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MENDELSSOHN'S JERUSALEM,

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JERUSALEM:

A TREATISE ON

ECCLESIASTICAL AUTHORITY AND JUDAISM.

BY MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY M. SAMUELS,

AUTHOR OF "THE MEMOIRS OF MOSES MENDELSSOHN."

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Sect. I.

To oppose those props of social life, state and church, civil and ecclesiastical government, secular and spiritual power to each other, so that they shall counterpoise, and not, on the contrary, prove burdens on social life; nor press on its foundation, in a greater degree than they help to support its structure, is in politics one of the most difficult problems, with the solution of which they are occupied already since many ages, and have here and there, perhaps with greater success, practically compromised, than theoretically solved it. These different relations of man in a state of society, it was thought proper to separate as moral entities, and to assign to each a separate jurisdiction, separate rights, dues, power and domain; although neither the precincts of those jurisdictions, nor the lines which divide them have yet been accurately fixed. Now the church is seen to move the

landmark far up the territory of the state; and then the state to presume encroachments, which according to accepted notions, seem no less usurping. The evils which have hitherto arisen from a disagreement between those moral entities, and still threaten to arise, are immense. When in the field against each other, mankind is the victim of their discord; and when they agree together, the brightest jewel of human happiness is gone; for they seldom agree but for the purpose of banishing from their realms, *a third moral entity*, liberty of conscience, which knows how to derive some advantage from their squabbles.

Despotism has one advantage, it is cogent. However troublesome its demands may be found by common sense, they are themselves systematical and well-connected. It has a definite answer to every question. Never mind limits; for with him who has got all, "more or less" is of no farther consideration. So is, according to Roman Catholic principles, also ecclesiastical government; it is complete in every particular, and as it were all of one piece. Grant it all its demands; and you will at least know what you have to expect. Your system is built for you, and perfect repose reigns in every part of it; it is true, that kind of dismal repose which, as Montesquieu says, "reigns in a fortress on the eve of its being stormed." Yet he

by whom a quiet doctrine and a quiet life are considered happiness, will find that happiness no where better secured to him, than under a Roman Catholic despot; and as even under him power is too much divided, no where better than under the absolute sway of the church herself.[1]

But when liberty ventures to displace anything in that systematical building, dilapidation instantly threatens on all sides; and at length, it is difficult to say how much of it will keep upright. Hence the extraordinary distraction, the civil as well as ecclesiastical disturbances, at the time of the Reformation, and the obvious perplexity of the preachers and reformers themselves, whenever they had to fix the extent of rights and privileges. It was not only practically difficult, to keep within bounds the multitude let loose from their trammels, but even as to theory, we find the writings of those times full of vague and wavering ideas; whenever the ascertaining the limits of ecclesiastical power is of the question. The despotism of the Roman church was abolished; but what other form was to be substituted for it? Even now, in our enlightened times, the text books of canon-law, could not be freed of that undeterminatedness. The clergy will not or cannot give up their claim to a regular constitution, and yet no one rightly knows in what it is to consist. Doctrinal differences are

to be adjusted, yet no supreme judge is recognised; an independent church is still referred to, yet no one knows where it is to be found; claims to authority and rights are proffered, yet no one can shew who is to exercise and uphold them!

Thomas Hobbes lived at a period, when fanaticism blended with inordinate love of liberty, no longer knew any bounds, and was about (as at last it did,) to bring royal authority under its foot, and entirely subvert the constitution of the realm. Disgusted with civil broils, and by nature fond of a tranquil and contemplative life, he looked on peace and safety as the greatest of blessings, no matter how procured; and those desiderata he thought were to be found only in the unity and indivisibility of the highest authority in the state. Accordingly he judges most advisable for the public good, that every thing, even men's opinions of right and wrong, should be under the superintendence of the civil authorities. And in order to do so with the greater convenience, he assumed that man has, naturally, a right to all nature endowed him with the faculty of; that a state of nature is a state of general confusion and uproar, *a war of all against all,* in which every one may do whatever he can do, and in which might constitutes right. That deplorable state lasted until mankind agreed upon putting a term to their misery, by foregoing

as far as public safety was concerned, right and might, and place both in the hands of a chief magistrate elected by themselves; and henceforward whatever that magistrate ordered, was right.[2]

Hobbes either had no taste for civil freedom, or wished it to be quashed altogether, rather than have it thus abused. But that he might reserve to himself freedom of thinking, of which he made more practice than any one else, he had recourse to a sly turn. According to his system, all right is grounded on power, and all engagement on fear. Now God being infinitely superior in power to the civil magistrate, God's rights, too, must be infinitively above the magistrate's, and the fear of God engage us to duties which are not to yield to fear of the magistrate. This, however, must be understood of internal religion, in which alone the philosopher was interested: external religion he entirely subjected to the dictates of the civil magistrate; and every innovation in religious matters without his authority, is not only high treason, but even sacrilege. The collisions which must arise between internal and external religion, he seeks to remove by the most subtle distinctions; and although there yet remain behind so many openings which betray the weakness of the union, one cannot help admiring the ingenuity with which he strives to give cogency to his system.

There is, in the main, much truth in all Hobbes's positions; and the absurd conclusions to which they lead, flow merely from the extravagant mode in which he expounds them, either from a love of the paradox, or in compliance with the taste of his times. Nor were the ideas of the law of nature, in part, sufficiently clear in those days; and Hobbes deserves as highly of moral philosophy, as Spinoza does of metaphysics; his ingenious deviation occasioned inquiry. The ideas of right and duty, power and engagement, were further developed; men learned to distinguish more correctly between physical and moral power, between violence and qualification; and these distinctions they so intimately united with the language, that, at present, the refutation of Hobbes's system seems to be in the nature of common sense, and, as it were, in that of the language. This is a property of all moral truths; when they are elucidated, they instantly are so imbibed by the language of conversation, and become so united with men's daily notions, that they will be intelligible to the meanest understanding; and we wonder how we could have stumbled before on such a level ground. But we do not consider the expenditure at which that path was cut through the wilderness.

Hobbes himself must have been sensible, in

more than one respect, of the inadmissible results to which his extravagant positions immediately led. If, by nature, men be bound to no duty whatsoever, then they are not even under the obligation of keeping their compacts. If, in a state of nature, there be no engagements but what are founded on fear and powerlessness, then compacts will stand good only as long as they are supported by fear and powerlessness; then have mankind, by compacts, not advanced a step nearer to security, and still find themselves in the primitive state of universal warfare. But if compacts are to stand good, man must, by nature, and without compacts or agreements, not be qualified to act against a compact entered into by him of his own free will; that is, he must no be allowed to do so, even if he could; he must not have the moral power, even if he have the physical. *Right* and *Might* are, therefore, two different things; and in a state of nature too, they were hetreogeneous ideas. Hobbes, furthermore, prescribes to the highest authorities in the state, strict rules not to insist on any thing which may be contrary to the subject's welfare. For although that authority have not to account for its acts and deeds to mortal man, it has to the supreme Judge of the world, who sufficiently revealed to us his will about this. Hobbes is very ample on this;

and, every thing considered, less indulgent to the gods of the earth, than his system would lead one to expect. But may not that fear of the Almighty, which is to bind sovereigns and potentates to certain duties to their subjects, become, in the state of nature, a source of engagement to every individual man as well? And so there would still be a *solemn* law of nature, which Hobbes, however, will not admit of. Thus may, in our days, any tyro in the law of nature, gain a triumph over Thomas Hobbes, which he would have to thank that philosopher for, after all.[3]

Locke, who also lived at that period of main confusion, sought to protect liberty of conscience in another manner. In his letters on education, he puts down as a basis, the definition, that the state is a society of men united for the purpose of conjointly promoting their temporal welfare. Hence it follows, that the state has no business at all to concern itself about the citizens' persuasions regarding their eternal happiness; and that it is to tolerate every one who conducts himself civilly well, that is, who offers no obstruction to the temporal happiness of his fellow-citizens. The state, in its quality of state, is not to take notice of difference of religion. For religion, of itself, has not, of necessity, an influence in temporal

affairs; and its being connected with them, depends entirely on the will of man.

Very good! If the dispute admit of being decided by a mere definition of words, I do not know a more convenient one; and if, by it, his turbulent contemporaries had let themselves be talked out of their intolerance, honest Locke himself would not have had to wander so many times into exile. "But," said they, "what should prevent us from promoting our spiritual welfare as well? Indeed, what reason have we to confine the object of social life to temporal affairs only? If mankind can at all promote their future felicity by public institutions, is it not naturally their duty to do so? Are they not in reason bound to congregate and form a social union also for that purpose? Since, then, it is so; and the state, in its quality of state, will act in secular affairs only, the question arises: to whom are we to commit the care of spiritual affairs? To the church? There we are, all of a sudden, again on the very spot from which we started! State and Church; care of temporal affairs, care of spiritual affairs, civil and ecclesiastical power. The former stands in the same relation to the latter, as the importance of temporal affairs to the importance of spiritual. The state, therefore, is subordinate to the church, and must

give way in cases of collision. And now resist, who can, Cardinal Bellarmin, and his redoubtable train of arguments, to prove that the head of the church, in his quality of God's vice-gerent on earth, has, on behalf of the Lord, the stewardship of every thing temporal; and, therefore, at least, indirectly,* a *Regale* of all goods and minds in this world; that all secular realms are under the dominion of that spiritual Potentate, and bound to follow his directions, as to changing their form of government, deposing their kings, and putting others in their stead; because very often, the eternal salvation of the state cannot be consummated in any other manner; besides many other maxims of his order, which Bellarmin lays down with so much subtilty, in his book, *De Romane Pontifice.* Of all that has been opposed to the Cardinal's sophism, in very bulky tomes, nothing appears to hit the mark, as long as the state gives the care of eternity entirely out of its hands.

Considered in another light, it is, in the strictest sense neither consonant with truth, nor does it tend to the good of man, when we cut time so clean off eternity. In the main, eternity will never fall to

* Bellarmin himself narrowly escaped being declared a heretic by Pope Sixtus V, for giving him only an indirect dominion over the temporalities of kings and princes. His work was inserted in the catalogue of the Inquisition.

the share of man, his eternity is merely perpetual time; his time never ends, and is, therefore, an actual and integral part of his perduration. It is confounding ideas to oppose his temporal welfare to his eternal felicity. And this confounding of ideas is not without practical consequences. It puts the sphere of human abilities out of its proper place, and strains man's powers beyond the limits set to them by Providence with such infinite wisdom. "On the dark path on which man is to walk here on earth," (if I may be allowed to quote from my own writings) "just as much light is provided, as he wants for to make the next step. More would only dazzle, and every side-light bewilder him."* It is essential that man should be constantly reminded, that with death there is not a complete end of him; on the contrary, an interminable futurity awaits him, to which his earthly life is only a preparation; the same as all through Nature every present is a preparation for a future. The rabbins liken this life to a lobby, in which we are to fit ourselves in the manner we wish to appear in the inner-room. Then take heed you no longer put this life as the opposite of futurity, and lead men to think that their true welfare in this world is not all one with their eternal welfare

* Anmerkungen zu Abbts freundschaftlichen Correspondenz 28.

in the next; that it is one thing to be mindful of our happiness here, another of our happiness there, and that we may continue to enjoy the former while neglecting the latter. The short-sighted man who has to walk along a narrow path, finds his station and horizon displaced by those sort of insinuations, is in danger of getting dizzy, and of stumbling on level ground. How many a one dares not venture to partake of the present bounties of Providence, for fear he should be mulcted of an equal portion in the life to come? How many a one has turned out a bad citizen on earth, in hopes of thereby becoming so much the better a one of heaven?

I sought to obtain a clear and distinct view of the ideas of church and state, of their reciprocal influence, and on the happiness of civil life, by the following contemplations. When man becomes aware that out of society, he is as unable to discharge his duty to himself, and to the author of his existence as those to his neighbour, and thus can no longer continue in that lone condition without feeling his wretchedness, he is bound to instantly leave it, and join his species in a state of society, in order to supply their common wants by mutual aid, and promote the public good by joint measures. But the public good embraces the future as well as the present, the spiritual as well as the temporal.

Unless we discharge our duties, we must not look for happiness either now or hereafter, either on earth or in heaven. Now, to truly discharge our duties, two things are required; namely, action and persuasion. By action is performed what duty bids, while persuasion causes it to flow from the true source, that is, to be performed from pure motives.

Action and persuasion are therefore required for the perfection of man, and it behoves society to take every possible care of both by their joint endeavours, that is, by giving the actions of its members a tendency to the public good, and by occasioning persuasions which engender such actions. The one is the governing, the other the training of civilized man. It is on grounds that man is led to either; to actions, by motivating; to persuasions, by evidential grounds. Hence society is bound to regulate both so as to make them coincide for the public good.

The grounds which lead man to rational actions and persuasions, rest partly on the relations of men to each other, partly on their relations to their creator and preserver. Those pertain to the state, these to religion. So far as men's actions and persuasions may be made subservient to public utility, on grounds arising from their relations to each other, they are an object fit for the civil

government; but so far as they are assumed to spring from the relations of man to God, they come under the cognizance of the church, the synagogue, or the mosque. We meet in so many text-books of canon-law as it is called, with grave enquiries: whether Jews, heretics, and misbelievers, may not respectively constitute churches? Considering the immense prerogatives, which the thing called *Church* is wont to usurp, the question is not so absurd, as it must appear to an unbiassed reader. With me, however, the difference of names, as may be supposed, is of no great consequence. All such public institutions for the cultivation of man, as refer to his relations to God, I call *Church;* and those which refer to his relations to man, I call *State.* By the cultivation of man, I mean the endeavouring to manage both action and persuasion, so as to make them jointly conduce to happiness; say, training and governing man.[4]

Happy the state which succeeds in governing the people by education itself; I mean by instilling in their minds such morals and principles, as of themselves lead to actions of public utility, and need not be constantly impelled by the spur of the laws. Man, in a state of society, is obliged to forego many of his rights for the public good, or as it may be called, to sacrifice frequently his own

interest to beneficence. Now he feels happy whenever that sacrifice is made from his own impulse, whenever he sees that it was made by him solely on behalf of beneficence. In the main, beneficence renders happier than self-interest; but we must feel ourselves by it, and the manifesting of our powers. Not, as some sophists explain it, because self-love is all with man; but because beneficence is no longer such, nor carries any value or merit with it, when it does not arise from the spontaneous impulse of the beneficent.

This will perhaps enable us to give a satisfactory answer to the famous question: "Which form of government is the best?" a question which has hitherto been replied to in so many different ways seemingly all correct alike. The fact, however, is: it is too indefinite a question, nearly as much so as another of the same sort in medicine, viz. "Which kind of food is wholesomest?" Every constitution, every climate, every age, sex, profession, &c. requires a different answer. And so does our politico-philosophical problem. For every people, for every stage of civilization at which that people has arrived, another form of government may be the best. Many despotically-ruled nations would feel very miserable were they left to govern themselves; and so would high-spirited republicans if subjected to a monarch. Nay, many a nation, as

improvements, general habits and principles undergo changes in it, will change also its form of government, and in a course of ages, run the whole round from anarchy to absolutism in all their shades and modifications, and yet be found to have all along chosen the form of government, which was best for them under existing circumstances.

But under every circumstance, and with every proviso, I think it an unerring standard of a good government, the more there is under it, wrought by morality and persuasions, and accordingly, the more the people are governed by education itself. In other words, the more opportunity there is given the citizen to see evidently, that he foregoes some of his rights for the public good only; that he sacrifices part of his own interest to beneficence only; and that therefore he gains on the one side, as much by acts of beneficence, as, on the other, he loses by sacrifices. Nay, that by sacrificing, he even profits in inward happiness, because it enhances the merit and dignity of the action, and, therefore also encreases the true perfection of the beneficent himself. So it is, for instance, not advisable for the state to charge itself with all offices of philanthropy, not even the distributing of charity excepted, and convert them into public establishments. Man feels his own worth when he is acting liberally; when it is obvious to him that by

his gift he alleviates the distress of a fellow-creature; that is, when he gives, because he *pleases;* but when he gives because he *must,* he feels only his fetters.

It ought therefore to be the chief endeavour of the state, to govern mankind by morals and persuasions Now there is no other way of improving men's principles, and by means of them also their morals, but conviction. Laws will not alter persuasions; Arbitrary punishments or rewards generate no maxims, nor do they improve morals. Fear and hope are no criterions of truth. Knowledge, reasoning, convictions, they alone bring forth principles which, through credit and example, may pass into manners. And there it is where religion must step in to assist the state, and the church become the supporter of civil happiness. It behoves her to convince the people, in the most emphatic manner of the truth of noble sentiments and persuasions; to shew them that the duties to man are also duties to God, the transgressing of which is itself the greatest misery; that serving one's country is true religion; probity and justice the commandment of God; charity his most holy will; and that a right knowledge of the Creator, will not let misanthropy harbour long in the creature's heart. To teach this, is the office, duty, and vocation of the church; to preach it, the

office, duty and vocation of her ministers. How could it ever have entered men's thoughts to let the Church teach, and her ministers preach quite the reverse?

But when the character of a people, the stage of civilization at which it has arrived, a population swelled along with its national prosperity, multiplied relations and alliances, overgrown luxury, and other causes render it impossible to govern it by persuasions only, the state has recourse to public institutions, compulsory laws, punishment of crime, and reward of virtue. If a citizen will not come forward in the defence of the country from an inward feeling of his duty, let him be either allured by rewards or compelled by force. If people have no longer a sense of the intrinsic value of justice; if they no longer acknowledge that uprightness of life and dealing is true happiness, let injustice be corrected; let fraud be punished. In this manner, it is true, the state gains the object of society only by half. External motives do not render him happy on whom they do nevertheless act. He who escheweth fraud from love of honesty, is far happier than he who only dreads the arbitrary penalty which the state attaches to fraud; but to his fellow-man, it is of little consequence from what motives evil-doing is refrained from, or by what means his rights and property are secured to him.

The country is defended all the same, whether the citizen fight for it from patriotism, or from fear of positive punishment; although the citizen himself is happy in the former case, and unhappy in the latter. If the internal happiness of society cannot be entirely preserved, at least, external peace and security must, at any rate, be enforced.

Accordingly, the state is, if need be, contented with dead works, with services without spirit, with consonance of action without consonance of thought. Even he, who thinks nothing of laws, must do as the law bids, when once it has been sanctioned. The individual citizen may be allowed the privilege of judging of the laws, but not that of acting up to his judgment; for, as a member of society, he was obliged to surrender that right, because without such surrender, a social compact would be a chimera.[5] Not so religion! Religion knows of no actions without persuasion, of no works without spirit, of no consonance of acting without consonance of thought. Religious observances without religious thoughts, are idle boys' play, and no worship; this, as such, must, therefore, proceed from the spirit, and can neither be purchased by rewards, nor enforced by punishments. But from civil actions also religion withdraws its auspices, so far as they are not produced by principle, but by authority. Nor has the

state to expect any further co-operation of religion, when it cannot act otherwise than by rewards and punishments; for when that is the case, the duties towards God cease to be of any consideration; and the relations between man and his creator have no effect. All the help religion can then lend the state, consists in teaching and comforting. It instils, by its divine lessons, into the citizen, principles tending to public utility; and, with its superhuman consolations, supports the malefactor doomed to die for the public good.

Here there already appears an essential difference between the state and religion. The state dictates and coerces; religion teaches and persuades. The state enacts laws; religion gives commandments. The state is armed with physical force, and makes use of it, if need be; the force of religion is love and benevolence. The former renounces the undutiful, and thrusts him out; the latter receives him in its bosom, and yet in the last moments of his present life, tries, not quite unavailingly, to instruct, or, at least, to console him. In one word; civil society, as a moral entity, may have compulsory power; nay, was actually invested with it by the social compact; religious society lays no claim to it; nor can all the compacts in the world confer it on it. The state possesses perfect rights; the church, only

imperfect rights. In order to place this in a proper light, I must beg leave to remount to primary ideas, and to enquire more narrowly into

The Origin of Compulsory Rights, and the Validity of Covenants amongst Mankind.

I know I risk becoming too speculative for many a reader. But is not every one at liberty to pass over what does not suit his taste? To the curious in the law of nature, it may not be uninteresting to see in what manner I sought to define the first principles thereof.

The quality (moral power) of making use of any thing whatsoever as a means of one's happiness, is called a right. But the power itself is called moral, when it consists with the laws of wisdom and goodness; and the things which may serve as the means of happiness, are called goods. Man has, therefore, a right to certain goods or means of happiness, so far as that right is not inconsistent with the laws of wisdom and goodness.

That, which according to the laws of wisdom and goodness, must be done, or that of which the reverse would be contrary to the laws of wisdom and goodness, is called morally necessary. The moral necessity (obligation) of doing or forbearing, is called a duty.

The laws of wisdom and goodness cannot oppose one another. If I have a right to do something, my neighbour can have no right to hinder me; else one and the same action would be both morally possible and morally impossible. To every right, therefore, there answers a duty. The duty of forbearing to hinder, answers the right of acting; the duty of performing, the right of demanding, and so on.*

Wisdom combined with goodness, is called justice. The law of justice on which a right is founded, is either of a nature, that all the conditions on which the predicate belongs to the subject are given to the holder of the right, or it is not. In the former case, it is a perfect, in the latter, an imperfect right; namely, with an imperfect right, part of the conditions on which it

* It is objected that, in time of war, a soldier is qualified to kill an enemy, without the latter being in duty bound to suffer it.

But it is not as a man that the soldier is so qualified, but only as a citizen, or as the mercenary of one of the contending powers. A state really is, or pretends to be wronged, and that it can obtain redress no otherwise than by force of arms. The battle is, therefore, properly not between man and man, but between state and state.[6] Of the two belligerents, evidently, one only can have justice on his side. The offender is certainly in duty bound to make reparation to the offended, and to put up with every thing without which, the latter cannot be reinstated in his rights.

is due, depend on the knowledge and conscience of the duty-bounden; he too, therefore, is, in the former case, perfectly bound to discharge the duty which answers that right, but in the latter, only imperfectly. There are perfect and imperfect duties as well as perfect and imperfect rights; those are called compulsory rights and compulsory duties; these, on the contrary, are termed pretensions, petitions, conscientious duties. Those are external, these internal. Compulsory rights may be enforced; but petitions may be dismissed. To forbear discharging compulsory duties, is wrong and unjust; whereas the omission of conscientious duties is only unconscionableness.

The goods to which man has an exclusive right are, 1, his personal abilities; 2, whatsoever he brings forth by them, and the welldoing of which he promotes; whatsoever he cultivates, breeds, protects, &c., (the fruits of his industry); 3, goods of nature, which he has so united with the fruits of his industry, that they can no longer be sundered from them without damage, which, therefore, he has made his own. Accordingly, in this consists his natural property. Even in the state of nature, and yet before any compact whatsoever was entered into by mankind, those objects were exempted from the general communion of goods; namely, men originally held only such

goods in common, as were produced by nature, without any one's industry or co-operation. Not all property is merely conventional.

Without beneficence man cannot enjoy happiness, not only without passive, but equally as little without active beneficence. He can become perfect no otherwise than by mutual assistance; by an interchange of kind offices, and by both an active and passive union with his fellow-men.

Therefore, when man possesses goods, or has at his command means which he can spare, that is, which are not necessary for his own existence, or of use for his *Meliority*, he is in duty bound to employ part thereof for the good of his fellow men, i. e., in beneficence; for meliority is inseparable from beneficence.

But for the same reasons, he, too, has a right to the beneficence of his fellow-men. He may expect, and pretend that others shall relieve him with their spare goods, and co-operate in his perfection. Only let it be always remembered what we mean by the word "Goods;" viz. all internal and external powers of man, so far as they may become the means of happiness to himself and others. Accordingly, every thing man, in the state of nature, possesses of industry, substance and ability, every thing he can call his, is dedicated

partly to his own use (private interest), partly to beneficence.

However, as man's means are limited, and therefore, exhaustible, the same means or goods may, at times, not serve for myself and my fellow-men at once. Neither can I employ those goods or means on behalf of all my fellow-creatures, nor at all times, nor under all circumstances. And as I am bound to make the best possible use of my powers; the quantum, object, time and circumstance of my beneficence will depend on an election, and more precise determination.

By whom is this to be decided? By whom are cases of collision to be adjusted? Not by my neighbour; for to him not all the grounds are given on which the conflict of duties must be decided. Besides, every one else would have the same right; and if every one of my fellow-creatures should decide in his own favour, as most probably he would, the difficulty would not be removed.

To me, and to me alone, therefore, belongs, in a state of nature, the right of determining whether, to what extent, when, to whom, and under what circumstances I am bound to exercise beneficence. Nor can I, in a state of nature, at any time, be forced to beneficence by coercive means. My duty to be beneficent is only a conscientious duty,

of which, externally, I have to render no account to any body; so is my right to my neighbour's beneficence, only a right of petitioning, which may be met with a refusal. In a state of nature, all positive duties of men to one another, are only imperfect duties, the same as their positive rights over one another, are imperfect rights, no duties which may be insisted upon, no rights which warrant coercion. In a state of nature, the duties and rights of forbearing only are perfect. I am perfectly in duty bound, no to wrong any one, and perfectly justified in preventing any one from wronging me. Now wronging, every one knows, means acting against the perfect right of another.

It may, indeed, be supposed that the duty of making reparation, is a positive duty to which man is bound even in a state of nature. When I have caused damage to my neighbour, I am, without any compact, and solely by the laws of natural justice, bound to make it good to him, and he may compel me to do so.

But although making reparation, certainly, is a positive act; the obligation to it, in the main, arises from the forbearing duty, not to wrong. For the damage which I cause my neighbour, as long as the effects of it are not removed, must be considered a protracted injury. Therefore, all the while that I omit making it good, I am violating

a negative duty, for I continue to wrong. Accordingly, the duty of making reparation forms no exception of the rule, that in a state of nature, man is independent, or that he is not positively under obligation to any one. No one has a compulsory right to dictate to me, how much of my own I am to employ on behalf of others, or to whom I am to give the benefit of it. It must depend entirely on my discretion, by what rule cases of collision are to be decided.

Nor is the natural relation of parents to their children, any ways contrary to this general law of nature. It will easily be conceived, that in a state of nature, those only are independent, who are thought able of rationally deciding cases of collision. Therefore, before children have arrived at the age, when they may be supposed to have the full use of reason, they have no claim to independence; but must let others decide for them, in what manner, and for what purpose, they are to employ their powers and abilities. But parents, on their part, are bound to inure their children to the art of deciding cases of collision; and also, as they increase in judgment, to allow them, step by step, the free and independent use of their powers and abilities.

Now, in a state of nature, it is true, even parents are, in certain respects, externally under

obligation to their children; and those might be thought positive duties, which can be enforced even without any compact, by the mere laws of wisdom and goodness. Yet, methinks, that in a state of nature, the right of enforcing the training of the children belongs to the parents reciprocally, and to no third person, who, befriending the former, should want to compel the latter to train them. But that parents have that compulsory right over one another, arises from the agreement they are supposed to have entered into, although not by word of mouth, still by the act itself.

