto life. The kingdom of heaven is opened, and all men press into it; the great sheet

knit at the four corners, and let down from heaven to earth, which S. Peter saw in prophetic vision, is the Church of God, the tabernacle of regenerate human nature. When in it, we cease to be mere denizens of earth, we claim the privilege of a noble citizenship in the eternal city, whose Builder and Maker is God.

We claim the privilege,—and we incur the responsibilities of a spiritual relationship to the Deity. Strange and wonderful are the apostolic descriptions of the regenerate; ‘a chosen generation,’ ‘a royal priesthood,’ ‘an holy nation,’ ‘a peculiar people,’ ‘partakers of the Divine nature,’ ‘fellow-citizens with the saints,’ ‘of the household of God.’ When we are urged, as by the services of this day, to remember the high, holy, exalted position to which, as Christians, we all are called; when we read again the title-deeds of our inheritance, and gaze upon the divine promises, and ponder on the extreme preciousness of our calling; must not bitter thoughts of shame, and sorrow, rise up within us, as we reflect how often we, who had such wonderful promises, whose position was so glorious, how often we have brought defilement unto the holy place? how often and how treacherously we have broken the laws of our celestial kingdom? how we have marred and defaced the work of God, till not one perhaps, of the features of a soldier of the cross remained visible upon us? It is well to awaken in ourselves, on our high festival days, thoughts of our own unworthiness,

lest we be too much dazzled with the splendours of those Divine gifts, our title to which, through our sins, has perhaps become more than doubtful.

I believe that nothing is of more avail to effect this self-abasement and anxiety, about our own position, than meditation upon the extreme preciousness of our calling, that when we see that we are so unworthy, so weak, so miserable, we may be stirred up to renewed, and active exertions, to lay hold on the hope set before us in the Gospel, and struggle onwards through the flood of worldly business and carnal corruption, as manful citizens of those bright realms on which we now fix our longing and expectant eyes. And though the raging torrent sweep by us many an one whose footing was unsteady, whose eyes were closed to the beacon, whose ears heard not the sound of the Lord's words, promising pardon and strength, let us not despair or despond, for Christ's strength is sufficient for us, if we will but believe it. Worldly business, and cares and anxieties, in some instances will overwhelm the man. Ambition and its heated concomitant passions will sometimes choke, like a thick jungle, the gentler emotions accessible to the soft pleadings of the Spirit of God. The plague of carnal lust will swallow up many. But each one of these, though he has obliterated to human eyes the marks of his spiritual citizenship, has not *destroyed* the testimony which tells of his fall and his loss.

Let us think on these things, and so impress

upon our own hearts how tremendous a judgment must impend over us, if we fail of the grace of God, that we may be moved to a rational and earnest endeavour to secure our high privileges, to follow after and attain to that for which we have been apprehended of Christ Jesus.

If human nature was by our Lord's Incarnation, not merely restored to its lost position, but placed much higher than before the fall, that union of the Deity and Manhood includes in its comprehensive universality each member of the incorporated society of believers, and, therefore, as by the Church, this same body is known unto the celestial intelligences the manifold wisdom of God; the fall of each and every one who is lost, *after* being made a Christian, is a fall which indeed is great. If *we* miss the rewards of heaven, we do not *only* relapse into the state of the unregenerate; in proportion as the exaltation was beyond any that it could have entered into the heart of man to conceive, so must the degradation be. If citizens of heaven lose their citizenship, there is superadded to the loss, bitter and grievous though it be, that 'much sorer punishment' which S. Paul tells us of. God's terrors are not exhausted upon the sinful *out* of the covenant. The condemned Christian must endure the pangs of the recollection of lost glory, and honour, and association with the Omnipotent in his kingdom. A bright, happy, and glorious inheritance missed, and seen from afar, in hopeless and desponding

certainly, is the true worm that never dies :—the thought of love like that of our Incarnate God despised :—the memory of celestial joys spurned :—our citizenship in the kingdom of God neglected, slighted, lost :—and the reflection, that we alone are to blame, ‘Thou hast destroyed thyself.’ How often would Christ have received us to himself, as the mother of the brood collects her trembling offspring, but *we* would not.

