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THE

# DEBATER'S HANDBOOK

AND

## Controversialist's Companion

## A MANUAL

OF

## THE NATURE, PRINCIPLES, ART AND METHODS OF CONTROVERSY

WITH A LIST OF UPWARDS OF

## One Thousand Two Hundred Subjects suitable for Discussion

*COLLECTED AND CLASSIFIED*

BY

SAMUEL NEIL

AUTHOR OF "THE ART OF REASONING;" "THE YOUNG DEBATER;" "COMPOSITION AND ELOCUTION;" "THE HANDBOOK OF MODERN HISTORY;" "SHAKESPERE, A CRITICAL BIOGRAPHY;" "THE LIFE OF LUTHER," ETC.

"He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper."—EDMUND BURKE.

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# PREFACE.

'THE Debater's Handbook" is intended for the use of young men who are desirous of engaging in the culture of active personal thought. It is less a guide to the exercise of the acquisitive than the inquisitive faculties. Its aim is to aid the investigative more than the receptive powers. It assumes the inclination to reason on facts, experiences, statements, proposals, and theories, and the disposition to employ the critical capacity for the discovery of the right, the true, and the good.

Already its author has supplied "the young debater" with a work suited to the earlier stages of life. He now supplements and extends that tract so as to afford counsel and help to those who are eager to engage in a life of thoughtful activity among their fellows in the studious culture of their intelligence, and in the considerate co-operation of thought required so much in our day to secure the proper progress of society.

The author hopes that by bringing the laws of controversial thought before his readers he will assist them to take their places in society as living powers, and aid them in being centres of intellectual influence wherever they are.

In the following pages he proposes to place before the reader some of those ideas concerning controversy which have had weight with himself and have been influential on the minds of many who, having exercised their energies in the arena afforded by the debating society, have thereafter taken their place among the considerate promoters of education and activity of thought, the careful critics of public measures, and the practical directors of those movements for the amelioration of life for which our age is remarkable. Of these not a few have passed into the influential circles of social, political, and ecclesiastical life, and have found the benefit derived from their patient labours in acquiring the power to employ critical reflectiveness on the ideas brought before them, to be great and manifold. In the hope that the matter now to be subjected to the perusal of the thoughtful and ingenuous may be found profitable in directing them to form correct opinions regarding the nature and uses of controversy, to acquire proper notions of its art and methods, and to gain such an acquaintance with its laws and forms as shall enable them to act as judicious competitors in their debating societies now, and to employ cultured thought in the investigation of truth hereafter in the wider stage of public life, the book in the reader's hands has been composed.

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"Here is a thing wherein I would willingly have you agree,—that, is to debate but not to quarrel; for friends discuss among themselves for their own improvement, but enemies quarrel for the destruction of each other."—*Plato.*

"Legitimæ inquisitionis vera norma est, ut nihil veniat in practicam cujus non fit etiam doctrina aliqua et theoria."—*Bacon.*

"Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties."—*Milton.*

"Our faith and knowledge thrive by exercise as well as our limbs and complexions."—*Milton.*

"Those who have not thoroughly examined to the bottom all their own tenets must confess they are unfit to prescribe to others; and are unreasonable in imposing that as truth on other men's belief which they themselves have not searched into, nor weighed the arguments of probability on which they should receive or reject them."—*Locke.*

"Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial."—*Burke.*

"All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility."—*J. S. Mill.*

"I would rather meet with a true philosopher, a considerative mind—one that hath searched and examined, one that hath thought upon and submitted things to discussion—I had rather be in that man's company than in his that will entertain me with delights of sense. For to please the mind, to satisfy a man's understanding—this is worthy of a man, this is entertainment."—*Whichcot (Provost of King's College, Cambridge).*

"Truth can operate only by supporting evidence; it cannot change sensation; it cannot change the sentiment of truth and falsehood."—*Bentham.*

# THE DEBATER'S HANDBOOK,

AND

# Controversialist's Companion.

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTION.—DEBATING SOCIETIES AND THEIR USES.

In our country, Literary and Debating Societies are favourite forms in which intelligent young men endeavour to provide themselves with the delight and profit to be derived from genial intellectual companionship. The social and educative influences which such associations of earnest young minds, whose investigative faculties are all on the alert, set in activity in a district, are capable of effecting results full of benefit, not to their members alone, but to all with whom they are brought into contact. Just at that period of life when the docility of youth is stirred to questioning by the quickness of the freshly active reasoning faculties, these societies supply at once a stimulant to reflection and a repression of egotism, in the reciprocal interactivity of thought they induce, and in the scope they afford at once for the exercises of individual energy of mind, and the immediate subjection of all the results of such efforts to social criticism; in the sense of duty they interfuse with life, and the training to bear investigation they impart. They constitute a sort of intellectual volunteer corps, whose drill enlivens life, infuses spirit, excites activity, assists perseverance, and promotes competitive progress; and whose arrangements are such as to train and exercise the minds of their members in the courteous use of speech, the proper conduct of the understanding, and the practical observance of the social amenities. Simple as their agencies are, and loose as their form may seem, they succeed in a great measure in

preparing the mind for the defence of the opinions it has reached, and for offering defiance to many of the more palpable sophistries which are employed by astute proselytizers to mislead the unwary and the unpractised. The intellectual gladiatorship in which their members engage may not be remarkable for the brilliancy of its results, but like the exercises of the gymnasium, the drill hall, the rifle competition, the sham fight, and the review, their mimic warfare of principles and speeches prepares for future effectiveness as well as yields a present joy in the sense of power elicited, and the insight imparted into the results of far-off consequences, of exertions made in the hope, but without the foresight of success.

As facts are the best arguments in a matter of this sort, we have great pleasure in quoting the testimony of a thinker, scholar, theologian and historian of the highest name and rank—Bishop Connop Thirlwall of St. David's. He is speaking of the "Conversazione Society" of Cambridge, derisively nicknamed "The Apostles," which had excited alarm in some minds from the fearlessness of its expressions and the wide scope of the questions discussed in it. Thus does the good and great Bishop refer to, defend and pay tribute to this Debating Society as a power for culture of the best sort.

"If you are not acquainted with the fact, you may be alarmed when I inform you that there has long existed in this place a society of young men, limited indeed in number, but continually receiving new members to supply its vacancies, and selecting them by preference among the youngest, in which all subjects of the highest interest, without any exclusion of those connected with religion, are discussed with the most perfect freedom. But, if this fact is new to you, let me instantly dispel any apprehension it may excite, by assuring you that the members of this society, for the most part, have been and are among the choicest ornaments of the University, that some are now among the ornaments of the church, and that so far from having their affections embittered, their friendships torn and lacerated, their union has been rather one of brothers than of friends. "The Cambridge Apostles,"—*Macmillan's Magazine*, November, 1864, p. 18.

Debating Societies should aim, not at the decision, but the discussion of questions,—at training to thoughtfulness, and refraining from dogmatism; and offering a practical education in the consideration of arguments, the weighing of evidence, and the careful testing of assertions, opinions, and proposals. To gain from them all the good that can be got they should be so conducted as to excite, interest, employ, and culture the powers of the intellect in the examination of the various questions which afford occasion for the exercise of the judicial faculties of the mind, and to habituate their members to the constant exertion of critical reflectiveness. Discussion as an *educative* agency merits a far larger amount of consideration than has been usually allotted to it among those who have the government of public instruction or the management of young men in general. In this age of newspaper and periodical reading, when every variety of opinion is thrown open to the perusal of all and sundry, a good deal of practice in sifting thought and testing the incidence of argument is requisite. A receptive but uncritical mind is scarcely fitted for workshop or warehouse, bank desk or counter. Men's minds are busy, and they overflow in talk; the public press teems with ideas which require careful consideration and cautious digestion; even life itself is so full of problems and theorems, that skill in the ready application of some test to what is set forth as truth is peculiarly desirable. Debate quickens the perception of the results and implications of statements, trains to efficacy in the comparison of thoughts, and inspirits the mind with a sense of delight in exerting its capacities, so as to discover the truth or falsehood, accuracy or incorrectness, of given assertions, opinions, or propositions. It necessitates the acquisition of a practical logic, of instantaneous reflectiveness, of the power of placing a thought before the mind in such a way that it may be fully seen and fairly examined. It polishes, exercises, sharpens and invigorates the intellect, and makes "a ready man."

As an *investigative* agency, controversy has long held a high place. Dialectic skill has always been an aid in the progress and in the triumph of truth. It is, even as an antagonist to the most

certain articles of the soul's creed, a great help to the thorough comprehension of all their implications, and to the clear conception of the contents of a belief. In the less settled matters of thought on which opinion only is possible, controversy brings into view all the restrictive circumstances under which these opinions must be received, and under what exceptions they must be acted upon. In questions of morals, politics, social economy, education, taste, and inferences from the doctrines of religion, or from the facts of history, great advantage is gained by the casting of thought into a controversial form; because these questions are then regarded with greater thoroughness and attention from the pointed observation required to be given to the matters involved in question. To get into the habit of constantly referring to "both sides of the subject," of searching into the facts in its disfavour as well as in its favour, and to be constantly alive to the necessity and advisability of examining all topics suggested to the mind as truth, with the keen eye of an opponent, can scarcely fail to give greater certainty to the operations of the mind, and greater likelihood of gaining the true solution of the question investigated. In short, it has the tendency to make "a sure man;" at the same time that its call and demand for complete information on all the possible relations of a subject give the best prospects that the person who honestly endeavours to fulfil the conditions of controversy will become a "full man."

As an example of what is meant by the advocacy of investigative study and a proof of its practicality, the following extract from a letter received by the author from the late John Stuart Mill, bearing date July 13th, 1865, the day on which he became Member of Parliament for Westminster, may be quoted. "I was then connected," he says, "with a set of young men who were engaged in studying Logic, Political Economy, and Psychology; and discussed every question of these Sciences, with text books before them, in meetings held twice a week, and continued for several years. To those meetings I have always ascribed a great part of my own mental improvement." An account of these meetings, of great interest, has been given by Mrs. Grote in her excellent biography of her illustrious

husband, the historian of Greece, and the expositor of Plato and Aristotle, in which due acknowledgment is made of the beneficial stimulus derived from these studious mornings devoted to discursive reading, and incisive thought. It is, of course, not essential, in fact it is scarcely possible, that such meetings should take place commonly in the mornings. Evening, with its leisure and opportunitty, will do well enough.

As a *social* agency, controversy has perhaps been much misunderstood. It has too commonly been translated as if it meant quarrelsomeness, a bitter feud of words—employed as swords—for defeat and destruction, and the gratification of wrath. Debate is usually said to be engendered of strife and over-zeal. This is a great mistake. Debate is merely critical thought. All discovery, progress, improvement, civilization, is the result of debate—the down-beating, eventually, of error before truth, wrong before right, evil before good. All the holiest influences and appliances of life are, in reality, engaged in controversy; endeavouring to win us from sin and thoughtlessness, mistake and suffering, ignorance and impotence, to righteousness, reflectiveness, truth, joy, knowledge, and power. Controversy has been the benefactor, not the bane, of social and economic, civil and religious life. Controversy is essentially a social agent. It seeks to persuade and convince, by submitting all subjects to the ultimate arbitrement of enlightened reason. It is true that it abhors dogmatism, and resists unproved claims to infallibility, and hence, perhaps, dogmatism dislikes it. It asks and it gives a fair field, and no favour; it listens to every advocacy calmly, discreetly, yields its faith to what is proved to be true, or shown to be probable, and gives its favour to everything that exhibits a possibility of beneficiality.

As a *moral* agent, debate has some influences which are apt to be overlooked. If it stimulates inquiry into many things, and becomes by doing so inconvenient and intrusive, it also induces men to endeavour to have, if not good, at least plausible reasons to offer for their proposals or practices. Hence it tends to restrain men within, at least, the limits of the defensible, if not of the approvable. It puts an arrest, too, on the hasty prejudgments which men are often

tempted to make, impairs the strength of dogmatism, and lessens the superciliousness of egotism. It is a standing defence of the right of private judgment, and a constant inducement to endeavour to be able to render a reason for the faith or practices of which we approve. It moderates and softens the manner of thinkers, and subdues to gentleness much of the political and public life of those who are engaged in the management or criticism of affairs. By maintaining the right to submit all subjects of thought and all public occurrences to inquiry, Controversy exerts a considerable effect in procuring their conformity to the general principles of morality and righteousness.

Nor is controversy without good possibilities in a *religious* point of view. Religious sectarianism must content itself to submit to the criticism of controversy, and must hence examine the various topics and arguments which may be employed in its favour or against it. Even truth itself gains by the reiterated proofs which controversy supplies of the impregnability of its foundations and the irrefragability of its main tenets. It keeps alive in the minds of men a vital activity of reflectiveness, and a disposition to obey the divine command, "Prove all things," so as to enable men to "hold fast that which is good." We cannot forget that our ideas on this point are opposed by a class—a class who think mere adherence to a creed of words, mere words and dogmas, constitutes faith, that investigation is a sin, and that it is a doctrine of evil which proclaims it to be a human duty and a human right to "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." They say,—

"Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

But *where* is ignorance bliss? Is it not well said by one of England's noblest sons,—

"Ignorance is the curse of God,
Knowledge the wings with which we rise to heaven"?

Do we not remember that one of our recently lost worthy inheritors of the old renown of English letters has said, "Knowledge, as all followers of it must know, has a very limited power indeed when it informs the head alone; but when it informs the

head and the heart too, it has a power over life and death, the body and the soul, and dominates the universe"? and is it not on this very account that in the prophecy of the blessedness of the later day of the earth's happiness it is declared that "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased"?

But advocacy of such opinions is decried as latitudinarianism. Latitudinarianism! What is wider than the universe of God—except the grace and mercy of the divine character of the Deity himself? To know God, himself, and nature, with all their relations and interrelations—surely that is a wide enough field for thought, and that is the latitudinarianism allotted to man in his inquiries and investigations. To know the worth or the worthlessness of every *ism* which may lead or mislead men is to exercise the right imparted by the Scriptures, which lay it down as the duty of man to "prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

The class of advocates for unreasoning faith and verbal adherence to uninvestigated creeds and cries in philosophy, politics, science, social life, or religion, is passing away, becoming not only numerically smaller, but actually less influential amongst men.

As a *political* agent Debate has always been held to be supreme. Hustings and public meetings, conferences, congresses, and parliaments are all arenas of controversy—arenas in which it is considered to be not beneficial merely, but indispensable.

The journalism of our age is now more aggressive and more suggestive than at any previous time. But it is also, perhaps, more thoroughly propagandist—sectarian and partisan—than it has ever previously been. The advocacy of opinions and interests is systematized, and has become a main aim of literary effort. The press is in bondage to parties and proprietories, whose purpose is fixed and whose aims are settled, and hence it exhorts rather than discusses, and pleads more earnestly than it proves. The opinions entertained and expressed are somewhat more reasonable, but not unfrequently less reasoned, than in bygone years, when the battles of principles were waged. Principles are often now-a-days assumed as incontrovertible which are, indeed, but traditions; and the watchwords of factions in Church and State are frequently used as

if they were "the bright consummate flower" of thought rather than of passion. It is taken for granted that they are rooted and grounded in truth, and that they have been diligently trained from the original seeds of experience by the disciplinary culture of reason. That this is far from being the true state of the case may be seen in the haste and hurry with which expediency is pursued, and how shifty the tactics are by which the purposes of parties are accomplished. The importance of the culture of thought, and of exercising the habit of reasoning in politics, cannot indeed be doubted, however much it may be decried.

As controversy, then, performs so large and wide a function in human life, it is advantageous to acquire the art of employing it readily and effectively; and debating societies are justified as *palæstræ* (exercising schools) for the thoughtful performance of all the duties proper to public life.

Profoundly impressed with the beneficiality of inducing reflective reading and examinative thought, of accustoming the general reader to demand a well-considered reason for what he is asked to believe, and of training all men to thoughtful keenness in the testing of opinions, the writer has been for many years engaged in working earnestly and practically towards the attainment of these ends by contributions to "the impartial discussion of all important subjects" in literature, education, social economy, politics, science, art, history, and religion, and in the promotion of self-culture by controversy as his contribution to social usefulness.

The issues of time are manifold, and the fashions of the world change. Few things were more decried, a little less than twenty years ago, than controversy. It was the order of the day then to represent faith and reason as antagonists, and to confound the advocates of free discussion with the abettors of scepticism and the leaders in political agitations. Much of this is given up as untenable. Controversy has now almost incorporated itself with our daily life, and the search for truth has been solemnly declared to be a human duty. Parliaments, pulpits, platforms, periodicals, and pamphlets, almost unanimously concur in regarding every topic as "a question." Newspapers discuss, conventions debate,

conferences argue, and public meetings consider; while all assert their desire to discover a *reasonable* solution of the matters which engage their attention—a solution attainable only *after discussion.*

The writer is indebted to a friend for the following observations, on the comparative advantages and disadvantages of Debating Societies, which he commends to the notice of the reader.

Debating societies, the offspring of free speech, have, and are exerting still a very powerful influence on the tone and condition of society. By them thought has received a mighty stimulus, deeply cherished prejudices an overpowering blow, whilst energies long latent have been called forth to do vigorous battle with the many moral obstacles that clog the pathway of the human soul in its strivings after the truth and peace of God.

But with the advantages which they thus offer up to all men, and especially to those embarking in the stirring life of our great cities, there are also certain dangers which, if not carefully avoided, may greatly neutralize their just influence upon character.

Archbishop Whately says, in his "Elements of Logic," that "debating societies are certainly free from the objections which lie against the ordinary mode of theme-writing, since the subjects discussed are usually such as the speakers do feel a real interest in; but then that which is the proper object of true eloquence—to carry one's point, to convince or persuade, rather than to display ability—is more likely to be lost sight of when the main object avowedly is to learn to speak well, and to show it."

It must be admitted that too often such fears are fully realized, and a ready tongue, aided by a few stock quotations, seems more sought after than the honest and feeling, though it may be rugged, sentences of a thoughtful mind.

On the other hand, it is foolish to close our eyes to the fact that those whose great object it is to cultivate their minds, and tune their tongues to sing with melody the high praises of righteousness and truth, always in the end command respect and confidence. They may never dazzle, but they will give light, or point to its dawning; they will not with presumptuous haste pass opinions on things whose dimensions are too great for them, but

wait for opportunities when well-digested thought may be expressed with the abiding influence of conscientious belief.

And these are they who avoid the quicksands spoken of by the writer to whom reference has been made, when he says,—

"If, while young men's faculties are in an immature state, and their knowledge scanty and imperfectly arranged, they are preternaturally hurried into a habit of fluent elocution, they are likely to retain through life a careless facility of pouring forth ill-digested thoughts in well-turned phrases, and an aversion to cautious reflection."

A man will thus have been qualifying himself only for the lion's part in the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe:—

*Snug.* "Have you the lion's part written, pray you? if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study."

*Quince.* "You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring."

The suggestion follows that "none should introduce themselves to this kind of practice too early, always taking care at the same time to pay particular attention to the general cultivation of their minds."

Advice like this, coming as it does from one thoroughly conversant as he was with the various temperaments and peculiar foibles of young men, cannot but call forth the most earnest consideration. Yet the task is one that amounts almost to an impossibility—to settle at what time a young man may with modest confidence presume to express his opinions and declare his principles in public. Here it is well to remember, as Dr. Watts has it, that "the mind's the stature of the man." William Pitt was Prime Minister of England before completing his twenty-sixth year; Mozart attained European fame when scarcely a youth, and poor; wonderful Chatterton left the world, and with it the works that were his death and yet are his immortality, when less than twenty years.

In the world of literature and eloquence, as that of business, there must be free trade and healthy competition. The capital of mind when wisely used always yields a large per-centage. Not a few

feel the influence of nervousness too strongly to allow them to stand up and openly dissent from positions taken by the older and more prominent members. But if anything is to be accomplished in the world worthy of effort, there must not only be a modesty that shall preserve from rash and foolish designs, but an amount of self-confidence that will execute the commands of duty, without which it is impossible to be efficient in the emergencies of life. Dean Swift said, with as much truth as sarcasm, that "it is a short way to obtain the reputation of a wise and reasonable man,—whenever any one tells you his opinion, to agree with him." It is undoubtedly most pleasant to stand on the winning side of a debate, to see the flood of feeling carrying on to victory that which you believe to be true; but to speak the mind's convictions, though in the face of a multitude, is something which will act like a tonic on the whole of a man's moral nature. The art of reasoning has been supposed by some to be nothing more than an easy way to prove black white, or a quick method of demonstrating anything and everything. We have to thank our diplomatists, and many of our theologians, for this common error; but for such there might have been a more hearty reception of the grand aim of reasoning, which is to discover the order and beauty of the divine laws. Debating societies give an impetus to the search in bringing together many minds of various capabilities and powers, and striking out from each by the intermingling of thought the light by them possessed. For honest minds are always near to the kingdom of truth, by possessing that sensitive condition of nature on which the image of Him who is "the Truth" may be most indelibly engraven.

The contact of different opinions is productive of another excellent result, in enabling a man to throw off mere habits of thought, and to begin to act from motives founded on great principles. To accomplish this is an important advance in the development of character, for to be led by mere tradition is a bondage of the living to the dead, which being a yoke unintelligently espoused, does not honour them whilst it debases and confounds the wearers. Froude says, "Most men live and think by habit; and when habit fails them, they are like unskilful sailors who have lost the landmarks

of their course, and have no compass, and no celestial chart by which to steer their way.

The most important time to a man is the "living present," and certainly the days through which we are now passing betoken an extraordinary development and excitement of intellectual and moral action. On the results proceeding from this revival of the higher forces and sympathies of our nature depends the quality of the birthright our children will inherit from us.

Debating societies, then, especially when conducted on Christian principles, advance the highest public good, by clearing the mind from miserable narrowness, and by showing the necessity for self-help and mutual help in the culture of the head and heart. They will send forth to the world men of thought and action, who, acting in the noble consciousness of high moral purpose, and who, believing the continual presence among men of a living and loving God, will do that which all find so difficult to succeed in—their duty. [E. C. S.]

Of late years, literary and debating societies, their members and officials, have found a difficulty in getting a supply of lists from which the topics of their word-combats and thought-fights might be selected. At the suggestion of many the following collection of debatable topics has been put to press. It will be found to present the largest quantity of such subjects that has ever been brought together in one publication, and we think that most of the subjects will be found to differ from the lists already published in other works, of which the following are known to the present compiler, viz., Rowton's "Debater," in which 109 are to be found (with a few helps); Brewer's "Guide to English Composition," in which several debatable topics are noted and analyzed; a list of the Subjects of Debate which occupied the attention of the Speculative Society of Edinburgh appended to the "History" of that renowned association for controversial contest; and McEllicott's "American Debater," in which a list of 580 may be seen. Besides these we need scarcely hesitate to mention a work which has had the good fortune to pass through many thousands, though due to the same author as the present work; we refer to "The Young Debater: a Handbook for Mutual Improvement and Debating

Societies," containing 200 "questions suitable for discussion." Some of the "questions" contained in this pamphlet may coincide with those which are to be found mentioned in the above works, but few have been copied from them by the compiler, whose main sources have been the suggestions of numerous correspondents and the notes made in his own reading. It will be seen that in the annexed lists some of the questions have additional matter added in brackets. These, in reality, constitute new questions, but these we do not reckon among the twelve hundred.