Whoever co-operates in producing a being fit for enjoying happiness, is, by the law of nature, bound to promote its happiness as long as it is not itself able to attend to its own well-doing. This is the natural duty of training: abstractedly, it is true, a conscientious duty; but by the act itself, the parents have agreed to assist one another in it, or to conjointly discharge that duty. In a word, by cohabitation itself, they entered the matrimonial state; and, at the same time, into a tacit agreement to conjointly qualify for happiness, the being destined to happiness, which they produce; that is, to train it.

From this principle, all the duties and rights of matrimony very naturally flow; and there is no

need to adopt, as professors of law are wont, a double principle, whence to deduce them. The duty to train children follows from the argeement to beget them; and the obligation of domesticating together, from the duty of training. Marriage, therefore, is, in the main, nothing but an agreement between persons of different sexes, to jointly bring children into the world; and on this rests the whole system of their duties and rights.* But

* When individuals of different persuasions form a matrimonial alliance, it is stipulated in the marriage contract, after which of the two principles the domestic establishment shall be conducted, and the children be trained. But how is it, when, after marriage, one of the parties changes religion, and goes over to another church? In a small work which pretends to have been written at Vienna, and which I shall bave occasion to quote more largely in the following section. (*Das Forschen nach Licht und Recht.* A Search after Light and Right). Such a case is said to be now pending in that capital. A newly-converted-Jew expressly demands to continue living with his wife, who herself abides by the Mosaic faith; and a law-suit has been commenced in consequence. The author of the above-named pamphlet decides according to the liberal system; "It may be reasonably expected," says he "that difference of religion will not be considered a sufficient reason for a divorce. The wise Emperor Joseph will not allow a change of theological dogmas to undo social ties."

Very prematurely judged, I should think! The Emperor no less just than wise, I trust, will hear also the arguments on the other side, and not suffer the liberal system to be abused of for oppression and tyranny. If marriage be only a civil contract, (as, even on Roman Catholic principles, it can be nothing else, between a Jew and Jewess) the words and conditions of the

that mankind by agreement, leave the state of nature, and enter that of society, will be shown

contract must be construed and interpreted, conformably to the meaning of the contracting parties, and not according to that of either the legislator or the judge. If from the principles of the contracting parties, it can be affirmed with certainty that they understand certain words in this, and no other way; and if they had been asked, would have explained them in this, and in no other way, that morally certain affirmation must be admitted as a tacit and implied condition of the contract, and stand just as good in a court, as if it had been explicitly agreed upon. Now it is evident that on signing the contract, the married couple, then both still professing the Mosaic religion, at least externally, meant nothing else but to conduct their joint household after Jewish precepts, and bring up their children to Jewish principles. At all events, the party with whom religion was a consideration, could have supposed nothing else; and if at that time a change of that sort had been apprehended, and the clause proposed, she would have declared herself in no other way. She was aware of nothing else, she expected nothing else, but that she should commence a household after her own parent's rules of living, and procreate children to be trained after her own parent's principles. If the difference be of consequence to that party, if it be notorious that the difference of religion must have been of consequence to her, at the time of closing the contract, the contract must be interpreted according to her notions and persuasions. Suppose the country at large should entertain a different opinion on the subject, it would have no effect on the interpretation of the contract. The husband changes principles, and embraces another religion. If the wife be compelled to enter upon a mode of housekeeping repugnant to her conscience; to bring up children on principles not her own; in a word, if she be compelled to accept, and to have forced upon her conditions of the marriage contract, to which she never agreed, she is evidently wrongfully

further on. Accordingly, neither the parent's duty to train their children, although, in certain respects, it may be called compulsory, forms an exception from the mentioned law of nature: that

dealt with; they evidently suffer themselves to be beguiled by insinuations of liberty of conscience, into the most senseless tyranny of conscience. The conditions of the contract can now no longer be fulfilled. The husband, who has changed principles is, if not *in dolo*, at least *in culpa*, that they can no longer be fulfilled. Is the wife to suffer violence of conscience, because the husband demands freedom of conscience? Did she ever consent to it? Could she consent to it? Is not conscience free on her part too? Must not the party who occasioned the change, answer for the consequences of it, make compensation to the other, and reinstate her in her previous situation, so far as that can possibly be done? Can there be any thing more simple? The thing, I should think, speaks for itself. No one can be compelled to accept conditions of a contract, to which, from his principles, he could not have agreed.

With respect to the education of their joint children, both parties have an equal right. If we had such things as neutral training establishments, children, in such contested cases, should be neutrally trained in one of them, until they arrive at the age of reason, and are able to make a choice themselves. But so long as no such institutions are provided, so long as our training establishments stand in connexion with positive religion, a preference is evidently due to the party who remained true to the previous principles, and made no change in them. This, too, very naturally follows from the above principles; and when the contrary takes place any where, it is tyranny, and religious oppression. An Emperor no less just than wise, surely will not tolerate in his dominions, so outrageous an abuse of ecclesiastical power.

in a state of nature, man is independent; and that to him alone belongs the right of deciding cases of collision between private use and beneficence.

In this light consists the natural liberty of man, which constitutes a great portion of his happiness. Independence, therefore is included in the goods exclusively his, and which he is qualified to employ as a means of his happiness; and whoever hinders him in it, injures him, and commits injustice. Man, in a state of nature, has the control over all that is his; over the free use of his powers and abilities, the free use of whatever he thereby produced (the fruits of his industry), or of what he united in an inseparable manner with the fruits of his industry; and it depends on him, how much of what he can spare of those goods, he shall give up for the benefit of his fellow-men, when, and to whom he shall give it up. All his fellow-men have only an imperfect right to his superfluity, the right of petitioning; and his, the absolute owner's conscientious duty it is, to dedicate part of his goods to beneficence; nay, at times, he is bound to sacrifice to it even his private interest, in so far as beneficence renders happier than selfishness, provided the sacrifice be made from a free will, and from a spontaneous impulse. All this appears plain enough; but I will go yet a step farther.

When that independent man has once passed judgment, that judgment must stand good. In a state of nature, when I have made up my mind, to whom I shall give up part of my own, how much of it, and when shall I give it up: when I have sufficiently declared this, my voluntary determination, and my neighbour, in whose favour it was taken, accepts the good; if my right of deciding have any meaning at all, the transaction must be of force and effect. If my decisions be powerless, and leave things *in statu quo;* if, in respect to the right, it produce not the change I determined upon, my supposed quality of passing judgment involves a palpable contradiction. My decision must, therefore, operate; it must alter the condition of the right. The good in question must cease to be mine, and have actually become my neighbour's. By that transaction, my neighbour's right, till now imperfect, must have become a perfect right, the same as my own once perfect right must have been transformed into an imperfect right; else my decision would be a mere cypher. Therefore, after the transaction is over, I can no longer claim the surrendered good without injustice. If I do, I injure; I act against the perfect right of my neighbour.

This holds good as well of material, moveable goods, which admit of being transmitted and

taken possession of by hands, as of immoveable, or even spiritual goods, the right to which can be resigned and accepted by a sufficient declaration of the will only. In the main, every thing depends upon that declaration of the will; and even the actual transmission of moveable goods, can only be valid as far as it is considered a token of a sufficient declaration of the will. The mere transmission, considered by itself, neither gives nor takes away a right, whenever that intention is not coupled with it. What I put in my neighbour's hand, I have not, therefore, transmitted to him; and what I take out of his hand, I have not thereby yet legally accepted, if I have not signified that the transaction has taken place with that intention. But if transmission, merely as a token, be valid, other significant tokens may be substituted for it, with such goods as do not admit of a real transmission. We may, therefore, resign and surrender to others, our right to immoveable or even spiritual goods, by sufficiently intelligible tokens.

In this manner, property may pass from one to another. What I have made my own by my industry becomes, through cession, the goods of another, which I cannot again take away from him without committing an act of injustice.

One step more, and the validity of covenants is

placed on a solid foundation. The right of deciding cases of collision, is itself, as shown above, an *incorporeal* good of independent man, so far as it may become to him a means of happiness. In a state of nature, every man has a perfect, and his neighbour an imperfect, right to the use of this means. But as, at least, in many cases, the use of that right is not absolutely necessary for support, it is a superfluous good, which, as already demonstrated, may be resigned and surrendered to others, by a sufficient declaration of the will. The act by which this is done, is called a promise, and when joined on the other side by acceptance, that is, when an assent to such transfer of rights is sufficiently signified, a covenant arises. Consequently, a covenant is nothing but, on the one side, the surrender, and on the other, the acceptance of the right of deciding cases of collision about certain goods superfluous to the promiser.

According to what has been proved above, such a covenant must be kept. The right of deciding, which previously formed part of my goods, that is, which was mine, has, by that cession, become the good of my neighbour, that is his; and I cannot again take it away from him without offending. The pretension which he, as well as every one else, had to the use of this my independence, so far as it is not absolutely necessary for my support,

has, by that act, passed into a perfect right, which he is qualified to assert by forcible means. This result is incontestible, if my right of deciding is at all to have force and effect.*

I leave off my speculative contemplations, and turn again into my former track. But first I shall establish the conditions on which, according to the above principles, a covenant is valid, and must be kept.

1. Caius possesses a good (some means or other of happiness; the use of his personal abilities themselves, or the right to the fruits of his industry, and the goods of nature united therewith,

* To this very intelligible definition of ideas, I was lead by that philosophic jurist, my worthy friend, Counsellor *Klein*, with whom I had the pleasure of conversing on the subject. His theory of covenants appears to me both simple and fertile. *Ferguson*, in his "Institutes of Moral Philosophy," thinks he has found the obligation of keeping promises, in the expectation we raise in our fellow-creatures, as well as in the immorality of deceiving. But from this, it would seem, there results only a conscientious duty. That which I was before in conscience bound to give up of my means, for the good of my fellow-creatures in general, I am, in consequence of the expectation raised in that particular individual, now, in conscience bound, to part with to him. But what has changed that conscientious duty into a compulsory? This, methinks, indispensably requires the principles of resigning, in general, and those of deciding cases of collision, in particular, as they are demonstated above.

or whatsoever else became his own in a rightful manner, be it corporeal, or incorporeal: privileges immunities, and the like).

2. But that good is not indispensably required for his support, and may therefore be employed on behalf of beneficence, that is, for the benefit of others.

3. Sempronius has an imperfect right to that good; he, as well as every one else, may petition, but not compel its present application to his own use. The right to decide belongs to Caius; it is his, and he cannot be deprived of it by force.

4. Caius makes use of his perfect right, decides in favour of Sempronius, and declares his will by intelligible tokens, that is, Caius promises.

5. Sempronius accepts, and likewise expresses his assent, in a sufficiently significant manner.

Thus Caius's decision is effective, and of force; that is, the good which was the property of Caius has, in virtue of that transaction, become the property of Sempronius. Caius's perfect right has passed into an imperfect one; the same as Sempronius's imperfect right has been transformed into a perfect and compulsory one.

Caius must keep his legal promise; and in case of resistance, Sempronius can compel him to it by force.

It is by agreements of this kind, that man leaves

the state of nature and joins the social union; and his own nature impels him to engage in various associations, in order to transform his precarious rights and duties into something more stable and determinated. The savage only cleaves like the brute animal to the enjoyment of the present moment. Civilized man lives for the future as well, and will have something to look to also in the next moment.[7] The very impulse of procreation—if it be not altogether animal instinct—necessitates him, as we have seen above, to form a social compact, of which we discover something analogous even amongst several species of the brute creation.

Let us proceed to the application of this theory of rights, duties, and covenants, to the difference between church and state, from which we set off. Both church and state have actions as well as persuasions for their object; those, so far as they are referable to the relation of man to man; these, so far as they are referable to the relation of nature to God. Men have need of one another; they hope for and promise, render services to, and expect them in return from one another. The miscellany of abundance and scarcity, strength and infirmity, selfishness and liberality, dispensated to them by nature, urges them to enter into a social union, to the end of giving a wider scope to their powers

and emergencies. Every individual is obligated to apply to the good of the united society, a share of his abilities and the rights thereby acquired. But what share is he to apply so? When and for what purpose is he to apply it? Abstractedly, all this should be decided by the contributor only? but they may also think proper to renounce that right of independence, by a social compact, and to transform by positive laws, those imperfect duties into perfect ones; that is, they may agree upon and fix a nearer rate of how much of his rights every member may be lawfully forced to apply to the benefit of society. The state, or whoever represents it, is imagined as a moral person who is set over those rights. The state, therefore, has rights and a jurisdiction over the goods and acts of man; it may, in a lawful manner, give and take, order and forbid; and because its object is also actions, as such, it may likewise reward and punish. I acquit myself externally of my duty to my neighbour, when I render him his due; the action may on my part be enforced or voluntary. Now when the state cannot operate by means of internal motives, and thereby provide for me too, it at least operates by external ones, and sees justice done to my neighbour.

Not so the Church. She is founded on the

relation between God and man. God is no being who needs our beneficence, who requires our assistance, who claims any of our rights for his use, or whose own rights can ever become embroiled and in conflict with ours. The (in more than one respect) unfit division of duties, in duty to God, and in duty to man, could not but lead to those erroneous ideas. The parallel has been drawn too far. To God—to man: thought they. From duty to our neighbour we sacrifice, and give up part of what is ours, so we do from duty to God. Men desire services; so does God. My duty to myself may come in collision and conflict with my duty to my neighbour; so it may with my duty to God. It is not that every one will fall in with those absurd propositions, when put to him in dry words; yet every one has more or less imbibed them, and infected his blood with them. It is from that source, that all the usurpation flowed, which (so styled) ministers of religion indulged themselves in, under the designation of Church; all the violence and persecution they practised—all the feuds and discord, all the mutiny and sedition they fomented; and all the evils, which time out of mind, were caused under the cloak of religion, by its fiercest foes, hypocrisy and misanthrophy, are wholly and solely the result of that

pitiful sophism, that insinuation of a conflict between God and man, between the rights of the Godhead and the rights of mortals.

In the system of man's duties, the duties to God, in the main, form no distinct division. All the duties of man are duties to God, some concern ourselves, some our neighbours. Out of love of God we are rationally to love ourselves, his creatures; out of rational love of ourselves we are bound to love our neighbours.

The system of our duties rests on a twofold principle, on man's relation to nature; and on the creatures relation to the creator. The former is Moral philosophy, the latter, Religion; and with him who is convinced of the truth, that the relations of nature are nothing else but expressions of the Divine Will, those two principles flow into one; to him the ethics of reason are sacred like religion. Nor does religion, or the relation between God and man, require of us any other duties; it only gives those same duties and obligations a sublimer sanction. God does not want our assistance, desires no service of us,* no sacrifice of our rights

* The words "service, honor, &c." have quite a different meaning when referring to God, than when referring to man. Divine worship is not a service which I am rendering God. Honoring God is not an honor which I am conferring upon him. For the sake of preserving the terms, they altered their import.

for his benefit, no surrender of our independence in his advantage. His rights can never clash or become embroiled with ours. He only designs our good, the good of every individual; and that surely must consist with itself, and cannot contradict itself.

This common-place is so trite, that good sense is surprised that people could ever have been of a different opinion. And yet mankind have, from the beginning, acted against those plain principles! Well will it be for them, if in the year 2240 they leave off doing so.[8]

The next conclusion to be drawn from those maxims, methinks, is that the Church has no rights over goods or property, no claim to contributions or cessions; that her privileges can never interfere with ours; and that therefore there never can occur a case of collision between her and the citizens. Since then it is thus, no covenant either can take place between them, for all covenants suppose cases of collision to be adjusted. Where there are no imperfect rights no collisions of claims can arise; and when there is not claim against claim to be decided, a covenant is a chimera.

Not all human compacts could therefore give

The common man, however, still sticks to the meaning he has been used to, and is firmly attached to his idiom; whence much confusion has arisen in theological matters.

the Church rights over goods or property, because from her nature, she can neither claim nor possess an imperfect right over either. No compulsory right can therefore ever belong to her, nor can any compulsory duty to her be ever imposed on her members. All the rights the Church has, are to exhort, instruct, fortify and console; and the duties of the citizen consist in an inclined ear, and a docile heart.* Nor has the Church a right to punish actions. Civil actions are of the province ofthe civil government, and proper religious actions, from their nature, admit neither of coercion nor bribery; they either arise from a spontaneous impulse of the mind, or are idle play and repugnant to the true spirit of religion.

But when the Church has no estate of her own, who is to pay the teachers of religion? Who is to remunerate the preachers of the fear of God? Religion and wages—lessons of virtue and pay—sermons of piety and remuneration. Those ideas seem to shun one another. What effect does a teacher of wisdom and virtue hope of his labors, while he is receiving pay, and selling himself to the highest bidder? What impression does a preacher of piety expect to make, while he is working for wages? "Behold," says Moses, "I

* Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened. Psal. xl. 6.

have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, &c."* "As the Lord my God, &c. the Rabbins interpret: gratuitously, "Even so I teach you, and so are you to teach yours." Paying, hiring, &c. is so unnatural to that exalted occupation, so irreconcileable to the manners which it requires, that the least love of lucre or money-making seems to degrade the order.[9] A desire after riches, which we willingly forgive any other class, seems to us in that, avarice and greediness, or actually very soon degenerates into avarice and greediness with men who devote themselves to that noble occupation, because it is so unnatural to their calling. A compensation for loss of time is the utmost that can be granted them; and the fixing and giving it, is the business of the State not of the Church. What has the Church to do with things that are for sale, that are bargained and paid for? Time constitutes a part of our property, and he who employs his for the good of the public, has a right to expect to be compensated out of the public purse. The Church compensates not; religion buys nothing, pays for nothing, and allows no wages.

These, methinks, are the boundary lines between Church and State, so far as both have an influence on the actions of man. In respect to persuasions

* Deut. iv. 5.

they come rather nearer to one another; for there the State has no other means of operating but the Church. Both must instruct, advise, animate, induce; but neither reward nor punish, neither force nor bribe: for even the State could not acquire, by any compact whatsoever, the least control over persuasions. Generally speaking, man's persuasions know nothing of beneficence, and admit of no control, I cannot renounce my persuasion as such out of love to my neighbour; I cannot, out of beneficence, surrender and make over to him a share of my own judgement; and as little can I assume, or in any way acquire a control over his persuasions. The right to our persuasions is unalienable, and cannot pass from one person to another; for it neither gives nor supersedes any claim to property, good, or franchise. Accordingly, the least preference which you publicly give to one of your own religion and opinion, may be called an indirect bribe; the smallest privilege you withhold from dissenters,* indirect penalty, which, in the main, tends to the

* In a state, in other respects tolerably liberal, a certain college composed of learned and distinguished men, lately made some dissenters pay double the regular passing fees. The excuse it offered on being called to account before the authorities was, that dissenters were every where "Deterioris conditionis" in civil life. What is most singular is, that double fees continue to be exacted to this very day.

same effect as a direct premium for acquiescing, and a direct fine for resisting. The distinction between premium and privilege, between fine and restriction, so much insisted upon in some text-books of Canon-law, is but a paltry delusion. The remark may be of use to the grammarian; but to the unfortunate, who must not participate in the rights of man, because he cannot say: "I believe," when he does not believe; because he will not be a Christian on his tongue, and a Jew in his heart, that distinction affords a sorry consolation. Besides; which are the limits of privilege on the one side, and restriction on the other? With moderate skill in dialectics, one may enlarge those ideas, and keep stretching them, until they become, on the one side, civil happiness; and, on the other, oppression, persecution, and exile.[10]

Fear and hope work on man's instinct of desiring; reasoning on his judging faculty. You are making use of the wrong means, when you want to lead man, by fear or hope, to adopt or reject certain dogmas. And although that may not be directly your object, still you spoil your better designs, if you do not remove fear and hope as far away as possible. You are bribing and deluding your own heart, or your heart is deluding you, when you believe that a test of truth can subsist; that freedom of enquiry can remain uninjured,

while here, consideration and dignities await the inquirer; and there, contumely and indigence. Remonstrances of good or evil are instruments for working on the will; those of truth or untruth, for working on the understanding. Let him who wants to work on the understanding, first of all lay aside the former instruments; else he will be in danger of unintentionally planing, where he should cut right through; of fastening, where he should break up.

Then, which is the best form of government to be recommended to the Church? None.—Who is to decide when disputes arise about religious matters? He whom God gave the ability of convincing. What occasion is there for a government, where there is nothing to govern? for a supreme magistracy, where no one needs to be a subject? for the judicial office, where cases of contested rights or claims can never occur? Neither State nor Church is a competent judge in theological matters; for the members of society could not concede that right to either by any compact whatsoever. The State, it is true, is, from a distance, to take care that no doctrines be propagated, which do not consist with public decency, no doctrines which, like atheism and epicurism, sap the foundation of civil society. Plutarch and Bayle[11] may, if they please, make it a subject of inquiry, whether a

state may not subsist better under atheism than under superstition.[12] They may estimate and compare the troubles which have hitherto arisen to the human race from both those sources of woe, and which still threaten to arise. In the main, this is nothing more than inquiring whether a hectic or an ardent fever be the most fatal? Yet one would wish his friends neither. So every civil society will act rightly in not suffering either fanaticism or atheism to strike root and spread about. The political body sickens and is miserable all the same, whether it be eaten up by a cancer, or consumed by an ardent fever.

But it is from a distance only that the state is to give this a consideration: and it is also to favor with wise temperance, even the doctrine on which its true happiness depends, and not directly interfere with any controversy whatsoever, or seek to decide it with a high hand. For it is evidently acting against its own purpose, when it directly forbids inquiry, and lets controversies be decided otherwise than by arguments of reason. Nor is it to concern itself about all the opinions adopted or rejected, either by the established or the tolerated doctrine. The question is only of those main principles, in which all religions agree, and without which happiness is a dream, and virtue itself no longer virtue. Without a God, a Providence, and

a future state, philanthropy is an inherent weakness, and beneficence little more than a pack of nonsense, into which we seek to talk one another, to the end that the simpleton may drudge, and the man of sense live luxuriously, and laugh at his expense![13]

It will scarce be necessary yet to touch on the question: is it allowable to swear ministers and priests to certain religious doctrines? On what should this be done? The above-mentioned fundamental articles of all religions cannot be confirmed by an oath. You must take the swearer's word for it that he admits them; else his oath is an empty sound, puffed in the air, with no greater conquest of himself than a simple declaration would cost him; for surely all the confidence in oaths, and their whole credit, rests merely on those fundamental tenets of morality. But if it be particular articles of this or that religion, to which I am to swear, or which I am to abjure; if it be principles, without which virtue and decency may all the same subsist amongst men, although the state, or those who represent it, think them ever so necessary for my eternal salvation; I ask, what right has the State thus to rake into the innermost recesses of the human heart, and force men to avowals which yield neither comfort nor profit to society? It could not have been conceded to it;

for all the conditions of a covenant set forth above, are wanting here. It does not concern any of my superfluous goods, which I am to part with to my neighbour; it does not concern any object of beneficence; and cases of collision to be decided, are out of the question here. But then how can the State assume a quality which does not admit of being conceded by a covenant, which cannot pass from one to another, nor be made over by a declaration of the will? But let us, into the bargain, inquire, whether swearing to believing or not believing is a cogitable idea? whether men's opinions in general, their concurring or not concurring in abstract propositions—is a subject on which they can be sworn at all?

Oaths beget no new duties. The most solemn appeal to God in witness of truth, neither gives nor takes away a right which did not already exist without it, neither does it impose on the appellant any obligation which was not incumbent on him before. Oaths serve merely to awaken conscience, if peradventure it have fallen asleep; and to draw its attention to what the judge of the universe demands of it any how. Taking an oath, therefore, properly serves neither for a conscientious man, nor for a determined profligate. The former must know, any how—must, without oaths or self-imprecations, be penetrated with the truth that

God is a witness not only of all the words and depositions of man, but of all his thoughts and most secret emotions, and that he lets not the transgression of his holy will pass over unpunished. As for the hardened unconscionable villain,

"He fears not God, who spares not man."

Accordingly, oaths are made only for the ordinary description of mortals, or, in the main, for every one of us, so far as, in many instances, we may be classed with that description; for the weak, irresolute and wavering, who have principles, but do not always act up to them—who are indolent and remiss in doing what they see and acknowledge to be right—who indulge their humours, defer, and palliate, to please some foible or other, seek for excuses, and, in most cases, think they have found them. They purpose, but have not firmness enough to persevere in their purposes. It is they, whose will wants steeling, whose conscience must be roused. He, who stoutly denies a charge in a court, may still have the property of others in his possession, and yet not be so determinately wicked as to want to be dishonest. Perhaps he spent it, or let it go out of his hands, and, for the present, only wants to gain time by denying; and so the good genius, who fights within him the battle of virtue, is put off from day to day, until he is tired out and

succumbs. We must, therefore, hasten to his assistance, and convert the case, which admits of delay, into one, which happens on the spot, in which the present moment is decisive, and all excuses fall to the ground. But then we must also summon all the awe, muster up all the force and energy, with which the recollections of God, the all-righteous avenger and retributer, is apt to act on the human mind.[14]

This is the purpose of oaths. And from this, I think it is evident, that men may be sworn only to such things as are perceptible by the external senses, to things of which they can affirm and declare the truth, with the positiveness which the evidence of the external sense carries with it: as, "I saw, I heard, received, gave, did not see;" and so on. But we are putting conscience to a cruel torture, when we question them about matters which belong to the internal sense only. Do you believe this? Are you convinced of it? Are you fully persuaded now? Do you think so too? If there still remain a doubt behind in a fold of your heart, in a nook of your mind, state it, or the Lord will avenge the using of his name in vain. For mercy's sake! spare tender conscience; if it had to maintain a thesis out of the first book of Euclid, it must, at that moment, be seized with fear, and undergo inexpressible torment.

The perceptions of the internal sense are of themselves seldom so palpable that the mind can safely hold them fast, and render them again as often as may be required. They will, at times, escape it, just when it thinks it is seizing them. About what I now think I am quite certain of, a slight doubt steals in, the next moment, and keeps lurking in a corner of my heart, without my perceiving it. Many positions for which I would suffer martyrdom to day, will perhaps appear very problematical to me to-morrow. And if I am even to render those internal perceptions by words and symbols, or to swear to words and symbols, which other men propose to me; the uncertainty will be still greater. It is impossible that I and my neighbour can unite the selfsame inward sensations to the selfsame words. For we cannot confront the former with one another, or form a comparison between them, and correct them, unless by words. We cannot define words by things, but again must have recourse to words or to symbols, and in the end to metaphors; because by that device, we, as it were, lead the conceptions of the internal sense back to external sensible impressions. But with that process, what confusion and obscurity will there not remain behind, in the signification of words? How will not the ideas vary, which

different men, in different times and ages, link to the selfsame symbols and words?