Though this idea, of our being citizens of heaven *now*, seem one which is rather beyond our reach, and perhaps one, which in the present turmoil of human occupations is so little realized, that it seems Utopian ; yet let not this surprize us. Our Lord himself speaks of his Ascension as the greatest of all mysteries ; when the absolute necessity of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, in order to secure eternal life, so shocked the Jews, that many abandoned him and his teaching ; our Lord says, ‘Doth this offend you ? what and if ye shall *see* the Son of Man ascend up where he was before ?’ Surely the maintenance of spiritual life by sacramental communion is a subject of deep and awful mystery ; but our Lord proposes to his hearers something yet more mysterious in the visible taking up of the *Son of Man* into heaven. The assumption of our blessed Saviour’s human body into the presence of God, is the admission of human nature to heaven, the apotheosis of the regenerate. Now if this is a miracle of such transcendant wonder, then it is to

be expected that the practical consequence flowing from it, to us on earth, will be hard to be understood, still more hard to be practised.

Nevertheless we read of it constantly as the *aim*, and the acquired state of the holy Apostles. 'I am,' says S. Paul, writing to the Galatians, 'crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me; dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' The world is 'crucified unto us by the cross of Christ.'

Now the difficulty of the life spiritual is less in proportion to our progress in it. It is not an exaggerated description of it to call it a resurrection, because there is that change in the objects, anxieties, and hopes of a man, which taken altogether, make him a new creature. He acquires new modes of thought; his standard of reference is changed; low, carnal views are banished for high spiritual ones; mortal anxieties, which all are to perish with the using, are cast off and discarded; habits are altered, and that by no violent spasmodic effort, but by a steady shaping of the course of the vessel in a direction different to that in which she sped, when carelessly running before the wind. And this inferior estimate of the great subjects which agitate the minds, and sway the conduct of mankind in general, does not proceed from indifference to the way in which God

governs the world, or from an unthankful disregard of the laws by which human societies are kept together, but from their being a subordination of these things to a higher, more important, object—the progress, stability, and welfare of Christ's great Spiritual kingdom upon earth. Thus, in matters political, the true soldier of the cross cares but little for the schemings and intrigues of parties, the changes of government, and the throbs and throes of the body politic,—except as far as they bear on the prosperity, freedom, and advancement of the Church of Christ. He cares in a minor degree for the advancement of science, and the progress of human learning—except in this light, that the intellectual progress of mankind paves the way for the extension of Christianity, which under all circumstances no doubt makes its sure, solemn, steady progress, but thrives most where freedom and knowledge are most vigorously maintained and promoted.

Without therefore being indifferent to these things, he cares for them in a different way, and in a subordinate degree. He is a citizen of heaven, as well as a citizen of his earthly country; but inasmuch as the one kingdom is eternal, immutable, universal, its interests and its laws are dearer to him, and involve him more in their ramifications, than the inferior anxieties of the kingdom temporal.

The one, in its overflowing plenitude, shall absorb heaven, and earth, and everything; the other shall soon be numbered among the things

which have been; his concern with it is only temporary.

Whereas the laws which regulate his conduct in matters temporal are changeful, contradictory, and uncertain, the laws of the great spiritual kingdom are clear, distinct, easily ascertained, never alter. Access at all times to his Sovereign is open to him in prayer. Though his Lord reigns in heaven, yet he is found on earth. Though high and lofty, and inhabiting eternity, yet he dwells with him that is of a humble and contrite spirit. Though thousand times ten thousand angels wait around his throne, yet he is found in the meanest cottage; on the bed of sickness; he is near the starving sufferer in the desert; and on the battle-field conveys comfort to the dying; provided these all are *his* citizens, who have remembered the Body into which they were engrafted, and call upon their King in the hour of danger and distress.

Dead to the calls of human ambition—Dead to the syren voices of voluptuous and carnal enjoyments—Dead to the fascinations of the world in every shape—Dead to the stern grasp of covetousness—but alive to the call of a heavenly ambition,—eager to gain a high place in the celestial ranks—keen in the pursuit of spiritual joys—intent on the glories which are hereafter to be fully revealed,—the citizen of heaven proves his enrolment to be valid, his allegiance to be faithful.

He has passed from the state of worldly care,

and the being absorbed in things of sense, to the state of true life, in which all things are real and *living*, leaving behind him the shadowy, unreal life present. The flitting, disappointing, vexatious vortex of human anxieties does not roll him away in its whirls. He stands upon the rock, not upon the sand. High above the roaring surge, he lifts his eyes to heaven, and there, secure, certain, brilliant, stands the shining light, which shines brighter and brighter until the perfect day. The kingdom of which he is a citizen grows and extends its sway; his Master's armies are gaining ground daily on the dreary hosts of the Pagan world; in his own gloomy recesses the Prince of Darkness is being overcome by the army of the cross; and while thus steadily the interests of the spiritual kingdom are progressing, can he be disturbed by the convulsions or factions of the temporal kingdom?