They are not, of course, all of equal importance, nor does their selection imply that, in the judgment of the compiler, they are all equally questionable or uncertain. The object has not been to gather together a number of queries to which categorical answers could be given either in the affirmative or negative, as the case might be, but a list of topics of thought admitting of being argued about *pro* and *con*. Neither is it implied that to all the questions herein collected definite and decided replies can be given or attained —even after discussion long, acute, and conscientious. The topics are selected as exercises for thought and speech, for argumentative advocacy or dissent, for intellectual exercitations and suggestive excitements to the activity of the reasoning faculties. The *sole* intent of the compiler has been to prepare a sort of text-book of problems, theorems, exercises, &c., in the practice of oral or written argumentative discussion for young men who are desirous of employing debate as an instrument of social and intellectual self-culture.

If a collection of arithmetical exercises has been found profitable in the preparation of pupils for the business of the counting-house, or if composition themes be useful to the student of expression, it is only a just analogy which would incline us to believe that a compilation of subjects suitable for debate may be beneficial in affording practice for the aspirant who wishes to be qualified to hold his opinions intelligently, and to defend them ably, and so be prepared for the intellectual battle of life.

In order that this little work may be made as useful as possible, we provide for the use of those who are not accustomed to the getting

up of such associations some help in the form of a code or constitution on which they may be based. At the same time reference may be advantageously made by persons engaged in instituting such societies to another form given in "The Young Debater," pp. 5—7.

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## SCHEME OF RULES.

### FOR A DEBATING OR MUTUAL IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY.

1. NAME.—The name of this Association shall be the [ ] SOCIETY.

2. OBJECTS.—The objects of this Society shall be the moral and intellectual improvement of the members.

3. MEANS.—These objects shall be promoted by debates, the reading of essays, criticisms on the same, and such other means as may be agreed upon.

(One evening each [month] shall be devoted to readings and recitations. Such meetings shall be opened to non-members.)

(The reader of an essay not to occupy more than [ ] minutes; the openers of a debate not more than [ ] minutes; and critics not more than [ ] minutes.)

4. OFFICE-BEARERS.—The business of the Society shall be conducted by a President, Vice-President, Minute [and Corresponding] Secretaries, Treasurer, and four Directors, all to be elected annually at [ ]. The Corresponding Secretary to be convener of Directors' meetings.

5. FUNDS.—The annual subscription of each member shall be [ ], payable at [ ]. All sums above [ ] shall be lodged in the [ ] Bank in the name of the Society. All accounts shall be initialled by the President previous to being paid.

6. MEETINGS.—The Society shall meet in [ ] every [ ], [ ] to form a quorum. The chair to be taken at [ ], and the meeting dismissed not later than [ ].

(The meetings of the Society shall be opened and closed [ ].)

7. MOTIONS.—All motions must be laid on the table in writing at the meeting previously to that on which they are to be discussed.

8. MEMBERSHIP.—Intending members shall be proposed and seconded on any evening, and voted for at the next ordinary meeting.

9. ABSENTEES.—Members absent from the meetings for four successive nights shall be waited upon by a committee appointed for the purpose, &c.

10. CHANGES.—No change shall be made in the constitution of the Society unless at [ ] or at a special meeting called for the purpose.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE NATURE, PURPOSE, USES, AND ADVANTAGES OF CONTROVERSY.

THE stir of thought—like the motion of the winds and of the ocean—prevents stagnation, and promotes advancement. No man's opinions ought to be stereotyped. To be progressive is the only way to be truly wise. Controversy is as essential to the health of the mind as exercise is to the health of the body. Investigation is the way to acquire, not only accuracy, but readiness of thought. Every thinking man knows that the lapse of years not only changes the facts which surround him, but also his relation to and knowledge of them ;—

"For the thoughts of men are widened by the process of the sun."

Hence a revision of the opinions a man holds—if he would be honest to himself—becomes absolutely requisite. No such revision as can be satisfactory is possible to those whose minds have not been trained and practised in the comparison and weighing of evidence, and in attention to "the way in which statements are put." Controversy is the gymnasium of reason; that which develops its skill, and makes it fit, in exigencies, "to do the duty that lies nearest it." This argument justifies an education in polemics—an education in "the impartial and deliberate discussion of all important questions" conducted with care and caution, honesty and intelligence.

Controversy cannot cease. Inquiry is natural to man. Inquiry implies the possibility of affirming or denying. "If," says Whately, "it were asked what is to be regarded as the most appropriate intellectual occupation of *man*, as man, what would be the answer? The Statesman is engaged with political affairs; the Soldier with military; the Mathematician with the properties of numbers and magnitudes; the Merchant with commercial concerns, &c.; but in what are *all* and each of these employed?—employed,

I mean, as *men;* for there are many modes of exercise of the faculties, mental as well as bodily, which are in great measure common to us with the lower animals. They are all occupied in deducing, well or ill, conclusions from premises; each is evidently engaged in *reasoning* concerning the subject of his own particular business." Now the greater part of reasoning is discursive. Thought does not go on always in a straight and linear path. We are constantly coming to bifurcations in our way, and at least a twofold possibility of progress opens before us. If there is any systematic way of deciding on the right path, it must be by some sort of controversial proceeding—some balancing of reason against reason, until that has been discovered which is of greatest weight and efficacy. Truth and falsehood lie before man always, act upon his mind continually, ply him on every side with suggestions and limitations. In this conflict of thought controversy is our only resource. After the fight peace may come; before it even compromise will be ineffectual. The way to truth, for man, is through controversy.

Controversy cultures reflectiveness. There is no surer method of stunting and stupefying the mind than that of accustoming it to acquiesce in common opinions, and to accept of thoughts as true because prevalent or paramount. Controversy is the healthy exercise by which men assimilate and appropriate what they "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest." No opinions can rightly be called our own until we have thoroughly investigated the subjects with which they deal on all sides. Nor must we be contented, like Laocoön, because it is sacred or fair-seeming, to dash the spear of inquiry but once against one side of the matter to be tested. We must try each side and examine each opening for error. Controversy is sifting investigation, is the thoughtful exercise of the mind in the search for truth, is foreseeing and far-seeing inquiry.

Lord Bacon suggested the establishment of colleges of controversy; and in Debating Societies an attempt has been made to open to the public such a medium of impartial debate as may, to some extent, fulfil similar functions to those contemplated by the great inductive teacher in his controversial colleges.

Nor can any one truly say that some such agency for investigative debate is unrequired. Controversy makes itself felt in every field in which thought attempts to exercise its activities. History has never been free from debatable topics; politics is a favourite subject for intellectual contention; law acts as umpire in human disputes; literature has been as much famed for the "quarrels" as for the "calamities of authors," and social life is seldom long exempt from causes or occasions for discussion. Commerce pleads against statecraft and taxation; even the principles of government and revenue are not finally settled; logicians wage war for system against system, and metaphysicians have as yet found no satisfying fundamental principles, but are "in endless mazes lost." Science has fought its way in the face of conflict; movements antagonize with movements, and schemes with schemes; morals has always a difficulty in determining between theory and practice; even religion has never been free from the contests of sect; while the terrible controversy of war is yet unsubdued. "The old order changeth, giving place to new;" but the latter cannot be advanced, nor the former be expelled from the place it held, without the employment of controversy. Though few things are more decried in every-day life, yet controversy is alert and active in every effort for progress. It is a power to be prized, not feared; least of all need it be feared by truth.

"E'en the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm;
He seems, indeed, indignant, and to feel
Th' impression of the blast with proud disdain;
Frowning, as if in his unconscious arm
He held the thunder: but the monarch owes
His firm stability to what he scorns—
More fixed below the more disturbed above."

Thoughtfulness is the demand of our age. Facts come upon us so rapidly, circle around us so numerously, and are brought within our ken so immediately, as well as so undigestedly, that we are in great danger of mistaking the elements of information for positive knowledge. Knowledge, however, consists of facts understood. Thought fashions information into

instruction, and the correct exerise of thought, therefore, is true education.

The educative influence of controversy, the keenness of interest it evokes, the energy of intellect to which it stimulates, and the habit of weighing evidence and balancing reason with reason to which it trains, are indubitable as well as invaluable. The search for truth is the duty of man, and the universe is so constituted that if truth is indeed honestly and persistently sought, men will ultimately discover the way of its attainment. As a general rule, honest controversy clears the light around a truth, and brings not only itself, but its various correlations more distinctly before the mind. Those who hold the truth need not fear investigation; those who may be holding error as truth ought to welcome it. No opinion should advance a claim that men ought to accept it for itself without seeking a reason for their having faith in it. "If the opinion is right," by denying to men the opportunity of examining its reliability, they "are deprived of the opportunity of exchanging error for truth; if wrong, they lose what is almost as great a benefit, the clearer perception and livelier impression of truth produced by its collision with error."

Thought is the great power of life. *Election* implies the exercise of discriminative thought, and a *vote* is the practical and definite registration of the decision of the judgment on the matter at issue. There can be no genuine choice without reflective consideration, and the careful weighing and balancing of all the qualities that tell in favour of and against the subject submitted to the deliberative action of the understanding and will.

> "Wisdom, of what herself approves, makes choice,
> Nor is led captive by the common voice."

To culture among men, a wise considerateness in estimating opinions, a careful deliberation in the weighing of arguments, and a cautious sifting of statements and inferences before accepting conclusions, is more than ever necessary, on account of the rapid and important changes which are taking place in social, political, religious, and intellectual life. Dogmatic thought is always fasci-

nating to weak and facile minds, and those who are thankful for being spared the trouble of thinking for themselves. The intellect itself is too apt to take opinions in reliance on authority or prevalency, without rigorous investigation and calm but searching revision, and without inquiring how they can be co-ordinated and held together as a coherent system. But now, when crude and indigested thought, when casuistic speculations and doubtful opinions may seriously affect the nation's material and moral well-being, the need for practical education in controversy has become more than ever important.

Public reforms, though initiated by individual thinkers, are shown to be advantageous by general discussion, and are brought into consideration and prominence by the tentative efforts of controversialists to procure a hearing for them. Public grievances have little hope of being redressed unless debate tasks their advocates, and overcomes their defenders. Hence we affirm that critical controversy has an important office to perform in Society and in the Church, on the Platform and through the Press. The essence of political and social influence is the formation of independent judgments, and these cannot be formed by those who devote themselves to the associations of a clique, the leaders of a school, the tenets of a sect, the opinions of a party, or the hobby of a favourite politician. He who contents himself with one view of a question, or the averments and statements of a specific organ for the diffusion and inculcation of any definite opinion, virtually closes his eyes, shuts his ears, and refuses to give reasonable heed to the means by which the whole truth on a question may become known to him. The larger proportion of newspapers and periodical publications exist for the purpose of promoting some given view, and appeal to the adherents of special opinions. We should endeavour not to be held in the fetters of the organ of a party or creed, but to engage in the exercise of genuine critical thought, in all the debatable questions which arise in the course of reflective thought and actual life. So it is that a reasonable public opinion may be formed.

Public opinion is a power. It is critical, active, influential. It lies at the root of all law, and is the main-spring of many of the acts of every-day life. In our country its scope is wider and freer,

its agency more thorough-going, and its effects more pervasive, than in any other. It is, therefore, more potently operated upon, and more anxiously experimented with, here than elsewhere. All the arts of persuasion, all the impulses of clamour, all the trickeries of sympathy, all the modifying elements of feeling, passion, or flattery, are used to beget or change it; but sagacious premeditation and honest inquiry are less frequently suggested by those who seek to excite it than might have been hoped for. How much more generally do we hear an opinion spoken of as widely felt than as clearly reasoned! Yet public opinion, to be valid or valuable, ought, undoubtedly, to be the result, not only of properly balanced feeling, but of calm, consistent, and carefully managed thought. Opinion should be the outgrowth of consideration, not of sentiment, party prejudice, or sectly or sectional emotions: it should be, in fact, the decision of deliberate reflection on well ascertained facts.

Would that public opinion were now—what it yet shall be—a power stronger than war, famine, crime, pestilence, ignorance, and selfishness—a reasonable and a reasoned decision on right, truth, goodness, and social life!

It is not uncommon for those who interest themselves in the advocacy of great questions, in the stirring up of men's minds to progress and improvement, and in the diffusion of an interest in the higher concerns of life, to be met with the bland but condemnatory remark, "We dislike controversy; it unsettles opinions; it excites quarrelsomeness and jarring contention; we seek to instil truth, and to promote morality, religion, and intellectuality." The inference underlying this observation is, of course, that controversy is disastrous to the better interests of mankind, and that those who encourage, promote, or defend controversy are aiding and abetting those who wish to cultivate scepticism and induce acrimonious dissension. To those who, acting upon a foregone conclusion, decry all controversy as mischievous, we suppose no plea of innocence would give any satisfaction. But we affirm that controversy may be employed without contentiousness, and may be made conducive to mental progress, the culture of a love of truth, and an observance of all the nobler pieties of the spirit.

We affirm, in opposition to the opponents of debate, that controversy is *unavoidable*. Men differ in opinion, and this difference they will emphasize and assert. It is a good thing, therefore, to have brought before us the reasons, candidly stated, which can be given in support of those opinions which men entertain. Then only can we justly hold our own opinions to be impregnable when we have exposed them to trial and assay. Again, controversy is *necessary*. No man possesses the power of so thoroughly exhausting the whole of the considerations relating to the more important questions in which the soul takes interest as to make it possible, or even probable, that he has attained to "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" upon each topic. Controversy supplements inquiry with criticism, and is the experimental test of right reasoning. It transfigures dogma into doctrine, and justifies our trust in truth. Controversy is growing in power, and is acquiring the same position in the regions of thought as experiment has long wielded in the realms of science. Parliament and Convocation, conventions and conferences, May meetings and recess assemblies of constituencies, are all made arenas of discussion and agitation; newspapers and pamphlets, even novels and poems, have become the vehicles of advocacy or denunciation; conversation and correspondence are engrossed with controversial topics; and, as we have before observed, government by party is controversy systematized, diplomacy is controversy by artifice, and war is only the controversy of force.

We hold that educative training in controversy is one of the greatest necessities of an age like ours, in which public opinion is enfranchised and made the ultimate force in Church and State; and the decision of the most vital questions regarding statesmanship—Education, Public Morality, and Personal Faith—is claimed, as we think justly, for the people and by the people. Discrimination as to the incidence of argument is surely an indispensable condition of deciding aright on the topics that arise in social, industrial, political, literary, and ecclesiastical life; and if so, controversy is the safeguard, not the betrayer, of truth.

Before men can expect to supersede the terrific controversies of

war, sectarianism, or partisanship by the pacific arbitration of wise counsel, they must be content to subordinate the rhetoric of passion to the logic of justice, and be accustomed, by the discipline of reason and the moralization of public opinion, to form accurate judgments founded on just principles. In the present age we are too prone to permit what we call "the inexorable logic of facts" to overrule and override the eternal verities of righteousness. Were it not so, the inevitable necessities of true reasoning would be the masters of events, and astute diplomacy would yield the management of the world's interests to acute ratiocination. On this account we look upon the education of public opinion as one of the noblest and most necessary tasks of our day. Only by that can we bring the desirable and the reasonable into union and harmony, and eliminate craft from statesmanship, church government, public agitations, and social life.

Men have not only to learn, but to unlearn. To do either aright the critical faculties must be trained. Reflective thought has been of much use to society. It has corrected mistakes and removed misjudgments; it has reformed codes and creeds; it has suggested change and advocated progress; it has confirmed sciences and aided philosophy; it has affected states and improved human life. Every new truth on which men's minds have been excited to inquiry has loomed out upon the horizon of investigation like the Cape to the Portuguese navigator, shrouded in storms; but, as steady approaches have been made towards it, calm settles where the former agitation raged; and when the resolute adventurer has passed round to the other side, and so seen both, he can say,—

> "Cape of Storms! thy spectre's fled,
> And the angel Hope, instead,
> Lights, from heaven, upon thy head."

We become wiser by pressing experience into new regions, and putting the good ship "Investigation" under the charge of Captain Intellect. We may under his guidance explore new seas of thought, and re-survey some of the old ones, so as to rectify our charts and make sure of the soundings. In a world of changes, opinion too

must change; or, at least, must watch and register the changes which take place around it, and keep a critical look-out on the highways and byways of speculative research, in order that where necessary it may re-map the territory and adapt its charts to the combined results of time, thought, and truth.

Plato believed that the search after truth was not only the noblest occupation, but the highest delight of life. Some modern thinkers, in their care only for results, or from experience of the fatigue and difficulty of the truth-seeker's task, have thought that dogmatic beliefs received on authority constitute a better furnishing for actual life than the culture of a critical, or, as they term it, a sceptical activity of intellect. The mind is mastered, not by what it receives on authority as right, but what it perceives by reason as true. The search for truth is in man's power, the attainment of it may be beyond his reach; but if it is to be gained at all, it must be found more certainly after examination than upon mere authority; for faith in authority is entirely different from faith in truth, and man's soul is enriched and ennobled by the truth he believes in, not by the authority on which he accepts it. Man may be conquered, not converted, by dogmatic authority; reasoned thought alone can convince him.

"Doubt," as double thought, said Aristotle, is "the beginning of truth;" "a good beginning" enough, as Locke says, "but a bad end." Inquiry implies doubt, because it is a search for certainty which may succeed or may be disappointed, but it seeks certainty, not scepticism. The more we think for ourselves, the less inclined we feel to accept the thoughts of others; for we then know the power and pleasure of thought as well as gain its profit. Truth can challenge doubt; falsehood cannot. Truth can dare controversy, error abhors it. The place of controversy in public life requires settlement and acknowledgment; but it seems to be essential now that every thoughtful person should know the forms, comprehend the uses, and understand the tactics of controversy.

## CHAPTER III.

### CONTROVERSY AS A PRACTICAL AGENT IN MENTAL CULTURE.

BACON has called "Dispute the child of Reason;" but the culture of the critical faculty by Controversy has among many fallen into singular disrepute. The author of the *Novum Organon* proposed the institution of "a College of Controversies," but the idea has never been looked upon with a friendly eye. It has been held that Controversy has for its main object the spread of negations, the perplexing of simple questions, and the disturbance of weak minds; whereas it aims, in reality, at the purification of our thoughts by purging them of all that is found to be proveably erroneous; and is meant to furnish a method and an opportunity of bringing opinions under the operation of a touchstone and test of their worth and verity. Controversy does not take its birth from the *sceptical* spirit, but in the *inquiring* one. Far from being a wrangling contentiousness, and an opinionative, self-satisfied anxiety to cavil, it is a reasoning and a reasonable exertion of human thought. It is not a dogmatic, but an examinative effort of man's "discourse of Reason," and its object is not to acquire the capacity to affirm or deny, but to learn, to judge, and to know. It is not the mother of Doubt, but of Certainty. It is not—as it has been stigmatised with being—"the insanity of dialectics," but is a legitimate evolution of human powers resulting in copious reasonings and well-examined consequences—a manly and proper effort of an honest mind to discover, amid the infinite variety of opinion, "What is truth?" Controversy has not for its object the general nonconformity of those who practise it to reputed and reputable opinions, but the general advancement of society in the power and practice of thinking, in the taskwork of reasoning, in the investigation of fact, and in the weighing of evidences; so that traditions may be transfigured into faiths, opinions may become beliefs, speculations may result in knowledge, and even knowledge itself become convertible into

wisdom. Individual effort of thought in contradistinction to the tyrannous sameness—in creeds, politics, customs, literature, art, fashions, philosophies, tastes, and modes—which public opinion solicits and commends; a rising up against the heartless, lifeless, stereotyped, formula-guarded, Chinese-quiescence sort of conformity—which is, if not now-a-days imperative, at least, common—is, we believe, advisable and necessary. This seeks to train man to a miserable collective mediocrity, averageness, similarity, and self-sameness; that aims at making each man indeed *himself* a veritable personality—not one of a bundle of dried and withered sticks, individually weak, and strong only in unions, associations, combinations, coteries, and clubs, wherein reason—

> "Adopts the standard of the public taste,
> To chalk its height on—wears a dog-chain round
> Its regal neck—and learns to fetch and carry,"

to be useful and to be tame.

We advocate the *individual* as well as the *multitudinal* movement, and would use and combine both, without, we believe, detriment to either. We would have each man to endeavour "to be strong" by the exercise and culture of all his powers, and by the operations and exertions of the spontaneities of his own nature. *Selfhood* is not selfishness, and is something nobler even than *manhood*. It is to be a man, but it is also to be a man whose individual powers and energies have been so educed and educated as to be able to effect the highest results, and to tend towards the ultimate production of a wise and noble being—wise, because he seeks truth honestly and earnestly; and noble, because he holds fast the truth which he has gained, as the greatest possible good. To take up our opinions from our favourite newspaper, magazine, review, book, preacher, teacher, party, sect, or church—as if the voice of an inspired oracle spoke in and through them,—or to pick up our beliefs from the public and conventional thoughts of the time, without examination, test, or reflection, *that* is neither manly, noble, nor wise. Contrariwise, it is to become parochial-minded and pauperized in soul. Only the free and fresh spontaneous outgush and forth-flow of our own mental life into all matters of speculation,

belief, or practice, makes a noble and wise man, gives a true and genuine selfhood to us. If we would nobly and humanly live and die, the currents of our human thoughts must issue from our own human hearts, and must not be borrowed streams, even when most carefully filtered for our use by others. Our own spirits, if they would ever attain the strength, courage, and manliness of immortals, must themselves wage the contest with the errors, ignorance, inutilities, and obstacles which beset their pathway towards truth, or oppose themselves to the attainment of accuracy of thought, opinion, belief, policy, or life.

All great movements, achievings, reforms, revolutions, improvements, policies, and progresses, have been due to unconventional minds—to men whose thoughts spurned the control of their then environments, and who threw their pioneer thoughts out into the untracked and intricate regions which lay beyond the mode and fashion of their time, and were thought or voted the unsearchable.

> "As the sea
> Waits ages in its bed, till some one wave
> Of all the multitudinous mass extends
> The empire of the whole some feet, perhaps,
> Over the strip of sand which could confine
> Its fellows so long time,"—

so does the craven-hearted multitude linger, in apathy, till some one, of hardier individuality than common, "quick with instinctive longings," has dashed through the glimmer and shimmer of the outlying, and returned, ready to pilot the adventurous into further ranges than Experience had hitherto encompassed in her ken; to lead them to the beleaguerment of the "bastioned midnight" which "use and wont" have built and fortressed against progress and change; or, to stimulate our zeal, stirs up a controversy against the self-satisfied "all is well" of his life's day.

Why do we admire such men? Is it not chiefly because they have taken the hero's place in the controversy between the innate conservative inertia of human habits, thoughts, and life, and the onrush of their own and our personality along the grooves of pro-

gress, out of the old and erroneous into the new and true? Is it not because they have seen the sea of error setting in, with full tide, on their and our souls, and they—

> "Did buffet it
> With lusty sinews, throwing it aside,
> And stemming it with hearts of controversy"?

This strong-souled heroism we, also, must make ours. This hardy individuality and self-assertion, this inclination and ability to stand up and forth for truth, we must acquire. This power of withstanding the currents of opinion, rather than the prevalent practice of going with the stream, is the characteristic of a true man. And this is just Controversy,—aturning of our thoughts against all opinions, until they produce evidence that they are the descendants of truth,—a wrestling, Jacob-like, even with angels, until the proof is furnished, and the blessing is bestowed.