Good reader! whoever you may be, accuse me not, on that account, of a sceptical turn, or of the insidious design of making a sceptic of you. Perhaps I am one of those, who are freest from that morbidness of the mind, and who most zealously wish to be able to cure all their fellow-creatures of it. But just because I have so frequently performed that cure on myself, and tried it on others, experience taught me how difficult it is, and how little we can answer for the result. With my best friend, with whom I fancied I thought ever so congenially, I very often could not agree in philosophical and theological truths. After a long dispute and conversation, it would at times turn out, that we had each of us united a different idea with the self-same word. In not a few instances, we apprehended alike, but only expressed ourselves each in a different manner; and just as often we would felicitate one another on coinciding, when, in thought, we were still wide apart from one another. And yet we were neither of us unpractised in thinking; we were both used to handle abstract ideas, and our earnest aim seemed to be alike truth, more for the sake of truth, than of gaining the point. Notwithstanding which our

ideas wanted a good deal of mutual rubbing, before they would dovetail into each other, before we could say with certainty: Now we agree. Ah, whoever has experienced this in his life-time, and can still be intolerant, can still bear his fellow-man animosity, because he does not think or express himself about theological matters exactly as he himself does—him I would not have for my friend; he has entirely stripped himself of humanity.[15]

And ye, my fellow-creatures, ye take a man, with whom, perhaps, ye never had any conversation about those matters; ye propose to him the most abstruse thesis in metaphysics and theology, clothed as they were, ages ago, in words or so-called symbols; ye make him swear by the most awful of names, that he associates with those words the very identical idea which you yourself associate with them; and that both he and you associate with them the very identical idea associated with them by him, who wrote them down ages ago; you make him swear that he subscribes to those theses, and draws none of them into question; and with this subscription on oath, you connect office and dignity, power and influence, the temptation to which, removes so many a contradiction, hushes so many a doubt. And if at any future time, the man's internal conviction prove not quite so adamantine as, to you, he

pretended it was, you accuse him of the most heinous of crimes; you indict him for having forsworn himself, and you let ensue what must ensue in such a case! Now, judging with all possible lenity, is not here the measure of guilt equal on both sides?

Ay, say the more reasonable amongst ye; we do not swear the man to his creed: no, we leave conscience full freedom; and only require of a fellow-citizen, whom we are about to invest with a certain office, that he shall declare, on his oath, that the office entrusted to him, on condition of conformity, is not accepted by him without conforming. It is a contract into which we enter with him. And if, in the sequel, doubts arise, which destroy that conformity, does it not rest with him to remain true to his conscience, and resign the office? Is there any liberty of conscience, any rights of man, that warrant the breaking of a contract?

Very well! I shall not oppose to this appearance of justice, all the arguments which may be opposed to it on the self-evident principles laid down above. What is the use of needless iteration? But for humanity's sake, look at the consequences of which that custom has been hitherto productive amongst the most civilized nations. Take all the men who mount your academical

chairs, and your pulpits, and still have their doubts about many an article they swear to, on accepting their appointments; take all the bishops who sit in the House of Lords, all the truly great men invested with power and dignity in England, who do not admit the thirty-nine articles quite so unconditionally as they were proposed to them.[16] Take them all, and then still say, civil liberty cannot be granted to my oppressed nation, because they make so light of oaths![17] Heaven preserve me from misanthropical thoughts! At this sad reflection, they might easily get the better of me.

No! Out of regard for humanity I will, on the contrary, believe that all those men do not consider perjury that which is charged to them as such. Good sense, perhaps, tells them that neither state nor church had a right to connect office, honour and dignity, with the belief in, and swearing to, certain propositions, or to make the belief in certain propositions, the condition on which to confer them. Such condition, perhaps, they think is null of itself, because it tends to no one's good; because the breaking of it causes no deterioration of any one's right or property.* If, therefore,

* Namely, a clause is valid, and renders a contract binding, when we can conceive a possibility of its having influence on the adjusting of cases of collision. Now, opinions can be brought in connexion with external advantages, no otherwise

wrong have been done, and it cannot be denied that there has, it was at the time when the benefits held out to them, tempted them into so inadmissible an oath. That evil can now no longer be remedied; and it can be remedied least by resigning the office so gotten. For the sake of acquiring justifiable worldly advantages, they, at the time, certainly, used God's most holy name in a manner unjustifiable with him. But what has been so done, cannot be made undone by their resigning the fruits they enjoy of it; nay, the disorder, scandal, and other bad consequences, inevitably resulting from the throwing up of their appointment, perhaps accompanied by a formal and public declaration of the matter of dissent, might only aggravate the evil. How much more advisable would it, therefore, be to the state, to themselves, and those depending on them, to leave things undisturbed, and continue to State and Church the services for which Providence gave them talent and inclination. It is in that, that their vocation for the public ministry consists, not in what they may be thinking about immutable truths, and theoretical propositions, which, in fact, concern only themselves, and not their fellow-men.

than by an erring conscience; and it is a question with me, whether they can ever be admitted as a legal stipulation.

And if many a one have too tender a conscience to owe his comfort to such fine-spun apologies, those who are weak enough to yield to them, are not therefore to be condemned altogether. It is not, at any rate, wilful perjury, but human frailty, with which I would tax men of their merit.

To conclude this section, I shall recapitulate the result to which I have been led by my contemplations.

The purpose of Church and State is to promote by public measures, the happiness of man both in this life and in that to come.

They both work on the persuasions and the actions of men, on principles and their application; the State, with such grounds as are resting on relations of man to man, or to nature; the Church, or the religion of the State, with such grounds as are resting on relations of man to God. The state uses man as *the immortal Son of Earth;* religion as *the image of his Creator.*

Principles are free, Persuasions, from thair nature, admit neither of compulsion nor bribery; they are the business of man's judging faculty, and must be decided on by the standard of truth or untruth. Good and evil work on his approving or disapproving faculty; fear and hope govern his instincts; reward and punishment direct his will, spur his energy, animate, tempt or frighten him.

But if principles are to render happy, man must neither be terrified nor wheedled into them; the judgment of the reasoning faculties alone must stand good. To let ideas of good or evil intermeddle, is to let cases be decided by an incompetent judge.

Neither State nor Church has therefore, a right to submit the principles and persuasions of men to any compulsion whatsoever. Neither Church nor State is entitled to connect rights over persons, or claims to things with principles and persuasions; and to weaken, by extraneous admixture, the influence of the force of truth on the discerning faculty.

Not even the social compact could concede such a right to either State or Church. For compacts about objects which, from their nature, are unalienable, are intrinsically nugatory, and cancel themselves.

Nor do the most sacred oaths any way alter the nature of things here. Oaths engender no new duties; they are a mere solemn confirmation of what we are obligated to do without them, either by nature or in virtue of a covenant. Where no duty exists, the taking of an oath is a vain invocation of God, scandalous enough as it is, but of itself binding to nothing at all.

Besides a man can swear to that only which

has the evidence of the external senses for it, that is, to what he *saw, heard, touched, felt or tasted.* The perceptions of the internal sense are no subject for a confirmation on oath.

Accordingly, all swearing to, as well as all swearing away, of principles and dogmas is inadmissible; and when done, notwithstanding, binds to nothing but to repentance of the blameable levity thus shewn. If I now swear to an opinion, I am, for that, not the less at liberty to repudiate it the next moment. The misdeed of a vain oath has been committed, even if I retain it; and if I reject it, will it be said that I have forsworn myself?

Let it not be forgotten that, according to my principles, the state is not qualified to attach income, dignity and privilege, to certain distinct dogmas. As to what regards the public ministry, it is the duty of the state to appoint preachers able to teach wisdom and virtue, and of promulgating the wholesome truths on which the well-being of society depends. All more particular provisos and regulations must be left to the best discretion, and the conscience of the ministers themselves; as being the only way of preventing endless confusion, and collision of duties, which will betray even the virtuous into hypocrisy and moral dereliction.[18] Not every offence against the dictates of reason remains unavenged.

But what if the harm have once been done? Here the State appoints and stipendiates a minister for preaching certain set dogmas. By-and-by, the man finds out that there are no grounds for those dogmas. What is he to do? How is he to proceed, in order to get his foot out of the gin into which an erring conscience made him run?

Here three different ways are open to him. He either locks up truth in his breast, and goes on preaching untruth, notwithstanding he knows better; or he throws up his situation without assigning a reason for it; or he openly vindicates truth, and leaves to the State what is to become of his place and salary; and what he is to suffer besides for his unconquerable love of truth.

Of those three ways, none, methinks, is under all circumstances to be absolutely condemned. I can imagine a condition, which would serve at the tribunal of the all-righteous judge, as an excuse for having continued to mix up with ours, all besides salutary promulgation of truths of general utility, an untruth hallowed by the State, perhaps from mistaken scrupulosity. I should, at any rate, beware taxing a pastor, irreproachable in other respects, with hypocrisy or Jesuitism on that account, unless I am thoroughly acquainted with his position and circumstances; nay so acquainied as perhaps no man ever was with his neighbour's

position and circumstances.[19] *Whoever takes credit for having never expressed himself on theological matters different from what he thought, either did not think at all, or has, at that very moment, a particular object in boasting of an untruth, which his own heart gainsays.*

With a view to persuasions and principles, religion and the civil government, therefore, agree; and it behoves both to avoid every appearance of compulsion or bribery; and confine themselves to teaching, exhorting, convincing, and shewing the way to the right path. With a view to actions they do not. The relations between men and men demand actions merely as such; the relations between man and God demand them only so far as they bespeak certain persuasions and opinions. An act of public utility ceases not to be publicly useful, even when procured by force; whereas a religious act is religious only accordingly as it is done spontaneously, and with a proper intention.

The State may therefore enforce acts of public utility; reward, punish, dispense offices, posts of honor, ignominy and banishment, in order to move men to actions, of which the intrinsic value will not operate forcibly enough on their minds. The completest right and power to do so, therefore

even was—and must have been—granted to it by the social compact. The State is, therefore, a moral entity, which possesses goods and privileges of its own, and may dispose of them as it pleases.

Divine religion is far from being all this; it conducts itself towards actions no otherwise than towards persuasions, because it commands actions merely as tokens of persuasions. It is also a moral entity; but its rights do not know what compulsion is. It drives not with a rod of iron, but on the contrary, leads by the strings of loving-kindness. It draws no avenging sword, dispenses no temporal goods, assumes no claim on earthly possessions, no external control over any mind. The weapons it uses are grounds and convictions; its power lays in the divine force of truth. The punishments it threatens, are the same as the rewards it holds out,—effects of kindness, salutary and beneficial even to him who receives them. By these characteristics, I know thee, daughter of the Godhead, Religion—who art in truth alone, the saving one on earth as in heaven!

The right of proscribing and banishing, which the State, at times, may think fit to exercise, is straight contrary to the spirit of religion. Excommunicate, exclude, turn away a brother, who wants to join me in my devotions, and raise his heart up

to God, along with mine, in salutary participation! And that while religion denies itself the power of inflicting arbitrary punishments, least of all that torment of the soul, which he alone feels who has really religion! Pass in review all the unfortunates, that ever were to be amended by anathema and threats of damnation. Reader, whichever external church, synagogue, or mosque you may belong to; inquire and see whether you shall not discover more true religion amongst the multitude of the anathematized, than amongst the incomparably greater multitude of those who anathematized them. Now anathema is either attended with civil consequences, or it is not. If it draw on civil misery, its hardship falls on the magnanimous individual only, who considers that sacrifice due to divine truth. He who has no religion, must be out of his senses, if he expose himself to the least risk, for the sake of a supposititious truth. But if the consequences of anathema be merely of a spiritual nature (as some would fain persuade themselves they are), they again bear heavy on him only who still is susceptible of that kind of feeling. The irreligious man laughs at anathema, and continues as obdurate as ever.

And is there a possibility of completely severing anathema from civil consequences? I think I

have truly observed in another place, that the introducing of ecclesiastical discipline without injuring civil happiness, resembles the answer of the Most High Judge to the Accuser: "He is in thy hands; but spare his life!" or as the commentators remark: "Demolish the cask, but let not the wine run out." Where is the anathema, where the excommunication, that can be said to be entirely without civil consequences, without influence, at least, on the civil esteem or the good name of the anathematized, the confidence he enjoys among his fellow-citizens, in default of which no one can follow his business, and be useful to his fellow-creatures, that is, be civilly happy?

But they will still appeal to the law of nature. "Every society," say they, "has a right of expelling; why should a religious society not have it too?"

I reply: "this is just where a religious society forms an exception." By virtue of a higher law, no society can exercise a right, which goes right against the main object of the institution of society itself. Excommunicating a dissenter, expelling him from the church, (says a worthy divine of this city,) is like forbidding a sick man the dispensary. Indeed, the most essential object of religious societies is common edification. We want to

transport, by the magic power of sympathy, truth out of the mind into the heart; and by participation, revive to lofty perceptions, knowledge of reason, at times dead. When the heart cleaves too fast to sensual desires to hearken to reason; when it is on the point of luring reason itself with it into the snare; it must here be seized with the awe of piety, inflamed with the ardour of devotion, and learn to know pleasures of a higher order, which outweigh those of the senses, even already here on earth. And ye will repulse, at the door, the patient who most needs that medicine, who needs it the more, the less he is conscious of the want of it, and in his own conceit imagines himself to be in good health! Ought it not rather to be your first endeavour to restore to him that feeling, and recal to life the part of his soul, which is as it were, threatened with mortification? Instead of which, you deny him all assistance, and suffer the lingerer to die a moral death, from which perhaps, you might rescue him.

A certain philosopher at Athens, acted far nobler, and more according to the purpose of his school. An epicure came away from the banquet, his senses clouded by the night's revels, and his brow enwreathed with roses. He steps into the auditory of the stoics, in order to treat himself;

yet at the morning-hour, with the finishing sport of enervated rakes, the sport of scoffing. The philosopher lets him alone, redoubles the fire of his eloquence against the seductions of voluptuousness, and paints the felicity of virtue with most irresistible force. The disciple of Epicurus listens, waxes attentive, casts down his eyes, tears the wreaths from his brow, and becomes himself a follower of the Stoa.[20]

Section. II.

Mr. Dohm's excellent work "On the Civil Melioration of the Jews," occasioned the enquiry: How far may a colony be indulged in the administration of their own laws in ecclesiastical and civil matters, in general; and in the right of anathematizing and excommunicating, in particular? Lawful power of the church—the right of anathematizing. If the colony have it at all, they must have been, as it were, enfeoffed with it, either by the state, or by the mother-church. Some one possessing those rights, in virtue of the social compact, must have given up, and transferred to them a certain portion thereof, so far as concerned themselves. But how is it if no one ever can possess such a right? if no compulsory power in theological matters belong to the mother church herself, or to the state either?—if, according to

reason, the divineness which we must all acknowledge, neither the state nor the church are qualified to assume, in theological matters, any part but that of instructing; any power but that of persuading; any discipline but that of reason and principle. If this can be demonstrated, and rendered evident to the human understanding, no express covenant, and still less consuetude or prescription, are powerful enough to maintain a right that runs counter to reason; then all ecclesiastical restraint is unlawful, all external authority in theological matters, usurpation; and if it be so, the mother church neither can nor may bestow a right which does not belong to her herself, nor yet dispose of an authority which she has wrongly assumed. It may be, that, through some prevailing prejudice or other, abuses have so spread, so deeply rooted in the minds of men, that it would not be feasible or even advisable to abolish them at once, and without cautious preparation. But, in that case, it is at least our duty to counteract them from a distance; and, in the first place, throw up a dam against their further incursion. If we cannot totally eradicate an evil, we ought, at any rate, to cut off its roots.

Such was the result of my contemplations; and I ventured to lay my thoughts before the public

for their opinion;* although I could not then state my grounds so completely as has been done since in the preceding section.

I have the happiness to live in a country in which these, my ideas, are neither novel, nor considered particularly singular. From the beginning of his reign, it has been the constant practice of the monarch by whom it is governed, to establish mankind in their full rights, with respect to religious matters. He is the first amongst the regents of our age, by whom the wise maxim: "Men are born for each other: teach thy neighbour, or bear with him,"† has never been lost sight

* In the preface to Manasseh Ben Israel, &c.

† Those are the words of my late friend, Mr. *Iselin*, in one of his last papers, in the 10th number of the *Ephemeris of Humanity*, Oct. 1782, p. 429. The memory of that true Sage, ought to be perpetual with every one of his contemporaries, who values virtue and truth. It is, therefore, the more inconceivable to me, that I should pass him over, when I was nameing the several benevolent persons, who first strove to propagate unlimited toleration in Germany; him, who certainly preached it in our language, and in its widest extent, earlier and louder than any one else. Accordingly I transcribe here, with pleasure, the passage from the advertisement of my Preface to Manasseh Ben Israel, in the Ephemeris, where this is observed. And this I do, in justice to a man after his death, who himself was so generally just in his life. "The author of the Ephemeris of Humanity fully concurs with Mr. Mendelssohn, also, in what he says about the legislative power of the higher authorities, over

of. He, indeed, with wise moderation, spared the privileges of external religion, such as he found

the opinions of the citizens; as well as about the agreements which individuals may enter into amongst themselves, concerning such opinions. And this way of thinking, he (the author) has not borrowed only of Messrs. *Dohm* and *Lessing*, but he has been a convert to it already, these thirty years. In the same manner, he also admitted long ago, that what is called religious toleration is not a boon on the part of governments, but a bounden duty." It is impossible to express one's self plainer than in what follows: (*Träume eines Menschenfreundes*, Visions of a Philanthropist, Vol. ii. p. 12.) "Thus if one or more religions are admitted in his dominions, a wise and just sovereign will not think himself entitled to encroach upon their rights, for the benefit of those of his own religion. Every church, every union, whose object is divine worship, is a society to whom protection and justice is due from the sovereign. To deny it, were it even for the sake of favouring the best possible of religions, would be contrary to the spirit of true piety."

"In respect to civil rights, the members of all religious persuasions are perfectly alike; those only excepted, of which the tenets go against the principles of human and civic duties. Such a religion can lay no claim to rights in a state. They who are so unfortunate as to profess it, may expect to be tolerated only as long as they do not disturb the order of society by acts of depravity and injustice. Whenever they do so, let them be punished, not for their opinions, but for their actions." As to the animadversions on the middle-hands in business, which I am said wrongly to impute to Mr. *Iselin*, the circumstances have been quite misrepresented. It was not Mr. *Iselin*, but another, and in other respects a very judicious author, who got an article inserted in the *Ephemeris*, in which he maintains the perniciousness of middle-hands; but who, if anything, was controverted

it in possession of. It will, perhaps, require yet ages of cultivation and of preparation, before men shall comprehend, that privileges on account of religion are neither lawful, nor, in the main, useful; and that, therefore, a final removal of civil disabilities, on account of religion, would actually be a benefit. However, under that philosopher's administration, the nation has got so used to toleration and socialness in religious affairs, that the terms "Anathema," and "Excommunication" have, at least ceased to be popular ones.

However, what every just man must rejoice at, is the earnestness and zeal with which several worthy members of the Christian clergy are endeavouring to propagate amongst the people, those principles of reason, or rather of true religion;[21] nay, some of them had no hesitation in concurring with me in my arguments against the widely worshipped idol—ecclesiastical law, and in publicly approving of the conclusion drawn from those

by the editor. The remarks against my co-religionists, made in that article, I shall pass over in silence. This is not the place to appear in their defence. I leave that to Mr. *Dohm*, who can do it with less partiality. Besides, we soon forgive a *Basilean* his prejudices against a people, which he can have no other opportunity of knowing, but from its migratory portion, or from the *Observations d' un Alsacien.* (A very violent pamphlet against the Jews).

arguments. What high notions those men must have of their vocation, that they are so willing to remove from it all by-ends! What noble confidence they must place in the force of truth, that they undertake to place it safe on its own pedestal, without any other support! Although we should differ ever so much in principles, I cannot forbear expressing my entire admiration and veneration of them, and of those noble sentiments.

Many others, readers as well as critics, bore themselves very singularly, on that occasion. They did not, indeed, controvert my arguments; on the contrary, they admitted them. None of them tried to show the least connexion between doctrine and privilege. None of them pointed out an inaccuracy in the syllogism, that my assenting or not assenting to certain immutable truths, neither gives me, nor takes away from me, any right or qualification whatsoever, nor yet authorises me to command men's means and minds at my own will and pleasure. And yet the inevitable result thereof made them startle, as at a sudden spectre. "What," cried they, "then there is no such thing as ecclesiastical law! Then all that so many doctors, and, perhaps, we ourselves, have written, read, heard, and disputed on—law, rested on a hollow foundation!" That seemed to them, going rather too far. And yet, unless there be a

hidden error in the syllogism, the conclusion must necessarily be right.

The Reviewer, in the Göttingen Advertiser, quoting my assertion, "That there exists no right over persons or things, which is connected with doctrine; and that all the compacts and agreements in the world, could not make such a right possible," adds: "all this is new and hard. First principles are denied away, and there is an end to all argument."

To be sure, it concerns first principles, which are refused to be admitted. But is there, therefore, to be an end to all arguments? Are principles then never to be doubted? So men of the Pythagorean school, will be everlastingly debating about the manner in which their teacher came by his golden thigh, if no one be permitted to investigate, whether Pythagoras really had such a thing as a golden thigh.

Every game has its laws, every race or match its rules, conformably to which the umpires decide. If you want to win the stake, or carry the prize, you must at once acknowledge those laws and rules. Whereas, he who wants to contemplate the theory of games and matches, may, by all means, have his doubts as to the fundamental principles. It is the same in a court of justice. A judge elicited from a murderer the

confession of his guilt. But at the same time, the contumacious fellow maintained that he knew no reason, why it should not be just as much allowed to kill a man, for his own benefit, as to slay a beast.[23] To him the judge might justly reply: "You deny the first principles, fellow; so there is an end to all arguing with you: anyhow you will admit that we, too, are allowed to rid the earth of such a miscreant as you, for our own benefit." But the priest, who had to prepare that felon for death, must not answer him in that manner. It was his duty to engage with him about the principles themselves, and to endeavour to remove his doubts, if he entertained them in earnest. Nor is it any otherwise in the arts and sciences. In every one of them there are certain fundamental ideas supposed, which are no further accounted for. Yet, there is not in the whole circle of human knowledge, a single point, which is superior to all doubt, not an iota which is not amenable to investigation. If my doubt lie out of the province of one forum, I must be referred to another; but I must be heard and set to rights somewhere.

Moreover, the case put by the Göttingen Reviewer (by way of an instance) to refute me, is not one in point. "Let us, however," says he, "apply those denied first principles, to a definitive case, viz.: The Jewish congregation at Berlin

appoint a person to circumcise male children conformably to the precept of their religion. In virtue of that transaction, such person acquires a right to a fixed salary, to a certain rank in the congregation &c. By-and-by he is seized with scruples about the dogma or law of circumcision, and refuses to perform the operation stipulated in the contract. Will he be suffered to continue to enjoy the rights acquired by the same? And so every where.

How every where? I will admit the possibility of the thing, which, I trust, will never occur.* What is this case, placed so near home to me, to prove? Surely not that, according to reason, rights over persons or goods are connected with doctrines or depending on them, not that positive laws and covenants may render such rights possible. According to the reviewer's own statement, the whole depends on those two circumstances; and

* There is neither a salary, nor a certain rank in the congregation, attached to the function of circumcising. On the contrary, whoever possesses the requisite habitude, will, with great pleasure, perform that meritorious work. Nay, the father, on whom properly the duty of circumcising his son is incumbent, has, in most cases, to select one from several competitors, who apply to him for it. All the remuneration, which the operator expects is, the place of honor at the circumcision banquet, and the saying of the benediction after it. According to my theory, which seems so new and hard, all religious offices should be filled in the same manner.

yet neither of them takes place in the simulated case: for the circumciser would receive a fixed salary, and enjoy a certain rank, not for his assenting to the dogma of circumcision, but for his performing the operation instead of the fathers of families. Now, if his conscience will not allow him to act in that capacity any longer, he will, by all means, have to renounce the remuneration for which he stipulated on undertaking it. But what has that in common with the privileges granted to a person because he subscribes to this or that doctrine, because he admits or rejects this or that immutable truth? All to which the simulated case may bear some analogy, would be, if the State engage and pay ministers to preach set doctrines after a certain method, and no other; and those ministers afterwards think themselves in conscience bound to deviate from the course prescribed to them. That case, which has so frequently given occasion to loud and warm disputes, I touched upon largely in the preceding section, and sought to set forth after my principles. But to me, it seems equally as little to suit the quoted simile. The reader will please to bear in mind the distinction which I established between actions required as actions, and such as are to pass merely as a token of persuasions. Here a foreskin is cut off: the circumciser may think or believe of

the custom itself what he pleases; the same as a creditor, whom a court helps to recover his claim, is paid, whatever may be the debtor's notions of the obligation of paying. But how can this be made applicable to a teacher of theological truths, whose lessons surely will bring but little profit, if his mind and heart do not agree with them, if they do not arise from his internal convictions? I signified already, in the before-mentioned place, that I would not take upon myself to prescribe to a minister, thus driven into a strait, how, as an honest man, he is to act, or to make him reproaches for having acted otherwise; and that, in my opinion, every thing depends on times, and on the circumstances and situation he may happen to be in. Who will therein presume to condemn his neighbour's conscientiousness? Who would force upon it, for so arduous a decision, a balance which, perhaps, he does not acknowledge as the true one?

That inquiry, however, does not lay exactly in my road; and has little in common with the two questions on which every thing depends, and which I shall once more repeat here.

1. Are there, according to the laws of reason, rights over persons or things, which rights are connected with dogmas, by the concurring in which they are acquired?

2. Can covenants and agreements engender perfect rights, and produce compulsory duties, where, previously, no imperfect rights and duties of conscience did not exist, independent of all covenants?

One of those two propositions must be proved by means of the law of nature, to convince me of an error. That they call my assertion new and hard, does not matter, if but truth do not contradict it. I am not, as yet, acquainted with any author who has touched upon those questions, and analysed them, in their application to ecclesiastical authority, and the right of anathematizing. They all start from the point, that there is such a thing as *Jus sacro sancto;* only every one models it in his own way, and enfeoffs with it, now an invisible person, now this or that visible one. Hobbes himself, who therein ventures to deviate farther from established notions than any one else, could not entirely divest himself of that idea. He admits of such a right, and is only seeking for a person to whom it may be entrusted with least harm. They all believe that the meteor is visible, but they have recourse to different systems for ascertaining its longitude and latitude. It would not be an unheard-of circumstance, if an unpre-occupied passenger, who just happens to look upwards at the spot where it is supposed to appear,

should, with far less scholarship, prove that there is never a meteor to be seen.

I now come to a much more important objection, which has been raised to me, and which chiefly occasioned this tract. Without refuting my arguments, they again opposed to them the sacred authority of the Mosaic religion, which I profess. "What are the laws of Moses," said they, "but a system of religious government, and of the power and rights of religion?" "It may consist with reason," says an anonymous author," &c. &c. &c.*

That objection goes to the heart; and I must own, that, except some intemperate expressions, the ideas he gives of Judaism are the same, which even many of my brethren in the faith entertain of it. Now, could I be convinced of their being correct, I certainly would, with shame, retract my positions, and bend reason to the yoke of faith. O no! wherefore should I dissemble? If the word of God were so evidently contradictory to my understanding, the utmost I could do would be to impose silence on the latter; but my unrefuted arguments would, nevertheless, return to some secret recess of my heart, there change to harassing doubts, and those

* Search for Light and Right. See vol. i. pp. 123, 124; 126, 127; 129: which passages are in the original.

doubts would resolve into filial prayer, into fervent supplication for light. I would exclaim with the Psalmist:—"O! send me thy light, and thy truth. Let them lead me, let them bring me unto thy holy mount, and to thy residence." (Ps. xliii. 3.)