However we may at times think these things extravagant, yet surely, brethren, they are but the expansion of the idea which is suggested to us by the services of this day. And we *must* attain in some degree to the state of spiritual citizens; or we may unhappily be reckoned among that rebellious crowd, who, though legally Christ's subjects, refused to have him to reign over them, and who, when he had received his kingdom, were summoned to pay the penalty of their treason.

But it is also true that the progress to such a state is gradual: in early youth, and when we are

looking forward to many years of sojourn in the world, the shifting, changing scenes of busy life, are not matter of indifference to us, we anticipate great things, we have bright hopes for the future. The phantasmagoria of the world's playhouse enchant us when we are young : we long to cast off the restraints of education and tutelage. At a distance the world seems fair, full of enjoyment, happy : and we do not believe the stern moralist who warns us of the hollowness of the scene. We hope by making trial of the joys of earth to find them not so empty as we have been told. But as we draw near, the scene loses much of its brightness ; what *was* so fair appears coarse ; the bright becomes dim ; the apparently solid fruits, like the grapes of Sodom, crumble to ashes under the touch : and then, to the true citizen of heaven, when his judgment is corrected, and his sight cleared, there arise pictures of a better kind. Like those imitations of art, where the fading hues and dissolving outlines of one picture are succeeded by brightening scenes of a different kind, so, as the world-picture fades from his sight, there arises a bright glow of heaven ; earthly gewgaws and gauds fade away ; the sublime realities of Christ's Spiritual Kingdom steal over the scene ; visions of transcendant happiness and magnificence glow upon the canvass ; and more firmly and more vigorously are these things apprehended by the eye of his faith, more brightly and more distinctly do they reveal themselves to Him,

till He exchanges them for the shining realities of heaven.

In his celestial contemplations he has joys far greater than any that earth or any thing short of heaven can give him. In the still and tranquil hours of retirement, he may delight himself in the thoughts of what is hereafter to be revealed. He can gratefully reiterate the mysteries of the Redeemer's love, God's wisdom, the Holy Spirit's subtle, all-subduing influences. Calm, happy, and peaceful, the indwelling of the Spirit raises him above the world. His pleasures are not impulsive, fitful, feverish. He lives for another sphere; his joys, which are spiritual, and his happiness, which is heavenly, lift him up out of the mire of earthly and sensual delights, and set him with the Princes of Christ's Church. Seraphical intelligences commune with him; celestial praises sound in his ears; he is rapt into the seventh heaven; visions of the angelic hierarchy open upon him; he dwells in the brilliant anticipation of future revelations: he desires to see God, to look upon the Invisible, to feel the Impalpable, to know Him that passeth knowledge.

He stands on the edge of a vast ocean, whose ever-varying surface reveals to him ten thousand times ten thousand new combinations, new images of glory and heavenly beauty; and above the horizon is an unsetting Sun, now veiled indeed from mortal eye, but hereafter to be revealed,

the Sun of Righteousness, the glimmerings and flashings only of whose glories do we see as we gaze on the reflections from the sparkling surface.

It is by thoughts such as these that I would try to follow out the prescribed duties of this day. To be citizens of heaven in reality, we must think much on the occupations that await us there, and the scenes of that kingdom of happiness: we are in heart and mind to ascend thither now, to have our affections there, to realize on earth the hereafter.

Then we shall truly feel that we are pilgrims and strangers, that our rest is far away in the heavens. Let us not, like the fabled lotus-eaters, touch of the forbidden joys of earth, and so become careless of our home, without desire to return to our True City: but like men waiting for their Redemption, eagerly expecting the opening of the prison-doors, and mingling in the affairs of life present without caring much for them, or troubling ourselves about the perplexities of mortality, we should let it be manifest to all by our moderation, our taste for spiritual joys, our thorough devotion to the service, rule, and cause of Christ Jesus our Lord, that we are begotten again to a living hope; to an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, unfading, reserved for us in heaven; that of heaven we *now* are citizens who realize their citizenship, and that our hearts and our affections are *There*, with our ascended Lord.

A WARNING AGAINST SELFISHNESS AND RASH
SPECULATION.

A SERMON

ADDRESSED

TO THE JUNIOR MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY.

A SERMON,

&c.

ROMANS XIV. 7.

None of us liveth to himself.

I N addressing peculiarly the younger part of the audience, as the preacher before the University feels himself called to do at this season of the year, when the everchanging body of students has received its fresh addition, a very considerable difficulty presents itself as he thinks of the great variety of mental condition which must probably prevail amongst his hearers.