> "The mind of man is by his reason swayed,"

is a somewhat complimentary assertion of Shakspere's. Would that it were less so!—that men were swayed less by fashion, fear, formality, pride, passion, prejudice, self-interest, and self-love, and more by right reason, rightly exercised! "Every man," says Mendelssohn, "is born to search for truth, and to make free his nature from confusion and doubt." That he may do this, reason has been granted to him—has been made, in fact, the characteristic endowment of man. Of late we have been somewhat losing the grand Miltonic faith, that "though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously to doubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple! Who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?" We have become afraid of the movements of the intellect, and apprehensive of the results of reasoning and inquiry. Speculative thought is now almost systematically decried; and the praise of an amiable and modest timidity—or rather, as it is politely and politicly called, reserve — of thought is much more loudly and repeatedly uttered than the commendation of that robust discipline and invigorating culture of the powers of mind by

which certainties become attainable through reasoning. Reasoning is the whole power of human thought employed in judging and distinguishing between the true and the false—the real and the seeming. It is essentially a *critical* exertion of thought. There can be no *criticism* without comparison of thought with thought; no distinguishing without the investigation and the perception of difference; no judging, unless there be difference calling for the exercise of the exegetical functions of thought, and necessitating the consideration of evidence, proof—the grounds and basis of a conclusion. The true province of reasoning is to *prove*, not to *disprove*. The latter is the work of that special application of reasoning which forms the subject of present regard, and which, because it turns one thought against another, is called Controversy. This, again, if warmed and rendered intense and perfervid by passion, becomes discussion, or grows into debate, or mayhap overshoots into contention, or drivels into disputatiousness, and so becomes pettish, quirky, captious, cavilling, and carping. That controversy is liable, like all human efforts, to abuse, is no all-sufficing ground for preferring or advocating the exertless passivity of blind belief—is no good reason for that mental sloth by which we are made amenable to the sarcastic rebuke of the sage king,—"The sluggard is wiser *in his own conceit* than seven men who can *render a reason*"—is no just occasion for putting an ignominous brand and stigma on critical thought, or even on—as Tennyson has phrased it—"honest doubt." To do so is the perfection of cowardly malice. To assert roundly, as is sometimes done, that controversy is merely or mainly the effort of a mind infected by a too great subtlety of thought, excited by an egotistical desire at once for novelty of thought, singularity of manners, and licence in action, is an assassin's sophism—a stab in the dark. To say so is to infuse a lie into social life, and to hint that a poisonous infection, ending in eternal death, taints the air which one breathes in the companionship of a thinking man. Nicknames are favourite instruments with the devil; and it is at once a shame, a pity, and a scandal that otherwise good men should think themselves justified in inventing and applying such terms as seem to imply that the exercise of the

chief and most precious of God's gifts is an offence against its Giver. It has been gravely propounded that as we live in a region of unfathomability, we should study acquiescence, and forswear critical reasoning, lest it should lead us to scepticism. We believe as sincerely as any one can, that the sceptical is far from being a happy frame of mind; that even looked at most favourably, scepticism is apt to dally with the truth, and to delay the true homage of the soul,—obedience to it; but of the philosophy of nescience, as a basis for faith, we have no high opinion; and we really cannot follow the logic which teaches that because "all that is known is, nothing can be known," we must fall back with more reverential awe and reliance upon faith and hope. We think, with Locke, that "it is of great use to the sailor to know the length of his line, though he cannot with it fathom all the depths of the ocean;" and we believe that—

> "Though inland far we be,
> Our souls have sight of that immortal sea"—

in which, though faith may name for us our destination and haven, reason must guide us. Reasoning is, in our opinion, a social, moral, and religious duty; one which no man can or dare neglect but at his soul's peril. In saying this, however, let us guard against being understood to approve of the doings of any one who may—

> "With muttered hints confuse
> The life that leads melodious days."

With such a one we have no sympathy. That is a low and base use of controversial power which strives to shake a faith which inclines to right-doing, when the mind is unfitted to track the devious logic by which the soul is brought within the mazes or meshes of doubt and disbelief. That is not scepticism—a waveringly conscientious weighing and assaying of evidence; it is merely the dogmatism of negation. The genuine controversialist seeks flawless truth; and that he may, as far as possible, fit himself to use "the right of private judgment," he must educate and train himself to perceive clearly, to inquire zealously, to test thoroughly, to decide impartially, to determine honestly, and to guard against any biassing

agency, either in himself or in the adjuncts of the investigation. He must employ his reason in the pre-consideration, as well as in the re-consideration, of every subject; and however much he may find in the belief of others which he may desire to controvert, he will be specially anxious to withhold himself from anything that would subvert the truth or pervert the soul. In short, he must avoid all the trickeries of sophists, the evasive subtleties of partisans, and the bewitching ambiguities of the special pleader. In the free play and balance, the rich, full harmony and manliness, of his intellectual life, he will feel a higher happiness than in the catch-brain semblances of thinking; and he will know that a keen insight into the processes of right reasoning will soon enable the defender of any veritable thought to detect the imposture that may have been practised on him, and to expose the falsity and fallacy that is sought to be infused into his reflective nature. Thus he will become careful in the conduct of his own understanding, and critically cautious in the expression—but chiefly in the mode of the arguing out—of his opinions.

It is the saying of an Arabian sage that "a man is wise so long as he seeks after wisdom; a fool, so soon as he conceits himself that he has gained it;" and the very word philosophy—which names the highest reach and the profoundest research of thought—is not significant of wisdom gained, but of the *loving* search for wisdom. In constant progressive activity of mind, in strenuous and untiring exertion of the thinking faculties, philosophy mainly consists; and Aristotle has truly reasoned when he says, "If to philosophize is right, we must philosophize to know and do the right; if to philosophize is wrong, we must philosophize to prove that it is so; in either case, therefore, we must philosophize." All philosophy is controversy; is a reasoning against something—against ignorance, misconception, error, misbelief, or unbelief. Nay, is not every intellectual effort in reality a controversy, a turning of the reasoning powers against the present limitations of human effort, aims, hopes, thoughts, wishes, labours? Is not even geometry itself—the only legislative and infallible science men can realize—a constant fighting of mind and energy against the mysteries of space, magnitude

and number, a controversy between human thought and the great sphinx—Nature, who gives all gains through pains, if we may venture so to translate the Platonic phrase, Πᾶν ἦθος διὰ ἔθος? Powers are only developed in proportion as they are exercised—as their energies are strongly put forth under the animating impulse of a purpose. With this aim in view, we have been placed in this world for educative purposes, and the very efficacy of the instruction we receive depends on how our minds are brought into healthy and habitual action from the love of the pleasant exhilaration exercise brings, and the delight experienced in the growth of our personal being. For the effectuation of these purposes no better agency can be had than that of controversy. It cultivates and inures us "to presence of mind, to dominion over our faculties, to promptitude of recollection and thought; and withal, though animating emulation, to a perfect command of temper; it stimulates also to a more attentive and profounder study of the matters to be thus discussed; it more deeply impresses the facts and doctrines taught upon the mind; and finally, what is of peculiar importance, and peculiarly accomplished by rightly regulated disputation, it checks all tendency towards irrelevancy and disorder in statement by adstricting the disputants to a pertinent and precise and logically predetermined order in the evolution of their reasonings."*

We have thus far attempted to explain, maintain, and defend the position of controversy, not only as a superlatively noble, intellectual gymnastic, and a commendable characteristic of thought and effort, but also as a justifiable educational agency, and a necessary and inevitable process in true life, learning, or philosophy. In so doing we opine that we have made manifest the special need in our age of controversial culture, and the peculiar virtue of its periodical and recurrent exercise. We have not done this gratuitously or causelessly. Frequently in our intercourse with the literary leaders of the age, we have found a wide-spread prejudice against Debate, as if its purpose were revolutionary and dangerous; and many, for want of due investigation, had quietly assumed that controversy was essentially at variance with all that they regarded as tending to

* Sir William Hamilton's "Discussions on Philosophy," p. 680.

the present and ultimate welfare of mankind. In many cases we have succeeded in disabusing their minds of this prejudiced and prejudicial view by arguments such as those which forego and follow; but not in all cases could we erase this rooted judgment from the breast.

On a subject so much misunderstood and misrepresented we shall endeavour to offer a few words of suggestion upon *the social utility of Controversy*.

It has, unfortunately for British intellectuality, become an established principle of etiquette that we ought in conversation to avoid and eschew all debatable topics, and all subjects likely to lead to the expression of any difference of opinion. Conversation is thus made to consist of a patchwork of indisputable and worthless remarks, or echoes and re-echoes of the same or similar sentiments. Debate is unfashionable, and the honest expression of an opinion is unconventional. The ban of etiquette is put upon any attempt to make a right of way along all that wide range of thought in which the perennial interests of the soul, the body politic or corporate, shoot up and grow, or in which the finest thoughts, speculations, and sentiments spring. Thought is confined within the small and unimportant circle of the indisputable and the stereotyped. Thought is dungeoned, speech imprisoned, and conversation deadened by this preposterous rule, and British freedom singularly enough compels and sanctions the shackling of thought. And why is this? but because controversy has been almost always, hitherto, conducted in an embittering and personal manner—in heat of temper and in hate of heart—not for the love of truth, or in the practice of truthfulness, but for the gratification of a love of victory, a desire to see *our* thought triumphant, a wish to make our souls at once the measure and the mirror of all truth. As an endeavour to evade the effects of this egotism, which selfishly excludes discussion and precludes impartial investigation, that rule may not be altogether unpraiseworthy; but its effects are certainly detrimental. Does it not truly lessen the educative influence of social conversation, impede improvement, and deteriorate the ideal, as well as the [illegible]ities, of human speech? Can God have made us with such

"large discourse of reason, to rust in us unused," to be employed in the utterance of truisms three thousand times stale, or commonplaces which are scarcely even substitutes for true speech, but rather the dim, ghastly shades of those

"Thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,"

to which the human soul should give utterance, if speech is to be the expression of *thought?* Were we to employ speech rightly, the true uses of conversation would lead us gladly to listen to and take part in the criticism and consideration of all opinions,—not as possessions of our own, or portions of ourselves, but as topics bearing in their heart of hearts our life's best interests, and, therefore, as subjects on which we cannot be too well informed. "As by the collision of flints, light, so by the collision of minds, truth is struck out;" and controversy, duly limited and rightly used, whets the thoughts, animates the attention, quickens the perceptions, enhances the exertive power of those who engage in it. The dull, cold, sleepy, inane formality of conventional conversation is dissipated; and life, usefulness, interest, and improveability are imparted to it. Were controversy, as the full, free, fair, honest, honourable, good-natured, and intelligent search for Truth, to become the use and wont of men, were it made reputable, respectable, and fashionable, we might have again, but much more frequently and far-scattered, such conversational meetings as a Johnson could delight in, a Burke share, a Goldsmith adorn, and a Boswell report, and occasionally even some approximation to those more famous "wit combats" which took place before the "Mermaid" was declared to be non-existent. Then might we see the features of Truth reflected in the face of Beauty, and honest manliness of thought partnered with the graceful sentiments of woman's soul; and conversation would become a sign and utterance of life, "like that which kept the heart of Eden green," instead of a symbol and semblance of death, as it now too frequently is. Then the right use of reason would not be stigmatised, as, in the eyes of the idol etiquette, high treason against civility, urbanity, politeness, and good manners. On this point we might easily venture to say more; but we are anxious to notice another aspect of the question, and to

submit for consideration a few jottings upon *the educative utility of Controversy*.

The correct employment of language, and the accurate use of thought, are among the most important of the results that education is calculated to effect. So to be able to express our ideas, that they exactly (and neither more nor less) represent the whole contents of our thoughts, is regarded as a priceless accomplishment and power; so to be able to think as to find Truth favouring our efforts, and gladly, by her revelations, seconding our endeavours to make discoveries in the way of knowing and doing the right, is also reckoned a capacity and a privilege of no mean value. Controversy is a practical training in accurate thought and properly arranged and definite expression. The right statement of any case, the adequate definition of any subject, the fit and proper arrangement of the materials out of which arguments are to be framed, and the consistent and consecutive determination of the mode in which the topic may be best considered, are all valuable exertions of mind called into active and auxiliary exercise in controversy. The attentive perusal of properly conducted controversy brings before the mind distinctions of thought and language, divisions and elaborations of topics, which, at a first glance, could not strike or affect the untrained mind. By having one's observation quickened thus, the natural aptitudes of the mind are cultured into keenness and clearness, and hazily indefinite thoughts,

"Like shapes of mist within a dim-lit wood,"

will not satisfy, much less commend themselves to the intellect. The controversialist demands distinctness; and unless he finds each idea, in the pure severity of perfect light, standing rigidly and rightly distinguishable from all other ideas, he is dissatisfied and unconvinced. He looks for proof before he believes, and he believes with all the greater intensity and decidedness, because he has examined and sought out his belief with earnestness, sincerity, and intelligence. This same thought we might follow out to wider consequences and farther reaches, but we hasten in closing to quote a thought which bears authority with it, and completely harmonizes

with our own views on the educative utility of controversy. Sir William Hamilton says, "All profitable study is a silent disputation, an intellectual gymnastic; and the most improving books are precisely those which most excite the reader to understand the author, to supply what he has omitted, and to canvass his facts and reasonings. To read passively to learn, is, in reality, not to learn at all. . . . He who reads to remember, does well; to understand, does better; but to judge, does best." *

Controversy is an educative agent—is a beneficial training for the great business of life and thought. Even if not regarded as in itself an ultimate good, but as a means to an end, and that end the attainment of truth, relative, if not absolute, controversy has high uses. Even as an energy of mind, controversy has charms for man, whose position in this life is so much that assigned to him by Plato —a *hunter* of truth,—

"Hunter of shadows, though himself a shade."

Nor is controversy all vain toil and fruitless expenditure of ingenuity. "Non inutiles," says Bacon, "scientiæ existimandæ sunt quarum in se nullus est usus, si ingenia acuant et ordinent" (Intellectual pursuits which have no attainable end of their own are not to be thought useless if they sharpen and regulate the intellect). Controversy is the best gymnastic of the mind, and by the culture of the noblest capacities of the soul it gives the mind the vigour that conduces to victory. It supplies, too, the best means of forcibly impressing the thoughtful mind; for—

"Truth's like a torch—the more it's shook it shines."

The foregoing thoughts appear to us to legitimate controversy, to prove that it has a proper field in literature and life, to show that it is a wholesome and requisite exercise of thought, and to justify the belief that they are engaged in a work, tending to the good of individuals and the advancement of the age, who endeavour to incite to the true use and the proper employment of honest debate.

* "Discussions," pp. 682, 683.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE USES AND ABUSES OF PARTISANSHIP IN CONTROVERSY.

"An opinion, though ever so true and certain to one man, cannot be transfused into another as true and certain by any other way, but by opening his understanding, and assisting him so to order his conceptions that he may find the reasonableness of it within himself."—*William Wollaston.*

It seems to us that the present time and the circumstances of the hour impart a natural interest to the consideration of the nature of Partisanship, its uses and abuses.

There can be no doubt that practically the course of political and social advancement, of moral improvement and religious progress, is a path of perplexity. It is so crossed and intercrossed with subdividing and sectionizing lines; it is so interrupted by opposing forces, antagonist opinions, conflicting interest, diverse plans, associations and counter-associations, agitations and congresses, establishments and foundations, precedents and privileges, passions and plots, that caution and wariness of procedure are indeed requisite to get on in it at all—especially to get on in it with straightforward forthrightness. It has many projected deviations, several incidences, and a few coincidences. To wind and warp through all the variations of project and opposition, and to gain impulsion and power, now from one and now from another of these, so as to insure persistency and yet secure consistency, is a problem not easy of solution. Yet progress is the law of all vitality, and progress in harmony with order is truly constitutional progress—and that alone results in civilization. Were men all of one mind we could only look for stagnation or precipitation; because men are not thus cemented together into a total unity of thought, we have sects, parties, divisions, classes, schools, cliques—each with its own schemes, aims, and claims, with its own policy and purpose, its own might and movement, its own force and influence,—and civilization is the total result of the combined interaction of all these dynamic centres of mental power.

Party, in its original signification, conveys the idea of a portion of a great number separated from the original whole, and aggregated together into a new unity, yet not losing entirely its original character and place as a part of the typal integer. Participancy is not destroyed by, but is rather implied in the existence of bodies of citizens in the relationship of parties. The idea is duplex; it involves the separation of an aggregate into parts, each holding a unity of its own, and yet not losing or giving up its share in the formation and composition of the totality of the citizenship. There is an ideal unity despite of this state of dispartition in which it may be said to exist, but it is of a whole made up of parts. The State is, as we may say, the unit of organization; and parties are the organized units within it, on the changes, movements, and effectiveness of which in their relative degrees, circumstances, and positions, the living progress of the whole depends. Parties are co-operative agencies in themselves, and within the State, which is itself a large co-operative institution. The co-adjustment of parties influences the constitution, and the power of the State contains only the residue of the force of all its parties after the last activity and antagonistic effort of each party's special operations have been deducted.

"Union," according to the proverb, "is strength." Men acquire might and influence by the concentration of their personal powers and interests into the force of party. Conjoint effort is far more efficacious than disjoint exertion. Individuals are weak, parties are strong. The open hand, as Aristotle noted, gives only a smart slap, the closed fist gives a hard blow. Union, as well as time, works wonders. Association increases both the mass and the might of men, though at the same time it must be remembered that the accumulated force of aggregated society weakens individual power, and imparts a seeming littleness to what single persons can accomplish, or even dare. The might of social effort is immense, and especially the might of co-operative social effort. It makes a highway of "dissociating ocean" by its ships, and joins province to province by its railways. It provides for the instruction of men by churches and newspapers, for their management by police

and laws, for their welfare by manufactures and commerce, for their punishment as individuals by jails and penitentiaries, and as nations by warfare. It disciplines men into an army having common objects and similar aims, it encourages them by similar hopes and expectations, it sustains them by common sympathies, and urges them to labour in a common cause through community of interest. Union imparts consistency to opinion, and gives might to efforts, effectiveness to desire, and vigour to determination.

But union, however desirable, may lead to the massing of men in communities so vast as to be unwieldable and unmanageable; leadership in this case becomes impracticable and consentaneous, sympathy cannot be kept up. Schemes of universal dominion, plans of union, which propose to embrace vast masses of mankind, and to eliminate from the activities of our race the selfish emotions and the feelings which lead to partisanship are scarcely ever worthy of much more than a critical examination, and under that they too often prove themselves to be at variance with the most patent facts of human nature. We find that progress is only possible by consilience of forces, and that a cessation of the dynamic powers, or any equilibrium of them, would bring us to a standstill wherein—

"The individual withers and the world is more and more."

But life is constant change, and it abhors and resists stagnation; and no union which involves the continuance of man in the same condition is likely to commend itself to our race in our present state of being. That great organizations of natural and political life must have less organizations of thought and action, through whose antagonisms and concordances, by increment or decrement of strength, as the case may be, movement and progression are made possible is true. The attempt to subdue party produces enervation, as in China; chronic discontent, as in France; and usually results in revolution, as in Spain. The true policy of governments is to legalize the due operation of party as the organ, the guide, and the exponent of public opinion.

The heart of man rouses all its affections into warmth and eager activity, into energy and concentrated competency; the social

affections and emotions are quickened and brightened, invigorated and intensified by community of feeling and interests, aims and plans. Simultaneity of action not only increases the power of men, but the enthusiasm of one excites that of another, till the spirit becomes animated by a concourse of emotions that often acquire an uncontrollable effectiveness over the passionate elements of human nature, and with a sort of irresistibility hurry man along to exertions he would never otherwise make, and to the commission of acts which in calmer moods and moments he would hesitate to believe himself capable of attempting. So stirring are the social affinities within us, and so heating are the frictions to which we are exposed in civic life, that we glow and gladden at difficulty, and greaten and grow in energy and executive power, in proportion as we are knit with others in sympathy, and are brought near to them by sameness of object and community of desire. "Matters," as John Locke says, "that are recommended to our thoughts by any of our passions, take possession of our minds with a kind of authority, and will not be kept out or dislodged; but as if the passion that rules were for the time the sheriff of the place, and came with all the *posse*, the understanding is seized and taken with the object it introduces, as if it had a legal right to be alone considered there." This is the turning-point of the beneficiality or injuriousness of the spirit of party. If it allies itself with those sympathies and interests which lead to the desire after the good and the true, energy and effectiveness come to it through these notions, and they conduce to earnestness and conviction; but if it associates itself with the antipathies and interests which incline to keep things as they are, and opposes the questioning or stirring of the determinations of the mind, the condition of the state or the prevalent opinion of the hour, then party spirit becomes inimical to peace and good order, to progress and enlightened reform. To give up our whole emotional nature to the success and predominance of any opinion is eminently unwise. Whether we are moved by affection for or dislike to an opinion, or the party by which that opinion is entertained or promoted, we are in opposition to the best interests of truth if we devote all our feeling and passion to its success, because

anything that tends to close the eyes to, or withdraw the attention from, any part of the evidence on which correct conclusions depend, in the same, if not in an increased, proportion, tends to vitiate the conclusions drawn by the understanding, which only acts perfectly in the white radiancy of pure light, and does not see with accuracy in the coloured light which emotion and passion supply—as stained windows not only intercept the light, but cast shadows on cathedral floors.

Pym maintains that "the best form of government is that which doth actuate and dispose every part and member of a state to the common good." It is a wise saying, and raises a great and grave question, namely, how may every part and member of a state be best actuated and disposed to the common good? Obviously, as we think, when the thoughts of men are free to investigate every suggestion and plan for improvement, to discuss its merits and demerits, to employ all just and proper means for furthering or opposing its adoption, and when it is known that the unforced arbitrement of conscience will be respected and given effect to, so long as no other better idea or method of conducting affairs has been proposed and been generally adopted; after having, like that which it is intended to supplant, been tried, tested, and made familiar to all by the exercise of free debate, and by the conflict of parties in public and in parliament. Free controversy is the great and genuine counter-revolutionist, or rather safeguard against revolution. Statesmanship is the science and art of promoting calm, steady, and continuous progress, and so of avoiding and rendering revolution impossible. It is incumbent, therefore, on the true statesman to provide for the full and thorough investigation by debate of every question connected with public policy, and so to arrange all the forms and proceedings of state business that party agitation may tend to aid and not to impede the cause and course of good government.

The best government to which a nation can at any time aspire is that which the noblest convictions of its most active and thoughtful parties can acquire acceptance for, and concentrate their effective forces to bring about. Laws are only willingly obeyed when there is a belief in their essential justice, and the honesty of their

administration. The action of parties by procuring acceptability for newly proposed laws, and by watching their operation and application after they have been placed on the statute books, tends very much, not only to procure the passage of improved legislation, but also to secure the impartial administration of the laws in existence, in accordance with the spirit of the times. The watchfulness of parties has had this highly beneficial effect on public life among us, that public opinion has acquired the means and art of expressing itself peaceably. There is no adjournment of the power of the public will till plot, conspiracy, and the sword have found or formed an opening for its expression. A wise man can *foresee* many steps; any one can *see* the next step in advance which legislation must take, for the action of party not only excites, intensifies, and concentrates public opinion, but it also reveals its course and its force. It is because parties present public opinion to the rulers in the full power of its aims and claims that our government is in the main a representative one. Parties are the lenses which concentrate public opinion on any subject to such a focus as brings it within the range of official vision.

England more than any other country dislikes pure political speculation, looks upon theorizing with distaste, and averts itself with repugnance from the proposal to resolve the problems of law and life by the inexorable results of methodical thought, and the determining ultimation of logical sequence. It has no patience to search for principles if it can get hold of a rough and ready, averagely working practice, and either set it or keep it going. The workableness of a suggestion is the first idea of English critical reflection; hence it is the land of institutions, compromises, makeshifts, and expedients,—almost of anomalies. To have an end in view that is plain, unmistakable, and, above all, attainable, is essential to the making of any impression on the English public; hence thought must concentrate and organize its hosts, settle its end and object, enlist its adherents, issue its cry, unfurl its standard, become "a movement." Thus put into palpability, it attracts notice, excites attention, occasions talk, arouses sympathy here and antagonism there. The favourers of it unite and agitate;—its oppo-

nents sneer first, contemn next, then feel the need of bracing up their energies to meet the new thought with such reasons as the old provides; thus discussion is evoked, active thought is elicited, force is brought face to face with force, a compromise is for the time effected, and the question is settled and shelved for a while, only to be reopened in a new form and with new energy when thought has gained a fresh development, and stored up new forces for new efforts. Hence it is that British legislation is a series of compromises, rather than a codified sequence of carefully adjusted acts and requirements. Each party gathers up its observations on the past, and generalizes from these the nearest principle which can be applied to the experience of the present hour; and it seldom looks farther than such a mediate axiom as may form a basis for immediate action and practical effort. It is seldom that the ideas which form the moving forces of the councils of the nation are protoplastic, formative, and seminal. They are in general distant derivatives from the primal roots of thought; roots which germinate chiefly in the fields of religious, moral, metaphysical, and social philosophy, and give off cuttings only, to practical politics and sociology.