At all events, it would be hard and vexing, if, like the above anonymous writer, and him who wrote the postscript with the signature of Moerschel, the world should impute to me the scandalous design of subverting the religion which I confess, and of renouncing it, if not expressly, but, as it were, in an underhand manner. This practice of wresting meanings should be for ever discarded from the conversation of the learned. *Not every one who concurs in an opinion, does, at the same time, concur in all the inferences drawn from it, though ever so correctly.* Those kind of imputations are odious, and only cause exasperation and pugnacity, by which truth seldom gains any thing.

Nay, the "Searcher, &c.," goes to the length of apostrophizing me in the following manner: "Or are we to presume," &c. &c.*

That imputation is expressed seriously and pathetically enough. But, my good sir, am I to take the step, without first considering whether it will really draw me out of the dilemma, in

* Vol. i. pp. 129, 130.

which, you think, I must find myself? If it be true that the corner-stones of my house are failing, and the tenement threatens to fall down, am I then right in shifting my effects from the lower story to the upper? Shall I be any safer there? Now Christianity, you know, is built on Judaism, and when this falls down, that must necessarily become one heap of ruins with it. You say, my conclusions undermine the foundation of Judaism, and you proffer me, for safety, your upper story. Must I suppose that you are mocking me? When there is the appearance of a contradiction between one truth and another, between Scripture and reason, a Christian, in earnest about "right and light," will not challenge a Jew to a controversy, but conjointly, with him, seek to discover the groundlessness of the discrepancy. Both their causes are concerned in it. Whatever else they have to settle between themselves may be deferred to another time. For the present, they must use their joint endeavours to avert the danger, and either discover the false conclusion, or show that it was nothing but a paradox which frightened them.

Thus I might now elude the snare, without engaging in any farther discussion with the "Searcher." But what would the subterfuge avail me? His compeer, Mr. Moerschel, although he

does not know me personally, has seen too deep in my cards. He thinks he has discovered in the criticised preface certain marks and characteristics, by which he feels himself perfectly warranted to pronounce me as wide from the religion in which I was born and educated, as I am from the one which has been transmitted to him by his own forefathers. As a proof of this his supposition, (besides referring me to the first paragraph of my preface), he quotes from it the following passage, verbatim: "The doors of the house of rational devotion," &c. &c.* One sees that, according to Mr. Moerschel's opinion, no believer in Revelation would so openly plead in favour of the toleration of Theists, or speak so loudly of immutable truths, taught by religion; and that a true Christian or Jew ought to pause before he calls his place of worship "the house of rational devotion." I certainly do not know what has led him to those thoughts; yet they constitute the whole superstratum of his supposition, and move him, as he expresses himself, (vol. i. p. 145,) not to invite me to embrace his own religion, or to refute it, but to intreat me, in the name and for the sake of all who revere truth, to speak resolutely and definitively of that which is, and always will be, of the first and most vital im-

* Vol. i. p. 109.

portance to the reflecting and conscientious of all religions. It is not, indeed, as he declares, his intention to make a convert of me; nor would he be the instigator of arguments and objections to the religion from which he derives genuine happiness in this life, and also expects eternal felicity in the next; and heaven knows what else the good man wants, and what he does not want. This, therefore, is to set the kind-hearted gentleman's mind at ease. I never openly controverted the Christian religion, nor will I ever engage in a controversy with any one of its sincere followers. And lest it should be again said of me, that by that declaration, I mean, as it were, to give to understand that I am very well provided with formidable weapons, wherewithal to combat that religion, if I were so inclined; might not the Jews be in possession of secret traditions, of records now become scarce and unknown, whereby historical facts would be made to appear in a light different from that in which they are represented to Christians? and more such like insinuations, which we have been thought capable of, or which were imputed to us?[23] In order then, once for all to remove all suspicions of that kind, I herewith affirm, before the public, that I have, at least, nothing new to bring forward against the faith of the Christians; that, for ought I know, we are

acquainted with no other accounts of the historical facts, and can produce no other records than those which are universally known; that I, on my part, have nothing to advance that has not been said and repeated innumerable times, by Jews and Theists, and answered over and over again by the other party. Methinks, in so many ages, and particularly in this *writative* age of ours, replies and rejoinders more than enow have been put in, in this suit. As the parties have nothing fresh to adduce, it is time the depositions were closed. He who has eyes, let him see; and he who has sense, let him examine, and live according to his convictions. What is the use of champions standing by the roadside, and offering battle to every passer-by? Discussing a matter too much does not render it any clearer, but, on the contrary, only obscures what faint glimmer of truth there may be in it. You have only to speak, write, or dispute frequently and much, for or against a proposition, be it of whatever nature it may, and rest assured, it will lose more and more of its evidence. Mr. M. need not, therefore, be under any apprehension. Through me, he certainly shall not become an occasioner of exceptions to a religion, to which so many of my fellow-creatures look for content in this life, and for unbounded felicity in the next.

I must, however, do justice to his penetrating eye. He is, partly, not wrong in his observations. It is true, *I acknowledge no immutable truths, but such as not only may be made conceivable to the human understanding, but as also admit of being demonstrated and warranted by human faculties.* There only he is misled by an erroneous notion of Judaism, when he supposes that I cannot maintain this without deviating from the religion of my forefathers. On the contrary, this is just what I hold an essential point of the Jewish religion; and I think that this doctrine forms a characteristic difference between it and the Christian. To express it in one word, I believe that Judaism knows nothing of a revealed religion, in the sense in which it is taken by Christians. The Israelites have a divine legislation: laws, judgments, statutes, rules of life, information of the will of God, and lessons how to conduct themselves in order to attain both temporal and spiritual happiness: those laws, commandments, &c., were revealed to them through Moses, in a miraculous and supernatural manner; but no dogmas, no saving truths, no general self-evident positions. Those the Lord always reveals to us, the same as to the rest of mankind, by *nature and by events;* but never in *words* or *written characters.*

I fear this will appear strange, and again be

found new and hard by many readers. This distinction has always been little minded. Supernatural legislation has been taken for supernatural revelation; and Judaism was considered nothing but a sort of earlier revelation of religious propositions and tenets, necessary for the salvation of man. I shall, therefore, be obliged to explain myself somewhat largely; and lest I should be misunderstood, I will ascend to prior ideas; in order that I may set out from the same station with my readers, and keep pace with them.

We call such truths *immutable* or *eternal* as are not subject to time, but continue the same to all eternity. They are either *necessary*, immutable in and of themselves, or *casual;* that is, their perpetuity is founded either on their nature, they are true so and not otherwise, because they are cogitable so and not otherwise, or on their *reality;* they are generally true, they are so and not other wise, because they became real so and not otherwise; because of all the possible truths of their kind they are the *best* so and not otherwise. In other words: necessary as well casual truths flow from a common source, from the fountain-head of all truth; the former from *reason,* the latter from the *will of God.* The propositions of necessary truths are true, because God *conceives* them so, and no otherwise; and those of casual truths are

true, because God deemed them good, and considered them to be in conformity with his wisdom so and not otherwise. The propositions of pure mathematics and logic are examples of the former kind; the general propositions of natural philosophy, pneumatology, and the laws of nature, by which the universe, the material and spiritual worlds are governed, are examples of the latter. The former are immutable even to Omnipotence, because God himself cannot make his infinite wisdom mutable; the latter, on the contrary, are subordinate to the will of God, and are immutable only so far as it pleases his holy will; that is, so far as they answer his purposes. His Omnipotence might introduce other laws instead of them; and may let exceptions take place, whenever they are of utility.

Besides those eternal truths, there also *temporal* or *historical truths;* things, which did occur at one time, and, perhaps, will never occur again. Propositions, which, through a confluence of causes and effects, have become true in one point of space and time, and which, therefore, can be conceived as true in respect to that point of space and time only. All historical truths, in their widest extent, are of that kind. Things of remote ages, which did once take place, and are narrated to us, but which we ourselves can never observe.

Those classes of truths and propositions differ no less in their nature than in respect to their means of evidence; that is, the mode and process by which men convince themselves and others of them. The doctrines of the first class, or that of necessary truths, are founded on *reason*, that is, on an unalterable coherency, and real connexion of ideas, in virtue of which they either presuppose or exclude one another. All mathematical and logical demonstrations are of that kind. They all show the possibility or impossibility of associating certain ideas in the mind. He who would instruct his fellow-men in them, must not recommend them to his belief, but, as it were, force them on his understanding: he must not cite authorities, and appeal to the trustworthiness of men, who maintained exactly the same thing, but he must analyse the ideas in all their distinguishing characteristics, and continue to hold them up to his pupil, one by one, until his internal sense perceives their junctures and connexion. The instruction, which we may give others, in this, consists—as Socrates very justly observes—in a kind of midwifery. We cannot put any thing into their mind, which it does not actually contain already; but we may facilitate the labour it would cost them to bring to light what is hidden; that is, to render the unperceived perceivable and obvious.

The truths of the second class require, besides reason, observation as well. If we would know the laws which the Creator has prescribed to his creation, and by what general rules the mutations therein take place, we must experience, observe, and make experiments on single cases; that is, we must, in the first place, make use of the evidence of the senses; and next, educe by means of reason, out of sundry single cases, what they have in common. In doing so, we shall indeed be obliged to trust in many things, to the faith and credit of others. Our natural life does not last long enough for us to experience every thing ourselves; and we are, in many cases, necessitated to rely on credible fellow-men; and to suppose the correctness of their experience, and of the experiments they pretend to have made. But we confide in them only so far as we know, and are certain that the objects themselves still exist, and that the experiments and observations may be repeated thereon, and put to the test, by ourselves, or by those who have the opportunity and the requisite skill. Nay, when the result becomes of importance, and has a material influence on our own happiness, or on that of others, we are far less satisfied with the report of even the most creditable witnesses, who state to us their observations and experiments; but we seek an opportunity to repeat them ourselves, and to become convinced of

them by their internal evidence. Thus, for instance, the Siamese may by all means believe the Europeans, when they tell them that, in their own climate, at certain seasons of the year, water becomes solid and capable of bearing heavy loads. They may take their word for it, and even go so far as to insert it in their text-books of natural philosopy as a decided fact, on the supposition that the thing may yet be tried and ascertained. But let there be risk of life in the case; let them be desired to trust themselves or those belonging to them to the congealed element, they would not be by far so confident in the testimony of others, but first seek to convince themselves of its truth, by various observations, experiments, and trials of their own.

Historical truths, on the contrary, or those passages which, as it were, occur but once in the book of nature, must either explain themselves, or remain unintelligible; that is, they can be observed by means of the senses, only by those who are present at the time when, and at the place where they happened; every one else can only take them on authority and testimonials, while those who live at a subsequent period must absolutely depend on the authenticity of the testimonials. For the thing testified of, does no longer exist. The object itself, and the direct inspection thereof, to which perhaps an appeal would be

made, are no longer found in nature. The senses cannot convince themselves of the truth. In historical matters, the narrator's reputation and his credibility constitute the only evidence. We cannot be persuaded of any historical truth, unless by testimony. Were it not for authority, the truth of history would vanish along with the events themselves.

Now, whenever it suits with God's design, that mankind shall be satisfied of any truth, his wisdom also affords them the aptest means to arrive at it. If it be a necessary truth, it grants them the degree of judgment which it requires. If a law of nature is to be promulgated to them, it inspires them with the spirit of observation; and if a fact is to be preserved to posterity, it confirms its historical certainty, and places the narrator's credibility beyond all question. I should think that, in respect to historical truths only, it was consistent with the dignity of Supreme Wisdom to instruct mankind in a human manner; that is, by means of words and writings; and to let miracles and extraordinary things take place in nature, when they were required as evidence of authority and credibility. But the eternal truths, so far as they are of use for the welfare and happiness of man, on the contrary, God teaches in a manner more to suit the Godhead; not by words or

written characters, which may be intelligible, here and there, to this or to that man; but by creation itself, and its internal relations, which are legible and intelligible every where, and to all men. Nor does he certify them by signs and miracles, which effect only historical belief; but he stirs the mind created by him, and affords it an opportunity to observe those relations of things, to observe its own self, and to become persuaded of the truths of which it is destined to acquire a knowledge here on earth.[24]

I, therefore, do not believe, that the resources of human reason are inadequate to the persuading of mankind of the eternal truths requisite for their happiness; and that God had need to reveal them to them in a preternatural manner. They who maintain this, deny the omnipotence or the goodness of God in another way, that, which, in one way, they imagine they are attributing to his goodness. He was, in their opinion, good enough to reveal to mankind the truths on which their happiness depends; but he was neither omnipotent nor good enough to grant to them the faculties of discovering them themselves. Besides, by this assertion, they make the necessity of a supernatural revelation, more universal than revelation itself. For if without revelation, the human race cannot but be depraved and miserable, why have by far the

greater portion thereof, been living without true revelation from the beginning, or why must both the Indies wait until the Europeans are pleased to send them some comforters, to bring them tidings, without which they can, in the latter's opinion, live neither virtuously nor happily, tidings, which, in their situation, and with their fund of intelligence, they can neither rightly comprehend, nor properly avail themselves of?

According to the notions of true Judaism, all the inhabitants of the earth are called to happiness; and the means thereof are as extensive as the human race itself; as liberally dispensed as the means of preventing hunger and other natural wants. Here, man is left to rude nature, which internally feels its powers and uses them, without being able to express himself in words and discourse, otherwise than defectively, and, as it were, stammering; there aided, by science and art, and brightly shining in words, figures and similes, whereby the perceptions of the inward sense are transformed into, and exhibited in a distinct system of symbols.

Whenever it was of use, Providence caused wise men to rise up amongst all nations, and bestowed on them the gift of clear-sightedness around and within themselves, in the works of God, and that of imparting their knowledge to others. But that is

neither required, nor of any great utility at all times. Very frequently, as the Psalmist says, "The lisping of babes and sucklings is sufficient to shame the enemy." Man living in simplicity, has not yet artfully contrived the exceptions so puzzling to a sophist. With him the word "Nature," or the mere sound of it, has not become a being that wants to supersede the Godhead; he even knows yet little of the difference between direct and indirect agency; but he hears and sees the all-vivifying power of God everywhere, in every rising sun, in every fall of rain, in every blowing flower, and in every lamb that pastures on the meadow, and cherishes life. There is something not altogether correct in this representation; nevertheless it directly leads to the knowledge of an invisible and almighty being, whom we have to thank for all the blessings we enjoy. But when an Epicurus, a Helvetius, or a Hume criticise the defects of that representation, and—which is excusable in human nature—extravagate on the opposite side, and want to carry on a juggling game with the word "Nature;"[25] Providence again raises up amongst the people, men, who separate prejudice from truth, who correct extremes on either side, and shew that truth will endure although prejudice be rejected. In the main, the material is still the same; here, with all the native and

vigorous sap with which nature provided it; there with the refined savour of art; of lighter digestion, it is true; but for valetudinarians only. The doings and forbearings of mankind and the morality of their conduct, may, perhaps, expect as good a result of that crude and plain representation, as of those refined and purer ideas. Many a people is destined by Providence to wander through that circle of ideas, nay, sometimes, to go round it more than once; but, perhaps, at those multifarious epochs, the quantity and measure of its morality will have been upon the whole about the same.

I, for my own part, have no conception of a "training of the whole human race," such as my late friend Lessing[26] himself let some historiographer of mankind put into his head. They imagine to themselves, the thing "human race," as a single individual, and think, Providence has put it here on earth, as it were, in a school, to be trained from an infant to an adult. In the main, the human race (if the metaphor will hold good) is, in almost every age, infant, adult, and greybeard at once, only in different places and regions. Here, in the cradle, sucking the breast, and living on cream and milk; there, in manly armour and eating the flesh of oxen; and again in another place, tottering on a staff, and toothless once more. Progress is for individual man, who is destined by Providence

to pass a portion of his eternity here on earth. Every one goes his own way through life. One's route leads him over flowers and meadows; another's across desert plains, over steep mountains or by the side of dangerous precipices. Yet they all get on on the journey, pursuing the road to happiness, to which they are destined. But that the bulk, or the whole human race here on earth, should be constantly moving forward in progress of time, and perfectioning itself, seems to me not to have been the design of Providence. It is, at least, not so decided, nor by far so necessary for the vindication of Providence, as some are wont to think.

That we should for ever spurn theories and hypotheses, talk of facts, want to hear of nothing but facts, and yet look least for facts, where facts are most wanted! Do you want to divine the design of Providence with man? Then forge no hypotheses; look only around you at what actually does pass—and if you can take a general view of the history of all ages—at what has passed from the beginning. That *is* fact; that must have belonged to the design; that must have been approved of in the plan of Wisdom, or at least have been admitted in it. Providence never misses its aim. That which actually happens, must have been its design from the beginning, or have belonged to it.

Now, in respect to the human race at large, you do not perceive a constant progress of improvement, that looks as if approaching nearer and nearer to perfection. On the contrary, we see the human race, as a whole, subject to slight side swings; and it never yet made some steps forward, but what it did, soon after, slide back again into its previous station, with double the celerity. Most nations of the earth pass many ages in the same degree of civilization, in the same crepusculous light, which appears much too dim to our spoiled eyes. Now and then, a particle of the grand mass will kindle, become a bright star, and run through an orbit, which, now after a longer, now after a shorter period, brings it back again to its stand still, or sets it down at no great distance from it. Man goes on; but mankind is constantly swinging to and fro, within fixed boundaries; but, considered as a whole, retains, at all periods of time, about the same degree of morality, the same quantity of religion and irreligion, of virtue and vice, of happiness and misery; the same result, when the same is taken into account against the same; of all the good and evil as much as was required for the transit of individual man, in order that they might be trained here on earth, and approach as near to perfection as was allotted and appointed to every one of them.

I now come home again to my previous observation. Judaism boasts of no *exclusive* revelation of immutable truths indispensable to salvation; of no revealed religion in the sense in which that term is usually taken. Revealed *religion* is one thing, revealed *legislation* is another. The voice which was heard on *Sinai*, on that memorable day, did not say, "I am the Lord, thy God, the eternal, self-existing Being, omnipotent and omniscient, who rewards men, in a future life, according to their works." All this is the *universal religion of mankind*, and not Judaism. And it was not the universal religion of mankind, without which they can be neither virtuous nor saved, that was to be revealed there. In the main, it could not; for whom were the voice of thunder, and the sound of trumpets to convince of those eternal tenets of salvation? Surely, not the animal man, to whom his own reflections had never yet suggested the existence of an invisible Being, that rules and governs this visible world; him the marvellous voice would not have inspired with ideas, and, therefore, could not have convinced. Still less would it have convinced the sophist, about whose ears so many doubts and cavils are buzzing that he is no longer able to discriminate the voice of sound common sense. *Logical demonstration* is what he demands; no miracles. And if, for the

sake of confirming an *immutable truth*, the founder of a religion raise up from the earth all the dead that ever walked on it, still a sceptic would say: the teacher has raised many dead, it is true, but about the immutable truth I am no wiser than before. Now I know that some one is able to do, and to cause to be heard, extraordinary things; but there may be several such beings, who may not think proper to reveal themselves just now: besides, how very short does all this fall of the infinitely sublime idea of an *only eternal* Godhead, who rules this universe after his own unlimited will, and sees into the most secret thoughts of men, to reward their works, according to their merits, if not always here, still hereafter! He, who knew nothing about this, who was not penetrated with the truths so indispensable to human happiness, and thus unprepared went up to the holy Mount, him the stupendous and wonderful array might stun and awe, but not teach him better. No; all that was supposed to be already known, or, perhaps, was taught and explained by human reasoning, and placed beyond all doubt, during the days of preparation. And now the divine voice called out, "*I am the Lord thy God, who led thee out of the land of Egypt; who delivered thee from bondage, &c.*" An historical fact, on which the legislation of that *particular people* was to be founded, since

laws were to be revealed there; commandments, judgments, but no immutable theological truths. "I am the Lord, thy God, who made a covenant with thy forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and swore to them to form out of their seed a nation of my own. The time has, at last, arrived, when that promise is to be fulfilled. For that purpose I delivered you from the bondage of the Egyptians. I delivered you thence, amidst unheard-of miracles and signs. I am your deliverer, your chief, and king; I make a covenant even with you, and give you laws, after which ye shall live, and become a happy nation, in the land which I shall put ye in possession of." All these are historical truths, from their nature, resting on historical evidence, which *must* be attested by authority, and *may* be corroborated by miracles.

According to Judaism, miracles and extraordinary signs are no evidence either for or against *immutable self-evident truths.* Hence Scripture itself directs, that if a prophet teach or counsel things which are contrary to decided truths, we are not to hearken to him, even if he confirm his legation by miracles; nay, if he seek to entice to idolatry, we are to put the wonder-doer to death. For miracles can only attest depositions, support authorities, and confirm the credibility of witnesses; but all depositions and authorities together cannot

subvert a decidedly self-evident truth, nor yet place a questionable one above doubt and suspicion.

Now, although that divine book, which we have received through Moses, is supposed to be properly a code of Law, and to contain judgments, rules of life, and precepts; yet it is well known to include withal an inscrutable treasure of self-evident truths and theological dogmas, which are so identified with the laws as to form but one whole with them. All the laws are referable to or are founded on immutable self-evident truths, or put one in mind of, and cause one to ponder on them: hence our Rabbins justly observe, that the laws and dogmas stand in the same relation to each other as the body does to the soul. I shall have occasion to say more about this further on, and here content myself with presupposing it as a fact, of which every one may convince himself who looks for that purpose into even any translation of the books of Moses. Many ages of experience also teach that this divine code of law has become a source of information to mankind, at which they draw new ideas, or amend the old. The more you search therein, the more you are amazed at the depth of knowledge hid in it. At a first view, truth, indeed, presents itself in it, in the plainest garb imaginable, and almost without

any pretensions whatsoever. But the nearer you approach, the chaster, the more innocent, affectionate, and wishful the look with which you are gazing at her, the more she will unfold to you of her divine beauty, over which she throws a thin gauze, that it may not be profaned by vulgar and unholy eyes. All those excellent theorems are, nevertheless, presented to knowledge and proposed for meditation, without being forced upon belief. There is not, amongst all the precepts and tenets of the Mosaic law, a single one which says, "Thou shalt believe this," or "Thou shalt not believe it;" but they all say, "Thou shalt do," or "Thou shalt forbear." There, faith is not commanded; for that takes no commands, but what get to it by the road of conviction. All the commandments of the Mosaic law are addressed to the will of man, and to his acting faculty. Nay, the word in the original language, which they are wont to translate "to believe," in most cases, properly means "to trust in," "to rely on," "to have full confidence in what is promised or caused to be expected." "Abraham trusted the Lord, and it was counted to him for piety." (Gen. xv. 6.) "The Israelites saw, and had confidence in the Lord, and in his servant, Moses." (Exod. xiv. 31.) Wherever the question is of eternal self-evident truth, there is nothing

said of believing, but *understanding* and *knowing*. "Know, therefore, this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God, in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else." (Deut. iv. 39.) "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is a unity." (Deut. iv. 4.) In no place is it said, "Believe, O Israel, and thou shalt be blessed; forbear doubting, O Israel, or this or that punishment shall betide thee." Commandments and prohibitions, rewards and punishments, are for actions only, for life and morals, all which depend on man's will and pleasure; and are governed by notions of good and evil, and, therefore, also by hope and fear. Belief and doubt, assent and dissent, on the contrary, are not to be regulated by our volition; not by wishes and desires; not by fear and hope, but by our discernment of truth or untruth.

For this reason, too, ancient Judaism has no symbolical books, no *articles of faith*. No one needed be sworn to symbols; to subscribe to articles of faith. Nay, we have not as much as a conception of what is called *oaths of creed;* and, according to the spirit of true Judaism, must hold them inadmissible. It was Maimonides[27] who first conceived the thought of limiting the religion of his forefathers to a certain number of principles: "in order," says he, "that religion, like all

sciences, may have its fundamental ideas, from which all the rest is deduced." In this merely casual thought originated the thirteen articles of the Jewish Catechism, to which we are indebted for the beautiful morning-hymn, *Yigdal,* and some good writings by Chisdai, Albo, and Abarbanel. And these are all the consequences they have been attended with hitherto. Into religious fetters, thank God! they have never yet been forged. Chisdai disputes them, and proposes alterations; while Albo diminishes them, and will allow no more than three, which tolerably well agree with those suggested by Lord Herbert of Cherbury, for the catechism, in later times; and still others, particularly Lorja and his disciples, the modern Cabalists, will not admit at all of any fixed number of fundamental tenets, but say, "In our doctrine everything is fundamental." However, that dispute was carried on, as all such disputes should, with earnestness and zeal, but without rancour or asperity; and notwithstanding Maimonides's thirteen articles were adopted by the majority of the nation, no one, as far as I know, has ever declared Albo a heretic, for his attempt to limit them, and lead them back to far more general axioms. In this matter, we have not disregarded the important judgment of our sages, viz. "Although one loosens, and the other binds,

they are both teaching the word of the living God."*

In the main, here, every thing depends even on the difference between *believing* and *knowing;* between theological *dogmas* and religious *commandments*. All human knowledge may certainly be limited to a few fundamental ideas, which are laid down as a basis. The fewer there are, the more solid the building will be. But laws admit of no abridgement. In them every thing is fundamental; and so far we may, on good grounds, say, to us all the words of Scripture, all God's commandments and prohibitions are fundamental. If, nevertheless, you wish to have the quintessence of them, mark how that eminent teacher of the nation, Hillel the elder, who lived before the destruction of the second temple, took himself in the matter. "Rabbi," said a Pagan to him, "wilt thou teach me the whole law while I am standing on one leg?" Samai, to whom he had made the same proposal before, dismissed him

* I have known many a pedant to quote that apophthegm, to prove that the talmudical Rabbis pay no regard to the rule of contradiction. I wish I may live to see the day when all the nations of the earth shall admit that exception to the general rule of contradiction:—"The fast of the fourth month, and the fast of the fifth, and the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth, shall be to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; only love truth, and peace." (Zech. viii. 19.)

with contempt; but Hillel, celebrated for his imperturbable temper, and his mildness, said, "Son, love thy neighbour like thyself. This is the text of the law; all the rest is commentary. Now go thy ways, and study."