Among these, however, he must select some as likely to be most prominent; and to-day I will endeavour to address those who have come up to the University with high aspirations and intentions, who hope to win here renown, and a position which will probably, if improved, influence their whole mortal career, those who are intent on the great secular objects of these noble foundations; and also those who have another more philosophical and thoughtful temper, who may be looking forward with apprehension or with eagerness to a time when they will mix with the world more freely, who have already caught the tone of that new spirit which is pervading the

thinking part of mankind, and who see rising up before them a freer method of inquiry—a shaking off of old modes of thought—plans for the reconstruction both of the civil and social states, proceeding on new and independent grounds—a spirit of investigating all the ancient theology of the Christian Church, to reconcile its dogmas with the deductions of the human consciousness, or reject them.

Great and noble subjects these in their several ways.

The distinctions of literature and science, the grades of the nobility of talent, being open to all who stir themselves to vigorous action, and cultivate those faculties which God has given them; the grand results which, as thinking beings, we may realize when we add industry to natural ability, are worthy of our ambition, our constant exertions, our strenuous endeavours.

And then what more worthy of our deep attention than those questions which relate to the very foundations of social and political society, which assuming the tendency of all the human race towards a more elevated scale of being, and recognizing among the nations a deep thirst for immortality, a craving for progress, improvement, growth, moral and intellectual, have for their object to unravel the great designs of Providence for man's redemption, and to find out how they may now be brought into intimate contact with our needs and necessities?

What more philosophical employment for our powers of investigation, than to examine with scrupulous exactitude the sources of the present characteristics both of the discipline and dogma of the universal Church of Christ, which claims to be the apostle to mankind of regeneration and salvation, to weigh well her pretensions, to scrutinize her charter of incorporation, her creeds and her forms, and assure ourselves by self-wrought convictions of the judgment, whether we are bound to submit to her rule or not?

In addressing myself then to these two classes of students, I shall have to make two different applications of the text.

To the student ambitious of University distinction, I might give words of encouragement and warning of a temporal kind, if I did not feel assured that such admonition and advice is tendered to them by those who are specially appointed to watch over them in their several societies in a far more efficient manner than I could give it.

But inasmuch as the constant daily intercourse of a secular kind between tutor and pupil has in my experience rendered it more difficult for the former to appear in his spiritual character, as one who has a great and responsible religious trust, and I have myself seen that the character of the minister of Christ glides out of observation, when he is ever brought into contact with his charge as a lecturer on science or literature; I

think it cannot be without advantage that we should take the opportunity to discuss in a higher tone the secular pursuits of our students, and to induce them to examine in some degree their motives. This may be done without the risk of offence when done generally ; no one can feel that he is personally selected as an example, or that any undue advantage is taken of the knowledge of his private circumstances by his adviser, when the advice is given by one to whom he is a total stranger. Such a feeling too often blunts the keen edge of remonstrance, and prevents the word of caution and reproof from making any deep impression.

Of those then who are full of high hopes of academic fame, who are longing to gain the high honors of the University, I would ask this question, What is the value they set on the prize for which they are striving? This is not a mere echo of the voice of ages, proclaiming the emptiness and vanity of all human pursuits—I do not mean it at all in that sense. I know that the age is practical, and that it is now no time for sentimental moralizing. I wish the question to be one of plain and useful import.

Is there any real love for science or literature in this strife of the schools? Or is it merely the worldly reward which such distinction brings that animates you, my brethren? And of the worldly rewards, which are the due result of success, is it the position, and the opportunities

such position affords of serving God in your generation faithfully, that your ambition seeks, or is it the pecuniary emoluments only, and the selfish gratifications which wealth can purchase, that lure you on to toil and labour?

There are some men who love to dwell on the noble sayings and doings of days of yore, who in the enthusiasm of the study, and the calm of retirement, summon up around them the mighty dead, and hold high converse with the orators and poets and philosophers of the past ages; whose solitude is peopled with the heroes of thought, and whose silence hears the whispers of the imaginative and the eloquent; they love to trace the workings of the diviner part of man in all the gifted and reflecting of ancient days, to see the intellectual fire bursting forth from the trammels of superstition and ignorance; Grecian heroism and Roman fortitude, the characteristics of the two great races, which have left their impress on all the civilized nations, they delight to trace in all the fortunes, the rise, and the fall of their empire.

Others, again, are eager to extend to farther limits the knowledge of the ways of God with the material creation, to enlarge the capabilities of the keen and subtle analysis by which we unlock the secrets of nature, to investigate the analogies of the laws which bind atom to atom, as well as system to system; they wish to dig out from the vast mine wherein lie hid the things of which we

still are ignorant, some more of the precious ore which enriches human knowledge; and to make all these discoveries available for the comfort, convenience, and necessities of man.