Yet opinions very unlike in appearance, and, as they are applied, in reality, spring from the same principles. These secondary principles, or *media axiomata*, being reached by the leaders of a party, are pressed into the service of agitation, and are acted upon as if they were the truths which lie at the very root and in the very germ of things. The business of the philosophic thinker is to trace every element of causation as far back as possible, to ascertain the greatest extent to which it is applicable, and, if possible, to discover its ultimate source, or at least its most reliable proofs. It not unfrequently happens that sequences of causation which at first sight seem to be different, and to constitute a variety of species, are, when more closely examined, found to spring from the same source. But men in general have little disposition to inquire and to pry into any matter of thought farther than to find an intelligible and usable fixed point or statement of opinion, rising from which they may proceed at once to active practical exertions. Resting their proposals for action on these secondary and derivative truths, the

leaders of parties get the vantage-ground of a comprehensible reason for their agitation, often a taking and pithy cry with which they may agitate the country, and upon the basis of which they can propose action. They rouse and stir the minds of the people to a perception of this truth and its consequences, and aggregate around themselves those who have similar aims and desires. Another section of thinkers may have reached down to a different secondary thought, and they on their part accept of and affirm this to be their first principle and basis of action, and they again aggregate and consociate a body who look with favour on their view of the matter. Each party, by exposition and illustration, endeavours to render clear and make familiar the absolute accuracy of the principle contended for by them, and by debate to prove its intrinsic claim to belief, as well as its extrinsic applicability to the purpose of the time. Each party widens the reach of agitation and increases the stir of thought, and hence the general public gains enlightenment in regard to the object, scope, and character of the movements in progress all around. Each party is so far helpful to each other that its existence quickens and intensifies the energies of the other, and both are in reality so far beneficial to the public that their activity prevents rash and hasty action on immature hypothesis, and secures the due and proper investigation of probable results and effects prior to attempts at realization; and even when allowed to realize its aim it is weighted with all the precautions which the opponents of the measure could suggest, when the inevitability of its adoption became evident. Our compromises are the results of the caution of parties, rather than of the precaution of thinkers.

In carrying great changes into effect we must employ the instrumentalities and agencies which are attainable, and we must employ them, too, with all their defects and imperfections, their faults and failings. On this account it is that, if we form or join a party, we must resign some portion of our own individuality, and accept in some sort a secondary responsibility on account of others. Interests, friendships, cabals, intrigues, resentments, alliances, reconciliations, projects, bargainings, and even mistakes not our own,

must find us prompt to engage in them and ready to defend. Corporate action must be united, and corporate responsibility must be accepted; and as the means, motives, and appliances of such activity must be level with the capacities, conditions, and moral sentiments of the mass, the highest and noblest aspirations of men are not attainable through party action. But this only makes it all the more desirable that the links of party ought not to be made too binding, nor its organization too pervading, lest, if they be so, the very agencies by which good has been accomplished may be employed to impede the attainment of other advantages. There is always a danger lest a successful party should proclaim a "finality," and shout out in the ears of men, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther." Though we cannot gain abstract perfection by party action, that is no reason why we should consent to relinquish the right of striving to make that attainable in the future which seems beyond reach now.

One of the gravest errors in regard to party committed in our country is that we crystallize our party traditions, and bind ourselves together by party connections, party leagues, party watchwords, and party names, and so endeavour to give permanency to that which is really impermanent. Thought is ever active, restlessly researchful, and hence the results of thought are continually changing, and public opinion is always in a state of transition. In our attempts to stereotype the transient, and to ice up the flowing river of thought, we do ourselves grievous wrong, and introduce into political life much needless sorrow. A party, in the very nature of things, can never possess at any one time more than a part of the truth: to unite ourselves for ever to remain true and consistent to that party in its creeds, doctrines, associations, and acts, is voluntarily to resign our right to reason upon public affairs as they arise, and so to destroy the very good which party life accomplishes, namely, the thorough sifting of opinion by earnest and serious discussion. It acts invidiously, too, in regard to the personality of party, by constituting party consistency into a virtue when it is in reality a vice, that is, when the times are ripe for new changes, and the traditions of parties hamper men of thought

in their researches, in their expressions of opinion, and in the course of action they adopt upon new public questions and new views of national policy, by making personal fidelity to party more meritorious than honourable fidelity to truth, and consistency to the traditions of the past more praiseworthy than persistency in the pursuit of the truth fitted for the present time, or available for the requirements of the future. Intellectual and social forces are always at work, disintegrating parties, and causing, by action and reaction, a need for reorganization; and at certain epochs the lines which divide parties one from another do not coincide with the lines which separate political and social opinions and schemes. When this occurs there is a great temptation to "give up to party what was meant for mankind," and to adhere to the personal connections it has brought around us, because of the consistency and force it possesses, though the tides of opinion are receding from its standpoint, and are gathering force elsewhere. Parties are unwilling to move forward and advance with the progress of opinion, the necessities of things, and the ceaseless change of sentiment and thought which the course of time occasions; still less are they magnanimous to forecast the anticipations which men may legitimately form. In the course of time the most admirably marshalled party becomes rather a centre of resistance than of assistance, and seeks to govern and control rather than to animate and guide the opinions of the nation. The thorough organization which gives it mastery at one period, by seeking to impart permanency tends to arrogate predominancy, and thus it comes to pass that so many of the noblest minds and ablest thinkers are constrained to break with their party rather than forfeit their allegiance to truth and progress.

Then there arises the grievous accusation of apostasy, and suspicion clogs the path, while misrepresentation is active with the reputation of a man whose thorough conscientiousness of thought has brought him to overstep the lines of circumvallation within which the party had entrenched itself. "He who can take up a speculative question, and pursue it with the same zeal and unshaken constancy as he does his immediate interests or private

animosities—he who is as faithful to his *principles* as he is to himself, is the true partisan." But they must be principles, and he must be prepared to follow them whithersoever they lead him, so that when one step is taken he may know that the next is not only inevitable but right. But he who, through vanity of consistency, or an over-refined regard to immediate appearances, through desire of keeping a foremost place among friends, or natural hesitancy to follow Truth wherever she leads, through fear of singularity or sense of obligation to patrons, restrains himself within the mere terms of a party's principle, when the soul of meaning has been eaten out of it by events and the progress of thought, is a false partisan. He is a mask and not a reality. He values the empty husk of the past more than the new fresh growth in which another kernel is enclosed. These are the men who huckster and trim, who hold by "the old, old paths" when traffic has forsaken them and interest has fled from them. The crystallizations of party ought, like those of nature, to be soluble and reorganizable when occasion arises and change is desirable.

Sometimes a man adopts a party as a sort of "short-hand compendious method of getting at a conclusion." It supplies him with "passion without proof, and action without thought," and fixes for him the right thing without the trouble of attending to "the formalities of reasoning or the dictates of common sense." It provides him with opinion ready made, concisely expressed, and portably arranged; it gives him the essence of all questions in a phrase, and acts as a guide-post for his feelings and sentiments, that they may take the most direct if not the most correct road to move in, and where to bring a vote to. But such allies are always unsafe ones for a party, they have neither opinions nor convictions, they have only inclinations, and these are liable to change and fluctuation. The man who forms an opinion must have thought, the man who accepts opinions must always be afraid to examine them lest they should turn out to be without good reasonable grounds. These, too, are the men who hold most tenaciously to the letter of the creed of a party; they have never estimated its *contents*, they have never considered its consequences, they stand

in a "charmed circle" while they are enclosed thereby. They bring the indolence, the cowardice, the ignorance, the prejudice, and the pride of men into a party, and they give to a party the help—if it can be so called—of intolerance, bigotry, and credulity—they give it mass, but do they not also impart to it weakness?

There are three great classes of errors into which partisanship betrays men, and which therefore vitiate the controversies that arise between or among parties:—(1) *Misstatements*, or actual and real errors, in representing the acts, opinions, writings, and sayings of opponents; a false presentation of the matter under consideration, or an explicit or implicit representation of facts or thoughts in a form more or less intentionally inexact or inaccurate, and having at the least a misleading connotation. Misstatements of reasonings are still more frequent than misrepresentations of incidents, or incorrect reports of opinions and sayings. These misstatements arise from the intervention of passion between the thing misstated and the mind which has been employed in contemplating the thing: and from the difference in the point of view chosen for taking an impression of the thing into one's mind, or from a defect of intellectual sympathy on the part of those who originate the misstatement. But misstatements also arise from the inventive ingenuity of partisans, and misrepresentations are often made which are so palpably and knowingly false as to be with difficulty distinguished from unmitigated lies. These are extremes, of course, for it very seldom suits well, and it never answers long, to make violent distortions of truth, or to put before the mind of another an account so wide of the truth as to approach to caricature on the one hand, or falsehood on the other.

(2) *Understatements*, evasive constructions of the merits of opponents, or the misconduct or errors of friends. In undervaluing the good done by our antagonists, in depreciating their energy or earnestness, their honesty or their efficiency, in giving a low estimate of their services, or slurring over the part they took in working to beneficial ends the matters in which they concerned themselves, we are guilty of understatement and evasive speech. So thoroughly natural is this understatement to the human mind

that it has actually become the office of art to give it perfection and point, and we employ parody to connect the ridiculous with our opponents' measures, irony to censure them, sarcasm to taunt them, mimicry to lower them in the eyes of others, and what the rhetoricians term *Aporia* that we may "hint a doubt and hesitate dislike" of their works or ways. Then, for the purpose of detracting from the measure of condemnation due to the party we favour, or rather, let us say, of ourselves, there have been invented several forms of extenuative or excusatory speech. By *Litotes* we endeavour to express the faults to which we must plead guilty in terms excitative of as little blame and reprehension as we can; and by *Tapinosis* we boldly claim the right to gloze with phrases connotative of admiration and respect the very acts of whose turpitude we are sensible, whose baseness we cannot defend, and whose consistency with honour we are unable to maintain.

(3) *Overstatements* or exaggerations, either of the faults of our opponents or of the deserts of our own party. Our admiration of our party—reinforced, to some extent, by our own egotism as a unit of it—causes us to look favourably upon the effect of every movement it makes, and induces us to ascribe every perceptible ripple on the surface of circumstance to the influence of the stir excited by the party whose tenets we expose. The importance of its aims and the potency of its effects impress us more the more closely we examine it, and our pride grows as our interest increases. Our sympathies gain warmth, and our emotions, excited by the interest we feel, magnify the doings and the prospects, the aims and the influences, of the party to which we belong. On the other hand, our antipathies incline us to look only at the faults of the opposing party, and to note their failings. We see the evils they do through the microscopic observativeness of prejudice, and they appear to us mountainous in aggregate offensiveness. We pile up the most outrageous epithets and accusations against our opponents, and exhaust the language of *Auxesis* in hyperbolical laudation of our own party, and in exaggerating the heinousness of that to which we are opposed. It is all the more important that we should point out this fact, because the passions of human nature are active and fierce

in doing mischief, and only moderately lukewarm in doing good,' on which account it is that we see the most violent animosities excited by the most trivial differences.

When the spirit of party has the effect of narrowing our views of policy and of truth; when it causes us to assign supreme importance to points of difference, and to look with jealous eyes and suspicious minds on those who differ from us, and so gives an inverted bias to the soul, it has begun to be hurtful, and requires considerate restraint. When the pledges it demands are not those of independence and sincerity of opinion, honesty of investigation and soundness of principle, but of adherence to leaders and blind obedience to their decisions, and of giving unqualified submission, if not approval, to all that they determine to be right, we may well doubt its genuine advantageousness; for it never can be truly advantageous to thinking men to resign their independence of mind, to forfeit their right to inquire into and understand the reasons for their actions, and the grounds of the movements in which they are asked to take effective parts; especially when party spirit inclines us to captious hostility, to carping jealousy, to arrogancy of tone, and cunning in action; when it induces us to insincerity, or substitutes the irritation of personal feeling for the sorrow of heart which should move us when we think of what we suppose are the errors of others; when the shibboleths of party take the place of reasonings, and we find controversy exciting warmth of temper rather than acuteness of mind, we have good cause for suspecting that we have gone too far, and that party is gaining that love which ought to be sacred to truth.

Modern civilization was for a long period employed in the task of observing and preserving the balance of power among European states, that is, in watching the progress of states, and using such means as were available to prevent any of them from acquiring such a preponderating influence as might enable it to threaten, impede, or endanger the independence of another. This was an external object, and engaged much of the attention of statesmen, until Napoleon began his ambitious attempt to resuscitate the Western empire, and to readjust the map of Europe: and the

traditions of it survived till our own day, and formed a main element in the undertaking of the Crimean war. The prevalency of the doctrine of non-intervention has gradually been working a change in our foreign policy, and the diplomacy based on the idea of a balance of power is losing its hold. When the internal government of states became a subject demanding a statesman's best energies, an equally eager disposition entered into the minds of men to manage the balance of parties. It was felt that sovereign authority and central government were unstable in proportion as they were uncontrolled and unresisted, and that the best measures were passed when to the selfishness of one party there was opposed the selfishness of another, and when the enthusiasm for things as they are had arrayed against it an enthusiasm for change in such a manner that the rashness of a desire for innovation was so tempered by conservative indifference to change, that a compromise between order and progress kept public affairs from sudden change, while it secured moderate improvement.

It is to be regretted that in this desire to bring about a balance of parties it was thought advisable to stereotype the personality of a party, and to make adherence to a party not only a point of individual, but often even of hereditary duty. This traditional consistency of partisanship, inasmuch as it tended in the long run to induce men to prefer party consistency to principle, by transforming fidelity to party into a principle, has come of late to defeat the very purpose of party, namely, the thorough and persistent investigation of every opinion, *pro* and *con.*, by those who were interested in its proper settlement. It seems to us that the theory of the balance of party will become as effete as that of the balance of power, and that the balance of opinion by controversy is destined to take its place. Not that we can ever do without party as the organized form in which opinion expresses its force, but we believe that parties will become more mobile and less compactly coherent and individually stationary, and when adherence to truth, and the honest holding of individual opinion, will be respected indeed by men of all parties. Then men shall co-operate for whatever object seems to be desirable with all who hold the same

aim, and, that aim being accomplished, will be free to form any new alliance which may seem to them to be thereafter desirable. Great is the might of party when based on sound principle; great are its uses in the commonwealth as the exponent of the force of opinion; but opinion should be the formative *nexus* of party, and party ought not to be the inexorable umpire of human thought and action. Partisanship, is in truth, only controversy embodied into power; and power embodied for a purpose, so soon as its given purpose is accomplished, should fall into new combinations in the political correlations of force.

Lord Carnarvon, in an address recently delivered at Birmingham, while alluding to the antagonism of feeling, interest, thought, and creed, which excite the minds of men to controversy, spoke as follows:—

"Travellers tell us that in some of the Eastern seas, where those wonderful coral islands exist, the insects that form the coral within the reefs, where they are under the shelter of the protecting rocks, out of the reach of wind and wave, work quicker, and their work is apparently, to the eye, sound and good. But, on the other hand, those little workers who work outside those reefs in the foam and dash of the waves, are fortified and hardened, and their work is firmer and more enduring. And so I believe it is with men. The more their minds are braced up by conflict, by the necessity of forming opinions upon difficult subjects, the better they will be qualified to go through the hard wear and tear of the world, the better they will be able to hold their own in that conflict of opinion, which, after all, it is man's duty to meet. It certainly seems as if, in this country those views of the beneficiality of controversy, in stimulating the energies and bracing up the powers of the intellect might now be practically assented to, and that the day for depreciating controversy has gone by. When man's craving for truth has become not only passionate and earnest, but conscientious; and when his whole moral nature is quickened with the desire to know, believe, and do what is right, he cannot but seek, with a strong love for freedom of thought, to find the means of instituting a comparison, not only of arguments for, but also of objections to, the tenets which claim his attention and practical sympathy. Looked at thus, controversy acquires great interest in the eyes of those who believe that it is the moral duty of man to search diligently till he find Truth and it becomes worthy of a valued place among those purpose-guided agencies—

> "That keep down the base in man;
> That teach high thoughts and amiable words,
> And courtliness, and the desire of fame,
> And love of truth and all that makes a Man."

## CHAPTER V.

### OPINION, AND HOW IT IS INFLUENCED BY DEBATE.

OPINIONS form the characters of nations, and sway in a large measure the destinies of men. The great fountains of original thought which well up in the souls of the master-spirits of an age flow often for a long time before they fertilize and benefit the mass. It is true that the mighty thinkers of our race ultimately become the governors of the world, guide its movements, protect it against dangers, raise its fortunes, and elevate the entire mode of being prevalent among those who are influenced by the ideas which have had their origin in the meditations of earnestly reflective minds. It is from those who have doubted and controverted the general opinion of the men of their time that improvement has come, and by them progress has been made possible. The inquisitive eye of the man of genius looks upon facts and thoughts with a more intense fixedness of mind, and a keener scrutiny of their accuracy, than those who snatch at current ideas as if they were certain truths, or accept the ordinary opinions of an age as at once indubitable and unmistakable. To direct, purify, and elevate the soul of man is a noble task—a task which is only accomplishable properly by those who know the might and exercise the right of independency of thought. Copernicus doubted the correctness of the Ptolemaic cycles, tested, tried, and controverted them, and was thus led to form that theory which explains the eternal miracles of the sky. Columbus distrusted the accepted ideas regarding the contents of the globe, and ploughed the seemingly trackless deserts of the Atlantic to recover to history a forgotten territory. Luther cast a sceptic's eye upon the fabled power of Rome to grant indulgences, and so thought back to the primeval simplicity of Christianity, and animated the souls of men to revolt against the corruptions of religion. Bacon perceived the interminable mazes of syllogistic manœuvring in which scholasticism had become enmeshed, and he sought an outlet by which mankind might arrive at a true method of scientific investigation. Adam Smith examined the commercial restrictions of nations with

an eye unsophisticated by submission to opinion, and saw that they did not, as was supposed, increase the prosperity of communities; and the secret of the wealth of nations issued from his inquiries. Grotius saw in the fierce passions of war a fearful waste of force and life, and a terrible addition to the miseries of mankind; he doubted the need for the horrid inhumanities practised in the contests of nations, and suggested mitigations, international laws, and at last succeeded in soothing the social savagery of belligerent conflicts. James Watt looked upon the laborious lot of man and the widening circle of his necessities; he saw that human thews and sinews were wearable and weariable, and he attempted to soften the toil of muscle and the strain of nerve by the invigorment of metal with mind, and the employment of steam as a power of smaller cost than life.

Slow is the growth of truth. It strikes into the darkness its early tender shootlings, and is esteemed a stray weed brought into the world, whose habit it is to be suspicious of things new; gradually it buds, and blossoms, and expands; its seeds are scattered into many souls, and it attracts notice if it does not gain recognition. By and by its utility or applicability is tested, and it is found to be most answerable to man's necessities. But it is slow work at the best.

> "The wisdom of mankind creeps slowly on.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> One mind, perchance, in every age contains
> The sum of all before, and much to come;
> Much that's far distant still: but that full mind
> Companioned oft by others of like scope,
> Belief, and tendency, and anxious will,
> A circle small transpierces and illumes."

Galileo opened the eye of man to the exhaustless glories of the sky, and found rough inquisition given to his discoveries. Smith strove to elicit the story of creation from the "secret-keeping stones," but Geology was branded as heretical, and a war of controversy has raged ever since around each new discovery she proclaims. Newton endeavoured to construct a tenable theory of light, but his

prescience was denied, and debate waxed fierce regarding the accuracy of his views. Camper, Blumenbach, and Pritchard made researches into the nature of man, and they evoked not only a new science but fresh contests of young thought with old opinion. Into what domicile of learned thinking was the Ramian or Baconian logic introduced without irate opposition and debate? What universities welcomed the economy of Smith, the jurisprudence of Bentham, or willingly exchanged the study of alchemy for that of chemistry? Every fresh truth has its period of contest to undergo; men are not ready, notwithstanding the experience of all the ages, to acknowledge the likelihood of their being in error. They look on those who teach new truths as enemies, treat them as aliens, not as prophets and brethren.

"It will ever," says Arthur Helps—"it will ever be one of the nicest problems for a man to solve, how far he shall profit by the thoughts of other men, and not be enslaved by them. He comes into the world, and finds swaddling-clothes ready for his mind as well as his body. There is a vast scheme of social machinery set up about him, and he has to discern how he can make it work with him and for him, without becoming part of the machinery himself. In this lie the anguish and the struggle of the greatest minds. . . . Could the History of Opinions be fully written, it would be seen how large a part in human proceedings the love of conformity—or rather, the fear of nonconformity—has occasioned. It has triumphed over all other fears; over love, hate, pity, sloth, anger, truth, pride, comfort, self-interest, and maternal love. . . . It has contradicted nature in the most obvious things, and been listened to with the most abject submission. Its empire has been no less extensive than deep-seated. The serf to custom points his finger at the slave to fashion; as if it signified whether it is an old or a new thing which is irrationally conformed to. The man of letters despises both the slaves of fashion and of custom, but often runs his narrow career of thought, shut up, though he sees it not, within close walls which he does not venture to peep over. . . . Some persons bend to the world in all things, from an innocent belief that what so many people think

must be right. Others have a vague fear of the world, as of some wild beast which may spring out upon them at any time. . . . In all things a man must beware of so conforming himself as to crush his nature and forego the purpose of his being. We must look to other standards than what men say or think. We must not abjectly bow down before rules and usages, but must refer to principles and purposes. In few words, we must think not whom we are following, but what we are doing. If not, why are we gifted with individual life at all?"*

These are wise words, and much needed in our own time. A great deal of aggressive thought has been recently brought into prominent activity among us. It is assertive and demands acceptance. It is impatient of inquiry and dogmatic in its anti-dogmatism. It demands the exchange of old beliefs and the unsettlement of former faiths, and it treats dominant opinions as creeds outworn.

It certainly forms no part of our purpose, in literature or in life, to decry or abuse as worthless and effete the heart's faith of any one, and it is equally aside from our intent to press upon the soul any bran-new speculation in regard to science, morals, or theology. We advocate the fullest, freest, least controlled examination of every thought, belief, or form of life. We wish to apply logic to all the varied uses of which it is capable in the interests of truth and of humanity—for these are, in our opinion, identical. But we find logic, though nominally accepted as a ready guide in scientific inquiries, is little resorted to as an aid in those investigations which relate to opinion—to that floating yet influential multitude of mental impressions on which men act, or through which they are acted on, in every-day life; and we wish to endeavour to advantage those who favour our thesis with perusal, by presenting them with a few remarks upon the logic of opinion.

In opinions wherein there is a possibility of falsehood or truth, or of a mixture of both, there is a conjunction of ideas as forming some thought or judgment. He thinks falsely whose thoughts have a different relation from those which the things of which he

* "Friend in Council," Book I., chap. ii., "Conformity."

thinks have; and he thinks right whose thoughts are conjoined in such a manner as to express or suggest the actual facts of the relations of things. All speech is significative, but all is not enunciative. It is by enunciative speech alone—or by speech understood as enunciative—that opinion can be expressed. We cannot in the practical affairs of life attain in all things, or even in many, the means of arguing with scientific accuracy; nor even when we have acquired absolutely scientific first principles can we develop their consequences and applications with invariable correctness and unmistaking rigour. Knowledge of a fact is distinct from the knowledge of its reason. Science is reasoned truth. It cannot be false, and it must be impregnable. It can offer no alternative; it must determine what is true in sensuous perception, in ideal reproduction, in demonstrated sequence of law and result; for there is no science of the demonstrable until the reason can trace its principles and processes.