I have now sketched the outlines of the ground plan of ancient original Judaism, such as I conceive it to be: systems and laws, persuasions and actions. The former were not bound to words or written symbols, which were to continue always the same, for all men, for all ages, all periods, amidst all the changes of language, manners, modes and relations of life, which were always to offer us the same inflexible forms, into which we cannot force our ideas without mutilating them. They were intrusted to living, intellectual instruction, which may keep pace with all the changes of times and circumstances, and be altered according to a pupil's exigencies, and suited to his abilities and powers of comprehension. It was both the written book of the law, and the ceremonial duties which a follower of Judaism had constantly to discharge, that occasioned that paternal mode of teaching. In the beginning, it was expressly forbidden to write more on the law than God had caused Moses to signify to the nation. "What has been delivered to thee orally," say the Rabbins, "thou art not permitted

to put down in writing." And though writing on the law had become alsolutely necessary, in the sequel, it was with extreme reluctance that the heads of the synagogue determined on consenting to it. They called that licence, the destruction of the law; and said with the Psalmist, "There is a time when we must make a law void for the sake of the Lord." (Ps. cxix. 126.)[28] But according to the original polity, it was not to be so. The ceremonial law itself is a kind of living writing, which rouses the mind and the heart: it is full of meaning; it never ceases to excite meditation, and constantly gives inducement and opportunity for oral instruction. What the pupils themselves did, from morning till night, and what they saw others do, was a direction to religious dogmas and persuasions it impelled them to follow their teacher's footsteps, to watch them, mark all their actions, and gather the information of which their talents rendered them capable, and their condnct made them deserving. The diffusion of writings and books which have been multiplied to infinity, in our days, through the invention of the printing press, has entirely transformed man. The great revolution thereby wrought in the whole system of human knowledge and persuasions has, indeed, in one respect, (for which we cannot be too thankful, to beneficent Providence) been of a

profitable result to the refinement of our race. Still, like every other acquisition which man may make here below, it has, withal, been productive of many evils, which must be attributed partly to its abuse, partly to the necessary conditions of human nature. We teach and instruct one another by writings only; we learn to know nature and man out of writings only; we toil and repose over, edify and amuse ourselves with writings only. The minister does not entertain his congregation; he only reads or declaims to them a written treatise. The professor rehearses, from the chair, his written quire. Dead letter all; spirit of living conversation none. We are affectionate in letters, and chide in letters; we quarrel in letters, and make it up in letters. Our whole intercourse is epistolary; and when we come together, we know of no other entertainment than a game, or *reading* to one another!

Hence it came, that man has almost lost his value with his fellow-man. Conversation with a sage is no longer sought after; for we find his wisdom in books. All we do is, we encourage him to write, when, perhaps, we fancy he has not consigned enough to the press already. Hoary age has lost its venerableness; for beardless youth knows more out of books than the former from experience. Whether the youth understands it

rightly or not, does not matter; he knows it, and that is enough; he has it at his tongue's end, and will put it off with greater assurance than the honest greybeard, who, perhaps, has a readier command of ideas than of words. We can no longer conceive that the prophet should think it so shocking an evil, "that the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient" (Isaiah iii. 5); or that a certain Grecian should predict the downfall of the state, because some petulant young men were making a laughing-stock of an old man at a public assembly. We do not want the man of knowledge and experience; we only want his writings. In a word, we are proper men of letters.* Our entire existence depends on letters: and we scarcely can imagine that a mortal can cultivate or perfection himself without the help of a book.

It was not so in the hoary ages of yore. If it cannot just be said that it was better, it certainly was different. They drew at other sources; they gathered and preserved in other vessels: and what they had thus preserved they distributed singly by quite other means. Man was then more necessary to man; doctrine was more intimately connected with the conduct of life, and so was

* *Buchstaben-menschen.*

observance with practice. The uninformed had to closely follow the informed; the disciple, his teacher, to seek his conversation, watch, and, as it were, sound him, in order to gratify his thirst of knowledge. That I may the more plainly show what influence that circumstance had on religion and morality, I must once more be allowed to digress from my road, into which, however, I shall soon turn again. My subject-matter borders on so many others, that I cannot always march on without now and then getting into a by-path.

Methinks, the changes that have taken place in writing characters, at sundry periods of civilization, have had, from the beginning, a very considerable share in the revolutions of human knowledge in general, and in the various modifications of men's ideas and opinions about religious matters, in particular: and if they did not produce those revolutions all itself, they, at least, in a great measure co-operated in them with collateral circumstances. Man scarcely ceases being satisfied with the first impressions of the external senses (and what man can let it rest there long?) he scarcely feels the spur entering his intellect, to form to himself ideas out of those impressions, but he sees the necessity of tacking those ideas to visible characters; not only for the sake of communicating them to others, but also to keep fast hold of them himself, and

be able to mind them again as often as may be required. The first step in separating general characteristics, he will make shift, nay, be obliged, to do without characters; for all new abstract ideas must still be formed without characters, and then only have names given them. The common characteristic is, in the first place, by force of attention, to be brought out on the tissue with which it is interwoven, in order to make it conspicuous. What is of great assistance in this is, on the one part, the objective force of the impression, which that characteristic has the power of making upon us; and, on our own part, the subjective interest we take in it. But this bringing out and minding the common characteristic costs the intellect some exertion. The light which attention concentrated on that point of the object soon vanishes again, and becomes lost in the shadow of the mass of which it forms a part. When that exertion requires to be continued for some time, or too frequently repeated, the intellect is unable to get on much further; it has begun to separate, but it cannot think. What help is there for it? Wise Providence has placed within its immediate reach means of which it may avail itself at any time; namely, it tacks, either by a natural or arbitrary association of ideas, the abstracted characteristic to a visible character, which, as often as its own impression

is renewed, instantaneously reproduces that characteristic, pure and unmixed, and throws light upon it. In this manner, we know, originated all human languages, composed of natural and arbitrary characters; without which languages man would have but little whereby to distinguish him from an irrational animal; since he can remove scarcely a step from sense without the help of characters.

In the same manner, as the first steps to intellectual knowledge must have been taken, the sciences are enlarged and enriched with inventions even now; and thus, at times, the invention of a new word is of the utmost importance to them. He who first invented the word "Nature," does not seem to have made a particularly great discovery: still it was him, whom his contemporaries had to thank for being able to shame the juggler, who exhibited to them an appearance in the air, and tell him that there was nothing supernatural in his trick, but that it was only an effect of nature. Suppose they had yet no clear conception of the properties of refracted rays, and of the manner in which, by means of them, a figure may be produced in the air (and how far does our own knowledge of them extend, even at this time? Scarcely one step further. For we are as yet but little acquainted with the nature of light, and its component parts), they knew, at least, how to

refer a single appearance to a general law of nature, and were not under the necessity of attributing every contrivance to a specific spontaneous cause. So it was also with the discovery that air possesses gravity. Although we are not able to account for gravity itself, we know, at least, to reduce to the general law of gravity, the observation that fluids will rise in air-void tubes, in which at a first view, they should be supposed rather to sink. We may render it conceivable how a rising was effected, in this case, by the general sinking, which we cannot explain; and even that is another step in knowledge. Accordingly, not every word in the sciences is to be, at once, pronounced an empty sound, because it is not derivable from elementary ideas. If it denote the properties of things, to their true extent, it is all that is wanted. There would have been no fault to find with the term "*fuga vacui*," had it not been more general than the observation itself. It was found, that there are instances where nature is in no such great haste to replenish the void; the expression was, therefore, not to be rejected as empty, but as incorrect. Thus the terms "cohesion of bodies," and "general gravitation," still continue to be of great importance in the sciences; although we do not yet know how to derive them from fundamental ideas.

Previous to Baron Von Haller's discovery of the law of Brownianism,* how many an observer must not have perceived the phenomenon itself in the organic nature of living creatures. But it vanished again at the very first moment, and did not distinguish itself enough from collateral appearances to arrest the observer's attention. Whenever the observation re-occurred, it seemed to him a single effect of nature, which could not remind him of the number of cases in which he had noticed the same thing before. It, therefore, got lost again soon, like the former, and made no lasting impression on his memory. Haller alone succeeded in raising that circumstance out of its connexion, by perceiving its generality, and marking it with a word; since which it has excited our attention, and we know how to refer to a general law of nature every single case in which we notice something analogous.

Thus the marking of ideas is doubly necessary: it is necessary for ourselves, as it were, as a receptacle, in which to preserve them, and keep them near at hand for use; and, next, to enable us to communicate our thoughts to others. Now,

* *Gesetz der Reitzbarkeit.* Should this term have been wrongly translated, my ignorance of physiology must be my excuse.—Ed.

in the latter consideration, sounds or audible signs are the more preferable; for when we want to communicate our thoughts to others, the ideas are already present in the mind, and we may, as occasion requires, bring forth the sounds by which they are denoted, and thus become distinctly apprehensible to our fellow-creatures. But in consideration of ourselves they are not so. If we wish to be able to resuscitate abstract ideas in the mind, and bring them to our recollection at any future time by means of signs, the signs must be forthcoming of themselves, and not wait until they are summoned by our will and pleasure, inasmuch as this our will and pleasure presupposes the ideas, which we want to recall to our memory. This is an advantage we derive from visible signs, because they are permanent, and do not require to be brought forth anew on every occasion, in order to make an impression.

The first visible signs which men made use of to stamp their abstract ideas withal, probably were the things themselves; namely, as every thing in nature has a character of its own, whereby it distinguishes itself from all others, so the sensible impression which that thing makes on us, draws our attention, principally, to that distinctive character, awakes the idea of it, and therefore, very conveniently serves to denote it. Thus, the lion

may have become a sign of prowess, the dog of fidelity, the peacock of proud beauty; and thus the first physicians carried about them live serpents, to denote that they possessed the art of rendering the noxious harmless.

In course of time, it may have been found more handy to take the figures of the things, either in solid substances or on surfaces, instead of the things themselves; next, and for conciseness' sake, to make use of the outlines; then to let only a part of the outlines stand for the whole, and finally, to compose of several heterogeneous parts, a grotesque whole, still *full of meaning;* and that method of denoting, is what we call *hieroglyphics.*

All this, we see, may have developed itself naturally enough. But the passage from hieroglyphics to our alphabetical characters, that passage seems a leap, and the leap seems to have required more than ordinary human powers.

There is positively no ground for asserting, as some do, that our alphabet consists only of signs of sounds, and that it can no otherwise be applied to things or ideas, but by means of sounds. Writing certainly will remind us, who have a more lively conception of audible signs, of distinct words first: our road from writing to things, therefore, lies in, and through speech; but not necessarily so. To one born deaf, writing is the immediate

notation of things; and if ever he recover his hearing, the alphabetical characters will, in the first days, most certainly bring first to his mind, the things immediately connected with them; and then only by means of those very things, the sounds which answer them. The difficulty of passing to our writing, I imagine to consist properly in this; that without any preliminary or inducement, they must have come to the well-considered determination of representing by a small number of elementary signs, and by every possible transposition of them, a multitude of ideas, which, at first sight, would seem, neither to admit of being brought under one view, nor of being arranged in classes, the better to compass them.

There too, however, the process of the understanding has not been altogether without guidance. As they had very oft occasion to change writing for speech, and speech for writing, they might very soon observe that in colloquial language, the self-same sounds frequently return, as do the self-same parts, in some of the hieroglyphic figures; though always in different combinations, whereby their meanings are multiplied. At last, they will have become aware, that the sounds which man is able to put forth and render distinct, are not so infinite in number, as the things which are denoted by them; and that the system of distinct sounds

easily admits of being encompassed, and divided in classes. Accordingly, some imperfect experiments of such division, might be made in the beginning, improved and perfectioned in course of time, and a hieroglyphic character that answered it appropriated to each class. And even then, it will always remain one of the most glorious discoveries made by the human intellect. But, at least, one sees how men could be led, without any flight of invention, but step by step, on the idea of measuring immensity; of, as it were, comparting the starry firmament in figures, and assigning to each single star its station, without even knowing their exact number.[29] Of the audible signs, I think it must have been easier to discover the trace, which they had only to follow, to perceive the figures into which the immense host of human ideas admit of being formed; and then it was no longer so difficult to apply them to writing, to arrange that, too, and divide it into classes. Hence, I suppose, that a people deaf-born, would comparatively have more to exert their inventive powers, in passing from hieroglyphics to alphabetical writing; because in written characters it is not quite so easily seen, that they have an imaginable compass, and admit of being divided into classes.

When speaking of the elements of audible languages, I make use of the word "classes;" for in

our living and cultivated languages, written characters are not as yet by far so multifarious as speech, and the same letter is differently read and pronounced, in different combinations and positions. Yet it is evident that we have made our colloquial language all the more monotonous, by the frequent use of writing; and, according to the directions and exigencies of writing, also the more elementary. Hence the languages of nations, who know nothing of writing are by far more copious and fertile; and many sounds in them so indeterminate, that we are not able to denote them by our own characters, otherwise than very imperfectly. They must, therefore, have been obliged in the beginning, to take things concretely, and to denote a great many similar sounds, by one and the same written character. But nicer distinctions may have been observed in course of time, and more characters adopted to denote them by. However, that our alphabet has been borrowed of some kind of hieroglyphic writing, we may see even now, by most of the features and names of the Hebrew letters;* and in them, as is evident from history, originated all other characters known to us. It was a Phœnician, who taught the Greeks the art of writing.

* As א an ox, ב a house, ג a camel, ד a door, ו a hook, ז a sword, כ the fist or a spoon, ל *stimulus*, נ a fish, ס a support or bottom, ע the eye, פ the mouth, ק an ape, ש the teeth.

All those various modifications of writing, and modes of notation, must also have acted differently on the progress and improvement of ideas, opinions, and all descriptions of knowledge; and in one respect, they must have acted in their favor. In astronomy, husbandry, ethics, and divinity, observations, experiments, and speculations were multiplied, propagated, facilitated, and preserved for posterity. These are the cells in which bees collect the honey, and save it for themselves, and for the use of others. But, as it always is with human matters, what Wisdom erects in one place, Folly already pulls down, in another, and, in most cases, avails itself of the very same engines. What was to conduce to the improvement of man's condition, misapprehension on the one hand, and abuse on the other, converted into corruption, and deterioration. What had been simplicity and ignorance, now became seduction and gross error. The multitude were not at all, or only half-instructed in the ideas to be united to those visible signs; they did not look upon the signs as mere signs; but took them for the things themselves. As long as they were making use of the things themselves, of their effigies or emblems instead of the signs, that error was very possible; for besides their signification, the things had their own reality. The coin was, at the same

time, substance; and itself of use and service. The ignorant might therefore be the easier mistaken in —and wrongly appreciate—its value as coin. Hieroglyphic writing would, indeed, partly correct that error, or, at least, was not so favourable to it as the outlines: for these were made up of heterogeneous and incongruous parts, uncouth and preposterous figures, which have no existence of their own in nature, and, one would suppose, could not be taken for writing. But the very mysteriousness and oddness in their composition furnished superstition matter for many a fiction and fable.

Hypocrisy and wilful abuse were busy supplying the multitude with tales, which the latter had not themselves sufficient ingenuity to invent. He who had once acquired power and consequence, was anxious, if not to increase—at least to conserve it. He who had once given a satisfactory answer to a question, did not like to be at fault, ever after. There is no absurdity so gross, no farce so outrageous, to which they will not resort; no fable so frivolous which they will not put off upon simplicity, merely to be ready with a "therefore" for every "wherefore?" The phrase, "I do not know," becomes inexpressibly bitter, when one has once set up for a man of extensive, perhaps of general, knowledge; especially when station, and office, and dignity, seem to demand

we should know. O how must many a one's heart beat, when he is on the point of either losing consequence and consideration, or becoming a traitor to truth; and how few there are who possess the prudence of Socrates, in always replying, at once, "I know nothing," even in things where they are rather more at home than their neighbours, in order that they may save themselves embarassment, and render humiliation the lighter beforehand, if, finally, such an avowal should become unavoidable.

Meanwhile we see how Zoolatry and Iconolatry, how the adoration of idols, and of human beings, how tales and fables could originate in all this. And if I do not give it out as precisely the fountain-head of heathen mythology, still I believe that it has very much contributed to the birth and dissemination of those absurdities. This will, particularly, serve to explain a remark made by Professor Meiners, somewhere in his works. He thinks he has invariably noticed, that amongst primitive nations, (namely, such as wrought their own improvement without being indebted to others for their civilization), Zoolatry has been more in vogue than Antholatry; nay, that inanimate things were adored and worshipped, in preference to human beings. Supposing the remark to be correct, and leaving the philosophical

historian to vouch for the same, I shall try to illustrate it.

Whenever mankind adopt things themselves, their figures or outlines, as signs of ideas, they can select none more convenient or significant to denote moral properties withal than animals. And that, for the reasons which my friend Lessing, in his Treatise on Fables, assigns to Æsop, for making animals the acting personages in his Apologue. Every animal has a definite distinctive character, and shows itself from that side, at first view, as its entire conformation mostly points to this its peculiarity. One animal is agile; another is sharp-sighted; one fierce; another gentle; one faithful, and attached to man; another treacherous and fond of liberty, and so forth. Even inanimate things have something more defined in their exterior than man has: he, at first view, bespeaks nothing, or rather every thing; he possesses all those properties, at least, he is quite destitute of none of them, nor does the more or less show itself at once on the surface. His distinguishing characteristic, therefore, is not conspicuous; and of all things in nature, he is least fit for denoting moral ideas or properties withal.

In the Plastic arts, even now, gods or heroes cannot be identified better than by the animals or inanimate things conjoined with them. Although a

Juno may differ from a Minerva, even in the figure, still they are much easier distinguished by their characteristic animal-accompaniments. Poets, too, when they want to speak of moral qualities in metaphors or allegories, mostly have recourse to the brute creation. The lion, tiger, eagle, bull, fox, dog, bear, worm, dove, are all expressive, and their meaning obvious. Thus, they might, in the beginning, seek to indicate by such emblems, and embody in a visible shape also the attributes of any being that, of all others, appeared to them most worthy of adoration; and in the necessity under which they were of tacking those most abstract of all ideas to visible things, and to such visible things, too, as admitted of fewest significations, they must have been obliged to fix upon animals, or compose certain figures out of several of them. And it has been seen how so innocent a thing, a mere mode of writing, will very soon degenerate in the hands of man, and pass into idolatry.[30] Naturally, therefore, all original idolatry will be found to have consisted of the worship of animals more than of human beings. The latter could not be made use of at all for denoting divine attributes; and their frequent deification must have come from another quarter. Heroes, conquerors, or sages, legislators or prophets, perhaps, arrived amongst them from

happier climes, and so distinguished themselves, and appeared illustrious by their extraordinary talents, that they were adored as messengers of the Deity, if not as the Deity itself. It will, however, be conceived that such is more likely to be the case with nations who are not indebted to themselves for civilization, but to others; since —as the common adage says—a prophet is seldom much esteemed in his own country. And thus Mr. Meiners' remark would be a kind of confirmation of my hypothesis, that the want of writing characters has been the first occasion of idolatry.

This is also the reason that, in judging of the religious notions of a people unknown to us in other respects, we ought to take care not to view every thing with our own home-bred eyes, lest we should call idolatry what, in the main, is nothing but writing. Figure to yourself another *Otaheitan*, neither knowing any thing about the secret of the art of writing, nor having been gradually inured to our ideas, were all at once transplanted from his own part of the world to one of the most unpictorial temples in Europe; and to render the instance the more striking, say, to the temple of Providence. He finds it bare of images and decorations, save, on the further white stuccoed wall, some black lines and dots, which chance

might trace there.* O no; the whole congregation are looking at those lines and dots with reverential awe, and with their hands folded address their petitions to them. Now let him be as suddenly and rapidly conveyed back to *Otaheite*, and there give his inquisitive countrymen an account of the theological notions in vogue at the *D.... Philanthropin.*† Would they not both laugh at, and lament the gross superstition of their fellow-creatures, who had sunk so low as to pay divine adoration to a parcel of black lines and dots on a white wall? Similar mistakes our own travellers may have frequently committed, when describing to us the religions of remote nations. A foreigner must make himself very intimately acquainted with the thoughts and opinions of a people before he can undertake to say that, with them, images still retain the spirit of writing, or that they have already degenerated into idolatry. At the sacking of the Temple of Jerusalem, the invaders found the cherubim in the ark of the covenant, and took them for the idols of the Jews. They saw every thing with barbarian eyes, and in their own point of view. Conformably to their manners, they took an emblem of Divine Pro-

* The words: *God—Omniscient—Almighty—All-beneficent—Rewarder of Virtue.*

† Seminary at Dessau.

vidence, and Sovereign Mercy, for a representation of the Godhead, or for the Godhead itself, and chuckled over their supposed discovery.[31] Thus, even now, readers cannot help smiling at the Indian philosophers, who suppose this universe to be born by elephants, which elephants they place on a huge tortoise, which tortoise is held up by an enormous bear, and which bear stands on a prodigiously large serpent. Perhaps the question never occurred to the good folks; and what does the prodigiously large serpent stand upon?

Now read, in the *Hindoo Shaster* itself, the passage describing an emblem of this kind, which, probably, has given occasion to that tradition. I extract it from the second volume of *Accounts of Bengal, and the Empire of Hindostan, by J. Z. Hollwel,* who got himself instructed in the sacred books of the *Gentoos,* and was able to see with the eyes of a native Bramin. These are the words in the eighth section:—

"*Modu* and *Kytu* [two monsters, *Discord* and *Rebellion*] had been vanquished; and now the Lord emerged from invisibility, and glory environed him on all sides."

"The Lord said: thou *Brama* [creative power] create and form all things of the new creation, with the spirit which I breathe unto thee. And thou, *Vishnu* [preservative power] protect and

preserve the created things and forms, according as I direct thee. And thou, *Sieb* [Destruction—Transformation], transform the things of the new creation, and remodel them, with the power I shall give thee."

"*Brama, Vishnu,* and *Sieb,* heard the words of the Lord, bowed, and showed obedience."

"Thereupon *Brama* floated on the surface of *Johala* [Ocean], and the children of *Modu* and *Kytu* fled and disappeared, as he presented himself."

"When the spirit of *Brama* had caused the commotion of the abysses to subside, *Vishnu* transformed himself to a mighty bear [with the Gentoos an emblem of strength, because it is the strongest of all animals, in proportion to its size], descended into the abysses of *Johala,* and with his tusks, drew forth to light *Murto* (the earth), whereupon there spontaneously sprang out of it a mighty large tortoise [with the Gentoos, an emblem of stability], and a mighty large serpent [their emblem of wisdom], and *Vishnu* erected the earth on the back of the tortoise, and put *Murto* on the head of the serpent, &c."

All this is found amongst them also depicted in figures ; and one sees how easily such emblems and hieroglyphics may lead to errors

The history of mankind, it is well known, has

run through a period of many ages, during which real idolatry had become the prevailing religion, almost over the whole face of the earth. Figures had lost their value as signs. The spirit of truth, which was to be preserved in them, had evaporated, and the insipid vehicles, which remained behind, turned to destructive poison. The notions of the Godhead, which still maintained themselves in the popular religions, were so deformed by superstition, so corrupted by hypocrisy and priestcraft, that it might be questioned, on good grounds, whether Atheism be not less detrimental to human happiness, or ungodliness not less ungodly, than such a religion? Human beings, brute animals, trees, nay, the most hideous, the vilest things in nature, were adored and worshipped as deities, or rather feared as such. For of the Godhead, the national public religions of those days had no other notion than that of a terrible being, superior in power to the inhabitants of the earth, soon put in anger, but difficult to propitiate. To the reproach of both the human understanding and the human heart, superstition would contrive to combine ideas the most incompatible, and admit human sacrifices, and worshipping of animals, at one and the same time. In the most magnificent temples, constructed and embellished according to all the rules of art (shame on reason!—as

Plutarch exclaims)—you looked in vain for the divinity adored there, but found an altar raised before a frightful baboon ; and to that obscene animal blooming youth and virgins were immolated. So deeply idolatry had debased human nature! And as the prophet expresses it, in that emphatical antithesis, "They slaughter human beings, to offer them as sacrifices to brutes!"

Philosophers occasionally tried to check the eneral depravity, to refine and enlighten ideas, either publicly or by secret institutions. They sought to restore to the figures their former significations, or even superadd new ones to them, and, as it were, thereby again breathe a soul into the dead body. But all in vain: their rational interpretations had no effect on the religion of the common people. Eager as uncultivated man seems to be after explanation, as dissatisfied he feels when it is given him in its real simplicity: he soon gets weary of, and spurns what is intelligible to him, and constantly goes in quest of new, mysterious, and inexplicable things, which he catches up with redoubled pleasure. His inquisitiveness must be always upon the stretch, and never gratified. Public speaking, therefore, met with no hearers amongst the majority of the nation; and, on the contrary, with the most obstinate opposition on the part of superstition and

hypocrisy; and received its usual reward, contempt, or hatred, or persecution. The secret institutions and provisions, for the purpose of maintaining, in some measure, the rights of truth, partly themselves took the road of corruption, and became nurseries of all kinds of superstition, of every species of vice, of every description of infamy. A certain school of philosophers conceived the bold thought of keeping human ideas quite apart from every thing figurative, or like it; and tacking them to such writing signs, as, from their nature, cannot possibly be taken for any thing else, namely, to *Numbers*. As numbers represent nothing in themselves; and as there is no natural connexion between them and any impression on the senses, one would suppose they do not admit of being misunderstood; they must either be taken for arbitrary writing signs, or be given up as unintelligible. There, one should think, the rudest understanding cannot confound signs with things; and that by that ingenious expedient every abuse was obviated. To him, who does not understand numbers, they are unmeaning figures. Him, whom they do not enlighten, at least they do not seduce.