Both these have their enjoyment, and an enjoyment that is reasonable; but no part of the commendation which the philosophic mind can bestow on studies of such a nature, can be allowed to be degraded by its bestowal on the labours of those who cultivate literature or science merely for the pecuniary benefits which they bring.

It is not without reason and much enquiry and consideration that such a warning as this is offered: it is known to many, who contemplate the fact with regret and sadness, that there are some among the successful of our students who have this sordid spirit, and who, no doubt, will with sophistical acumen endeavour to hide from themselves the meanness of their aims.

We cannot but regret that the generous endowments of our ancestors, which were intended for high and worthy and intellectual objects, all tending to the glory of God and the welfare of mankind, dispensed as they must be for excellence in study, should degenerate into mere sinecures, or rewards for past exertion, and be supposed to bring with them no responsibilities and no duties. We must feel dissatisfied if the tone amongst many who come up to the University is not any love for science, not any deep desire to profit in their own minds by the abundant

and excellent assistance here offered to the student in numberless ways, not any generous aspirations after high intellectual culture, but a mere anxiety for money, hopes that they may turn their acquirements as soon as possible into that which may minister to selfish pleasures or to covetousness.

I am not alluding to many, whose professional qualifications include of necessity a degree of school, nor to those who come here merely to pass through the course which the prevalent opinion of society has stamped as the desirable educational career of a gentleman; but I mean the remarks I have made to be addressed to those who have before them a laborious University course, who intend to struggle for the honours and rewards of the University.

Neither do I wish to be understood as arguing that these prospective rewards and emoluments ought not to be wished for: but I ask those who are looking forward to such honourable employment, and who intend faithfully to discharge its duties, Whether this is all they are looking forward to? I ask those to whom my observations apply, to examine honestly and fairly their views for the future. And if their desire for the golden return of scientific and literary exertion is uppermost, if it be not in subservience to higher views of mental improvement for themselves, if it be not altogether less important to them than the formation of their own minds, the love of know-

ledge for its own sake, *then* we would beg of them to pause and reflect whether their objects are worthy, whether they are not debasing the coin of the republic of letters, and whether such an estimation of the advantages they enjoy be not wholly contrary to the intentions of the place.

The nation, whose sons and daughters have given the magnificent endowments which form the inheritance of these ancient corporations, and whose laws have protected the present holders in their rights, and secured to them the usufruct—the nation has a right to demand of all who avail themselves of the benefits secured, and who strive to attain to the honours thrown open to all, that they should do so with honest regard to the great objects intended, and not bring into the groves of Academus the disposition of one who drives a bargain; that they should look to the high reward of learning in the elevation of their own moral and intellectual being, more than to the price at which they can sell again their acquirements.

And if it be asked what the objects are which we suppose the national mind may aim at, in the maintenance of these great fountain-heads of education, we must answer, that the object broadly and widely understood, is to form Christian men. Those who profit by these institutions in their right spirit, ought in the first place to be *men*, in intellect, in power, in laborious energy, in all high qualities that can distinguish one man above another. And this would be the case if the

foundations were not specially and intentionally religious foundations. As far as the temporal prosperity of the kingdom is concerned with the abodes of learning, it is to be promoted by their sending forth year by year valuable citizens of a great and free country, whose minds are stored with the wisdom of ages, and whose faculties are sharpened and prepared for the great contest of life. They ought to be *men* in the highest sense of the word, able to promote the public weal, and willing to do so, considering themselves as specially called to stand in the foremost ranks of their country's sons.

In the senate, at the bar, or on the bench, in the paths of literature and science, and as parish priests too, their manly qualities should shine forth and prove that they have trod the courts of the temple of learning with lofty aims, and have achieved corresponding success.

And if we looked no further than on those motives which, as self-love or ambition, prompt men to energetic action, yet even these rebel against the sordid spirit which would make the mere pecuniary value of University success the *βραβεῖον* of the student. An ardent patriotic spirit, even if fired by no Christian zeal, yet recoils from this wretched aim, and sets itself a task higher and nobler, in the devotion of its energies to the good of the country.

But we have more to urge.