Wherever an alternative is possible, opinion alone can be validly held. The truth of opinion is precarious, because it deals with contingencies, so far as the mind which holds the opinion is concerned. The contingent is the object of opinion, the necessary of science. When the mind has no alternative, and must regard the object of its regard as absolutely correct and necessary, it holds that as knowledge and not as opinion; when the mutable element of contingency or uncertainty accompanies and forms part of his thoughts on any subject he holds that mental impression as an opinion, and does not claim for it the undeniableness and undoubting reliance which he insists on for knowledge. All apprehension of truth, real or supposed, is comprehended within the three terms reason, science, and opinion. These are the three species of *intellectual* apprehension. Reason cognizes the first principles, science the necessary sequences and processes, and opinion the contingent qualities, attributes, and relations of things. The product of reason is necessary and universal knowledge or truth. Reason supplies the first principles *from* which we proceed to think, and science furnishes the principles *to* which we think.*

* The two preceding paragraphs may be regarded as an epitomized

The principles of the reason are those which in virtue of its nature exist as the conditions which make reasoning possible. They are the proposition which reason must involve implicitly that we may reason explicitly; they are, as Whewell calls them, "the intuitive roots of the dialectical power." "Science," says Blemnides, "has its name from bringing us (ἔπι στασίν) to some stop and boundary of things, taking us away from the unbounded nature and mutability of particulars; for it is conversant about subjects that are general and invariable." Science is knowledge certain and evident (1) in itself, (2) by the principles from which it is deduced, or (3) the principles with which it is certainly connected. Science is *subjective*, as existing in a *mind*; *objective*, as embodied in *truths*; *speculative*, as resting in *attainment* of truth; *practical*, as leading us *to do something* founded on or resulting from the truths attained.

Of the same thing (as thought) we cannot have, in regard to the same part or quality, at once the scientific knowledge which yields certainty and the sense of probability on which opinion depends. Science and opinion may agree in the subject and predicate of their propositions, and they may even agree in their conjunction; but they differ in the mode of their conjunction. The former connects them peremptorily, necessarily, and essentially; the latter contingently, accidentally and with a degree of distrusting doubt. "Opinion cannot rise to know what science knows, nor science descend to estimate as opinion estimates. The latter, less luminous than science, less obscure than ignorance, finds its object in that which, holding the mean between pure being and pure nothing, at once is and is not."* "Absolute certainty and fixed science," according to De Quincey, "transcend opinion and exclude the probable." Opinion is not opposed to matters of fact but to matters of certainty, refers primarily to a state of thought rather than to a state of things, though the uncertainty of thought may

translation of several passages in Aristotle's "Organon," to which detailed reference would be tedious.

* W. A. Butler's "Lectures on Ancient Philosophy," Vol. I., lect. vi., p. 72.

be the result of the state of things. *Opinion* is a judgment or holding-for-true, consciously insufficient both subjectively and objectively; *belief* is a judgment recognised as insufficient in objective certainty, but accepted as subjectively sufficient. Science is a holding-for-true, as being both objectively and subjectively sufficient in its proof.

Facts do not constitute science: "they are the preparatory materials—items of that common knowledge which the energy of man, as he advances to maturity, develops into science"—verified experience and reasoned certainty, *i.e.*, conformity with the observed order of phenomena and conformity with the positive laws of thought. Science is certainty—verified thought.

In our own day this peculiarity of science, this high claim which is so often made and so much insisted on, requires not only that due emphasis be given to it, but also that due notice should be taken of it. Science in our day claims to be the judge of all truth, because, being certain while all else is uncertain, it alone can be true, and all besides it is false. But what if this all-criticising and all-subduing judge has taken a position to which it is only entitled on condition that it holds to its essential characteristic—that all that it asserts it can verify, substantiate, and prove to be true, certain, precise, and indubitable? What if opinion, falsely pretending to be Science, takes the seat of judgment, and passes decrees as those from which there is no appeal, and scouts and flouts all that opposes her inflexible, irreversible, and peremptory decision? What if human belief and hope are made subject to the doctrines of "science falsely so called"? If science is certainty—certainty amounting to *pre*science, even to *retro*science, capable of rectifying the mistakes and errors of bygone ages,—if all it teaches is verified and verifiable, whence come the contests of science? whence arises its multiplicity of theories? whence spring its controversies? and how does it happen that "the general doctrines of science are never, like those of theology and metaphysics, conceived to be final? [as] however firmly fixed at present, they may be shaken tomorrow by a new discovery." * If this is *science*, I fail to see

* G. H. Lewes's "Aristotle," chap ii., "The Dawn of Science," p. 33.

the justice of its claim to lord it over human opinion—its assumption of holding in its hand the touchstone and test of all that relates to life, thought, faith, and practice; for it has abandoned its specific work and lofty assertion of infallibility, and by this confession sinks only into *opinion*. "For the essential idea of opinion seems to be that it is a matter about which doubt can reasonably exist; as to which two persons can, without absurdity, think differently." "Any proposition, the contrary of which may be maintained with probability, is matter of opinion." *

"Opinions," said a subtle thinker, "are optional thoughts, arbitrary excogitations, thoughts which we may entertain or not, just as we please. We may maintain an opinion, we may also maintain its converse; at least, it is not impossible to maintain the converse of any opinion that may be formed, for that is precisely what is meant by an opinion; it is a thought which we can help thinking, and in the place of which we may, by possibility at least, entertain the opposite thought. To define opinion almost in one word, I would say that opinions are thoughts which we can help thinking." † In science it ought to be different. There can be no such thing—free from a misnomer—as *scientific opinion*. Science is demonstrated truth presented in a verified, systematic, and harmonious shape, bound together link and link by reason. Now "reason in one man listens to nothing but reason in another; thought, genuine thought, in one mind responds only to genuine thought in another mind. But thoughts, in order to be genuine, in order to have root, must co-exist in a vital and organic unity, and not as a tissue of floating fragmentary opinions," ‡—must, in fact, be science. Science in which there are contentions is not science, and it has no right to declare concerning any other opinion,—science is against it, shows its invalidity, and affirms its preposterousness. That is opinion in the guise of science, giving false judgment in its own favour. "Science," Aristotle said, "is only the

* G. C. Lewis's "Influence of Authority in Matters of Opinion," pp. 1 and 4.

† J. F. Ferrier's "Lectures and Philosophical Remains," vol. ii., p. 486.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii., p. 482.

solution of doubts," and this is accepted as a truism by the positivists; but how can it be true at the same time that, on their own showing, "in the general doctrines of science, while one portion is understood to be beyond dispute until the horizon of knowledge is enlarged, another portion is admitted to be more or less hypothetical and approximative?" * Do we solve doubts by doubts? Much of the argumentation which goes in the present day by the name of science, and much of that aggressive thought which is employed as the weapon of science, is only opinion, and admits not only of scrutiny and scepticism, but doubt,—doubt sufficient at least to justify controversy and permit of debate. The logic of science has been well elaborated; of the logic of opinion less has been said.

The law of non-contradiction reigns paramount over all truth, and in the consideration of opinions we must trace them all back to some principle or form which brings them face to face with this law of mental consistency. "That which we wish to refer through opposition is not a consequent consistent with the antecedent,—not a consequent whose truth is involved in the truth or its falsehood in the falsehood of the antecedent. We seek a consequent inconsistent with the antecedent,—a consequent so related to the antecedent that the truth of the latter shall involve the falsehood of the former, and the falsehood of the latter the truth of the former. In a word, our two propositions ought to be so related that the laws of difference and excluded middle shall strike at them directly: they should be peremptorily and necessarily contradictory of each other." But on due inquiry and examination "we find that the contradiction between antecedent and consequent is not universally and formally guaranteed, unless when the two propositions have a maximum of difference, that is, unless when they differ both in quality and in quantity. Accordingly, propositions thus related are called contradictories by way of eminence. This kind of opposition leads always from affirmation to denial, and from denial to affirmation. Hence its superiority to contrary opposition, which leads only from affirmation to denial; sub-contrary opposition,

* G. H. Lewes's "Aristotle," p. 33.

which leads from denial to affirmation; sub-alternation, which leads from affirmation to affirmation, or from denial to denial." *

For practical purposes "opposition is important, as showing the force of any assertion, exhibiting the power which it has of resisting any argument brought against it, or against which it is brought."† But it must be remembered that "when the laws of opposition are said to determine the relative truth of propositions, it is not meant that they enable us to pronounce on the external truth of either, but only on their consistency or inconsistency as acts of thought. When, for instance, it is said that A and E cannot be true together, it is only asserted that the mind cannot admit them both [as such] at the same time; whether either of them, or if either, which, be materially true, it is not our (the logician's) province to inquire. We have only to decide whether they are consistent with each other."‡ This it is which makes the consideration of the doctrine of opposition of so much importance in relation to the logic of opinion; for "contradictory opposition is naturally the relation between any given proposition and the objection urged against it by an opponent. The objection to a universal affirmative is a particular negative, and *vice versa*. Any other opposition would preclude the continuance of an argument. If two reasoners make contrary statements (A and E), neither proposition would be susceptible of clear and easy proof, and in many cases neither would be susceptible of proof at all. If two reasoners made sub-contrary statements (I and O), they would not be at issue at all. But if to A or E is opposed the counter-statement O or I, then the disagreement is fully expressed, and at the same time the counter-statement, being a particular proposition, is easily proved or disproved." § It is one of the most common errors or fallacies in argumentative discourse, oral or written, especially in debate, to charge upon the opponents of the opinion we hold as ours, that is, for true, the assertion of the contradictory of that opinion, when

* Spalding's "Logical Science," pp. 167-8.

† Devey's "Logic, or the Science of Inference," p. 97.

‡ Woolley's "Introduction to Logic," p. 84.

§ C. E. Moberley's "Lectures on Logic," p. 83.

only the contradictory has been affirmed or implied; it is almost equally common to assume that a contrary has been established by arguments which are only of power to prove a contrary. The establishment (or refutation) of the contrary is very far from being the same in effect as the proof or disproof of a contradictory. This is a matter which requires careful attention and thought. "It is surely wiser and safer to confine ourselves to such arguments as will bear the test of a close examination than to resort to such as may indeed at the first glance be more specious and appear stronger, but which, when exposed, will too often leave a man a dupe to the fallacies on the opposite side. But it is especially the error of *controversialists* to urge everything that can be urged; to snatch up the weapon that comes first to hand ('furor arma ministrat') without waiting to consider what is *true*." *

"In all syllogisms one of the terms must be affirmative and universal; for without the universal there will either be no syllogism, or it will not relate to the thing proposed, or the very thing to be proved will be assumed." † Now "all who attempt to syllogize from things less credible [or less able to be comprehended] manifestly do not syllogize rightly." ‡ Reasoning is called fallacious when it appears to be conclusive and is not conclusive. This is called contentious syllogizing, which is syllogizing from notions that seemed to be but are not really expressive of common notions; or it is merely apparent syllogizing. Such reasoning requires refutation. "Refutation is a syllogism of contradiction." § An objection is a proposition contrary to a proposition, and it differs from the proposition inasmuch as it is possible for the objection to be particular, but the proposition cannot be so at all, or at least not in the universal syllogisms." ‖ On the method of refutation we cannot now enlarge, nor indeed is it farther necessary if our readers will habituate their minds to the application of the knowledge of opposition as developed in the foregoing pages to argumentation; for the progress of syllogistic reasoning proceeds thereafter in the

* "Whately's Logic," Book III., chap. v., p. 111.
† "Prior Analytics," i., 24. § "Topics," viii., 26.
‡ "Prior Analytics," ii. 20. ‖ "Prior Analytics," ii., 26.

usual course. We may only refer to the chapters in a former work of ours, "The Young Debater," on "The Laws of Debate," and "The Logic of Debate," pp. 54—66, as likely to be helpful in the carrying out of this logic into argumentative debate. Our present purpose does not tend in that direction, except remotely. We intend in our present paper to bring into emphatic speciality before our readers the old, old teaching of Aristotle—that "the object of science differs from that of opinion inasmuch as science is universal and of necessity, and the necessary cannot be otherwise, but opinion is unsettled." * Samuel Bailey, the sage of Sheffield, has pertinently asked,—

"Where is the science concerned with events, material or mental, that has not had to struggle through errors of the grossest character? Is it chemistry? Look to the doctrine of absolute levity. Is it natural philosophy? Look to Nature's horror of a vacuum. Is it astronomy? Look to the immense blunder of placing the earth in the centre of the solar system, and even of the universe. Is it physiology? Look to the long-continued ignorance of the circulation of the blood, and all the errors implied in it. Is it metaphysics? Look to the doctrines, presented in various phases, that ideas are things distinct, on the one hand, from external objects, and from the mind on the other. Is it morals? Look, if you can bear the sight, to the principle that it is justifiable to blast the happiness and crush the very soul of a man with a black skin or a scanty creed." †

Similar questions might be asked regarding geology, ethnology, archæology, &c., to show that Opinion is not unfrequently adjudicated on as if it wore the unimpeachable ermine of Science. When, therefore, Science presents herself as a controversialist, let her come prepared with authoritative certainty, and then demand admission according to the logic of science; but let not Opinion, aping science, call for our submission to her, and while employing the logic of opinion herself, claim our unquestioning capitulation as to the mistress and queen of truth.

Knowledge is truth gained, science is truth ascertained, opinion is at the best only an approximation to truth. Knowledge is the

* "Posterior Analytics," i., 33.

† "Discourses on Various Subjects," IV.—"On the Science of Political Economy," p. 127.

result of observation and experiment expended on facts and things. Science is the result of reasoning and reflectiveness on the facts of knowledge in the endeavour to discover the principles which regulate them, but opinion is a solution of the causes, occasions, effects, consequences, laws, and operations of facts not demonstrably known or irrefragably confirmed by experience. "In knowledge," as Reid says, "we judge without doubting; in opinion, with some mixture of doubt. . . . Judgment extends to every kind of evidence, probable or certain, and to every degree of assent or dissent. It extends to all knowledge as to all opinion; with this difference only, that in knowledge it is more firm and steady,—like a house founded upon a rock; in opinion it stands upon a weaker foundation, and is more likely to be shaken and overturned." The characteristic difference, then, between knowledge and opinion is the unsteadiness, fluctuation, and undemonstrability of the former, as compared with the trustworthy security and stability of the latter. As the statuary conceives, at once, the pure form which is to be evoked from the crystallized mass of fine-grained marble, in pristine beauty, compact gracefulness, and radiancy of polished surface —in a bright genius-dream or in entranced mind-vision, but must submit, before it is realized in permanent outwardness and figurate solidity, to the dull and laborious processes of boring, roughing out, and chipping by the chisel, till the rude block issues into shapeliness, and is fitted for taking the delicate touches of skill which bring out the effects designed, and impart livingness though not vitality to the previously uncouth stone; even so has the percipient of a new thought to toil out its form and persistency. Fair as the idea may rise up and present itself, all the labours of verification to himself, and of proof to others, must be undergone. Controversy is in this work an excellent auxiliary; it rough-hews the material thought, and shows what requires to be done that the eventual result may be satisfactory and acceptable; it compares the block with the cast, and contrasts the outcome of the thinker's effort with similar or rival endeavours to substantiate the forth-flash of exerted thoughtfulness as a veritable addition to knowledge, faith, truth. Hence there is always a place for controversy

in the world. Controversy not only tests old opinions, but tries new truths. It applies the touchstone of reason to all that is brought before it, and compels the old and the new alike to produce the evidence on which they rely for belief of what they advance. Controversy is therefore the hope, the trust, the safeguard of every great thinker. It preserves the vitality of all notable ideas, discoveries, and inventions.

> "The man who for his race might supersede
> The work of ages, dies—worn out, not used,
> And in his track disciples strive,
> Some hair's breadth only from his starting-point:
> Yet lives he not in vain; for if his soul
> Hath entered others, though imperfectly,
> The circle widens as the world spins round,
> His soul works on, while he sleeps 'neath the grass."

"Men, in general, do not understand or appreciate the difficulty of finding truth. All men must act, and therefore all men learn in some degree how difficult it is to act rightly. The consequence is that all men can make excuse for those who fail to act rightly. But all men are not compelled to make an independent search for truth, and those who voluntarily undertake to do so are always few. They ought, indeed, to find pity and charity when they fail, for their undertaking is full of hazard, and in the course of it they are apt to leave friends and companions behind them; and when they succeed they bring back glorious spoils for those who remained at home criticising them. But they cannot expect such charity, for the hazards and difficulties of the undertaking are known to themselves alone. To the world at large it seems quite easy to find truth, and inexcusable to miss it. And no wonder! For by finding truth they mean learning by rote the maxims around them."* But Controversy is examinative. Every opinion must be brought to the test, and only after due testing can it be passed on into the realm of received and ratified truth, so as to become science. Hence the need of a constant habit of thoughtfulness in men, and hence the advisability of being furnished

* "Ecce Homo," p. 73.

with a logic which is applicable to all the turns and windings of human thought, and suitable to the general wants of human life—a life of reasoning thought.

The views set forth in the preceding pages have been exhibited in full activity in the *British Controversialist*, a magazine for the promotion of impartial inquiry and earnest self-culture, which was established in May, 1850, and was continued by its proprietors and projectors for twenty-two years, closing its career in 1872 on account of the pressure of other engagements upon those who mainly contributed to its pages. The principles for which the present writer contended in that serial for so long a period he would not willingly see die. He has endeavoured here briefly to enunciate, enforce, and explain them in such a fashion as he hopes may be helpful to those who are now, as youthful strivers after practical thought, taking their places among the contenders in debate in the various "Mutual Improvement Societies" which exist in almost every village, town, and city in the empire.

Knowing the difficulties felt by young thinkers in finding subjects on which the mimic warfare of controversy may be expended, the writer has brought together, from various sources, as well as from the note-book accumulations of years, a collection of topics suitable for debate. These amount to a larger quantity in the aggregate than is to be found in all the other books of the sort known to the compiler. To afford further specific aid, without increasing bulk and cost, the author has noted those subjects which have been discussed in the *British Controversialist* during the long period in which it held its place as the advocate and representative of "the impartial discussion of all important questions in Art, Science, Philosophy, Education, Social Economy, Politics, History, Literature, and Religion." The magazine is accessible in many public libraries; it forms a series of volumes much valued by members of the reading societies frequently connected with mutual improvement associations; and though its issue has been discontinued, its volumes are yet in such considerable demand, that several of them have been reprinted frequently, and many, at least, of them may be had, in sets or separately, at the publishers of this tract.

# CLASSIFIED LIST

OF

# SUBJECTS SUITABLE FOR DEBATE.

*** *The references given at the foot of the pages indicate the volumes of* "THE BRITISH CONTROVERSIALIST" *in which those questions are to be found debated in full, as has been notified on the previous page.*

## RELIGION.

Are the colonial churches independent?

Is authority a justifiable ground of faith?

Ought blasphemy to be legally punishable?

Are the clergy priests or pastors?

Should we confess sin to God only or to man as well?

Does the Lord's Supper signify a sacrament or a sacrifice?

Have Christians one Mediator or many?

Is inhibition from lay preaching proper and expedient?

Are "religious riots" evidences of Christian earnestness?

Is "spectacular" compatible with intellectual Christianity?

Is sisterhood life favourable to piety and progress?

Ought the Church and State to be united? *

Is it possible to be "over-parsoned"?

Are the sacraments *seven* or *two*?

Is religion opposed to recreation?

Was the Atonement sympathetic or substitutionary?

Is High-Churchism "bastard Popery"?

Is Broad-Churchism "dishonest infidelity"?

Is marriage a sacrament?

Is Scripture the criterion of truth?

Ought we to have worship-time separated from sermon-time?

Is the Evangelical Alliance worthy of support?

Is the pew system in churches advisable?

Does the Divine Trinity exist in the person of Jesus Christ?*

Is sectarianism Christian? †

Is church discipline properly conducted?

Can the Churches of Rome and England be united?

Is the Church of England a great bulwark against infidelity?

Do creeds and confessions consist with the Protestant right of private judgment?

Does Christianity imply a particular providence?

Is the chronology of Christ's ministry self-consistent?

* See Vol. I.

* See Vol. II. † *Ibid.*

Ought pew-rents to be charged in places of worship?

Is Romanism decaying?

Is the information the gospel gives desirable?

Which should be supreme, the Bible, the Church, or the Conscience?

Ought Christians to support the British stage?*

Did the apostles realize their commission?

Does inspiration conform to the criteria of truth?

Is instrumental music conducive to true devotional feeling?

Are Plymouthist doctrines a reaction from Calvinism?

Is the confessional in harmony with intellectual and moral freedom and social well-being?†

Is it only "by Act of Parliament" that the Church is established?

Is "order combined with popular rights" better preserved by Presbytery or Episcopacy?

Is the ordained clergyman of the Church of England a priest?

Ought the Colonial churches to be connected with the Church of England?

Are endowments in churches causes of corruption?

Is Ritualism promotive or provocative of Popery?

Which system is most in accordance with the Scriptures, and productive of the best results, Episcopacy, Presbyterianism, or Congregationalism?‡

Is an ecclesiastical legislative authority essential to the stability and well-being of the Church?

Has monachism been beneficial to society or the Church?

Is Popery opposed to the welfare of society?

Is a specially educated ministry essential to the progress of Christianity?

Ought the Church of England to be reconstituted?

Is the Bible a record or a revelation?

Is the Christian religion fitted only for the white races of the earth?

Are creeds essential to churches?

Is the strict observance of a Sabbath, as enjoined in the Old Testament, incumbent upon Christians?*

Has any human character ever equalled or excelled that seen in Christ?

Ought instructive entertainment to form a portion of the Sabbath provision for the people?

Do the working classes prefer the Church to Dissent?

Is science opposed to religion?

Can religious faith be achieved through science?

Are faith and science irreconcilable?

Is the Baptism of Infants a practice in harmony with the Scriptures?†

Is a stable government possible in a nation of atheists?

Ought the home episcopate of the Church of England to be extended?

Is Rationalism or Ritualism more to be dreaded?

Is reform in the English Church only possible through its disestablishment?

Is Ritualism inconsistent with Christianity?

Are the offers of salvation in Christ limited to this present world?

Does the theology of the schools coincide with that of Scripture?

Do the Scriptures teach that the punishment of the wicked will be eternal?‡

Is church organization unfavourable to home piety?

Is the literal truth of the Scripture narrative of Creation probable and belief-worthy?

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* See Vol. III. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. V.

* See Vol. IV. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. VI.

Was the Jewish Sabbath a day of worship?

Is the "private interpretation" of Scripture allowable?

Are there good reasons for believing in providence?

Does Old Testament teaching favour polygamy?

Does prophecy determine moral or political questions?

Ought the Church of the nation to include among its teachers men of all creeds?

Is the verbal inspiration of Scripture more tenable as a theory than its essential inspiration?

Has "Tractarianism" been disadvantageous to Christianity?

Is Ritualism more likely to lead *to* than avert *from* the Church of Rome?

Does Ritualism imply Tractarianism?

Should the sale and purchase of Church livings be permitted?

The resurrection of the body.*

Is the destruction of the Papacy necessary to the freedom of the world?

Is the Christian ministry sacerdotal or evangelistic?

Ought worship to be formal or free from form?

Can the origin and history of the Scripture canon be satisfactorily detailed?