So might the founder of that school imagine. But ignorance soon took again to its old courses. Not satisfied with what was found so intelligible

and conceivable, they sought after an occult virtue in the numbers themselves; again, for an inexplicable reality in the signs, whereby their use as signs were again lost. They believed, o rat least made others believe, that in those numbers were hidden all the secrets of nature, and of the Godhead; ascribed to them miraculous powers, and pretended to satisfy with, and by means of them, not only mankind's curiosity and thirst of knowledge, but even the full extent of their vanity; their aspiring at sublime and unattainable things; their inquisitiveness and egotism; their avarice and frenzy. In one word, imbecility had again defeated the plan of wisdom, and again destroyed, and even applied to its own rule, what the latter had provided for a better purpose.[32]

And now I am able to set forth with greater distinctness my conjectures about the purpose of the ceremonial law in Judaism. The first parents of our nation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, continued true to the Lord, and sought to preserve amongst their families and descendants ideas of religion, pure and far distant from all idolatry. These, their descendants, were, in the sequel, selected by Providence to be a *nation of priests;* that is, a nation, which, by its regular institutions and polity, its laws and practices, its fortunes and changes, should constantly point to sound and

unvitiated notions of God and his attributes; and never cease to teach, proclaim, preach, and conserve them amongst all other nations, as it were, merely by its own existence. They sojourned amongst barbarians and idolators, under extreme oppression; while misery almost made them as insensible of truth as arrogance had made their oppressors. God released them from this state of bondage by extraordinary deeds of wonder; he became the deliverer, leader, lawgiver, and law-administrator of the nation thus formed by himself; and so ordered the whole of its polity as to make it answer the wise designs of his providence. But man's eyes are weak and short-sighted. Who can say: 'I penetrated into God's Sanctuary; I have looked into the whole of his plan, and can accurately state the magnitude, extent, and bounds of his designs?' A modest inquirer, however, may be allowed to conjecture, and draw conclusions from his conjectures, if he but always bear in mind that he can do nothing but *conjecture.*

It has been seen, what difficulty there is in preserving the abstract ideas of religion amongst mankind, by permanent signs. Figures and hieroglyphics will lead to superstition and idolatry; and our own alphabetical writing makes man too speculative. It exhibits the symbolical meaning of things, and of their mutual relations, by far

too openly on the surface; it saves us the labour of diving and searching, and forms too wide a separation between doctrine and life. In order to remedy those defects, the lawgiver of that nation gave *the ceremonial law.* Religious and moral information was to be united with the ordinary and daily transactions of men. The law, indeed, did not urge them to meditation; it only prescribed to them acts; only what they had to do and to forbear. It seems to have been a grand maxim with that polity, that to act, man must be urged; but to meditate he can only be induced. Accordingly, every one of those actions, every custom, every ceremony thus prescribed, had its meaning, and cogent reason,—was closely allied to the speculative study of theology and ethics, and a stimulus to the searcher after truth, to meditate on those sacred things himself, or ask one more experienced than himself for information. For it was the principal object and fundamental rule of that polity, that the truths useful to the welfare of the nation at large, as well as to each individual, should be as distant from every thing figurative as possible. They were to be bound up with practices and observances, which were to serve them for signs, without which they could not be preserved. The acts of man are transient; in them there is nothing stable, nothing continuate, which, like

hieroglyphics, may, through abuse, lead to idolatry. But then, they have that advantage over alphabetical signs, that they do not isolate man, and make of him a recluse, continually brooding over writings and books; on the contrary, they urge him to social commerce, to copying, and to living oral instruction. Hence, there were but few written laws; nor were even these quite intelligible without oral instruction and tradition; and it was forbidden to write more on them. Whereas the unwritten laws, the living instruction of man to man, from the mouth to the heart, were to explain, enlarge, restrict, and more particularly determine, what, for wise purposes and with wise moderation, was left undetermined in the written law. In every thing a youth saw doing, in all public as well as private functions, on all gates and doorposts, whichever way he turned his eyes or ears, he met with something which excited him to think and search; which induced him closely to follow the footsteps of one older and wiser than himself; observe with filial diligence, and copy with filial docility, even his most trivial actions and observances; enquire after their meaning and object, and gather what information his teacher might think suitable to his abilities and fitness. In this manner, were doctrine and conduct, prudence and industry, speculation and conversation,

most intimately united, or, at least, should have been, according to the lawgiver's original disposing and design. But the ways of God are inscrutable; and within a short period, this too took the road of corruption. It was not long before that bright orbit too was run round; and things again returned to no great distance from the depth from which they had emerged, as, alas! is manifest since many ages.

Already, in the first days of this so marvellous a legislation, the people relapsed into the sinful delusion of the Egyptians, and demanded a *Zoological image.* And from what they pretended, it seems that they did not demand it exactly as a Deity, for the sake of adorning it; for with that, the high-priest, the legislator's own brother, would not have complied, if his life had been ever so much in danger. They merely spoke of a divine Being, which should lead them on, and supply the room of Moses, who was supposed to have deserted his post. Aaron could no longer withstand the people's importunities; he cast them a calf; and that he might keep them firm in their intention not to offer up divine adoration to that image, but to God alone, he called out, "Let to-morrow be a feast to the Lord." On the feast-day, however, while regaling themselves, and dancing, the rabble let him hear quite different language.

"These," shouted they, "be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Now the fundamental law was broken through; the national bond was dissolved. Sensible reasoning is seldom of much use with an excited mob, when disorder has once got the upperhand; and we know to what hard measures the lawgiver had to make up his mind, for the sake of quelling the rebellion of the mixed multitudes, and to bring them back to subordination. It deserves, nevertheless, to be noticed and admired, how divine Providence knew to turn that unfortunate circumstance to advantage, and for what sublime ends, altogether worthy of itself, it employed it.

It has been remarked, in a former place, that paganism had even more tolerable notions of the *power* of the Godhead than of its *goodness*. A common man takes goodness and easy reconcileableness for weakness; he envies every one the least pre-eminence in power, wealth, beauty, honor, &c., but not pre-eminence in goodness. Indeed, how should he; since it mostly depends on himself to arrive at that degree of gentleness which he thinks enviable? It requires some thinking to comprehend that rancour and vindictiveness, envy and cruelty, are, in the main, nothing but weakness, nothing but the effect of fear. Fear, combined with chance and precarious

predominance, is the parent of all those barbarous feelings. Fear only renders man severe and implacable. He who is fully conscious of his superiority, feels far greater happiness in leniency and forgiveness.

When we have once learned to see this, we can no longer feel any hesitation in considering mercy, at least, as sublime a quality as power; in thinking the Supreme Being, to whom we attribute omnipotence, capable also of love; and in acknowledging in the God of power also the God of mercy. But how far was paganism from being thus refined? You do not find in the whole of its mythology, in the poems, and other remains of the ancient world, a trace of their having attributed to any one of their deities also love and clemency towards the children of men. "The people, as well as the majority of the most renowned captains and enlightened statesmen, indeed, took the gods whom they adored, for beings mightier than man; but for such as had, in common with them, the same wants, passions, foibles, and even the same vices. So malicious did the gods, in general, appear to the Athenians, and other Grecians, that they fancied any extraordinary or long-lasting success to draw on it the anger and grudge of the gods, and to be overthrown by their instrumentality. They further imagined those

same gods so irascible, that all unfortunate accidents were looked upon as divine judgments; not for a general depravity of manners, or of great individual crimes, but for slight, and, mostly, inadvertent omissions, in certain rites and solemnities.* In Homer himself, in his gentle and benign soul, the thought had not yet kindled, that the gods forgive out of love; and that without beneficence, they would know no bliss in their empyreal abode.

Now mark with what wisdom the lawgiver of the Israelites makes use of their horrible offence against majesty, to promulgate to mankind so very important a doctrine, and to open to it a source of consolation, from which we are drawing and refreshing ourselves, even to this day. What sublime and awful preparation! The mutiny had been subdued; the sinners were brought to a sense of their guilty attempt; the nation plunged into the deepest sorrow, and Moses, the Lord's nuncio himself, almost desponding. "O Lord" said he, "as long as thy displeasure has not subsided, carry us not up from hence. For wherein shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? so shall we be separated, I and thy

* *Meiner's Geschichte der Wissenschaften in Griechenland und Rom; zweiter Band. p.* 77

people, from all the people that are on the face of the earth."

"I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken;" was the Lord's reply, "for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I have known thee by name."

"Upraised by those solacing words," resumed Moses, "I presume to make another, and a still bolder request. O Lord, I beseech thee shew me thy glory."

I will make *all my goodness* pass before thee,* and make thee acquainted with the name of the Lord, in what manner I am gracious to him, to whom I am gracious, and shew mercy to him to whom I shew mercy. Thou shalt look at the back part of my presence, for my face cannot be seen."† Thereupon the vision passed by before Moses, and a voice was heard saying, "The Lord is, was, and shall be eternal, being, all-mighty, all-merciful and all-gracious; long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, who preserves his goodness even to the thousandth generation; who forgives

* What a sublime import! Thou desirest to behold my whole glory. I will make all my goodness pass before thee. Thou shalt look at the back part of my presence, for my face no mortal man can see!

† Exod. xxxiii. 15.

transgression, sin and apostasy; but lets nothing pass by unresented." What man's feelings are so hardened, that he can read this with dry eyes? Whose heart is so inhuman that he can still hate his fellow-man and remain irreconcileable to him?

The Lord, indeed, says: that he will let nothing pass by unresented; and those words are known to have been the occasion of much error and misconstruction. But if they are not completely to set aside that which precedes them, they immediately lead to the grand thought, which our Rabbins discovered in it, namely, *to let man pass by nothing unresented, is also an attribute of divine love and mercy.*

Once, in conversation with a highly esteemed friend of mine, about theological matters, he asked me, "Did I not wish to obtain, by direct revelation, the assurance that I shall not be miserable in a future state?" He was of one opinion with me, that I need not be in fear of eternal punishment in hell; since God cannot let one of his creatures be unceasingly miserable; nor can any creature, by his actions, have deserved the punishment of being miserable for ever. The hypothesis that the punishment of sin must be proportionate to the offended majesty of God, and, therefore, infinite, my friend, with several other eminent men of his church, had discarded long ago, which

therefore precluded all debate between us on that subject. The idea of *duties to God*, which is correct only by half, has occasioned the just as undeterminate idea of *offences against the majesty of God*, while the latter idea, taken in a literal sense, brought into the world the inadmissible notion of eternal punishment in hell, the farther abuse of which made not fewer people *really* miserable in this world, than, *theoretically*, it makes unhappy in the next. My philosophical friend also agreed with me, that God created men for their happiness; and that he gave them laws for their happiness. Then, if the slightest infraction of those laws be punished in proportion to the lawgiver's majesty, and therefore carry with it eternal misery, God has given men those laws for their destruction. Were it not for the laws of so infinitely exalted a being, man would not be liable to eternal misery. Why, if mankind might be less miserable without divine laws, who doubts that God would have spared them the fire of those laws, since it must so irretrievably consume them? All that being admitted, my friend put his query in a more definite form: "Must I not wish to be assured by a revelation, that I shall be exempt even from terminable misery in a future state?"

"I must not," replied I; "that misery can be nothing more than well-deserved punishment;

and, in God's paternal household, I am willing to undergo the chastisement which I deserve."

"But what, if all-merciful God would remit men even justly deserved punishment?"

"That he certainly will, as soon as punishment shall be no longer indispensable to men's amendment. There is no need for a direct revelation to convince me of that. When I infringe the laws of God, the moral evil makes me unhappy; and divine justice, that is, his *all-wise love*, seeks to lead me to moral recovery, by means of physical misery. When that physical misery, that punishment of sin, is no longer absolutely necessary to a change of my principles, I am, without a revelation, as persuaded as I am of my own existence, that my father will instantly remit the punishment; and, on the contrary, if that punishment be still of service for my moral recovery, I do not, by any means, wish to be acquitted of it. In the state of that paternal regent, a transgressor suffers no other punishment but that which he himself must be desirous of suffering, if he could see its effect and consequences in their true light."

"But may not God think fit to let man suffer as an example to others; and is not an exemption from such exemplary punishment desirable?

"No," replied I; "in God's dominions no individual suffers merely for the good of others. If

that were done, such immolation for the good of others must impart to the sufferer himself a higher moral worth; and, in consideration of the internal accession of perfection, it must be of importance to himself to have promoted so much good by his suffering. Since, then, it is thus, I cannot *dread* such a state; I cannot *wish* for a revelation that I shall never get into a condition of magnanimous benevolence, so fortunate both to my fellow-creatures and myself. What I have to dread is the sin itself. When I have committed a sin, Divine Punishment is an act of benevolence towards me, an effect of his paternal mercifulness. When it ceases to be a benefit to me, I am certain it will instantly be remitted. Can I wish that my father would turn away from me his chastising hand, before it has effected what it was designed to effect? When I am praying that God may let a transgression of mine pass by entirely without punishment, do I know what I am praying for? O, of a surety, it is also one of the attributes of infinite Divine Love, that he lets not any transgression of man pass by entirely without punishment. Surely

"Omnipotence belongeth to the Lord alone:
Unto thee, God, belongeth also mercy,
When to every one thou renderest according to his works."
Ps. lxii. 12, 13.

That the doctrine of God's mercifulness was first promulgated to the nation by Moses, on that grand occasion, the Psalmist expressly declares in another place, when he quotes, from the former's books, the identical words in question here :—

" He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

" *The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.*

" He will not always chide, neither will he keep his anger for ever.

" He hath not dealt with us after our sins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities.

" For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

" As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

" Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth him that fear him.

" For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." &c. (Ps. ciii.)*

* In a general view, the contents of this Psalm are throughout most important. He, to whom the subject is of any interest, will do well to read the Psalm all through with attention, and compare it with the above remarks. It seems to me evidently to have been occasioned by that remarkable passage in Scripture; and to be nothing else but a bursting out of the lively emotion, into

Now I am able to concentrate my ideas of Judaism of former times, and bring them under one focus. Judaism consisted, or, according to the founder's design, was to consist of

1. Religious dogmas and propositions of *immutable truths* of God, of his government and providence, without which man can neither be enlightened nor happy. These were not forced on the belief of the people, by threats of eternal or temporal punishment, but suitably to the nature and evidence of immutable truths, recommended for rational consideration. They needed not be suggested by direct revelation, or promulgated by *words* or *writing*, which are understood only *in this or that place*, at *this or that time*. The Supreme Being revealed them to all rational beings, by *events* and by *ideas*, and inscribed them in their soul, in a character legible and intelligible *at all times*, and *in all places*. Hence sings the frequently quoted bard:

which the bard got, on considering that extraordinary event. Accordingly, he commences the Psalm with calling upon his soul to offer up the most solemn thanksgiving to God for the divine promise of his goodness and paternal mercy. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits. He forgiveth all thine iniquities; he healeth all thy diseases; he redeemeth thy life from destruction; he crowneth thee with loving-kindness and with mercy, &c."

"The heavens tell the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handy work.

"One day streams this unto another, and night therein instructeth night."

"No lesson or words of which the voice is not heard; their chord rings through the entire globe; their discourse penetrates to the extremes of the inhabited world, where he set a tabernacle to the sun, &c." (Ps. lxx. 1.)*

Their effect is as universal as the salutary influence of the sun, which, while revolving round its orbit, diffuses light and heat over the whole globe, as the same bard still more distinctly declares, in another place:

"From where the sun rises to where it sets, the name of the Lord is praised." Or, as the prophet Malachi says, in the name of the Lord: "From where the sun rises to where it sets, my name is great among the Gentiles; and in all places, incense, sacrifice, and pure meat-offerings are offered unto my name, for my name is great among the heathen."

2. Historical truths, or accounts of the occurrences of the primitive world, especially memoirs of the lives of the first ancestors of the nation; of their knowledge of the true God, even of their

* After Mendelssohn's Translation.

failings, and the paternal correction immediately following thereon; of the covenant which God entered into with them, and his frequent promise to make of their descendants a nation dedicated to himself. These historical truths contain the groundwork of the national union; and, as historical truths, they cannot, according to their nature, be received otherwise than *on trust;* authority alone gives them the necessary evidence. And they were, moreover, confirmed to the nation by miracles, and supported by an authority which sufficed to place *faith* beyond all doubt and hesitation.

3. Laws, judgments, commandments, rules of life, which were to be peculiar to that nation; and by observing which, it was to arrive at national—as well as every single member thereof, at individual—happiness. The lawgiver was God himself; God,—not in his relations as Creator and Preserver of the universe—but God, as Lord Protector and ally of their forefathers; as the liberator, founder, and leader, as the king and ruler of that people. And he gave the laws a sanction, than which nothing could be more solemn; he gave them publicly, and in a marvellous manner never before heard of, whereby they were imposed on the nation, and on their descendants for ever, as an unalterable duty and obligation.

Those laws were *revealed*, that is, they were made known by the Lord, by *words*, and *in writing*. Still, only the most essential part thereof was entrusted to letters; and without the unwritten laws, without explanations, limitations, and more particular definitions, even those written laws are mostly unintelligible, or must become so in course of time; since neither any words or written characters whatever retain their meaning unaltered, for the natural age of man.

As *directions to general practice*, and rules of conduct, both the written and the unwritten laws have public and private happiness for their immediate object. But they must also be mostly considered as a mode of writing; and as *ceremonial laws*, there is sense and meaning in them. They lead inquiring reason to divine truths; partly to eternal, partly to historical truths, on which the religion of *that* nation was founded. The ceremonial law was the bond for uniting practice with speculation, conduct with doctrine. The ceremonial law was to offer inducements to personal intercourse and social connexion between the school and the professor, the inquirer and the instructor, and to excite and encourage competition and emulation; and that purpose it actually did answer in the first times, before the polity degenerated, and human folly again intermeddled

to change, by ignorance and misguidance, good to evil, and the beneficial to the hurtful.

Under that primitive polity, state and religion were not *united*, but *one;* not *allied*, but *identical*. The relations of man to society, and the relations of man to God, converged into one point, and could never come in collision. God, the Creator and Preserver of the universe, was, at the same time, the king and administrator of that nation; and he is a *Unit*, which admits of no division or plurality, either politically or metaphysically. Nor has that regent any wants, and he demands nothing of the nation but what is for their good, or what promotes the happiness of the state; the same, as on the other hand, the state could demand nothing that was contrary to the duties to God; but rather what was prescribed by God, that nation's lawgiver, and the administrator of their laws. Hence, civil life amongst that nation assumed a holy and religious cast, and every service to the public was, at the same time, *true divine service*. The congregation was a congregation of the Lord; their concerns were the Lord's; the public taxes were heave-offerings to the Lord; and, to the least measures and regulations for the public safety, every thing was religious. The Levites, who lived on the public revenue, received their maintenance of the Lord. They were to

have no part or inheritance in the land; *for the Lord is their inheritance.* He who is obliged to roam about abroad *worships foreign gods.* In several passages in Scripture, this cannot be taken in a literal sense, and, in the main, means nothing else but *that he is subjected to foreign laws; laws which are not, at the same time, religious, like those of his own country.*

And now as to offences. Every offence against the authority of God, the lawgiver of the nation, was an offence against majesty, and, therefore, a political or state offence. He who reviled God, committed high treason; he who wickedly broke the Sabbath, abrogated, as far as lay with him, a fundamental law of civil society; for on the institution of that day rested a material part of the polity. "The Sabbath shall be an eternal covenant between me and the children of Israel, says the Lord, a perpetual sign, that in six days," &c. (Exod. xxxi.) Therefore, under that polity, those offences could, nay must, be punished civilly, not as false opinions, not as *misbelief,* but as *misdeeds,* as contumacious political offences, which aim at the abolishing, or at least at weakening, the lawgiver's authority, and, thereby, undermining the state itself. And yet, with what lenity were not even those highly treasonable offences punished! What plenteous allowance was there not made for

human frailty! According to a certain traditional law, sentence of death could not be passed on a delinquent, *unless he have been cautioned by two unexceptionable witnesses, who must have cited to him the exact law, and threatened him with the penalty thereby enacted.* Nay, where corporeal or capital punishments were concerned, *the delinquent must have admitted, in express words, the punishment, taken it upon himself, and forthwith committed the offence in the sight of the witnesses.* Under such regulations, how rare must capital executions have been; and what frequent opportunities judges must have had of sparing themselves the painful necessity of passing sentence of death on their fellow-creatures, their fellow-images of God! *A hanged man is a disrespect to God,*[33] says Scripture. How long must judges have paused, how long must they have examined and considered mitigating circumstances, before they signed a sentence of death! Nay, more. According to the Rabbins, every criminal court, which cares about a good name, ought to mind that, during a period of *seventy* years, no more than *one* person suffer punishment of death.[34]

This clearly shows how little one must be acquainted with the Mosaic code and the Jewish polity, to believe that it authorises ecclesiastical law, and ecclesiastical power; and attaches tem-

poral punishment to unbelief or misbelief. Both *the Searcher after Light and Right,* and *Mr. Moerschel* are, therefore, very far from being right in thinking that I have set aside Judaism, by my arguments against ecclesiastical law and ecclesiastical authority. Truth cannot contradict truth. What divine law commands, reason, not less divine, cannot set aside.

It was not unbelief, not false doctrine or error, that was punished; but contumacious offences against the majesty of the lawgiver, daring misdeeds against the fundamental laws of the state, and the civil government; and it was punished only then, when the crime, in licentiousness, exceeded all bounds, and was approaching to rebellion; when the offender did not mind having the law quoted to him by two fellow-citizens, and being threatened by them with the regular punishment; nay, not even taking the punishment upon himself, and committing the offence in their sight. This is tantamount to high treason, and the religious reprobate becomes a state criminal. Besides, the talmudical doctors expressly declare, *that ever since the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, all corporeal and capital punishment, nay, all fines, so far as they were merely national, ceased to be legal.* Now this perfectly accords with my principles, and cannot be explained except on them.

The civil bonds of the nation were dissolved; religious infractions no longer constituted state offences; and religion, as such, knows of no punishment, of no penitence, but what a repentant sinner voluntarily imposes upon himself. It disclaims all coercion, acts with the wand "gentleness" only; and acts only on the mind and the heart. Let them try to explain rationally the above talmudical assertion any other way than on my principles.

Methinks I hear many a reader ask: "Wherefore all this prolixity to tell us so notorious a thing? Judaism was a hierocracy, an ecclesiastical government, a state of priests, or, if you please, a theocracy. It is well known what assumptions such a government will indulge itself in."

By no means. All those technical terms throw on the subject a false light, which I had to avoid. We want to be always classifying and dividing all things in categories. So that we know under what category a thing must be brought, we are satisfied, let our conception of it be ever so imperfect in other respects. But wherefore seek a generic term for a thing which belongs to no genus at all, which ranks with nothing, which cannot be brought under any category whatever? That polity did exist once, and once only: call it by

its individual name, the *Mosaic* polity. It has disappeared; and omniscient God alone knows among what people, and in what age something like it will again appear.

Plato supposes a terrestial Cupid as well as a celestial. Just so one may say, there are terrestrial politics as well as celestial. Take one of those gay adventurers with whom the promenades of every great city abounds—one of those lady-killers,—and enter with him into conversation about *Solomon's Song*, or about the Loves of our first Parents in Paradise, as described by *Milton*. He will think you are ranting, or want him to hear you say your task how to beset the heart of a prude with Platonic blandishments. Just as little will a fashionable statesman understand you, when you are extolling to him the simplicity and moral excellence of that primitive polity. Just as the former knows of love nothing but sensual gratification, so the latter, when treating of politics, will talk of nothing but an imposing attitude, circulation of money, commerce, balance of power, population; and to him religion is a means of which the legislator avails himself to curb restive man, and the priest to suck the blood out of him, and consume his marrow.

This false point of view, in which we are wont to contemplate the true interest of human society,

I had to remove out of the reader's sight. I, therefore, did not call the subject by any name, but endeavoured to exhibit it itself to him, with all its properties and purposes. When we look point blank at true politics, we shall discover in them—as a certain philosopher said of the sun—a divinity, where ordinary eyes see only a pebble.

I have said that the Mosaic institution did not subsist long in its pristine purity. Already, in the days of the prophet Samuel, the building got a rent, which widened more and more, until all its parts came asunder. The nation wished to have a visible king for their regent, a king in the flesh. Whether the priesthood had already begun to abuse their consequence amongst the nation, as we are told in Scripture of the high-priest Eli's sons, or whether the people's eyes were dazzled by the splendour of neighbouring royalty; suffice it to say, they demanded *a king, to judge them like all the nations* (1 Sam. viii. 5). Indignant at their proposal, the prophet represented to them what sort of thing a king in the flesh was, who has peculiar wants, which he may multiply at his will and pleasure; and how difficult it is to satisfy a frail mortal, to whom the rights of the Godhead had been granted. But all in vain; the people persisted in their resolution, their request was complied with, and they experienced every thing the prophet had foretold

them. Now the polity was undermined; the unity of interest destroyed. State and religion ceased to be identical; and a collision of duty was already no longer impossible. Still, instances of it must have been rare, while yet the king himself not only was of the nation, but also observed the laws of his native land. And now let us follow history through a long series of fortunes and vicissitudes, through several good and several bad, several virtuous and several profligate reigns, down to the sad times in which the founder of the Christian religion delivered the cautious decision: "Render unto Cæsar the things which be Cæsar's, and unto God the things which be God's." (Luke xx. 25.) An evident discrepancy: a collision of duty! The state was under foreign dominion, and receiving mandates, as it were, of foreign gods, all the while that the national religion, with its influence on civil rights, still remained in preservation. Here is demand against demand; claim against claim. Whom are we to render to? Whom are we to obey? Then bear both burdens as well as ye may—the decision fell out—serve two masters with patience and acquiescence: render unto Cæsar, and render also unto God, to each his due; now that the unity of interest is destroyed.

And a more wholesome advice could not be given to the house of Jacob, even at this very day.

Comply with the customs, and the civil constitution of the countries in which ye are transplanted, but, at the same time, be constant to the faith of your forefathers. Bear both burdens as well as ye may. It is true, that, on the one hand, the burden of civil life is made heavier to you on account of the religion to which you continue faithful; while, on the other, the climate under which you live, and the times, render the observance of your religious laws more burdensome than they really are. Hold out, notwithstanding; remain immoveable on the station which Providence assigns to you, whatever may befal you; which is no more than what your prophets foretold you, long ago.

Indeed, I do not see, how those who were born in the house of Jacob can, in any conscientious manner, disencumber themselves of the law. We are allowed to think on the law, to inquire into the spirit of it; and, here and there, where the lawgiver assigned no ground, conjecture one, which, *perhaps*, was governed by times, circumstances, and local situation; and, *perhaps*, will undergo modification, according to times, circumstances, and local situation—whenever the Supreme Legislator shall be pleased to make known to us his will thereon; and make it known to us as loudly, publicly, and as utterly beyond doubt and hesitation,

as he made known to us the law itself. As long as that does not take place, as long as we cannot produce so authentic a discharge from the law, all our fine reasoning cannot exonerate us from the strict obedience we owe to it; while the awe of God will always draw a line between theory and practice, beyond which no conscientious person will permit himself to go. I, therefore, repeat the protest I first entered. The eye of man is weak and short-sighted. Who can say: "I have got into God's holy of holies; I have seen through the whole system of his purposes; and can fix its measure, aim, and bounds? I am at liberty to suppose, but not to decide; not to act according to my supposition. Why, even in human matters, I dare not presume to act on my own supposition, and explain away laws without the legislator's or judge's leave; how much less, then, in things divine?" Laws necessarily connected with the possession of land, and with local institutions, carry their dispensation with them. Without a temple, and a priesthood, and, out of Judea, neither sacrifices, nor a law of purification, nor contributions to the priests, as far as they depended on landed property, any longer obtain. But personal commandments, duties which were imposed on a son of Israel, without any consideration of the temple service or landed property in Palestine,

must, for aught we can see, be observed strictly to the letter of the law, until it shall please the Most High to make our conscience easy, by loudly and openly proclaiming their abrogation.

Then it evidently comes down to this: what God has bound, man cannot dissolve. If one of us even go over to the Christian Church, I cannot conceive how he can believe, thereby, to compound with his conscience, and exonerate himself from the yoke of the law. Jesus of Nazareth never signified that he was come to acquit the house of Jacob of the law; nay, he said the reverse in express terms; and, which is still more, he *acted* the reverse. Jesus of Nazareth himself kept, not only the Mosaic law, but also the Rabbinical institutions; and whatever seems to be contrary to this, in the sayings and proceedings recorded of him, only seems so at first sight. Carefully examined, every thing will be found perfectly to agree, not only with Scripture, but also with tradition. If he came to put a stop to the more and more spreading Pharisaism and hypocrisy, surely he would not himself have set the first example of them, by sanctioning, by his own observance, a law which he thought should be abrogated and set aside. On the contrary, the Rabbinical maxim, that *he, who is not born in the law, need not bind himself to the law; but he, who is born in the law, must*

live according to the law, and die according to it, obviously characterises his whole conduct, and that of his disciples, in the beginning. If, on later times, his followers thought differently, and believed they might absolve also the Jews, who joined them, it certainly was not done by his authority.