The voice of the Christian Church is lifted

up for ever with the same proclamation of eternal warfare against selfishness: *No one of us liveth to himself*: we owe all our faculties to *Christ*. In whatever way we are preparing ourselves for the struggle of life—in ALL—the Christian man is to consider how he may, in his vocation and ministry, religious or secular, busy or contemplative, amidst the bustling crowd, or in the quiet retirement of the country—how he may promote the cause of Christ Jesus. Religion and loyalty, and laborious industry in every calling, he has to promote, not only by subduing his own heart, and quelling the corruption of his own thoughts, by punctual rendering of obedience to the powers ordained of God, and by unremitting diligence in discharge of duty; but by example and precept for the good of others, by instilling into all about him right principles, by promoting peace and good-will amongst men actively, with personal sacrifice, by giving time, energy, and thoughtful consideration, to the general welfare¹. And this too, with constant reference to our one Lord, whose mission was against the love of self.

Need we say that those will thus recognize the call made upon them, by the very existence of the princely benefactions of our ancestors, to serve God faithfully in their generation as *men* and as *Christians*, will certainly not be liable to any such

¹ τοῦτο κανὼν χριστιανισμοῦ τοῦ πλειοστάτου, τοῦτο ὄρος ἡκριβωμένος, αὐτὴ ἡ κορυφὴ ἢ ἀνωτάτω, τὸ τὰ κοινῇ συμφέροντα ζητεῖν.—*S. Chrysostom on 1 Cor. Orat. 25.*

imputation as that which I have selected for warning: they will thrust from them with contempt the mercenary spirit of covetousness (naturally so alien to the youthful disposition), and gladly turn to those more exalted views of duty, which the voice of man suggests—the voice of God *commands*.

But a more serious question arises when we come to consider the use that will be made of the acquired mental power for which men ought to strive.

When in the progress of the arts the hidden forces of nature have been called forth, and those secret virtues have become known, they have indeed been found instruments of unbounded power in men's hands, promoting in many ways our comfort and convenience; but it has been also discovered that these subtle agents are sources of frightful destruction, unless handled with the greatest care and precaution; so it must be with the human mind, when armed with keen power of investigation, acute criticism, the faculty of subtle discrimination—when all this machinery of a strong understanding has been created, and is prepared for vigorous exercise, there arises a like danger in its application, if safeguards, cautions, and all the checks required for sound judgment, are disregarded. In such a case the powerful intellect is no longer like those natural agents which are subdued to the will of man, but rather like the stormy wind, which in the wildness of uncontrol rushes on, the minister of devastation and ruin.

In these days there prevails amongst many a habit of thought which becomes in its excess almost a worship of the human intellect; and in a certain sense the present age witnesses, like the last, a celebration of the deification of human reason. After the prestige of authority had been lost, because those who wielded this wonderful engine for guiding and controlling mankind had scandalously misused their power, and because, in fact, authority ought not to *control*, but to *guide* inquiry; then, by a natural reaction, it no longer preserved its proper place, and its absence led to lamentable disorders. Ever since the invention of printing, and the extension of knowledge consequent thereupon, there has been an oscillating between two extremes, the surging of the tide towards perfectly unshackled speculation, being followed by the opposite phase, when in dismay at the results of the wild freedom of the speculative, men endeavoured to evoke again from the shades of past ages the shattered and disjointed armour of authority which had once been cast aside as a cumbrous impediment.

As the human race grows older, these fits become more intense and less durable: each extreme begets its opposite more rapidly: it becomes constantly harder and harder to maintain that *via media* which alone is *via tuta*: all these ultra views command men's sympathies and their affections much more readily, are entered into more keenly, and gain a greater number of enthusiastic

partisans, than can possibly be the case with the negative position which alike condemns both in their excess, but is ready to embrace out of each whatever can be shewn to be consonant with sound judgment.

All bold attempts please: the courage men shew in attacking old modes of thought, old conclusions, and long-established theories, especially in religious and social matters, where in old times, under the prevalence of a conclusive authority, such attempts would have been reprobated and put down with severity; this very courage, often to the exclusion of a sounder reason, gains men's admiration and favour to the innovators; and insensibly these attacks work changes even in those who most eagerly oppose them, and so are influential beyond the sphere of their apparent spread.

It must happen that these views meet with reception in many an ardent and aspiring breast. Free inquiry is no longer branded with a mark of infidelity. We have been taught, with truth, that the great reformation of religion in the 16th century commenced by men finding that mental powers involved religious responsibility, and that convictions of the judgment acquired by a thoughtful investigation are not only better than those which are wrought by a confiding trust, but that it was the bounden duty of all men to have such convictions when the question was put before them.

It is true that in those days it was not thought

necessary to require of men, before acceptance of the Bible as the Word of God, a laborious investigation of the historical testimony on which that important question rests : authority and tradition still prevailed thus far ; but the last century affords us an example that such inquiries as these naturally spring up, and that men would begin boldly to question all and every particle of the system which had, up to that time, been held sacred.