Are liturgies more conducive to devotion than extemporaneous prayer?†

Is it possible to evangelize great cities?

Should official female agency in the Church assume the form of sisterhoods?

Is the resurrection of Christ capable of historic proof and reasonable substantiation?

Can the imprecations of the Psalms be harmonized with the beatitudes of Christ's sermon on the mount?

Is a settled superior to an itinerant pastorate?

Ought Christianity to be aggressive or attractive?

Was the life of Jesus one entirely of sorrow?

Did Jesus Christ ever claim to be God, or was He contented to be known as "the Son of God"?

Are constructive creeds destructive of faith?

Was the Adamic race of man the only one created?

Ought the supremacy of the Crown in the Church to be admitted [or maintained]?

Are the clergy averse to the progress of science?

Is the present state of Christianity such as it should be [or satisfactory in itself and hopeful in its aspects]?

Is the Bible alone a sufficient rule of faith?*

Are the organizations of British churches suitable for the churches of the colonies?

Does Christianity supply a high, self-consistent, and successful form of human life?

Should the Church be governed entirely by clergy?

Is religion as necessary to nations as to individuals?

Were the Hebrew doctrines of providence as taught in the Old Testament correct?

Is the cause of revealed religion obsolete and hopeless?

Has Dean Milman, in his "History of Christianity," fully refuted Strauss?

Is the Catholic rule of faith true?†

Are the commandments of God grievous?

Is episcopacy of divine origin?

Are the clergy bound by their subscription to the Articles *not* to be free inquirers in regard to the doctrines and practices of religion?

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* See Vol. IX. † See Vol. X.

* See Vol. XII. † See Vol. XIII.

Is "assurance" essential to salvation?

Is the Christian ministry recognised in the New Testament as a distinct order in the Church? *

Is the indiscriminate circulation of the Bible conducive to the advancement of Christianity?

Is the "Book of Job" historical?

Has the Bicentenary Celebration (1866) been beneficial in its effects?

Has the influence of Puritanism been beneficial?

Ought continued adherence to the terms of Articles of Faith, subscribed by them, to be enforced on all holders of sacred offices?

Will Christ's second coming be millennial or pre-millennial?

Is "the whole range of Christian theology a mass of dreamy fallacies"?

Would the Church be benefited by the calling of a new Œcumenical Council?

Is the holy eucharist a symbol of sacrifice [a representative or propiatory sacrifice]?

Ought religious differences to prevent or invalidate marriage?

Do Scripture prophecies and secular history harmonize?

Has the study of prophecy been conducive to the interests of true religion?

Does sin in the long run betray itself?

Are the teachings of the Evangelical clergy in harmony with the Prayer Book? †

Is Whately or Whewell the better defender of Christian truth?

Is Henry Rogers superior to Isaac Taylor as a defender of the faith?

Should Bishop Colenso leave the Church of England?

Are the endowments given to the Roman Catholic Church evidences of the love of her members [of her holy power over the soul]?

Can Nonconformists be brought into union with the Church?

Is it desirable, if possible, to bring Nonconformists into the Church?

Does Nonconformity imply a self-willed interpretation of the Bible?

Is there more active spiritual life among Dissenters than in the Church?

Are the prevalent forms of worship in Britain effective? *

Is freedom of worship possible in an Established Church?

Is it expedient in the present state of the Church to restore [or institute] diocesan assemblies?

Would it be advantageous to introduce a lay element into the management of the Church of England?

Are presbytery and episcopacy irreconcilable?

Has the Pan-Anglican Conference been useful and satisfactory?

Is the encyclical letter of the bishops of the Pan-Anglican Synod a satisfactory document as to the interpretation of doctrine?

Is Colenso heretical in his interpretation of Scripture?

Were the Mosaic institutes founded in ignorance or disregard of a future life?

Does religion need no State patronage?

Was the inhibition of the Church Congress by the bishop of any diocese wise and beneficial?

Is a belief in the miraculous essential to personal Christianity? †

Is Biblical criticism inimical to religious thought?

Is Ritualism the result of religious earnestness?

Has the Church of England elasticity and strength enough to permit the struggle of parties within her pale?

Does the Bible permit investigation for the attainment of truth?

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* See Vol. XIV. † See Vol. XVII.

* See Vol. XVIII. † See Vol. XX.

Is the Bible intended as a guide to any other thing than religious truth?

Could Church patronage be safely abolished?

Are stipendiary curates in the Church fairly dealt with?

Is the Apostles' Creed an authoritative document?

Should Christians send [or support] missions to the Jews?

Is a God all mercy a God unjust?

Is the destiny of nations discoverably indicated in the prophecies of Scripture? *

Can opinions be received or rejected without incurring moral guilt?

Is the cause of Ritualism that of revealed truth against latitudinarianism and infidelity?

Is Paley's "Natural Theology" irrefragable?

Has Butler's "Analogy" excited as many doubts as it has dissipated?

Did Neander confute Strauss, [Pressensé, Rénan, Young, Seeley, &c.]?

Ought the public parochial edifices of the National Church to be appropriated to a few, or to be free to all—rich and poor alike?

Have the interpretations of Scripture by theologians and preachers caused all the quarrels in Christendom?

Is "Presbyterian Hildebrandism" uncommon?

Has the influence of John Keble been beneficial in the Church?

Which has exerted the greater [more beneficial] influence, Whately, [Arnold, Denison, Hawkins, Hampden, Coplestone, Pusey,] or Newman?

Can the English unite with the Greek Church?

Is religion theology?

Could the Mosaic polity be adapted to a commercial nation?

Is Hooker a greater theologian than Jeremy Taylor [Jewel than Andrews; Baxter than Calamy]?

Does the eucharist bear a sacrificial character?

Have the ministers of Christ sacerdotal power committed to them?

Will everlasting punishment consist of everlasting pain?

Do the Nonconformists surpass [equal] Churchmen in Biblical scholarship and ministerial training?

Is Pearson's "Exposition of the Creed" a proper text-book in divinity?

Ought free communion among Christians to be encouraged and extended?

Has the "Oxford Movement" (1833) been beneficial to the Church [of England]?

Is the "Immaculate Conception" defensible?

Can orthodoxy, Scripture, and reason be reconciled?

Are the miracles helps to faith or hindrances?

Do Christians attain justification by faith or works?

Was William Law a match for Bishop Hoadly?

Is the expiatory theory of the Atonement the most Scriptural?

Would the adoption of Protestantism have benefited Spain?

Ought churches to insist on agreement to a common system of belief among their members?

Are ecclesiastical courts less likely to do justice than civil ones?

Is the eucharist an extension [and the complement] of the Incarnation?

Have the New Testament Scriptures superseded the morality taught in the Old Testament? *

Are the principles of Independency right?

Are the relations between science and Scripture antagonistic?

Does baptism regenerate?

* See Vol. XXIII.

* See Vol. XXVI.

Is recognition of earthly friends one of the joys of heaven?

Will the Millennium include the personal reign of Jesus?

Is Scripture baptism that of water or of the Holy Ghost?

Is Christian perfection or a sinless life attainable on earth?

Is justification by faith alone the teaching of Scripture?

Was sin predestined?

Is the possible annihilation of any spiritual being opposed both to Scripture and reason?

Should the English Church be disestablished and disendowed?*

Is modern preaching effective?

Is man a free agent?

* See Vol. XXXVI.

## PHILOSOPHY AND SCIENCE.

Does J. S. Mill prove that Sir Wm. Hamilton is an erroneous teacher in philosophy?

Does H. L. Mansel's reply to Mill on the "unconditioned" satisfy the laws of controversy?

Is the philosophy of the unconditioned impregnable?

Has the secret of Hegel been discovered?

Is the inconceivable the unbelievable?

Was Goethe a philosopher?

Has the spirit of negation [scepticism] a place in the progress of thought?

Is self-restraint or self-indulgence the true means of self-development?

Are international ethics based on the same principles as private morals?

Is despotism a lie?

Does Cousin merit the praises of all time?

Is self-assertion as necessary as self-denial as an element of human worth?

Is Geneva the Rome of the mind?

Does Christianity supply the widest and most sublime of philosophies?

Since the advent of Christ have men's views of God's providential care changed?

Is Stewart or Brown the more accurate psychologist?

Ought speculative difficulties to influence practical life?

Does might give right?

Can any age misunderstand its great men?

Are sects, parties, and cliques necessary or beneficial?

Has McCosh [or Mansel] successfully oppugned the views of J. S. Mill?

Is beauty a quality inherent in objects?*

Is truth more natural to mankind than falsehood?

Can the existence of pain be reconciled with the idea of God's goodness?

Is Hobbes' philosophy superior to Cudworth's?

Is Mill's theory of mind superior to McCosh's?

Was Bayle or Montesquieu the better thinker?

Does Atheism corrupt men less than idolatry?

Has J. S. Mill depreciated the morality of the gospel?

Is philosophy more tolerant than ignorance?

"Is virtue, then, unless of Christian growth,
Mere fallacy or foolishness, or both"?

Was Hegel an Atheist?

Are Grote's views on the Sophists correct?

Did Socrates improve men by his teaching?

Is the philosophy of Descartes

* See Vol. I.

superior to that of Spinoza, [Bacon, Locke, &c.]?

Can the moral faculty be distinguished from conscience?

Is psychology essential to mental philosophy?

Has Malthus's theory of population been refuted?

Is the philosophy of Helvetius superior to Locke's?

Is Hume's theory of [causative] sequences tenable?

Does the will exert a power over the imagination?

Is Hobbes' [Herbert Spencer's] theory of laughter a correct one?

Is sacerdotalism stronger than patriotism?

Can representative institutions co-exist with a theocracy real or professed?

Is it right to say,—

"Where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise"?

Are the austere or the temperate sects of Christians the more serviceable and durable?

Was Spinoza a religious sceptic?

Is woman mentally inferior to Man?

Are De Quincey and Coleridge trustworthy expositors of Kant [German philosophy]?

Is bullionage preferable to paper currency?

Are the interests of labour and capital identical?

Is the thought of Deity a proof of Deity?

Are the enduring works of nature more wonderful than miracles could be?

Do— "Miracles believed
Work on men's minds like miracles achieved"?

Can it be said of man, as Young affirms,—

"His true existence is not yet begun"?

Are great reforms carried by the progress of morals?

Can civilisation and Romanism be reconciled?

Is forensic eloquence representative, substitutionary, or mediatorial?

Does ignorance simply deprive men of advantages, or does it bring on miseries of its own causing?

Whether ought we to attend most to the sources, purposes, or nature of knowledge?

Do the faculties of observation ripen at an earlier period than the reasoning powers?

Is consciousness a distinct faculty of the mind?

Is mind only a concomitant of bodily being?

Is mind the result of bodily existence?

Are changes in mental phenomena concomitants or results of changes in the material elements of life?

Is there a definite correspondence between the mental activity of man and the consumpt or change of his bodily tissues?

Is tradition the daughter of revelation?

Is the feeling of free will in man apparent or real?

Can the facts of spiritual be adequately tested by the laws of material phenomena?

Is reason confined to man?*

Is man the creature of circumstances?†

Are marks of design the most convincing arguments for the being of a God?

Is Locke's philosophy superior to Condillac's?

Does high culture brace or relax the sinews of action?

Does high culture destroy sympathy with the people?

Has university training tended to make men compliant to power?

Is treason against the rights of a nation a crime as great as that against the prerogatives of the Crown?

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* See Vol. III.

* See Vol. VI. † See Vol. VII.

Is statesmanship the art of avoiding evil or of enforcing good?

Is barbarism the original or a degenerate condition of mankind?

Are nationalism and oligarchical rule inseparable?

Does republicanism lead to cosmopolitanism?

Do trades unions cripple industry [and impede invention]?

Does the state exist for the Government or the Government for the state?

Does Atheism involve social danger?

Are choice and chance irreconcilable?

Is the nineteenth century the age of intelligent reproduction?

Is philosophy never truly opposed to revelation?

Are knowledge and imagination enemies?

Have all social improvements resulted from the exercise of special inquiries?

Is the progress of mankind measurable by the knowledge of the laws of the physical universe?

Can "positivism" yield an effective religion?

Ought our international policy to be founded on moral or political considerations?

Is commercial interest sufficient to secure international peace?

Can commerce be made flourishing through war?

Ought the traditions of ages to influence investigation?

Is an unlimited bank issue beneficial to commerce? †

Should our international policy be founded on merely human considerations?

Is Confucius the most perfect type of morality known to men?

Whether does greater evil arise from want of thought or want of heart?

Is civilization self-originating?

Is confessed ignorance better than pretended knowledge?

Ought the clergy to be exposed to the direct and immediate action of public opinion?

Has scepticism or superstition the worse effect on the moral conduct of men?

Is the philosophy of common sense satisfactory to the understanding?

Do the clergy hinder the progress of humanity as much as the army?

Is the philosophy of Hume superior to that of Berkeley?

Is pleasure the *end* of art?

Ought the Annexation Policy pursued in India to be adopted towards China?*

Does conception differ from imagination?

Is conscience a moral faculty?

Is assent intellectual and consent moral?

Is continence different from or the same as chastity?

Is the principle of contradiction a sufficient reason?

Does man possess a criterion of truth?

Does civilization owe more to science than Scripture?

Can a rational system of metaphysics result from a material phrenology?

Is infidelity unproductive of true virtue?

Are life's crosses losses or gains?

Is doubt sinful?

Is the present age too fond of self-glorification?

Have we any evidence for the existence of matter?

Have we any evidence for the independent existence of mind?

Do Christian ethics differ from natural morals?

Does the speculative differ from the practical reason?

Are virtue and happiness coincident?

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* See Vol. VIII. † See Vol. IX.

* See Vol. X. * See Vol. XIII.

Is counsel justified in defending a prisoner of whose guilt he is cognizant?

Is reasoning from analogy legitimate?

Can the papacy be tolerant?

Are men naturally as vain as women?

Is the earth solid, or is it only a crust enclosing reservoirs of fluid igneous matter?

Is smoking injurious to health?

Has the progress of humanity been due to Christianity?

Is the number of debatable topics rapidly diminishing?

Is war the worst of calamities?

Are the claims of land and its owners to special legislative privileges well founded?

Ought there to be a digest of British law?

Does the proclamation of war supersede discontent and suspend agitations?

Does civilization necessitate demoralization? *

Does the power of attaining enjoyment increase with the increase of wealth?

Is political freedom compatible with the supremacy of the Church [or the infallibility of the Pope]?

Will England decay as the great nations of antiquity have done?

Has political economy improved or injured the civil condition of man?

Does the ideal afford more pleasure [or produce more sorrow] than the real?

Is the cross of vice heavier to bear than that of virtue?

Is the middle station of life most favourable to virtue and happiness?

Are the joys of labour sweeter than the gifts of fortune?

Is the intellectual development of Europe more due to religion than science? †

Can we [successfully] do evil that good may come?

Is the absolute thinkable?

Is prosperity a more severe trial of virtue than adversity?

Do the laziest people take the most trouble?

Is every man the best judge of his own interests?

Are the production and distribution of wealth the sole aims of polity [or the end of national existence]?

Is commerce an exchange of advantages, or the means of enriching one nation by impoverishing another?

Does the doctrine of final causes lead to truth?

Is certainty of knowledge attainable by man?

Is chance subjective or objective?

Is sensation bodily or mental?

Is national luxury a source of gain or loss?

Is it possible to harmonize position with merit?

Has love neither duties nor rights?

Are the general laws of the mind suspended for the sake of the affections?

Has the philosophy of Bishop Berkeley been refuted?

Is J. S. Mill's utilitarianism superior to Bentham's?

Has Hamilton explained or misunderstood Reid?

Are morals the basis of politics?

Is revolution necessary for evolution?

Are the sorrows of the affections irremediable?

Is the mind active or passive in sensation?

Is abstraction a function or a faculty?

Has the soldier or the sailor the harder life of it?

Are public improvements more difficult in free than in despotic countries?

Ought innovation to be dreaded?

Has France made greater im-

* See Vol. XX. † See Vol. XXII.

provement in the iron manufactures than Britain?

Is conceptionalism superior to nominalism [or to realism]?

Has the coating of vessels of war with armour-plates been a failure?

Was Davy or Faraday the greater discoverer [or the abler man of science]?

Is Carpenter or Elliotson the more notable physiologist?

Is Airy or Babbage the more accomplished man of science?

Can utility supply a criterion of the beautiful?

Is alcohol food [an alimentary article or a health agent]?

Is the soul immortal? *

Does geology confirm the Mosaic account of the Creation? †

Is the destruction of birds of prey a wise economy?

Are the game laws as injurious in their effects on game as a pestilence?

Does "mimicry in nature" imply intelligence in the mimic?

Do all the races of civilized beings spring from wild ones?

Is the principle of natural selection sufficient to account for all vital changes?

Ought science to be taught in public schools?

Is crime insanity? ‡

Is theology the completion of science?

Does the screw afford the best means of propulsion for steam-vessels?

Are our coal-fields practically inexhaustible?

Is mind necessarily opposed to matter? §

Is science the true bulwark rather than the countermine of religious belief?

Ought railways to be constructed on the broad or on the narrow gauge?

Is force never created or destroyed, but only transmuted?

Is mathematical superior to logical training?

Is the Whitworth or the Armstrong the superior gun?

Is any knowledge beyond the range of ordinary human experience impossible?

Is science as useful as a means of discipline as it is as a source of knowledge?

Is Descartes inferior as a philosopher to Bacon?

Can human nature be scientifically studied?

Have any great discoveries been made by accident?

Has science been less contradictory in its teachings than Christianity in its doctrines?

Are the tenets of George and Andrew Combe philosophically correct? *

Is the theory of "pre-Adamite man" based on sufficient evidence?

Was Brougham or Brewster the more versatile in mind [or pursuit]?

Was Ferguson or Herschel the superior astronomer?

Are the principles of the development theory true? †

Did David Mushet or J. B. Neilson do the greater service to metallurgy?

Has Fairbairn or Bessemer done the greater service in engineering?

Has the canal system been advantageous to the country?

Are the modern phenomena designated "spiritual manifestations" genuine? ‡

Is science the handmaid or foe of religion?

Do no human pursuits make any material progress till science has been brought to bear on them?

Is the muscular frame a distinct organ of sensation?

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* See Vol. VII. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. VIII. § See Vol. IX.

* See Vol. XI. † See Vol. XIII.
‡ See Vol. XIV.

Is the Mosaic account of the Deluge consistent with the facts of science? *

Does science deal with a circle of knowledge with which theology should not meddle?

Is the law of lunacy founded on correct principles? †

Can the bounds between the knowable and the unknowable be scientifically determined?

Is knowledge power?

Is Comte or Hegel the better theorist on the philosophy of history?

Is positivism the science of the future?

Have professing Christians any right to apply the tests of reason to Bible statements of facts or doctrines?

Can sewage be profitably applied to the soil?

Do the sensations and desires of the sick guide or misguide?

Should "vivisection" be abandoned?

Is sensation the original source of all human thought?

Do the aims of science coincide with those of the Bible?

Does the realm of fact extend beyond what is evident to the senses?

Did Newton *first* demonstrate the law of gravitation?

Does the reign of law involve the impossibility of miracles?

Are all material phenomena resolvable into modes of motion?

Can the law of gravitation be explained by the principle that a moving body communicates motion to another body?

Are there statutes and counter-statutes (antinomies) in the human mind?

Has Nasmyth, Fairbairn, or Bessemer most advanced engineering?

Is a logic of induction possible?

Is hydropathy superior to homœopathy as a system of curative agencies?

Are moral and social phenomena exceptions to the usual course of nature as being exempted from the operation of overruling law?

Is Hugh Miller's "Testimony of the Rocks" a conclusive reconciliation of geology and Scripture?

Was Mantell superior to Hugh Miller as a geologist?

Are all women Tories?

Is the study of logic useless and injurious?

Is ignorance a greater occasion of credulity than knowledge?

Is homœopathy true in principle and beneficial in practice? *

Does talent differ from genius [in kind or in degree]?

Ought money to be intrinsic or symbolical? †

Are the categories of Aristotle or Bacon [Kant or Mill] the more useful in reasoning?

Are instincts superior or inferior to appetites?

Have we sufficient evidence to prove that communications are *now* made to man from the spiritual world? ‡

Is Huxley a better authority on comparative anatomy than Owen?

Is the notion of a plurality of inhabited worlds consonant with science and revelation? §

Is *à posteriori* superior to *à priori* reasoning?

Can there be a science of the beautiful?

Is sensationalism realism?

Is Whewell superior to Mill as a moralist?

Do the microscope and the telescope supply proof of the inadequacy of the senses to afford to man a knowledge of the truth of things?

Is Mesmerism true? ‖

Is Vegetarianism reasonable and beneficial? ¶

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* See Vol. XV. † See Vol. XVII.

* See Vol. III. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. V. § See Vol. VI.
‖ See Vol. II. ¶ *Ibid.*

Is Hugh Miller a better geologist than Sir R. Murchison—[Lyell than Lubbock—Buckland than De la Beche]?

Can self-denial ever be immoral?

Is phrenology true? *

Are ships the best coast defences of Britain?

Does Sir D. Brewster excel Sir J. Herschel—Airey, Arnott?

Is cause knowable?

Is all causation necessary?

Is educational or medical quackery the more injurious?

Do the teachings of moral philosophy and political economy agree?

Is the Bank of England justly constituted?

Should we have imperial railways?

Ought "Telegraphy" to be national?

Is Circumstantial Evidence reliable?

* See Vol. I.

Is causation uniform?

Has the volunteer movement conferred any benefit on the country, or on those connected with it?

Is the present organization of our police force excellent on the whole, or should it be reconstructed?

Should the State repress immoral and infidel literature?

Do the land laws of this country require alteration?

Has the influence of Rationalism been injurious?

Does the human soul, on quitting its present abode, become the tenant of another material vehicle?

Has the immorality of France been influencive in its failure in war?

Which is the greater loss, sight or hearing?

Is the influence of war more ennobling than debasing?

Does Bain or Ferrier supply the better theory of knowing and Being?

## HISTORY.

Are the Gracchi deserving of the fame they possess?

Was Cæsar necessary to Rome's prosperity?

Is Xerxes worthy of nothing more than the execrations of historians?

Did Miltiades deserve his fate?

Is Shakspere's character of Richard III. correct in the main?

Was the persecution of the Jews in the Middle Ages inspired by political or religious aims?

Is Jesuitism in harmony with human progress?

Did circumstances justify the execution of Charles I.? *

Was Lord Bacon justly disgraced and punished?

Was Burke a patriot?

* See Vol. I.

Had Oxford good reason for rejecting Gladstone?

Was the English Revolution the issue of moral principle?

Was the French Revolution the issue of philosophic speculations?

Was the trial of Lord Strafford more important than that of Warren Hastings?

Was Cromwell a first-rate general, a great statesman, and a sincere man? *

Was the Earl of Strafford the victim of a legislative murder?

Did St. Peter die at Rome?

Was John Pym a greater statesman than Sir Robert Peel?

Was the Hampton Court conference beneficial to the religious progress of England?

* See Vol. II.

Was Sir Walter Raleigh justly executed or judicially murdered?

Did Chief Justice Coke merit the disgrace imposed on him by the court?

Can the apostolic origin of the British Church be proved? *

Is the career of Garibaldi worthy of the admiration of men?

Was the Reform Bill of 1832 due to the manifestation though not to the employment of physical force, or to the sense of justice entertained by the higher classes of the time?

Were the effects of the Crusades favourable to the civilization and moral elevation of the people? †

Is the world more indebted to Rome than to England?

Is the character of the Duke of Wellington worthy of admiration? ‡

Was Warren Hastings justly impeached?

Was Leo X. a heathen or a Christian?

Is a State Church necessary for the maintenance of British society?