And ye, good brethren and fellow-men, who follow the doctrine of Jesus, should you blame us for practising what the founder of your religion himself practised? Should you think you may not love us in return as brethren, not unite with us as citizens, as long as we distinguish ourselves outwardly by the ceremonial law, as long as we do not partake of viands or intermarry with you, all which, for ought we can see, the founder of your religion would neither have done himself, nor have allowed us to do? If that be your real feeling, and is to continue so—which we cannot suppose of Christian-minded men—if civil union cannot be obtained on any other term than that of departing from the law, which we consider still binding upon us, we are heartily sorry for what we deem necessary to declare—that we will rather renounce civil union: then may that philanthropic man, *Dohm*, have written to no purpose, and every thing remain in the bearable state in which it is now; or in any other, your own humanity may think fit to

change it. To compromise, is not, here, in our power; but if we be just, it is in our power to love you like brethren, notwithstanding; and in a brother-like manner intreat ye to make our burdens as bearable as ye can. Look upon us, if not as brethren and fellow-citizens, at least, as fellow-creatures and countrymen. Show us the way and supply us with the means of becoming *more efficient* men and countrymen; and let us also enjoy as much of the rights of man as times and circumstances will admit of. We cannot, in conscience, depart from the law; and of what use would it be to you, fellow-citizens void of conscience?

But, in this manner, how can the prophecy be fulfilled, that *a time will come when there will be only one shepherd and one flock?*"

Dear brethren, who mean well with humanity, do not let yourselves be deluded. For to belong to such an ubiquitary shepherd, the entire flock needs neither graze on one field, nor go in and out the master's habitation by one door. This is not what the shepherd wants; nor would it be good for the thriving of the flock. Is it that they are confounding ideas, or designedly seeking to perplex them? They tell you, that a union of religion would be the shortest road to the brotherly love and brotherly toleration, which you, kind-hearted people, so much long for. They will have you

imagine, that when we are all of one creed, we shall no longer hate one another on account of religion, or difference of opinion. Then religious animosity will be seized by the root, and extirpated: then the scourge will be wrested out of the hand of hypocrisy, the sword out of the grasp of fanaticism, and the halcyon days will arrive of which it is said: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard by the side of the goat, &c." The meek souls who propose this are ready to set to work, meet together as negotiators, and humanely take the trouble of bringing about a universal concordat of religions. They will bargain for *truths*, in the same manner as for *rights and privileges*, as for a vendible commodity, ask a price, bid and bate, bully or coax, hurry and cozen one another out of them, until, at length, the parties shake hands, and the treaty for the happiness of the human race wants only to be written down. There are many, indeed, who reject such a project as unfeasible and chimerical; but, nevertheless, talk of a union of religions as of a very desirable state, sincerely pitying the human race on account of that summit of happiness not being reachable by human powers. Friends of mankind, beware listening to such sentiments without putting them to a rigid test. They may be snares, which fanaticism, grown powerless, wants to lay for liberty

of conscience. That enemy of all that is good, you know, is of a variety of shapes and forms: the ferocity of the lion, and the mildness of the lamb; the simplicity of the dove, and the cunning of the serpent; no quality is so foreign to it, that it does not either possess it, or knows how to assume it, for the sake of attaining its sanguinary purposes. Now, that through your salutary efforts, it has been deprived of open power, perhaps, it puts on the mask of meekness, to impose upon you; feigns brotherly love, and cants general toleration, all the while that it is secretly forging the fetters in which it means to put human reason, that it may, unawares, hurl it back again into the pool of barbarism, out of which you have begun to extricate it.*

* Painful experience proves that there is fanaticism even in Atheism. Indeed, but for an admixture of *internal* Atheism, it never would have become furious. But that even external and open Atheism wlll become frantic, is as undeniable, as it is difficult to conceive. Although the Atheist, if he be consistent, will always act from *self-interest;* and although it little accords with that, when he sets up for establishing a sect of his own, and does not keep the secret to himself; still he has been known to preach his doctrine with the most glowing enthusiasm, and to become outrageous, nay, prosecute, when his preaching did not meet with a favourable hearing. And a most frightful thing it is, when that kind of zeal inflames a regular Atheist, when innocence gets into the hands of a tyrant, who fears any thing but a God.

Let this not be supposed mere imaginary fear, or the natural effect of an atrabilious temper. In the main, if an union of religions be at all feasible, it can be of none but the worst consequences to reason and to freedom of conscience. For supposing them to be all of one mind about the articles of faith they propose to introduce and establish; supposing them to have accomplished symbols, with which none of the religions prevailing in Europe, at present, has any fault to find; and what would have been effected then? Shall we be all of the same opinion about theological truths? He that has the least knowledge of the construction of the human understanding will believe no such thing. Then the unanimity would lie only in the words, and in the formulæ. It is that which the consolidators of religions mean to join for; they want to nip, here and there, a bit off the notions; keep here and there stretching and enlarging the meshes of terms, and make them become so flimsy and indefinite, that the ideas, notwithstanding their inward variety, would scarcely be contained in them. Every one would then, in fact, associate with one and the same word a different idea, peculiar to himself; and ye would boast of having consummated a union of the different creeds of mankind; of having brought the whole flock under one single

shepherd! Oh, if there be at all a design in this so specious a pretence, I fear it is that of, in the first place, penning up again the human mind, as yet free. The shy thing will then let itself be caught easily, and suffer the halter to be thrown on its neck. Only tack religion to symbols, opinions to words, to as modest and pliant words as ever you please; only appoint, once for all, the articles; and woe unto the unfortunate, who comes a day after, and criticises even upon those *modest* and pliant words! He is a disturber of the peace. To the stake with him!

Brethren! if it be genuine piety you are aiming at, let us not feign consonance, when manifoldness is, evidently, the design and end of Providence. None of us feels and thinks exactly alike with his fellow-man; then wherefore impose upon one another by deceiving words? We are, alas! prone enough to do so, in our ordinary transactions, in our general conversation, comparatively of no material importance; but wherefore also in things involving our spiritual and temporal welfare, and constituting the whole purpose of our creation? God has not stamped on every man a peculiar countenance for nothing: why, then, should we, in the most solemn concerns of life, render ourselves unknown to one another, by disguise? Is not this resisting Providence so far as with us lies? is it not frus-

trating the designs of creation, if it were possible, and purposely acting against our vocation and destiny, both in this life and that to come? Regents of the earth! if an insignificant fellow-inhabitant of it may be allowed to lift up his voice unto ye, O listen not to the counsellors, who, in smooth words, would misguide you to so pernicious an undertaking. They are either blind themselves, and cannot see the enemy of mankind lurking in ambush; or they want to blind you. If you hearken to them, our brightest jewel, freedom of conscience is lost. For your happiness' sake, and for ours, *religious union is not toleration*; it is diametrically opposite to it. For your happiness' sake, and for ours, lend not your powerful authority to the converting into a law any *immutable truth*, without which civil happiness may very well subsist; to the forming into a public ordinance any theological thesis, of no importance to the state. Be strict as to the life and conduct of men; make that amenable to a tribunal of wise laws; and leave thinking and speaking to us, just as it was given us, as an unalienable heirloom; as we were invested with it, as an unalterable right, by our universal father. If, perhaps, the connexion of privilege with opinion be too prescriptive, and the time have not yet arrived to do away with it altogether, at least, endeavour to mitigate, as lies

with you, its deleterious influence, and to put wise bounds to prejudices now grown too superannuated;* at least, pave, for happier posterity, the way to that height of civilization, to that universal forbearance amongst men, after which reason is still panting in vain. Reward and punish no doctrine; hold out no allurement or bribe for the adoption of theological opinions. Let every one who does not disturb public happiness, who is obedient to the civil government, who acts righteously towards you, and towards his fellow-countrymen, be allowed to speak as he thinks, to pray to God after his own fashion, or after that of his forefathers, and to seek eternal salvation where he thinks he may find it. Suffer no one to be a searcher of hearts, and a judge of opinions in your states; suffer no one to assume a right which the Omniscient has reserved to himself. "*As long as we are rendering unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's; render ye, yourselves, unto God the things which are God's. Love truth! Love peace!*

* We regret to hear also the Congress of the United States (1783) harp on the old string, by talking of an established religion.

ADDENDA.

ADDENDA.

Note 1.

Mendelssohn considered, with Lessing, the Papal government the mildest in Europe; and so it may be; although that does not argue much for its goodness in other respects. A country whose prosperity depends on the imbecility of other countries, will always be under a wretched government, whether mild or tyrannical. The crafty idler is better off than the honest, industrious, and virtuous man, who fails in most of his laudable undertakings. Were not the present Rome a degenerate daughter, still in possession of her legitimate inheritance, a fine sky, and the ancient remains of the once mistress of the world, what would the pope's dominions have to boast of?

Note 2.

"—— Sans doute que l' egalité des biens est juste. Mais, ne pouvant faire que l' homme soit forcé d' obéir à la justice, on l' a fait obéir à la

force; ne pouvant fortifier la justice, on a justifié la force, afin que la justice et la force fassent ensemble, et que la paix fût, car elle est le souverain bien.

" Si on avait pu, on aurait mis la force entre les mains de la justice; mais comme la force ne se laisse pas manier comme on veut, parce-que c'est une qualité palpable, au lieu que la justice est une qualité spirituelle, dont en dispose comme on veut, on l' a mise entre les mains de la force, et ainsi on appelle Justice ce' qu' il est forcé d' observer.

" Il est juste que ce qui est juste soit suivi. Il est nécessaire que ce qui est le plus fort soit suivi.

" La justice sans la force est impuissante; la puissance sans la justice est tyrannique.

" La justice sans la force est contredite, parce qu' il y a toujours des méchans; la force sans la justice est accusée. If faut donc mettre ensemble la justice et la force, et pour cela faire que ce qui est juste soit fort, et que ce qui est fort soit juste.

" La justice est sujette à disputes: la force est tres-reconnaissable, et sans dispute. Ainsi on n' a qu'àdonner la force à la justice. Ne pouvant faire que ce qui est juste fût fort, on a fait que ce qui et fort fût juste."—*B. Pascal.*

" Pascal semble ici se rapprocher des idées de

Hobbes, et le plus dévot des Philosophes de son siècle est, sur la nature du juste et de l' injuste, du même avis que le plus irreligieux."—*Voltaire.*

An equality of goods, no doubt is just. However, as they could not manage to force man to be obedient to justice, they made him be obedient to force; as they could not strengthen justice, they strengthened force, in order that justice and force might fit together, and that there might be peace; for peace is the supreme good.

If it could have been done, they would have placed force in the hands of justice; but as force, being a material quality, is not to be managed as one pleases, whereas justice, as a spiritual quality, may be disposed of as one pleases; it was placed in the hands of force, and thus we call justice, that which must be observed at any rate.

It is just, that what is just, be observed. It is necessary, that that which is the strongest be obeyed.

Justice without force is powerless; power without justice is tyrannical.

Justice, without force, is continually subject to resistance, inasmuch as there always are bad characters: force without justice, is impeached. Then justice and force must be united; and, therefore, that which is just must be strong, and that which is strong must be just.

Justice is liable to be disputed ; power is easily known, and admits of no dispute. Thus we have only to invest justice with power. As they could not cause that which is just to be powerful, they caused that which is powerful to be just.

* * * *

"In this, Pascal seems to favour Hobbes' ideas; and the most religious amongst the philosophers of his age is of the same opinion as the most irreligious, about the nature of justice and injustice."—*Voltaire.*

"Il est incontestable, et c'est la maxime fondamentale de tout le droit politique, que les peuples se sont donné des chefs pour défendre leur liberté, et non pour les asservir. Si nous avons un prince, disoit Pline à Trajan, c'est afin qu' il nous préserve d' avoir un maitre."—*J. J. Rousseau.*

It is not to be questioned, and a fundamental maxim of all public law, that nations put themselves under chiefs for the protection of their freedom, and not for being subjugated. "If we have a prince," said Pliny to Trajan, "it is in order that he shall preserve us from having a master."

Note 3.

Vatel, Droit des Gens, Prelim. §. 1 & 2.
Puffendorff de Jur. Nat. T. 2. L. 7. c. 2. §. 7.

Note 4.

On National Instruction. By M. MENDELSSOHN.

In the instruction of the people, and of children in general, as introduced at present, we are wont too diametrically to oppose time to eternity; this life to the future: happiness in this world to felicity in the next; as if time were allotted to us by Providence merely in order to see with what carelessness we would squander it. And yet time is a part of eternity, and of the same piece with it. Man, indeed, is of eternal duration, but there never falls more to his share then a *Now:* he always lives and enjoys in time only, never in eternity; he is capable of happiness in time, or—never. It is true, that whenever temporal prosperity cannot subsist with the consequences it may be of on perduration, the sacrificing of it is a virtue; but the merit of that virtue does not consist in a contempt of the temporal, but in the readiness of giving the preference to higher duties. Nay, the merit is so much greater, the greater the importance we place in the temporal object, which we are ready to sacrifice in cases of collision.

Religion and the State, worldly prudence and piety, Sophists and Enthusiasts, have opposed those objects to one another. In the eyes of the philosopher they are, like the *useful* and the *good*,

one and the same idea viewed in different relations. The religion which cannot subsist along with the welfare of society is not the true one. The polity which acts contrary to true religion, is folly; it saps the welfare of human society instead of fortifying it.

In the endless career marked out by Providence for every man, his life, or the space of time, which the individual spends on earth, forms an *epoch*. The characteristics of that epoch are: the development of powers and capacities in—and through—social life.

Without social life man is a bud of which no sunshine favours the blowing. The germ, indeed, will not be smothered, but is reserved for future vegetation; this time, however, it withers without expanding its hidden beauties. The bird, too, who dies in a cage, was destined by nature to fly about at large, and was provided with wings for that purpose.

The development of our powers and capacities through social life, is, therefore, our destiny on earth, the final object of our existence, the will of God, and our happiness; accordingly, it is the main principle in the ethics of religion and of reason; in politics, in pedagogy, in that part of gymnastics which relates to the body and its agility, as well as in the musical part, which

teaches to form the mind and its capabilities. The whole life of man is education. The boy is trained at school to a man; man, in this world, to a superior being. Theology and politics contain the rules of this grand education; they are both either acting upon one plan, or they spoil instead of perfecting.

It is true, the union of politics and religion is subject to a fatal abuse, and the human race has long enough felt the torment which resulted from that abuse. *Locke* himself believed that there was no other way of preventing that abuse, and of securing the most precious jewel man possesses, *liberty of conscience,* than by confining the idea of *state* to *temporal* things, and entirely removing it from all interference with the opinions of men about their eternal felicity. He lived in times in which the true notion of toleration was not enlightened enough: in order not to reel on the declivitous side of prejudice, they were obliged to bend in on the opposite one. Still it was deviating from the road of truth. Thank God, we live in such times, and in such a country, in which truth needs make no concessions out of fear of prejudice.

The most perfect state will, therefore, be that in which men are best enabled, by public measures, faithfully pursue to their destiny: that is, duly to form their powers and capacies conformable

to the will of God, and the ways of his providence, or to accomplish themselves. The happiness of a state does not consist in its population, in its wealth, power, liberty, or in its unanimity alone, but in all those taken together; because they are all means of leading men to their destiny, by the road of nature.

The final object of nature is the development of powers. Every desire ceases to be urgent in fruition. All elastic bodies become relaxed on distending themselves. Hence the constant circle in the events of the world, the unceasing revolutions of states, and their vicissitudes. Change itself is suitable to the destiny of man, and is also the aim of nature:—save some slight changes, the order of education always continues the same; inasmuch as grown up pupils pass into the wide world, and younger ones fill up the vacancies.

Every form of government, not even excepting the worst of all, favors certain springs of human nature, and puts them in full play; the same as every position of the human body affords a freer motion to certain muscles. Only through a constant shifting of situation and attitude, the human body becomes perfectly formed. The members of a state have various wills, manifold powers; and in the union of them, for the common good, consists the perfection of the government. It is from

the different shades, in which that multiplicity and unity change each other, that the different forms of government arise.

Monarchy limits the multiplicity, in order to introduce the greater unity. It puts its members under restraint, and restricts the free use of their powers; but it does so for the good of the union. The *Republic* is more for multiplicity, and thinks nothing of unity in comparison with it; it leaves the will of the members more freedom, but with some loss in unity. *Despotism* annihilates multiplicity under pretence of the most perfect unity. But under pretence only; for inasmuch as it totally annuls the free will of the members, the state ceases to be a union of moral beings; and we obtain a physical aggregate instead of a moral system. Anarchy decomposes unity, under pretence of the most perfect multiplicity; that is, the most unlimited freedom of the members; but again, under pretence only; for freedom, which has not for its aim the public good, is licentious freedom.

In monarchy, the will of all the members is subjected to the will of the monarch, and in despotic empires to the arbitrariness of the despot. Will depends on reason and its laws; arbitrariness is led by whim and caprice. The monarch rules by *general* laws; the despot by *particular* promptings of the will, and by *peremptory fiats*. According, as in a state

the general laws are more or less obstructed by arbitrary judgments, and prevented from taking effect, so a monarchical form of government will, more or less, incline to despotism. A perfect despotism in a state, according to which every thing is done pursuant to the will of one man, and nothing pursuant to general laws, is impossible in nature.

The subject of a despotic state is not fit to be instructed in politics. All his duties, in the end, come down to unlimited obedience (if, indeed, such a physical necessity may still be called duty). His spring is fear, his rights—Zero.

Of the monarchial subject, too, obedience and submission is required; but only to the sovereign's disposition, not to his arbitrariness; to the general decrees of the only legislator of the state, but not to peremptory fiats, which can escape a despot only. The laws of a monarch demand obedience; his person, love and unlimited confidence; his peremptory fiats (at the utmost, in harmless cases) filial compliance.

The meanest subject must be made acquainted with the laws, to which alone he is to show obedience. He must be instructed in a manner suitable to his capacity, in his duties to all his superiors. But if he is to know his duties, he must also learn what are his rights and qualifications,

which render his existence dear to him, and in default of which there can be no such thing as duties. Duties, without rights—services, without qualifications—are like a weight which is to be raised without any power; an effect without a cause.

And the most inferior class is capable of receiving that instruction. If we think the meanest amongst the people worthy of being instructed in its duties to God and religion (and what is man without that instruction?) they must also admit of being taught their rights and qualifications. The man who lives by the labour of his hands must know his appointment on earth, and learn the means by which he is to acquit himself thereof in human society.

Without religious instruction, man is a ravenous beast; without political instruction, a stray lamb, liable to become a prey to every ravenous beast. When due instruction of God, Providence, and the destination of man has preceded, the dictates of domestic duties are to follow next in order.

Let the humblest man be shown what rights and duties belong to him as a father, son, husband, master, or servant. Let him learn to see, that out of social life man is incapable of happiness either in this world or in the next. The smallest society requires *subordination*. No household can subsist

without subordination. Subordination requires difference of rights and duties; it requires laws and submission, command and obedience. Woe to the household of which all the members have equal power, equal rights, and equal incumbencies!

What has been said of a private household may, with slight alterations, be applied to the state. The happiness of families requires a closer union amongst themselves for a common whole; for a system into which they unite for the sake of promoting their common happiness. There, too, subordination is indispensable. Laws and submission, command and obedience, difference of classes, rights and duties, variety of the relations of the members of the whole, are the cementers, but for which the building would topple into ruins.

After this introduction, we may, with the author of the Treatise on Patriotism (the Prussian Minister of State, Von Sedlitz), bring primary instruction under the following heads, fixed by him for the different classes.

For the lowest class: distinct aphorisms, maxims without demonstration, at most, attested by texts of holy writ. About monarch and subject—duties to the authorities—unconditional obedience to the laws, not to persons—love of and confidence in superiors—qualifications and rights; of man, of the citizen—security of the person and of property

—liberty of conscience—simplicity of manners of that class—domestic peace—innocence—contentment.

For the middle class: Maxims, supported by a scientific connexion with theological and logical arguments—co-operating in the welfare of mankind—influence of trades, commerce, arts, and sciences on the happiness of social life in general, and of the state in particular—comparison of forms of government—pre-eminence of the native form of government—love of country—civic tranquillity and concord—merit and reward.

For the Patrician class: The same form of exposition—international alliances—reciprocal duties and rights of states—maintenance of general order, by laws and administering of justice, by a wise use of power—security of the state—defending its rights—fitness of war—duties of the soldier to the country, to an enemy—self-immolation—glory and posthumous renown.

Note 5.

"La Justice est ce qui est établi, et ainsi toutes nos lois établies seront nécessairement tenues pour justes sans être examinées, puisqu' elles sont établies.

"Il est dangereux de dire au peuple que les lois ne sont pas justes, car il n' obéit qu' à cause qu' il les croit justes. C'est pourquoi il lui faut dire

en même temps qu' il y faut obéir parce qu' elles sont lois, comme il faut obéir aux superieurs, non parcequ'ils sont justes, mais parcequ' ils sont supérieurs. Par là toute sédition est prévenue, si on peut faire entendre cela. Voilà tout ce quec'est proprement que la définition de la Justice."—*Pascal.*

Justice is that which is established for all; and, thus all our established laws will necessarily be held just without being scrutinized, since they are established.

It is dangerous to tell the people that laws are not just; for they obey them ouly because they believe them to be just. This is why we should tell them that they must obey them, because they are laws; the same as we must obey superiors, not because they are just persons, but because they are superiors. In this way all discontent is prevented, as long as people can be made to understand that. In this consists the whole definition of justice.

Note 6.

Pourquoi me tuez vous? Eh quoi! ne demeurez vous pas de l' autre coté de l' eau? Mon ami, si vous demeurez de ce côté, je serais un assasin, cela serait injuste de vous tuer de la sorte; mais puisque vous demeurez de l' autre côté, je suis un brave, et cela est juste. Se peut-il rien de plus plaisant qu' un homme ait droit de me tuer

parce qu' il demeure au-delà de l' eau, et que son Prince a querelle contre le mien, quoique je n' en aie aucune avec lui ?

" En ordonnant la guerre, qui n' est pas nécessaire pour la sûreté de son peuple, un prince se rend responsible de tous les maux qu' elle entraîne, et il est coupable d' autant de meurtres que la guerre fait de victimes. Combien cependant de guerres inutiles sont regardées comme justes, et entreprises sans remords, sur de frivoles motifs d' intérêt politique ou de dignité nationale !

C' est unu sage, reçu en Europe, qu' un gentilhomme vende, à une querelle étrangèr, le sang qui appartient à sa patrie, qu'il s' engage à assassiner, en bataille rangée, qui il plaira au prince qui le soudoie ; et ce métier est regardé comme honorable !"—*Pascal.*

What do you kill me for ? What for ! Don't you dwell on the opposite side of the river ? If you were dwelling on this side I should be a murderer, and it would be wrong to kill you in this manner ; but since you dwell on the other side I am a warrior, and what I do is no more than right. Can there be any thing more ridiculous than that a man shall have a right to kill me, because he dwells on the opposite side of the river, and his sovereign is quarrelling with mine, while I myself am not at the least variance with him ?

When a prince engages in a war, not necessary for the safety of his people, he makes himself responsible for all the evil which it brings forth; and he is guilty of as many murders as there have men fallen victims to it. And yet how many unnecessary wars are considered just, and are undertaken without remorse from frivolous motives of political interest or national dignity?

It is a custom accepted in Europe, that a gentleman sells to a foreign quarrel, the blood which ought to be consecrated to his own country; that he engages to be a wholesale assassin, in what is termed fair battle, to please the prince, who pays him wages. And that trade is considered an honorable one!

Note 7.

"Nous ne tenons jamais au présent. Nous anticipons l'avenir comme trop lent, et comme pour le hâter, ou nous rappelons le passé pour l'arrêter comme trop prompt, si imprudens que nous errons dans les temps qui ne sont pas à nous; et si vains, que nous songeons à ceux qui ne sont point, et laissons échapper sans reflexion le seul qui subsiste. C'est que le présent d' ordinaire nous blesse; nous le cachons à notre vue, parce qu' il nous afflige, et, s'il nous est agréable, nous regrettons de le voir échapper. Nous tachons de le soutenir par l'avenir et ne pensons qu' à disposer les choses

qui ne sont pas en notre puissance pour un temps ou nous n' avons aucune assurance d'y arriver.

"Que chacun examine sa pensée ; il la trouvera toujours occupée au passé et à l' avenir. Nous ne pensons presque point au présent; et si nous y pensons, ce n' est que pour en prendre la lumière pour disposer l' avenir. Le présent n' est jamais notre but. Le passé et le présent sont nos moyens; le seul avenir est notre objet. Ainsi nous ne vivons jamais, mais nous esperons de vivre."—*B. Pascal.*

We never stick to the present. We anticipate the future, as too tardy; and as if to press it on, or recal the past, to detain it, as if slipping away too fast. We are unwise enough to roam in times which are not ours, and not to think on the only ones which belong to us. We are frivolous enough to mind the eras which are not, and to let escape, without reflecting, the only one which does exist. It is, because commonly the present is repugnant to us; we hide it from our view, because it vexes us, and when it is agreeable to us, we regret to see it depart. We seek to keep it up by the future, and think nothing of disposing of things which are not under our control, for a time which we have not the least certainty of reaching.

Let every one examine his thoughts; he will find them constantly engaged on the past and

future. We almost never think on the present; and if we do, it is only to take from it hints how to manage the future. The present never is our scope. The past and present serve us as means; and the future only is our object. Thus we never live, but constantly hope to live. On which Voltaire remarks:

"Il est faux que nous ne pensions point au présent; nous y pensions en étudiant la nature, et en faisant toutes les fonctions de la vie: nous pensons beaucoup aussi au futur. Remercions l'auteur de la nature de ce qu' il nous donne cet instinct qui nous emporte sans cesse vers l' avenir. Le trésor le plus précieux de l'homme est cette espérance qui adoucit nos chagrins, et qui nous peint des plaisirs futurs dans la possession des plaisirs présens. Si les hommes etaient assez malheureux pour ne s' occuper jamais que du présent, on ne sémerait point, on ne batirait point, on ne pourvoirait à rien, on manquerait de tout au milieu de cette fausse jouissance. Un esprit comme Pascal pouvait-il donner dans un lieu commun comme celui-là? La nature a établi que chaque homme jouirait du présent en se nourissant, en faisant des enfans, en écoutant des sons agréables, en occupant sa faculté de penser et de sentir, et que, en sortant de ces états, souvent au milieu de ces états même, il penserait au lendemain, sans quoi il

périrait de misère aujour d' hui. Il n' y a que les enfans et les imbéciles qui ne pensent qu' au présent; faudra-t-il leur ressembler?"

It is not true that we do not think on the present; we do think on it while we are studying nature, and while we are performing all the functions of life: we also think a good deal on futurity. Let us be thankful to the author of nature for that he gave us that instinct, which incessantly carries us away to futurity. That hope which assuages his afflictions, and paints future pleasures in the enjoyment of the present, is the most precious treasure man possesses. If men were unfortunate enough never to occupy themselves but with the present, they would not sow, build, plant, or see to any thing, and along with that seeming possession, every thing would be wanting. How could a mind like Pascal give in to such a common place? Nature ordained that every man shall enjoy the present, while eating and drinking, propagating his species, listening to agreeable sounds, exercising his thinking and judging faculties, and that when getting out of those states, and often while in those very states, he shall think of tomorrow, else he would perish of misery, to-day. None but children and simpletons think of the present only; are we to be like them?