The noble efforts of the learned, who contended manfully with the Deist and infidel in those days, successfully maintained the right cause ; yet they could not stifle the spirit : it remains, and now is working subtilly amongst us.

Again : the social question is one which it is impossible to ignore. Though thousands of lives and millions of treasure were expended within the memory of many now living in restoring an ancient monarchy whose overthrow had been effected with the utmost violence against the traditions of the social and political fabric of Europe, the present generation has seen changes scarcely less remarkable in their result, effected with comparative quiet, and no attempt is now made to uphold what seemed formerly to be the very palladium of political authority.

Another symptom of great change in the general tendency of men's minds in this matter is, that monarchical institutions, so far from being valued as of Divine authority, are preserved rather from a deference to prejudices than from any strong con-

viction of their superiority. Can any one suppose that in the forming a new independent state in the present day, under circumstances which did not strongly urge, on traditional grounds, the establishment of hereditary monarchy, KINGLY government would be resorted to, and not rather the democratic form? And does not this shew how strongly the current sets in a particular direction, clean contrary to the ancient channel?

All this put together makes one very apprehensive for the future. And where shall *all* these influences be found to work so strongly as in the minds of those who, with a clear head and vast powers of acquirement, and in the full enjoyment of youthful hopes and eager anticipations, are looking forward to the taking an active part in the events of the next forty years, which are pregnant with important influences on our relations both in Church and State?

To you, then, my brethren, for whom this great struggle of opinions has attractions, and who are even now perhaps under the thralldom of one or other of the prevalent schools among us, I would earnestly address a few words of warning. I would not bid you refrain from enquiring into all these questions which agitate mankind; far from it. To do your duty nobly and conscientiously you must make yourselves masters of the fundamental principles of the great controversy: you must examine thoroughly the pretensions of the Christian Church, and arrive at a conscientious and honest conclusion

thereupon. You must, at the same time, listen, without self-confidence or querulous impatience, to the yearnings of many who see danger, difficulty, and doubt, in store for you in your investigation. It is an awful question, full of grave responsibility. You must also not push aside rudely, nor adopt too readily, the complaints of those who condemn our social institutions. Your duty is to examine carefully, to judge honestly, and act strenuously upon your acquired convictions. But in *all* these things there are certain great principles to be observed; and before I mention one which I specially intend, let me observe, that with respect to religion (of which it is of course my chief duty to speak in this place) you have a contest to go through different to that which you might have had seventy or eighty years ago.

The question with us now is, not whether Christianity be from God, but another, no less important, What is Christianity?

The actual advantage which results from this change in the subject matter of discussion is, that there is *no doubt* about many of the practical parts of religion, or of our obligations. The Spirit of Christianity, as far as it embraces the affections only, is by all admitted, commended, admired: to it we all are in professed subjection. The object of discussion is the faith and discipline of the universal Church of Christ. I may, therefore, set before you my caution with confidence, because it has its root in the practical part of Christianity.

‘No one of us liveth to himself.’ Personal and selfish views are hereby condemned. But the text is not merely the expression of a negation. It imports that we live to Christ, i. e. that our energies, our faculties, all our strivings, all our labours, are to have respect to Him. Let no vain-glory of superiority of mind, let no self-worship, no worship of human reason, encroach upon that feeling of reverence, devotion, and submission, which we all owe to the Incarnate Son of God. Let us not live to be guides ourselves. ‘Be not many masters; for one is our Master, even Christ.’ Let not any inferior motive come between us and our duty to our Saviour. ‘If a man hate not father and mother, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.’ Worthy thoughts of our allegiance to our Saviour exclude all thoughts of self, and among these, thoughts of advancing our own credit, or shewing ourselves persons superior to what we often hastily call common prejudices.

There is no doubt that many who take up new views, and maintain them vigorously, very often do so with the spirit of the gladiator rather than that of the patriot. The applause of the spectators when an adversary is overthrown is the reward which they seek, and assuredly all that they will obtain. This is not the spirit of the Christian student of mankind and the new philosophy. It is an error to be guarded against.