Is the Bible a record of historical development?

Does history give a verdict in favour of or against Protestantism?

Is Maria Theresa deserving of admiration?

Have the effects of the French Revolution of last century been beneficial? §

Did England's share in the seven years' war destroy the maritime power of France?

Would the family compact of the House of Bourbon have secured the peace of Europe?

Is European interference in Mexican politics just? ‖

Was Pitt the Pericles of England?

Does Roux-Ferrand or Guizot supply the better philosophy of the progress of civilization in Europe?

Does T. A. Bushez or John von Müller give the better philosophy of history?

Which supplies the best history of the Crusades — Heeren, Mill, Michaud, or Wilken?

Was the Crimean war justifiable in its origin and satisfactory in its results? *

Is Calvin or Luther the nobler reformer [or man]?

Was the Duke of Marlborough worthy of the honours and rewards he gained?

Is the character of Ignatius Loyola worthy of admiration and respect? †

Did the monastic orders benefit the Church?

Was the French Revolution as justifiable as the English?

Was the Civil War in England necessary?

Did Thomas Cromwell deserve to be attainted?

Did Cranmer merit either his life's success or his death's disgrace?

Is the character of Henry of Navarre worthy of commendation? [was his reign advantageous to France?]

Was the consolidation of the Dutch republic beneficial to Europe?

Did European politics justify the Armada?

Has Napoleonism been beneficial to Europe? ‡

Was slavery the real cause of the American war? §

Were the Scottish nobles of Mary Stuart worthy of their power, place, and trust?

Was Burke the advocate of an effete social and political system?

Was the execution of Mary Stuart politic?

Whether was A-Becket or the king right in their controversy?

Was the career of Edmund Burke consistent and honourable?

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* See Vol. III. † *Ibid.* ‡ See Vol. IV.
§ See Vol. XVII. ‖ *Ibid.*

* See Vol. XVIII. † See Vol. XIX.
‡ See Vol. XX. § *Ibid.*

Was Elizabeth "the greatest sovereign that ever sat on the British throne"?

Has the influence of Puritanism been beneficial?*

Has the life of Napoleon III. been more beneficial to France than that of Napoleon I.?

Is Charlemagne worthy of his great fame?

Were the maritime expeditions of the Normans advantageous to Europe?

Did the Saracen invasion of Europe do permanent injury to society?

Did the preachers of the League encourage or retard democracy in France?

Was Lord Clive or Lord Clyde the greater man?

Was Marlborough or Wellington the greater military genius?

Was Lord Bolingbroke a patriotic statesman?

Was Scotland a dependency of England?

Has the Popedom of Pio Nono been advantageous to the Church, [religion, or religious freedom]?

Was the life of Pope Alexander the Sixth less holy than that of Martin Luther?

Was the institution of marriage coeval with man?

Was the first estate of man one of barbarism?

Was religion under the Stuarts worse than under the commonwealth and the Revolution?

Has the statesmanship of Napoleon III. saved Europe from war?

Was Napoleon Buonaparte worthy of the admiration of the French people?†

Have the permanent causes of European disturbance been increased or diminished during [or by] the reign of Napoleon III.?

Has the Roman policy of Napoleon III. been vacillating in the interests of Italy or of his own dynasty?

Did circumstances justify the Irish Rebellion of 1798?

Was Robert Emmet deservedly executed?

Can Scotland reasonably complain of injustice from England?*

Has monachism been beneficial to European society?†

Was Napoleon III. an enemy of freedom?

Is history philosophy teaching by example?

Was the British Government justified in entering upon [the present] war with Russia?‡

Was Mahomet an impostor?§

Has modern legislation been by Bentham reduced to practice?

Has the life of W. J. Fox been efficacious for the permanent benefit of man?

Has the peace Napoleon III. gave to France been worth its cost to Europe?

Was Sir G. C. Lewis superior as a statesman to Sir William Molesworth?

Is the character of Queen Elizabeth worthy of admiration?‖

Is Macaulay's estimate of William of Orange correct?¶

Was Walpole as great a statesman as Chatham?

Was William III. as noble a king as Frederick the Great?

Which of the French *régimes* of this century has exerted the most beneficial influence in that country? [in Europe?]

Was Burke or Sheridan the superior orator?

Has Adam Smith or James Watt produced the most important revolution in human affairs?

Was Louis Philippe a worthy king of France?

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* See Vol. XXI. † See Vol. V.

* See Vol. V. † See Vol. VI.
‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.*
‖ See Vol. VII. ¶ *Ibid.*

Is Russia great because or in spite of serfdom? *

Was Mary, Queen of Scots, more sinned against than sinning? †

Was Hastings or the East India Company worthy of the greater blame regarding the government of India?

Has the English, the American, or the French Revolution been productive of most permanent good to mankind?

Was Cromwell superior as a statesman to Robespierre?

Was Pym more powerful in influence than Mirabeau?

Was the Walcheren expedition mismanaged or wittingly reduced to imbecility?

Has the condition of the common people improved or deteriorated since the days of Elizabeth?

Does Scotland resemble Spain in its religious character?

Has the preservation of caste conduced to [the present] revolt in India? ‡

Have the clergy been the constant resisters of mental improvement?

Was Cromwell's Irish policy praiseworthy?

Ought the East India Company to be [have been] abolished? §

Is the Church of England entirely a creation of the State?

Was Pitt (the younger) a curse to his country and to Europe?

Was the Norman Conquest beneficial to England?

Was Sobieski a wise patriot king?

Was the Reformation under Henry VIII. the result of motives of a religious or a political character? ‖

Is the "Julius Cæsar" of Mommsen, Merivale, or Napoleon III. the most correct and impartial?

Did the civil wars in Ireland benefit it?

* See Vol. VIII. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. IX. § *Ibid.*
‖ See Vol. X.

Is Julius Cæsar, William III., or Napoleon I. the best type of autocratic power?

Was Joan of Arc an impostor? *

Has the influence of the clergy declined with the spread of the Reformation?

Did the Reformation secure liberty of conscience?

Was George III. a constitutional king?

Was the pontificate of Gregory VII. beneficial to the Church?

Has the foreign policy of France under Napoleon III. been directed to wise ends?

Was the Reformation a schism or a change?

Were the treaties of 1815 justified by the circumstances of the times?

Does the aggrandizement of Prussia imperil France?

Has the civilization of Western Christendom reached its climax, and is it going to dissolution?

Is Kossuth or Garibaldi the more worthy of the loving regard of men?

Has Mazzini been the friend of Italy?

Was the Secession of the Free Church of Scotland justifiable? †

Has Bismarck acquired a just character for statesmanly foresight and patriotism?

Did our "iron aristocracy" do or secure justice to Henry Cort?

Was it because they favoured despotism too much or restrained democracy too little that the State Churches of England (1640) and of France (1790) were abolished before their Revolutions succeeded?

Are the Poles justified in endeavouring to regain their national independence? ‡

Did Arnold da Brescia deserve the love of the Romans?

Was the Act of Uniformity of 1682 justifiable? §

* See Vol. XII. † See Vol. XIV.
‡ See Vol. XV. § See Vol. XVI.

Was the life of Huss or of Savonarola more useful to the Church [and to the progress of man] ?

Was Alfonso the Magnanimous worthy of his character, [repute, or agnomen] ?

Did Frederick the Great act judiciously in the war of the Austrian succession ?

Was Frederick the Great ever truly the arbiter of the destiny of Europe ?

Was the Pragmatic Sanction a just settlement ?

Was Edward I.'s policy of conquest justifiable ?

Has the memory of Nelson been duly honoured ?

Was Henry VIII. superior as a monarch to Charles V. ?

Was Luther essential to the Reformation ?

Had Charles V. or Luther the greater share in producing the political results of the Reformation [the sixteenth century] ?

Was Charles V. the greatest sovereign of his age ?

Has the invasion of Europe by the Turks been advantageous to the Continent ?

Is the character and life of Clive as well given by Lord Macaulay as by James Mill ?

Was Sir Thomas More legally condemned ?

Has Carbonarism justified its friends or its enemies?

Did the Medici family do more good than ill to the European nations ?

Was the French siege of Rome (1849) justifiable ?

Did Bonaparte procure the death of Pichegru ?

Has O'Connell been properly appreciated as a politician ?

Did the history of the Revolution influence Napoleon III. for good or evil ?

Was Marius superior or inferior to Sulla ?

Were the civil wars in France advantageous in their results ?

Was the 18th Fructedor, 4th Sept., 1797, or the 2nd Dec., 1852, the better conducted *coup d'état* ?

Are Thomas McCrie's biographies as trustworthy in their inferences as in their statements ?

Was the insurrection in Canada (1838) justifiable in itself or justifiably repressed ?

Did Leo X. merit the admiration of his own times and the wonder of posterity ?

Was Napoleon's Mexican scheme as foolish as it has been vain ?

Was the Emperor Theodosius superior to Constantine the Great ?

Was Swedenborg an impostor, a deceiver, or himself deceived ?

Has the eighteenth century a just claim to human admiration and interest ?

Did the sixteenth or the eighteenth century proclaim the more powerfully the right of truth to govern the world ?

Did science or civilization make the greater advancement in the eighteenth century ?

Did Erasmus or Reuchlin do the greater service to the Reformation ?

Has monasticism conduced to Christian life ?

Was Butler a better bishop than Warburton ?

Was the career of Pelissier (Duc de Malakoff) [upright, honourable, or] commendable ?

Have the clergy been the opponents of science ?

Have the confusion of tongues and the dispersion of man been verified by modern discoveries ?

Was Guizot right in interdicting Michelet's lectures on history ?

Is there a true distinction between history sacred and profane ? *

Has the English nation been guilty of selfish injustice to Ireland ?

Did Richelieu or Mazarin do the greater amount of good to France ?

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* See Vol. XXVI.

Were the wars of the Fronde beneficial to France?

Has the reign of Charles V. been fruitful in good?

Did the domination of the Arabs in Spain produce more good than evil?

Was Palmerston as a premier superior to Peel?

Was the career of Cavour praiseworthy?

Was Alexander the Great worthy of the power he gained?

Ought Pitt to have resigned in 1762?

Was the character of Cranmer noble and Christian?

Has the abolition of the East India Company been beneficial?

Was Pitt or Fox the abler statesman?

Did Pericles cause the deterioration of Greece?

Was Cataline's conspiracy wholly unjustifiable?

Did Cicero deserve the respect of his contemporaries?

Was the aid rendered by England to one portion of the Chinese against another right?

Was the conquest of Naples by Charles of Anjou just in itself or justified by its results?

Is the verdict of history in favour of the Reformation [Toleration]?

Which gives the best history of the French Revolution — Thiers, Miguet, Carlyle, or Louis Blanc?

Had the revolution of Puritanism in England, or that of Encyclopædism in France, the better results?

Was the Hans league advantageous to commerce?

Was the peace of Westphalia beneficial?

Have the countries which favoured the Reformation been more prosperous than those which adhered to Rome?

Was the dominion of the Normans in Sicily advantageous?

Was the Treaty of Utrecht advantageous and just?

Has Britain a right to tax its colonies?

Was Egbert or Athelstane first King of England?

Was Dunstan a good and great man?

Did Thomas à Becket deserve assassination?

Was the expatriation of the Acadians justifiable?

Was the massacre of St. Bartholomew expedient?

Was there ever a period, after the first blow was struck in the great civil war, when a reconciliation between Charles the First and his Puritan subjects was possible?

Was Cromwell justified in the measures he adopted with the parliaments elected during his protectorate?

## LITERATURE.

Is education more necessary under a democracy than an aristocracy?

Was Bordaloue [Bossuet, Flechier] or Massillon the better preacher [pulpit orator]?

Is James Mill's "Fragment on Mackintosh" as just as it is severe in its criticism?

Is Fielding preferable to Smollett as an author?

Is ancient wisdom superior to modern learning?

Is Mitford as an historian superior to Grote?

Has the mystery of Shakspere's sonnets been solved?

Which most deserves esteem, the poet or the legislator? *

* See Vol. I.

Are the Bampton lectures worthy of their object?

Is Derby's superior to Herschel's Homer?

Is language of divine origin? *

Was William Hazlitt greater as a literary man than De Quincey [Lamb than Leigh Hunt]?

Was Christopher North greater as a literary man than Southey [Lockhart than Gifford, Jeffrey than Mackintosh, Hogg than Cunningham, Campbell than Bowles]?

Which was the greater poet, Milton or Shakspere? †

Do classical studies tend to contract men's views and deaden their sensibilities?

Are Voltairean worse than Ultramontane principles?

Are the writings of Cowper superior to those of Wordsworth?

Has the Church been the mother or the step-mother of learning?

Is a revision of the authorized version of the Bible necessary? ‡

Was Byron or Scott the greater poet? §

Is "Paradise Lost" preferable to the "Pilgrim's Progress"?

Is Sterne or Swift the preferable character?

Is the press the servant or the tyrant of the public?

Does the *Times* deserve the character of "the leading journal of Europe"?

Was Sir Philip Francis the author of the "Letters of Junius"?

Does nature or art supply the better materials for poetry?

Which is preferable, present popularity or posthumous fame?

Is freedom of debate unfriendly to political liberty?

Are *ideas* in politics more important than *men*?

Are the religious or the irreligious novels of our day the works of the greater writers?

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* See Vol. II. † See Vol. IV.
‡ See Vol. VIII. § *Ibid.*

Which is the abler writer, Dickens or Thackeray? *

Is James Philip Bailey a better poet than Alexander Smith—[Gerald Massey than Sydney Dobell—Robert Browning than Alfred Tennyson—J. A. Herand than R. H. Horne—Thomas Aird than Charles Mackay—Mrs. Hemans than Mrs. Southey—Archbishop Trench than Matthew Arnold—Sergeant Talfourd than Lord Lytton]?

Is Froude superior as an historian to Prescott?—[Palgrave to Stanhope—Arnold to G. C. Lewis—Muir to Grote—William Massey to Sir A. Alison—Bancroft to Macaulay]?

Is the poetry of Tennyson as healthy in its tendencies as that of Longfellow? †

Has Longfellow given a better translation of Dante than Cary, Wright, Ramsay, Pollock, &c.?

Is Charles Reade as good a novelist as Victor Hugo [Freytag, Anne Thomas, Mrs. Stowe, &c.]?

Is Montaigne or Rabelais [Le Sage or Lopez de Vega—Racine or Calderon—Corneille or Nicolini] the better author?

Is Anthony Trollope superior as a novelist to Miss Braddon?

Are English novels superior to those of France [Italy, Germany, Spain, America, &c.]?

Has the Cambridge edition of Shakspere been satisfactorily edited?

Do the quartos or the folios of Shakspere's works afford the best text?

Are the travels of Sir S. Baker as interesting as those of Dr. Livingstone [Grant and Speke]?

Are modern English novels fit for home reading?

Do the novels of English life bear witness to an undercurrent of vileness in society?

Are Balzac's [Paul de Kock's] novels deserving of careful perusal?

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* See Vol. IX. † See Vol. XII.

Are the intrinsic merits of Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" worthy of its popularity? *

Do theatres exert an unfavourable influence on society?

Was Lockhart a superior critic to Gifford [Jeffrey to Hazlitt]?

Is Dr. Hampden a greater thinker than Dr. Newman [Maurice than Grote—Caird than Candlish]?

Does the present multiplicity of periodicals retard rather than foster intellectual progress? †

Is Halliwell, Dyce, [Keightley, Collier, Cowden Clarke,] the better Shakspere editor?

Who is the "Mr. W. H." of Shakspere's sonnets, Southampton, Pembroke, Hathaway, Heminge, Willobie, Hammond, &c.?

Did Shakspere revise or neglect his dramas?

Is Whittier superior as a poet to Longfellow?

Which are the better sonnets—those of Sidney, Shakspere, Daniel, Milton, Wordsworth, Bowles, &c.?

Ought anonymous [newspaper] writing to be continued?

Are the talents of Hobbes equal to his style?

Is Bacon superior to Goethe as an aphorist?

Are the sacred poets of Germany superior to those of England?

Is Byron's "Manfred" or Bailey's "Festus" the better poem?

Is Joanna Baillie worthy of the title of "the female Shakspere"?

Is George Eliot superior as a novelist to Mrs. Oliphant?

Is Schiller's or Knowles' "William Tell" the better play?

Is the Pulpit or the Press more potent in the present day? ‡

Is Campbell's superior to Southey's specimens of the poets?

Is Chateaubriand as great a thinker and writer as Rousseau?

Is Keats or Shelley, [Horne or Knowles, Hunt or Mackay, Browning or Landor, Allingham or Dobell, Arnold or Trench,] the better poet?

Are the pastoral poems of Ben Jonson [Browne, Fletcher, &c.] better than Allan Ramsay's?

Is an age of general intellectual culture unfavourable to the development of great men? *

Are the dramas of Dryden, [Marston, Cumberland, Godwin,] superior to those of Sheridan, [Chapman, Otway, Maturin]?

Is sacred inferior to secular poetry?

Was the Pentateuch written by Moses? and is it historically true? †

Does Smiles or Craik best narrate the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties?

Is Channing's essay on Milton better than Macaulay's?

Are the works of Plato authentic?

Was the humour of Thackeray beneficially employed?

Does Neander, Strauss, Rénan, or Pressensé furnish the better life of Jesus?

Which has the better claim to the authorship of the "De Imitatione Christi,"—Gerson or A-Kempis?

Does poetry or history yield the higher entertainment?

Can [could] members of Christian churches consistently take part in the Shakspere Tercentenary movement? ‡

Ought the Press to be free from legal restriction?

Has the authorship of the Junius Letters been discovered?

Is ancient superior to modern eloquence?

Is the early history of Rome credible?

Is Tennyson's "Enoch Arden" morally objectionable? §

Are the studies pursued in the Scotch universities better adapted to life and progressive thought than those most favoured in England?

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* See Vol. XVI. † See Vol. XVII. ‡ See Vol. XVIII.

* See Vol. XIX. † *Ibid.* ‡ See Vol. XX. § See Vol. XXII.

Is the perusal of works of fiction right or wrong? *

Have the novels of Miss Braddon the elements of a lasting fame in them?

Is the character of Charlotte Bronte or of Miss Mitford the more admirable?

Are the novels of Mrs. Gaskell equal to those of George Eliot in power, morality, and style?

Do the later writings of Thomas Carlyle harmonize with his earlier ones?

Has the drama declined as much as the novel has advanced?

Are Milton's prose works equal in power and range of thought to his poetry?

Is Dr. J. H. Newman or Francis William Newman the more influential in life [and the more worthy of approval]?

Do the letters of Byron display as much genius as those of Burns?

Are the sonnets of Wordsworth equal to those of Shakspere?

Ought novels as well as plays to be licensed?

Does "Festus" merit "the praises of all time"?

Is Massinger a better dramatist than Schiller?

Is the English of Scripture superior to the English of Shakspere?

Are public lectures profitable for instruction? †

Does poetry decline with the advancement of civilization? ‡

Are literary men truly chargeable with impracticality?

Is anonymous preferable to acknowledged journalism?

Why have Scotchmen succeeded and Englishmen failed in song-writing?

Is the social and political influence of *Punch* rightly used and directed?

Is Machiavelli's "Prince" serious or ironic?

Whether was Voltaire, Rousseau, or Hume most to blame in their several quarrels?

Was E. A. Poe or Chatterton the more wonderful combination of genius and insanity?

Are the poems of Ossian translations or fabrications?

Are the diaries of Pepys, Evelyn, or D'Arblay most interesting to historians?

Was his connection with Jeremy Bentham advantageous to James Mill?

Was Béranger or Petöfie the greater lyrist?

Are there foreshadowings of Christ in Plato?

Should translations reproduce the form of their original?

Is the literary character of the articles written in modern magazines adequate to the advancement of the age generally?

Are the writings of Thomas Carlyle worthy of national admiration? Or, Is the tendency of the works of Thomas Carlyle beneficial?

Which is the greater writer, Charles Kingsley or Lord Lytton?

Which is the greater writer, George Eliot or Mrs. Beecher Stowe?

Which is the greater writer, the author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," or Mr. Disraeli?

Do our newspapers form the new (true) Church of England?

Is the influence of the pulpit on the wane? *

Is Robert Browning inferior as a poet to Alfred Tennyson?

Has the telegraph superseded the historian?

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* See Vol. XXII.
† See Vol. XXIV. ‡ *Ibid.*

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* See Vol. XXXV.

# ART.

Do pre-Raphaelite paintings rightly represent nature?

Is photography favourable to art?

Is science inimical to poetry?

Are art unions favourable to originality in art products?

Is painting on the decline?

Is sculpture more realistic than painting?

Does poetry or history afford the better materials for paintings?

Are mythological preferable to real subjects?

Is sculpture unadaptable to modern themes?

Is Chantrey or Flaxman the superior sculptor?

Is hill or sea scenery the more picturesque?

Is painting superior to poetry in causing a love of nature?

Do works of taste tend to increase social happiness?

Are the principles of the pre-Raphaelite school of painters correct? *

Has ancient or modern poetry afforded art the greater number and the nobler class of subjects?

Do the fine or the useful arts produce the greater amount of delight?

Does music, sculpture, painting, or the drama most completely fulfil the ends of art?

Is feeling the standard of the artist?

Does the painting [music, sculpture, &c.] of France excel that of Britain?

Is Kugler or Waagen the better art guide?

Is industrial art neglected in Britain?

Has J E. Millais remained a consistent Pre-Raphaelite?

Are works of taste able to be so cheapened as to be brought within the reach of the people?

Was Baily the equal of Chantrey, Mac Dowell of McDonald [Marshall of Gibson]?

Does Baron Marochetti excel all British sculptors?

Is Maclise equal to Gilbert?

Has Cruikshank rivalled Hogarth?

Was Weber equal to Meyerbeer [Spohr to Rossini, &c.]?

Is Gothic superior to Greek [or Roman] architecture in churches?

Was Delaroche, Delacroix, or Ary Scheffer possessed of the greatest artistic genius?

Did Gericault surpass David?

Did Ingris excel his master David?

Did Thorwaldsen excel Canova?

Has realism in art kept pace with physical inquiry and philosophical doubt?

Does Rosa Bonheur equal Sir E. Landseer?

Has the philosophy of Kant been the occasioning cause of Pre-Raphaelitism [of sensational novels]?

Is oratory a fine or a useful art?

Does acting afford a career as influential as painting, [sculpture, or literature]?

Do stage effects conceal stage defects?

Has modern emulated ancient sculpture?

Are the moderns superior in art to the ancients?

Does any moral or historic principle underlie the change between the earlier and the later Gothic architecture?

Does Egyptic art conform to the beautiful?

Is the pleasure of art subjective or objective?

* See Vol. XIV.

## POLITICS.

Did the free trade agitation prove the advantage of common sense over theoretical training?

Does democracy tend to the bringing about of a general state of mediocrity?

Is the Irish revolutionary brotherhood worthy of success?

Whether has Stephens or Roberts made the greater bungle of the Fenian movement?

Ought the Bank Act of 1844 to be Repealed? *

Has Victor Emmanuel used Garibaldi as he ought?

Would Austria make a better headship for Germany than Prussia?

Is an aristocracy advantageous to society? †

Is Mr. John Bright as a politician worthy of the confidence of this country? ‡

Should the nations of Europe guarantee the inviolability of the Papacy?

Has the nationalizing of Italy been beneficial to France?

Should Belgium be annexed to France?

Is an armed peace preferable to a state of war?

Were the industrial phenomena of society properly understood by Adam Smith [Malthus]?

Which is now the Imperial nation on the Continent [Britain, Germany, France, &c.]?

Is the function of Government protective or directive?

Were the means by which our Indian empire was acquired consistent with sound national policy?

Was slavery the chief cause of the American war?

Ought one nation to enforce upon another, against its will, treaties regarding trade?

Does a nation possess the right of revolution?

Was the policy of Peel honourable and right?

Ought European nations to have interfered in the American struggle?

Ought Parliamentary representatives to vote according to the wishes of their constituents or their own judgment?

Are the interests of France and Germany antagonistic?

Ought a difference between the borough and the county franchise to be maintained?

Was Disraeli's management of the Reform Bill statesmanly?

Ought Turkey to stand neutral in European political questions?

Should Crete be made self-governing?

Ought Great Britain to interfere with the progress of events in Italy [in the papal dominions]?

Do individual states constitute independent sovereign powers?

Are there rights and duties common to all countries and states?

Should the administrative departments of Government be reorganized?

Ought land transfers to be cheapened and simplified?

Can the power of the Legislature be limited?

Is the Reform Act likely to utilize the popular will, and make it operate for good?

Was Garibaldi justifiably arrested?

Is Mill or Bright the better qualified for being the leading mind of the Liberal party?

Are the Poor Laws founded on political and moral fallacies?

Is government by majorities just?

Does democracy weaken an executive?

Should working men send paid delegates to Parliament?

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* See Vol. V.

† See Vol. XXVI. ‡ *Ibid.*

Is territorialism or industrialism likely to have the greater power under the Reform Act?

Has the ministry of Ratazzi been beneficial to Italy?

Would a European congress be likely to settle the papal difficulty?

Is the true foreign policy of England intervention or non-intervention?

Does Democracy lead to Republicanism?

Has the Derby-Disraeli Government sacrificed the permanent interests of the country to gain a temporary popularity?

Is education essential to the proper exercise of the franchise?

Ought small boroughs to be entirely abolished?

Is Gladstone superior as a party leader to Disraeli?

Ought the premier of Britain to be a peer?

Should the head of a party in the State be its master or its leader?

Is the cession of Russian America to the United States likely to be advantageous or disadvantageous?

Should the costs of parliamentary elections be borne by the constituencies or the nation?

Ought sex to be a disqualification for the elective franchise?

Is non-intervention as dangerous as intervention?

Ought the reform agitation to be renewed or discontinued?

Has the Representation of the People Bill been properly managed?

Should France defend the Papacy by arms?

Can the Conservatives fraternize with the working classes?

Is Roman Catholicism favourable to temporal freedom?

Should the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland accept [or receive] a State endowment?

Was the Genevan peace congress a breach of Swiss neuttrality?

Is a United States in Europe possible?

Ought the working classes to form themselves into a political party?

Should permanent be superseded by mobilizable armies?

Is a confederation of democracies realizable?

Does the strength of the nation exist in inverse proportion to the power of the Crown?

Are political liberties favours or birthrights?

Is an hereditary monarchy preferable to an elective one?*

Is universal suffrage just and desirable?†

Is organized agitation by petition a constitutional right or a privilege arising from use and wont?

Has a wide franchise a tendency to put the leadership of nations in less noble hands than a narrow one?

Ought sovereign power to reside ultimately in the parliament or the king [or queen]?

Should women possess political power?

Was Fenianism justifiable in its reasons [in its aims]?

Have the Fenian prisoners received justice?

Ought the Orange society of Ireland to be kept up or encouraged?

Can Austria be made a great constitutional empire?

Can the republican system of government alone put an end to war?

Would the excision of Turkey from European powers be for the good of the Continent?

Must Russia pass through a war crisis to its freedom?

Was the transference of the government of India from the Company to the Crown a politic and statesmanly measure?

Is labour of no country?

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* See Vol. XXVII.

* See Vol. I. † *Ibid.*

Are wars for the acquisition of territory justifiable?

Is nationalism the root-cause of war?

Ought Jews to be admitted to Parliament? *

Is France unfit for self-government?†

Does the Ashantee expedition promise results equal to its perils?

Should the Ottoman empire be supported in Europe against Russia?

Was the public immorality of Disraeli in 1867 greater than that of Peel in 1846?

Ought native produce and industry to be protected by legislative enactments?†

Did the Liberals fail through cowardice in managing a Reform Bill suited to the wants of the people?

Is Ireland in a fit state for organized agitation?

Does public spirit exist in Ireland?

Is the Reform Bill of 1867 the outcome of the apostasy of one party and the shortcomings of the other?

Do the aristocracy pay a fair share of the taxation of the country?

Does intervention usually lead to occupation and conquest?

Did the Tories in 1867 abandon principle for place?

Were the *Alabama* claims of the Americans consistent with international law [or just in themselves]?

Are Russia and America likely to be the two great powers of the future?

Ought the grant to Maynooth to be withdrawn?‡

Is a war of civilization against barbarism in this age justifiable?

Is a digest of the law of England practicable and expedient?

Is it the best way to insure peace or to provoke a breach of it to be prepared for war?

Ought the President of the United States to be impeached [or subject to impeachment]?

Was the Reform Bill "a leap in the dark"?

Judging from the history and present state of France, is an attempted Invasion of England probable?*

Can Roman Catholicism and free institutions co-exist?

Ought Austria to reinstate Poland as a nationality in Europe?

Does Pan-Sclavism threaten the liberty of Europe?

Ought the laws of primogeniture to be repealed?†

Is a European Confederation possible?

Should the British army be reorganized on the European plan?

Is England declining in political influence?

Is the ballot more desirable than open voting?‡

Have Russia and America cognate interests?

Does John Bright merit the confidence of the British people?

Which would most effectually extinguish bribery—the punishment of the bribers or the bribed?

Ought the civil power or the ecclesiastical to be supreme?

Do the Catholic hierarchy exercise the powers of political leaders?

Have recent wars disturbed the balance of power in Europe?

Is temporal power essential to the Papacy?

Ought marriage to be regarded as a civil or a religious ceremony?

Is peace likely to prevail in Europe long?

Is non-intervention a proper policy for Britain?

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* See Vol. III. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. IV.

* See Vol. IV. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. VI.

Ought President Johnson to have been re-elected?

Has Fenianism a just programme?

Ought the franchise to be extended?*

Ought the law of landlord and tenant to be amended?

Ought Mr. Gladstone to resign the leadership of the Commons?

Ought Britain to adopt the non-intervention principle in its foreign relations?†

Does the government of Britain provide the maximum of security with the minimum of interference?

Can the Romish Church be infallible if it advocates freedom of opinion in Britain and America, but denounces it in Austria, Italy, and France?

Does the support of churches by the State involve the control of them by the State?

Is peasant proprietorship the remedy for Irish grievances?

Is the House of Lords, in its existence and operations, beneficial to the country?‡

Ought the episcopate to be increased?

Should clerical vestments be regulated by law?

Is our naval administration satisfactory?

Is cumulative voting advisable?

Ought race to weigh with politicians?

Is patriotic rebellion possible in our times?

Does the delay of reform excite passion and increase the strength of opinion in its favour?

Has ultramontanism failed in France?

Ought nationalities and races to coincide?

Are the Irish justified in attempting to regain their independence?

Ought Mormon polygamy to be abolished by law?

Ought the Southern States of America to be treated as conquered provinces?

Should any European power be possessed of territory in the Western Hemisphere?

Are the working classes qualified for parliamentary representation?*

Would an extension of the franchise cause a deterioration in the House of Commons?

Is the President or the Congress wrong?

Have the recent successes of the Prussian arms been favourable to German freedom?

Is democracy superior or inferior to aristocracy?

Are power, place, pay, and patronage more powerful in politics than pledges and principles?

Is imperialism beneficial or injurious to commerce?

Ought the Reform League to dissolve?

Is slavery under any circumstances justifiable?†

Should Britain abandon her "right of seizure"?

Ought the national debt to be reduced in preference to lowering or remitting present taxation?

Should war be limited or unlimited in its results?

Is the arbitration of force preferable to the arbitration of intellect?

Is diplomatic more important than war power?

Is there a possible utility for the House of Lords?

Is the responsibility of sovereigns to their people a wholesome political rule?

Are "three-cornered" constituencies just and expedient?

Ought national engagements to be as honestly fulfilled as personal ones?

Is the Roman Catholic Church inimical to free institutions?

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* See Vol. VIII. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. XIV.

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* See Vol. XXII. † See Vol. V.

Will the Reform Bill, if unsupplemented by an anti-bribery one, benefit the country?

Is the cession of Russian America to the United States likely to favour the peace and welfare of the Western Hemisphere?

Do the Christian interests of European Turkey demand intervention for their defence?

Does constitutional government require the representation of minorities?

Does the system of responsible ministries favour the orator to the detriment of the statesman?

Is cumulative voting equitable?

Is Napoleonism essential to the peace of Europe?

Is the ecclesiastical system of Ireland defensible?

Is the negro capable of as much improvement under culture as the white races? *

Is a science of history possible? †

Is Tory-Radicalism a possibility?

Ought Parliaments to be septennial? ‡

Is a militia preferable to a volunteer force?

Ought Mr. Gladstone to be our Premier?

Is democracy impossible in Europe?

Ought trades unions to be used as centres of political agitation?

Could Russia be safely entrusted with supremacy in the east of Europe?

Would a female electoral franchise be favourable to female morality?

Ought the powers of Europe to guarantee Turkey against internal rebellion?

Would "internationalism" be advantageous to man?

Would the people be likely to give their votes in blind reliance on worthless leaders?

Is the present system of Church patronage justifiable? *

Ought the revenues of the Church of England in Ireland to be secularized?

Could Germany be transformed into an imperial confederation?

Would it be advantageous to Switzerland to be incorporated with France?

Is the difficulty and expense of obtaining legal redress a consequence of class legislation?

Is the political position of the landed interest unsuitable to the character of modern society?

Ought the United States to absorb or annex Canada?

Is internationalism consistent with non-intervention?

Can bribery be prevented by penal enactments?

Is a democratic form of government better than a limited monarchy? †

Is the organization of the British Empire safe and satisfactory?

Is the permanent connection of the colonies with the mother-country desirable? ‡

Would universal suffrage (male and female) be more advantageous than manhood suffrage alone?

Are Irish evictions the cause of Irish emigration?

Can we have reform without revolution?

Ought Government to become exclusive proprietors of the electric telegraph?

Should asylum in Ireland be offered to the Pope?

Should Parliament regulate the finance of public companies?

Ought we to lend our money to foreign Governments [or people]?

Are the land laws of Britain just and beneficial?

Was Napoleon III's. the mastermind of Europe?

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* See Vol. XXII.
† See Vol. XXIII. ‡ *Ibid.*

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* See Vol. XVI. † See Vol. XVIII.
‡ See Vol. XIX.

Is a standing army expedient in a free country? *

Is a compact between Spain and Portugal, sanctioned by France, desirable in the present state of Europe?

Is England no more than a second-rate power in Europe?

Is the maritime supremacy of England incompatible with the orderly and peaceable development of civilization?

Should we have an American or a European protectorate for Mexico?

Is the policy of France one of equivocation?

Are universities close corporations or national institutions?

Should trades unions not possess the protection of the law accorded to friendly societies?

Ought Taxation to press equally upon Capital and Labour?

Does a national church necessarily imply persecution, either actively or passively?

Should we have personal or class representation?

Is the national debt as injurious to the country as it is generally supposed to be?

Should laws be framed for the preservation of animals not naturally domestic, or restricted to locality? Or, Game laws—are they just?

Does the judicial system of this country require a thorough reform?

Should it be in the power of a M.P. to exclude strangers from the House of Commons?

Does the ecclesiastical system of this country require to be reformed?

Ought unwilling people to be annexed in conquest?

Is a united Germany as essential to European progress as a united Italy?

Is France favourably situated for forming a good republican Government?

Is commercial neutrality possible?

Ought every citizen to be a trained soldier?

Is a national militia sufficient for the proper defence of a country?

Is the doctrine of Nationalities effete?

* See Vol. XXI.

## SOCIAL ECONOMY.

Does marriage decrease the death-rate?

Should the clergy have the care of the education of the people vested in them?

Is the influence of public opinion beneficial?

Should the universities be open to the entire nation irrespective of creeds?

Is force necessary for the protection of the rights and interests of nations [or communities]?

Is war, under every circumstance, opposed to Christianity? *

Is the moderate use of alcoholic drinks injurious? †

Can morality be promoted by Acts of Parliament?

Ought the female sex to be politically emancipated?

Is club life favourable to morality?

Are building societies beneficial investments for the working classes?

Ought intemperance to be legislatively prevented [or prohibited]?

Ought the people to have a veto on the sale of drink?

Has moral suasion as a temperance agent failed?

Are patents beneficial to inventors and the public?

Ought gaming-tables to be taxed or prohibited?

Is it desirable that the revenue

* See Vols. I. & XXXVII. † *Ibid.*

of this country should be raised by indirect taxation? *

Ought capital punishments to be abolished? †

Ought Government to interdict the establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy? ‡

Have the working classes been benefited by machinery? §

Are the Irish in America the enemies of Great Britain?

Is drunkenness an excuse for crime?

Would communism promote the happiness of man? ‖

Is anonymous journalism essential to the freedom of the press?

Would private paper money be preferable to [or equally valuable with] Government currency?

Ought transportation to be abolished? ¶

Ought the law upon criminal cases to be altered?

Is the power of society over individuals limited?

Are free labour societies preferable to trades unions?

Is coercion the policy of trades unions?

Should women be employed in industrial labours?

Are landlords and capitalists likely to be eliminated from the social system?

Can industrial organization be safely entrusted to the State?

Should trades unions be transformed into co-operative societies?

Is monogamy superior to polygamy in its social effects?

Is a lock-out as justifiable as a strike?

Are the charities of Britain wisely administered?

Ought there to be an international currency?

Are the ethics of trades unions commendable?

Is the use of oaths for civil purposes right and expedient? *

Ought the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge to be thrown open as national institutions to British subjects of all religious opinions? †

Ought Government to prohibit the sale of intoxicating drinks? ‡

Is secularism consonant with the highest amount of social happiness? §

Is the unanimity required in juries conducive to the attainment of justice? ‖

Ought public provision to be made for the recreation of the working classes?

Is it the tendency of civilization to supersede the relation of employer and employed by that of partnership?

Would Parliament be justified in sanctioning the opening of the Crystal Palace on Sunday? ¶

Has the income tax been the cause of the lax commercial morality of recent times?

Ought the tribunals of justice and magistracies generally to be reorganized?

Ought a revenue to be raised by taxing intoxicating liquors?

Are licensed public-houses causes of crime and poverty?

Is international arbitration desirable?

Ought there to be a court of criminal appeal on the facts?

Is it the business of the State to govern, and of the Church to educate, a country?

Did the monastic orders benefit the people?

Is our convict system carried on with an equal regard to penal justice and the improvement of the criminal?

Should public licentiousness be punished as a crime?

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* See Vols. I. and XXXVII. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. II. § *Ibid.*
‖ See Vol. III. ¶ See Vol. IV.

* See Vol. V. † See Vol. V. ‡ *Ibid.*
§ See Vol. VI. ‖ *Ibid.*
¶ See Vol. VII.

Is the spendthrift more injurious to society than the miser? *

Are freehold land societies and similar associations beneficial investments for working men's savings? †

Are church rates just and necessary? ‡

Would the Maine law benefit, or be possible in England? §

Should vagrancy be punished as a crime?

Has political economy any concern in the moral advancement of the people?

Is the centralization of all that tends to the administration of justice desirable?

Is sectarianism obstructive to Christianity? ‖

Is Mormonism adapted to modern society?

Are convict colonies expedient?

Ought pecuniary fines to be inflicted in cases of breach of promise of marriage?

Is the increase of a nation's wealth favourable to its morality? ¶

Is the public interest in the administration of charitable funds sufficiently secured?

Should seduction be criminally punished?

Can the rights of landlord and tenant be made mutually beneficial?

Could social institutions be preserved on the principle of "free love"?

Does chastity depend on law?

Is Alpine climbing a proper recreation?

Are the charities of London properly administered?

Should English law be codified?

Ought prison labour to be remunerative?

Ought drunkenness to be considered as a disease, or punished as a crime?

Ought Sunday lectures to be privileged like Sunday sermons?

Is it possible to regulate wages by combination?

Can Government interfere beneficially in the suppression of the Social Evil? *

Have politicians or priests been the more prejudicial to Irish prosperity?

Should the law of *felo de se* be altered?

Ought the game laws to be repealed? †

Are sisterhoods in accordance with Christianity?

Ought we to have asylums for inebriates?

Has aristocratic misrule or priestly cunning the greater share in Irish misery?

Is unrestricted competition injurious to the community? ‡

Is revenue retrenchment consistent with national safety?

Are standing armies beneficial?

Ought the licence system to be enforced in regard to dramatic performances?

Should all betting be declared illegal, and all engagements entered into in consequence of it be made null and void?

Is the law relating to master and servant, as it now exists, objectionable?

Is the property of women justly cared for by British law?

Is co-operative labour advisable?

Should the "gang system" in agricultural labour be permitted?

Should flogging be abolished in the army?

Should celibacy be the general law in our army?

Ought Christian churches to run in debt?

Ought the State to pay the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland?

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* See Vol. VII. † See Vol. VIII.
‡ *Ibid.* § *Ibid.* ‖ See Vol. IX. ¶ *Ibid.*

* See Vol. X.
† See Vol. XI. ‡ *Ibid.*

Ought the Indian opium trade to be suppressed? *

Are the operations of trades unions beneficial to working men? †

Ought working men to discourage "overtime" in trades?

Is ultramontanism inimical to civilisation?

Ought the employment of females in agricultural, manufacturing, and commercial pursuits to be encouraged? ‡

Should criminals be prosecuted by individuals or by the State?

Should the leases of farms be marketable [like the shares in railways, &c.]?

Is the right of assembly properly guarded as a privilege of Englishmen?

Ought the registration of partnerships to be made compulsory?

Are financial crises unavoidable?

Is advertising a specious kind of lying?

Are well-endowed professorships better for a country than richly revenued bishoprics?

Have trades unions the tendency to send British commerce to foreign countries?

Have most of the changes effected by recent legislation been for the better?

Has commercial morality been lowered by the limited liability system?

Are large or small farms the more profitable?

Should the licensing of places for the sale of intoxicating drinks be put in charge of a stipendiary magistrate [or of the people]?

Ought marriage with a deceased wife's sister to be legalized?

Have trade unions a tendency to destroy the commercial prosperity of a country?

Are the charities of England properly managed and administered?

Is the Church of England the best home missionary? *

Ought the export of coal to be continued?

Is limited liability in public companies productive of more harm than good? †

Is land best held in small or in large properties?

Is it desirable that heresy should be taught?

Are bachelorship and maidenhood inimical to life?

Should conjugal unions be temporary or permanent?

Has civility no foundation but convention?

Are there no rights but those of labour?

Should we have official Government auditors for joint-stock companies?

Is communism a favourite working class idea?

Can a lawyer conscientiously defend a prisoner of whose guilt he has professionally been made cognizant?

Do the game laws prevent the profitable occupancy of waste lands?

Ought prize ring-fights to be permitted?

Is burying or burning the better way of disposing of the dead?

Is co-operative preferable to personal charity?

Is the machinery of British beneficence properly organized and superintended?

Has the conversion of small holdings into large farms been destructive to agricultural prosperity?

Is feudal legislation obnoxious to the welfare of human society?

Are congresses as useful as they are fashionable?

Ought the revenues of the Established Church to be secularized?

Does (actual) existence imply the (social) right to live [by labour]?

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* See Vol. XII. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. XIV.

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* See Vol. XIV. † *Ibid.*
‡ See Vol. XVIII.

Are Bands of Hope, as at present constituted and conducted, generally beneficial? *

Are our existing patent laws productive of public benefit? †

Ought horse-racing to be discouraged? ‡

Is hospital education economical and beneficial? [in harmony with sound principles of charity?]

Is bachelorhood favourable to longevity?

Are trades unions intended for protection or coercion?

Ought "assault" to be punishable by fine, by imprisonment, or by flogging?

Are international strikes more objectionable than international money-lending?

Is imprisonment for debt absurd and inefficient?

Are English workhouse infirmaries properly managed?

Is the wickedness of women more disastrous to the world than the wickedness of men?

Ought the police force to be local or national?

Is the organization of our police force satisfactory?

Ought the national provision for the poor to supersede or stimulate local charity?

Should the nurses of children in their own homes be licensed, registered, and subjected to inspection?

Does education increase Nonconformity?

Are Post Office superior to savings banks?

Do the revenue returns show that the country is in a prosperous condition?

Ought we to have local courts and tribunals of commerce?

Ought music and dancing licences to be withheld from buildings where intoxicating drinks are sold?

Ought corporal punishment to be employed in education? *

Should strikes and lock-outs be [equally] regarded as crimes?

Ought land to be let on life leases?

Has the Social Science Congress done any good?

Is a standing army expedient in a free country?

Is the "ticket-of-leave" system just and expedient?

Would total abstinence from intoxicating drinks result in the degeneracy of the English race?

Is the offertory preferable to the pew-rent system? †

Does the drama elevate or degrade? ‡

Are our existing patent laws productive of public benefit?

Is it prudent to allow the free export of coal?

Is privateering permissible?

Does the democratic constitution of the United States prevent men of culture from entering into political life?

Should Congregationalists accept the Government grants in aid for the support of their day schools?

Did the Archbishop of York act wisely in ignoring [discouraging, or opposing] the Pan-Anglican Synod?

Should admission to the service of Government be granted only as a prize for success in a public competitive examination?

Can an extension of the currency improve trade?

Ought commons to be preserved?

Should friendly societies be local or national?

Are friendly societies in general conducted trustworthily?

Is—

"Ignorance the curse of God,
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven"?

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* See Vol. XIX. † See Vol. XX. ‡ See Vol. XXI.

* See Vol. XXIII. † See Vol. XXIV. ‡ Ibid.

Are athletics [gymnastics] more dangerous than beneficial?

Are parliamentary Governments more favourable to commerce than despotic or bureaucratic ones?

Is co-operation capable of general adoption and success? *

Is pauperism incurable?

Are the sports [recreations, amusements, pastimes] of the British in accord with Christian civilization?

Ought houses in towns to be inspected and certified (like ships) before being occupied?

Is Mohammedanism superior to Brahminism [Buddhism, Lamaism, Zendism, Egyptism, &c.]?

Has the political progress of Russia made her financially secure?

Do trades unions enhance the cost of the necessaries of life?

* See Vol. XXVI.

## EDUCATION.

Does the multiplicity of aids to Bible study promote Bible reading and increase personal piety?

Has the national system of education in Ireland been a success or a failure?

Ought Government to provide a system of secular education for the people?

Should the State enforce universal education?

Ought the Church or the State to control education?

Would education eradicate crime?

Ought military drill to be introduced into national schools?

Is the study and appreciation of the Bible as general now as during the seventeenth century?

Can a high education be a cheap one?

Is education the duty of the State?

Was Rousseau, Fellenberg, Pestalozzi, or Edgeworth the propounder of the superior system of education?

Can we have a nobly educated people while we keep schoolmasters impoverished?

Are the results of Sunday school instruction satisfactory?

Is school inspection superior to competitive examination of pupils?

Is it true that—

"A little knowledge is a dangerous thing"?

Should the clergy have the management of any system of education?

Ought the "Conscience Clause" in schools receiving national aid to be repealed?

Is the minute of the Committee of Council calculated to benefit the cause of general education?

Are aphorisms superior to proverbs?

Have Sunday schools failed in their aim?

Is the Bell system of teaching superior to that of Lancaster?

Should education represent the existing state of knowledge?

Is the Hamiltonian, Jacotot, Perryian, Stowe, Wilderspin, Owenite, &c., system of education the better one?

Is Government education too interfering, formal, and uniform?

Is there marked advantage derivable from the study of the dead languages?

Is Euclid's "Elements" suitable as a text-book of geometry?

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