Not only are we to live actively to Christ our-

selves, but to HIM in the brethren. Our anxiety in the search after truth must be that we may promote the welfare of the general brotherhood, not of a party; and it is strange to notice how often men who commence their investigations with the most honest intention do eventually become unconscientious partizans. In such a case they conceive themselves bound to certain individuals, or certain opinions, and their pride prevents them from recognizing their error, of course the more effectually as they become aware of its being deeper in the principles of their system. This danger is incurred by forgetfulness of the *end* to which their reasonings should have respect. Christ is represented to us in this matter by the universal brotherhood; and the truth that our faculties are due to Him is now translated into this proposition, that we are bound to the whole family of God. Whatever of mental power we possess is a trust for the benefit of the brethren: and as we are bound to them, so are they bound to us; their enlightenment was meant for our benefit. Came not the Holy Spirit of God unto them also? In this sense it is that Church authority has moral claims upon us. 'No one of us liveth to himself.' We are members, portions of Christ's body; and as if one member suffer, all the members must suffer with it, and one member rejoice, all the members must share its joy, so in matters intellectual and spiritual, all the brethren have been taught of God in different degrees according to the progress

which the Divine influence makes in their hearts ; and their teaching is intended as a guide to us, a warning and an assistance. If we neglect this we may pursue our theories till they land us in the region of the shadow of death, and we shall not be blameless : we shall have no right to plead the conscientiousness of our opinions in abatement of the penalty due to error, if we have not paid a due regard to the great principle of Christianity, which asserts that we are all members one of another.

The text proclaims the Christian warfare against selfishness. It bids you, my brethren, to whom these remarks are specially addressed, remember, first, that your career in this place ought to have a higher object than worldly rewards of emolument, pecuniary independence, and ease. There is a higher task before you, the higher you can ascend in the career of honour. Secondly, if you are caught by the spirit of the age, remember that your discharge of your duty of investigation will not be blameless, if you neglect the warning that you are in this matter a servant of Christ, that you owe the harvest of your faculties to all the brethren, that you are not to be saved alone, and that others have a light to shed on you, as well as you on them. Members of the True Vine, whose elder branches have now reached heaven, nourished by the same vivifying influence, dependent upon the same source of life, though on some sides the gifts of God may be more abundantly poured than on others, though the dew of

Divine Grace may fall more plenteously in one place than another, yet none of these branches has any independent lot—‘No one of us liveth to himself.’

The whole body of the faithful, triumphant and militant, with Christ at their head, the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs, and Holy Church throughout the world, all call upon us with one voice to remember the great practical rule of Christianity, to forsake all low, carnal, selfish aims, and devote all our faculties to the great object of the Incarnation, the redemption of the human race—*our* race.

To what purpose, suppose you, have these foundations been established and maintained? Surely as to their general object none can hesitate to answer, that it is the glory of God and the welfare of man—not to minister to the indolent comforts of some few individuals,—not to induce such a cultivation of the intellect as shall glorify a man’s own self,—not to be nurseries of mental power, which may be directed to overthrow the superstructure of ages in the dogma of the Church, or sap the foundations of social security. No! far from all this. The piety of University benefactors has consecrated their gifts. ‘Fear God, honour the King; honour all men; love the brotherhood.’ These are the precepts which stand as frontlets to the University. They all require self-subjugation, and they are violated by those who turn the dona-

tions of the faithful either into sinecure rewards for literary and scientific exertions, or otherwise use them for selfish or party purposes, to the exclusion of these great objects of our holy faith.

We ought rather to stimulate our lagging faculties to noble and disinterested labours for the good of our Church and our country, by frequent reflexions on these substantial proofs which men have given in old times of their good will to man, and their love for the brethren, and stir up ourselves to active exertion, that we be not found to have come short of their zeal and devotion.

We shall be *deeply responsible* for the use we make of such gifts. Being present and sensible they ought to strike us the more vividly. They should awaken in us some emulation when we see what men have done who remembered the great obligations of the Christian family, and gave substantial proofs of their anxiety to discharge them.

And then far higher and more touching is the memory of Him after whom we are all named *Christians*. If we feel a spirit of self-sacrifice stirred up within us by that of our fellow-men, how much more ought the example of our Redeemer to work in us. A life of toil and penury, cheerfully undertaken for the benefit of man, amidst scorn and rebuke, and imputation of evil motives by those whose salvation from eternal misery he came to effect, unwearied benevolence, continued even when meeting with base ingratitude—a sad and bitter lot ending in a cruel and ignominious death.

All this, voluntarily undertaken and submitted to by Him who was very God, begotten of very God. Surely this, if constantly kept in mind, and thought upon diligently, will exact from us desires to fulfil, in some faint degree, the duties which it suggests. 'He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him, who died for them, and rose again.'

Would that such recollections were in all of us effectual; would that the words of the text might be true, not only as an admonition, but as a record of actual experience, and God's Holy Spirit might so work on all our hearts, that of every one of us here present, before the Day of Doom, it might be said with truth, 'None of *us* liveth to himself.'

NEW BOOKS

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