Note 8.

L'an Deux Mil Deux Cent Quarante, by Mercier.

Note 9.

In Mishna (Ethics of the Fathers, b. 4.) it is said "Make not the study of the law subservient to thy aggrandizement; neither make a hatchet thereof, to hew therewith, &c. for whosoever receiveth any profit or emolument from the words of the law, depriveth himself of life." Maimonides remarks thereon: "The meaning of this is, Do not pursue learning as a trade, to make a living of it. The truly pious and wise men of antiquity voluntarily chose poverty; they never would be paid for their instruction in the sciences, but did every thing gratuitously. Thus Hillel, a celebrated Talmudist, and very virtuous man, subsisted by hewing wood; no doubt but his contemporaries would have paid his instruction munificently, if he had accepted it (Talmud. T. Joma). A certain Carna, a judge in the Holy Land, got his living by water-carrying. When suitors appeared before him, he would say: "First, get me somebody to draw water instead of me, then I shall decide your cause, according to the law." Rabbi Joseph carried large bundles of wood from one place to another; "I have taken up a very handy business," would he say, "it maintains me, and keeps me warm into the bargain."

Maimonides speaks here only of such occupations as were considered by the common people low and degrading; and therefore, says nothing of a number of very eminent Talmudists, who were tailors, shoemakers, bakers, &c. by trade. Besides Talmud says (Tract. Kidushin) "he, who does not bring his son up to a trade, trains him to a robber."

By the way, Talmud contains a surprising variety of interesting, instructive, and highly moral things, which no doubt were *undesignedly* omitted in the fragments of it, translated into English, and ublished under the auspices of a certain company established for making of libertine or ignorant Jews, hypocritical or mechanical Christians, and, as it were, producing Christianity of the dregs and garbage of Jewry; on the same principle as the coarsest paper is made of old rope, bits of woollen rags, and other materials absolutely good for nothing else.

I cannot for a moment entertain the absurd suspicion, justified by nothing like former experience, that the said company wants to expose what it conceives to be the weak sides of a work of so remote an origin, the produce of almost an antipodean clime, and composed under circumstances, and amidst laws, customs, manners, and general notions, so widely differing from the present;

and perhaps, little less than hyperbolical, or, at least, unintelligible to a great portion of the company's second or third rate customers, a work which with all its faults (and where is the human production that has none ?) has outlived nearly two thousand years, still presenting a superb monument of human wisdom, knowledge, and penetration! If this be a deep-laid plan of opposition to the old rabbinical establishment (which, however, I am far from believing), it might prove popular, though not in the least effectual, and perhaps procure the company a monopolizing charter of some pious prince or other, a century and a half ago; but in the one we live in, we cannot discover any possible end which it may serve, except that of saving a soul,—I mean keeping a soul—in the body of some starving zealot-hunters, who if the truth were known, had been themselves Talmudical enthusiasts heretofore; and nine out of ten living by teaching it, until having, from some cause or other best known to themselves, lost the countenance of the saints of their own persuasion, they seek yet to make the most of that said Talmud, amongst the saints of another. So will a ruined and unprincipled spendthrift try to get a living, anyhow, even by the prostitution of his once adored mistress!

What makes me the more stiff-necked, in

believing this not to be an inimical measure against the Talmud, and much less a regular recruiting or electioneering manœuvre, unworthy of the company's, no doubt well-meant, final object, is, that with its capital and influence (which, I nevertheless beg leave to observe, might be devoted to far more philanthropic speculations) it does not engage some Bramins, some Ashantee, or South-Pacific-Ocean Rabbis, some Loyolists, to make extracts from their respective Talmuds, expose also their weak sides, and at the same time, point out in ours, parallel passages about the sacred and venerable institutions of suttees, infanticide, Juggernaut processions, human sacrifices, inquisitions, holy regicide, mental reservation, &c. &c. Now *sutteeism*, in particular, that noble self-immolation to conjugal love and fidelity, that glorious proof of female piety and heroism, would form a powerfully striking contrast to the base, grovelling, and subdued disposition of Jewish females, naturally brought on by the contempt and low estimation, in which they are held by their co-religionists of another sex, as it seems intended to be made to appear from passages, for which the company's jackals have been prowling about Talmud in all directions, with a degree of industry not at all usual with that lazy class. If I may beg the favor of serving the company with a reason, why

the holy rite (or as it is called in the vocabulary of another company) the *national custom* of suttees neither is, nor ever was, known amongst the Jews; we should say, because it is not in nature, that a wife, not unfrequently in her zenith of youth and beauty, would plunge alive amidst a blazing pile of faggots, from affection to a husband, who has been religiously taught to look upon her as an inferior being, as a mere piece of household furniture, and who always was in the habit of treating her as such. This thought, which I have not met with anywhere else, (not even in a German author) may be valuable to anthropologists; and notwithstanding I consider it original, I willingly allow to a company, which is so solicitous of stocking people's heads with new thoughts, the merit of having put it into mine.*

"*Sed tamen amoto quæramus seria ludo.*†" To one more jealous of the company's motives than I am, this evidently studious selection of specimens of rabbinical want of gallantry to the fair sex, would betray as deep a piece of Machiavellism as ever was concocted; no less a scheme than that of sowing the seeds of dissension betwen the two sexes, amongst the Jewish community; and finally

* In Jerusalem, vol. 1. p. 105 and for metaphysics, read anthropology.

† Horace Sat.

of transplanting the roses of Sharon, in the groves of Mount Olivet, by inspiring our females with indignation and disgust at their austere and fanatic taskmasters. Consummate benevolence! Masterly tactics! The simplicity of the dove and the cunning of the serpent. It were high time then, we should seek to avert the calamity which threatens us; that of being bereft of our only consolation, under the hardships of our captivity. Our garden once stripped of the beautiful roses, so pleasant to the eye, and of such exquisite and refreshing fragrance, there are no dances held at Shiloa now, where we might supply the loss. And although daily experience be sufficient to convince our females of the malignity of the aspersions thus cast on us, it will be as well to set their minds completely at ease, by the following article written by one of their brethren, and an admirer of their exemplary conjugal and maternal virtues.*

* *Clenard* in his letters, speaks highly of the beauty of the Jewesses in Fez and Morocco. So are the beautiful Avignon Jewesses extolled.

Winkleman in his history of the arts (no mean authority) declares, that formerly, the countenances and form of the Jewesses were such as might have served for beautiful models. He observes, with Joseph Scaliger, that no flat-nosed were found amongst their descendants; "he might have added," says Bishop Gregoire, "that a striking resemblance of children to their parents, is oftener met with amongst the Jews than amongst other nations? *Quid enim?*"

To conclude. One more word to the company. Extracts from Talmud, we repeat, serve no end whatsoever. The intelligent Jew knows perfectly well how to separate the tares from the wheat; to the illiterate Jew, the Talmud is a sealed book; and the Christian consumers of the company's wares have no business at all with it. Besides an attempt to decry that ancient work with the latter, bespeaks but little deference to the reverend founder of their own religion, in whose reputed discourses, a well-versed Talmudist will not be long in discovering how deeply he must have been read in that book. I know I am liable to be charged with pertness, but I ask in return:

"Ridentem dicere verum, quid vetat?"—*Editor.*

* * *

It has been frequently either outright asserted by anti-Judæan writers of a light calibre, that the

In modern times, the beauty of two Jewesses excited particular sensation. One of them, fair Esther, was beloved by Casimir the Great, king of Poland. About a mile from Casimir, the suburb of Cracow, there is a mausoleum called the tomb of Esther. The other, was fair Rachel, the adored of Alphonso VIII. king of Castile. That king issued an edict forbidding the Jews to exercise their religious rites; whereupon the Rabbins advised that a Jewish virgin should be deputed to the king as intercessor. Rachel was chosen to that office, and Alphonso, captivated by her charms, forthwith revoked the decree.

Jewish laws require the female sex to be held in the lowest estimation; or they were temperate enough, to chiefly attribute that bad custom to the manners of the East, the former country of the Jews, where, notoriously, wives—in comparison with those in Europe—hold not a much higher rank than slaves. Now, as far as regards Jewish females, those assertions are totally false, or rest on mere hypothesis of erring sophists. Which are the texts that warrant such an assertion? What though there be passages in the Bible and in Talmud which seem to vouch for the degradation of Jewesses amongst their own nation? indeed, they only seem, or, are at most, mere whims of some morose and tottering graybeard or other, who himself was no longer able to cull a flowret in the road through life; and can by no means be taken as a Norma, whereby to decide the point of Jewish female slavery. There is no evidence of it in the five books of Moses; any more than in the rest of the sacred writings, or in Talmud. With what mildness, cordiality and affection does not Solomon speak of the excellencies of a wife, to which he devotes the last chapter of his Proverbs, concluding it with the fine verse שקר החן והבל היפי, אשת יראת־ה׳ התהלל i. e. "Favour is deceitful, beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." There certainly are other

passages, in which the wise monarch, the greatest of former Eastern sages,* thinks less favourably of women; but probably these are only reflexions, which crossed his mind in pensive moments, or while in a moody temper, when everything else presented itself to him in sombre colours; or—as Mr. Mendelssohn thinks in his Hebrew commentary on Ecclesiastes, (chap. vii.)†—because he had

* "He was wiser than all men." 1 Kings. iv.

† When King Solomon found that his wives were turning away his heart from his God, he felt contrite, repented of his doings, and in the height of his vexation, uttered those contemptuous words about women; whom he considered the cause of the wrong he himself had been doing, in transgressing the divine command. He likened sensual desires to woman, and pronounced her more bitter than death itself. He further says: "one man in a thousand, have I found; but a woman among all those, have I not found." Having a thousand wives, namely, seven hundred princesses, and three hundred concubines, and not a blameless one amongst them! However, it is more becoming a sensible man to believe, that the king, on scrutinizing his conduct; must see, that if, agreeable to the commands of God, he had taken one wife, or only a few, he probably, would have met with a good helpmate, as many others have, who had not reached that sage's elevation in life. For there are good and bad women, as well as good and bad men. But as king Solomon had left the golden middle course, and launched into extremes, by taking a thousand wives; no marvel that he did not find in any single one of them, that help or love, that attachment and conjugal felicity, which ought to be the lot of him who takes only one. Besides, God had commanded kings not to take too many wives. And if polygamy was not for-

to form a comparison between the relative merits of a thousand; whereas if he had known only one well, he would have been better able to find out her good qualities, and duly appreciate them. In the times of the prophets, women certainly were highly honored and esteemed among the Jews. Who has not read of high-spirited Deborah, the holy, the inspired poetess, the prophetess of her nation? See what the prophet Malachi says about the sanctity of marriage in a particular chapter (ii.), which he so beautifully begins with "Have we not all one father, has not one God created us all? Then why do we act treacherously to one another, &c." and goes on: "ye cover with tears, with sighs and moans, the altar of the Lord; so that he no longer looks at the sacrifices, no longer receives any thing acceptable at your hands. Ye say: Wherefore? Because the Lord is witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, to whom thou actest treacherously, and yet she is thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. And did he not make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a Godly seed. Therefore take heed to your Spirit, and let none deal treacherously. For the Lord, the God of Israel

bidden to common men, perhaps for moral or political reasons, still it is best for man to be contented with one wife.

saith that he hateth putting away; therefore take heed to your spirit that ye deal not treacherously." But the Talmudists, it is objected, for all that speak very reproachfully of women. So they do, would I say, if I were one of those complying sycophants, who are so ready to condemn those men without hearing them; but my motto is, *suum cuique.* Here, the same as frequently of other things, the Talmudists are quite wrongly accused; for they actually respected women to a high degree, and did perfect justice to their worth. And if we meet with passages, which have a face of contradicting that assertion, they certainly are not properly understood, or wilfully misrepresented. But did not the Talmudists expressly say and establish as a maxim: כל המלמד את בתו תורה כאלו מלמדה תפלות i. e. "Whoever teaches his daughter *Thora* (the law or sciences) teaches her folly?" To be sure, they said so; but, what else did they mean by it, but he who crams his daughter's brain with a prolix exposition of the Mosaic or ceremonial law, teaches her something unsuitable to the calling of a woman; and again, he who teaches her abstract sciences, makes of her an impertinent reasoner, who, at last, neglects her duties as a housewife, and scoffs at all positive ceremonial laws; inasmuch as from the nature of a woman, a deep and methodical study of those subtile matters,

neither is nor can be a business for them; and also because in the opinion of the Talmudists, women are, for those things, less steady than men? Accordingly, the Talmudists, at least the more intelligent ones amongst them, did not by any means entertain a mean opinion of the female sex.* Out of respect to their merits, in regard to domestic affairs, they even exempted them from almost all ceremonial laws, which are bound to time;† and their observing them notwithstanding, is no more than a mere aping of the religious proprieties of males, of which they even do not know the meaning. The Talmudists rather wanted to circumscribe the sphere of women to household duties; and, therein, surely they were not unjust to them; for where does woman appear to greater advantage, but where she can duly discharge the duties of her vocation? Granted that here and there the precepts of domestic duties, given by the Talmudists to females, have been framed somewhat after the oriental fashion: but are they so very sacred that they may not be modified and remodelled, in conformity with changed circum-

* "Honor women, for then you will get rich." (Talmud Tract. Kidushin.)

† Time, thought the Talmudists, is much too precious to women for the discharging of their household duties, than to be wasted on ceremonial worship.

stances? Nay, has not this been done already long ago? Nevertheless there also are very good religious precepts for married life, which are not known to the generality, and of which I shall mention only the following: namely, a married man is not to undertake distant journeys for a whole twelvemonth after the wedding, that he may not, thereby, grieve his wife. And several more the like.

And now there is yet another stumbling-block to be got over, namely, the daily prayer: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God! King of the universe, who hath not made me a woman." At which great surprise has been expressed by many a one, and even by the venerable and liberal French Bishop Gregorie, in his excellent works. However, the words of the late Mr. *Isaac Euchel* may serve to help us over it: "We should form a very wrong judgment of the Rabbins," says he, in a note to his German translation of the daily prayers of the Jews, "if we were to seek for the foundation of this prayer in their contempt of the female sex. Whoever is acquainted with the writings of the Rabbins, knows how strongly they every where recommend the highest respect for that sex, to which we are indebted for so many comforts, for nursing, rearing, and a great part of our moral education. When we males are praising

the Creator for not having made us women, we, thereby, mean, for not being subject to those natural aches and inconveniences to which they are. Females, on the contrary, express their thanks to their Creator, according to the wise lesson: "That we are to receive evil at the hand of God, as thankfully as we receive good," by substituting, in this place: "Blessed art thou, O Lord, our God! king of the universe, who hath made me according to his will."

It will, therefore, be seen, that to forbear acknowledging women as amiable and excellent partners through life, is no principle of, but either an ignorant or a traitorous aspersion on, the Talmud.

Note 10.

"Les crimes, regardés comme tels, font beaucoup moins de mal à l' humanité que cette foule d' actions criminelles qu' on commet sans remords, parceque l' habitude, ou une fausse conscience, nous les fait regarder comme indifférentes ou même comme vertueuses.

"Combien, depuis Constantin, n' y a-t-il pas eu de princes qui ont cru servir la divinité en punissant, de supplices cruels, ceux de leurs sujets qui l' adoraient sous une forme différente?

Combien n' ont-ils pas cru être obligés de proscrire ceux qui osaient dire leur avis sur ces grands

objets, qui intéressent tous les hommes, et dont chaque homme semble avoir le droit de décider pour lui-même ?

" Combien de législateurs ont privés des droits de citoyen quiconque n' etait pas d'aune avec eux sur quelques points de leur croyance, et forcé des pères de choisir entre le parjure et l' inquiétude cruelle de ne laisser à leurs enfans qu'une existence precaire ? Et ces lois subsistent ! Et les souverains ignorent que chaque mal qu' elles font est un crime pour le prince, qui les ordonne, qui en permet l'exécution, ou qui tarde de les détruire ?" *Pascal.*

Crimes, considered as such, do much less harm to humanity than the multitude of criminal actions which are committed without remorse, because habit, or an erroneous conscience, causes them to be looked upon as of no consequence, or even as virtuous.

How many princes have there not been since Constantine, who believed they were serving God by inflicting cruel punishment on those of their subjects who worshipped him in a form different from their own ? How many have they not thought themselves bound to proscribe, for having dared to express their opinions on those important subjects which interest all men, and on which every man seems to have a right to judge for himself?

How many legislators have not deprived of the rights of citizens, whoever did not agree with them in some points of their creed, and forced parents to the alternative of perjuring themselves, or to the anguish of leaving their children a precarious subsistence? Yet such laws do exist! Yet sovereigns do not know that the evil done thereby lays on the conscience of the prince who sanctions their being carried into execution, or who does not immediately repeal them.

Note 11.

"Bayle a très-bien prouvé que le fanaticisme est plus pernicieux que l'Athéisme, et cela est incontestable; mais ce qu'il n'a eu garde de dire, et qui n'est pas moins vrai, c'est que le fanaticisme, quoique sanguinaire et cruel, est pourtant une passion grande et forte qui éleve le coeur de l'homme, qui lui fait mépriser la mort, qui lui donne un ressort prodigieux, et qu'il ne faut que mieux diriger pour en tirer les plus sublimes vertus; au lieu que l'irreligion, et en général l'esprit raisonneur et philosophique, attache à la vie, effémine, avilit les ames, concentre toutes les passions dans la bassesse de l'intérêt particulier, dans l'abjection du *moi* humain, et sappe ainsi à petit bruit les vrais fondements de toute société; car ce que les intérêts particuliers ont de commun est si peu de chose, qu'il

ne balancera jamais ce qu'ils ont d'opposé. Si l'athéisme ne fait pas verser le sang des hommes, c'est moins par amour pour la paix que par indifférence pour le bien ; comme que tout aille, peu importe au prétendu sage, pourvu qu'il reste en repos dans son cabinet. Ses principes ne font pas tuer les hommes ; mais ils les empêchent de naître, en détruisant les moeurs qui les multiplient, en les détachant de leur espèce, en réduisant toutes leurs affections à un secret égoisme, aussi funeste à la population qu'à la vertu. L'indifférence philosophique ressemble à la tranquillité de l'état sous le despotisme : c'est la tranquillité de la mort, elle est plus destructive que la guerre même."—*J. J. Rousseau.*

Bayle has very well proved that fanaticism is more pernicious than Atheism ; and so it undoubtedly is ; but what he took care not to say, and which is no less true, is, that fanaticism, although cruel and blood-thirsty, is nevertheless a great and powerful passion, which elevates the heart of man, makes him despise death, and gives him a prodigious impetus, which we have only to give a better direction in order to obtain the most sublime virtues from it ; whereas irreligion and an arguing and philosophic habit, in general make man fond of life and effeminate, debase the mind, concentrate all the passions in the meanness of

private interest, in the despicableness of self, and thus slowly undermine the true foundation of all society; for what private interests have in common is so little, that it will never balance that in which they are opposed to each other. If Atheism does not cause the shedding of human blood, it is less out of love of peace than from an indifference to what is right. It matters not to the pretended philosopher how the world goes on, so that he can sit quiet in his study. His principles do not occasion the death of men; but they prevent their being born, by destroying the morals tending to their increase, by disengaging them from their species, and by reducing their affections to a secret egotism, equally fatal to population and to virtue. Philosophical carelessness is like unto the tranquillity of a state under a despotic government: it is the tranquillity of death; it is even more destructive than war itself.

Note 12.

What is superstition? I answer briefly: the believing any thing which is inconsistent with, and contradictory to, the rules of common sense. In regard to the object of superstition, it may be divided into spiritual, and (provided the expression be a fit one) into temporal superstition. The former relates particularly to religion, and consists in this; that the superstitious will take for religion,

for something holy, venerable, and divine, what, according to the rules of reason, cannot be so.

—— Nothing is easier than to earn the approbation of the divinity, by a strict observance of outward ceremonies; but to act according to the principles of virtue, to subdue one's passions, to renounce one's selfishness, one's revenge, one's avarice—to resist the temptations of luxury; there is where the difficulty lies. To mortify one's flesh, put up with this or that restraint, lacerate one's body with scourging, or pass one's life in perpetual solitude, as the saints did during the greater half of the Christian era; why, properly considered, all that is not so very difficult. In that, too, it is true, a man must give up many passions and favourite inclinations; but on the other hand, he finds a recompense in thereby gratifying the greatest and fiercest of human passions, his ambition. The odour of sanctity and piety, in which he thereby gets with his fellow-men; the thought of thereby obtaining the particular approbation of God, of ascending a higher step in heaven, is too sweet, too flattering, that for the sake of it he would not submit to still greater sacrifices. Here, therefore, it is passion that conflicts with passion, within him; no wonder then, that the stronger obtains the preference. But it is not so with a rigid observance of moral precepts.

There only reason conflicts with passion, argument with fierce desires, while no external recompense follows victory; nay, sometimes, perhaps the reverse does. Such a conflict often costs the greatest exertion, and requires far more resignation than all the unnatural treatment to which one subjects one's body.

In cases when the practice of a virtue comes in collision with a ceremonial law, the former will, with an ordinary man, frequently be frustrated; and that, because the latter is by him considered the more important of the two, while it is also by far the easiest. It may, therefore, be justly maintained, that religious superstition is very prejudicial and degrading to religion itself.

But then, is every outward ceremony in religion superstition? Is it to be absolutely without outward usages? By no means. A religious ceremony is superstition, only when it wants to be more than it really is; when it places itself on the throne due to the goddess whom it is only to serve as embellishment. In this only lies superstition; for so long as man continues a frail creature, a creature clinging to sense, so long he will be obliged to have a religion connected with sense; for him who never can be all spirit, no purely spiritual religion will do. Yet the ceremonies prescribed to him by religion, must never be

represented to him as the end, as religion itself; but as the means of promoting a higher end; and they also must be qualified to promote that higher end. This is no other than to animate in us religious feeling, to kindle us into fervent love and adoration of God, and to fortify our virtue; and the ceremonies which may gain that end are public divine worship, and the celebration of religious festivals, which recall to our memory the bounties received of God, and invite us to offer up to him our thanks by word and deed. Such ceremonies, if adapted to the purpose, bear, as it were, a divine character; they are every way suitable to both the sensible and spiritual nature of man, for they only operate on the former to elevate the latter; they excite imagination in order to give a more intense ardour to feeling, and to transplant it to the proximity of the Godhead. They are, therefore, not only admissible, and not injurious to the essence of religion, but, on the contrary, absolutely necessary to it; and so much so, that without them, religion cannot be what it should be, a daughter of heaven, who inspires us with feelings of devotion, of love, and admiration of, and gratitude to, the first grand cause; as well as with enthusiasm for every thing that is good and noble.

It is acting diametrically against the will of God, to be for ever abiding with iron stubbornness, by

what might be good and to the purpose, many hundred years ago, and without enquiring whether it be also suitable to present circumstances, to present notions and ideas, and modifying it accordingly. If this be not done, we exchange the shell for the kernel; retain the former and thereby lose the latter: religion more and more loses the character of spirituality, it is no longer religion, and its whole efficacy for the amendment and improvement of the heart is lost. These truths are so plain to man's understanding, that it is surprising there should still be any necessity of telling them. But so is man; with him it becomes easier to sense, to earn, as he imagines, God's approbation, by a scrupulous adherence to the precepts of his religion which relate to ceremonies, than by moral virtues; and therefore, he sticks to them with obstinacy, which entirely blinds him, as to their true purpose, their intrinsic meaning, and causes him to believe, that he is a being acceptable to God, if he but say his prayers at stated times, if he keep frequent fasts, and regularly mortify his flesh; whether his heart be amended, whether he discharge the duties of philanthropy, justice, integrity, and self-denial: *that* he cares far less about; in his sight those are only secondary matters. O, when will mysticism vanish from the earth; when will the sun of true enlightenment, at length,

pierce the darkness; when will the delusive mist vanish from before our eyes; when shall we learn to see what does really serve for our peace, for our true perfection?

Note 13.

De combien de douceurs n'est pas privé celui a qui la religion manque? Quel sentiment peut le consoler dans ses peines? quel spectateur anime les bonnes actions qu'il fait en secret? quelle voix peut parler au fond de son ame? quel prix peut il attendre de sa vertu? comment doit il envisager la mort?

Un heureux instinct me porte au bien, une violente passion s'éleve; elle a sa racine dans le même instinct, que ferai-je pour la détruire?

De la considération de l'ordre, je tire la beauté de la vertu, et sa bonté de l'utilité commune; mais que fait tout cela contre mon intérêt particulier, et lequel au fond m'importe le plus, de mon bonheur aux dépens du reste des hommes, ou du bonheur des autres aux dépens du mien? Si la creinte de la honte on du châtiment m'empêche de mal faire pour mon profit, je n'ai qu'à mal faire en secret, la vertu n' a plus rien à me dire, et si je suis surpris en faute, on punira, comme à Sparte, non le délit, mais la mal-adresse. Enfin, que le caractere et l'amour du beau soit empreint par la

nature au fond de mon ame, j'aurai ma regle aussi long-temps qu'il ne sera par défiguré; mais comment m'assurer de conserver toujours dans sa pureté cette effigie intérieure qui n' a point parmi les Etres sensibles de modelle auquel un puisse la comparer? Ne sait-on pas que les affections désordonnées corrompent le jugement ainsi que la volonté, et que la conscience s' altere et se modifie insensiblement dans chaque individu, selon l'inconstance et la variété des préjugés? Adorons l'Etre éternel, d'un souffle nous détruirons ces fantômes de raison qui n'ont qu'une vaine apparence et fuient comme un ombre devant l'immuable vérité.

L' oubli de toute religion conduit à l' oubli des devoirs de l'homme. *J. J. Rousseau.*

What comforts does he not miss who has no religion? What thoughts can solace him in his troubles? What spectator applauds the good actions which he does in secret? What voice can speak from the bottom of his soul? What reward has he to expect for his virtue? How is he to face death?

A happy instinct inclines me to be virtuous; but a vehement passion starts up; it has its root in the same instinct, what shall I do to subdue it? From a consideration of order, I imply the beauty of virtue; and from general utility, its goodness; but of what effect is all that against my private

interest, and what, in the main, is of still greater consequence to me, against my happiness at the expense of the rest of mankind, or the happiness of others at the expence of my own? If the fear of disgrace or punishment prevent me doing wrong for my benefit, I have only to do wrong in secret, virtue then can have nothing to say; and if I am found out, they will, as at Sparta, not punish the offence, but the awkwardness. In fine, let the character, and the love of what is good and fair, be impressed by nature in the bottom of my soul, then I shall have a rule to go by, as long as it is not disfigured: but how can I be sure of always preserving in its purity, that inward image, of which no likeness is found amongst sensible beings, by which it may be compared? Do we not know that inordinate affections corrupt the judgment as well as the will; and that in every age, every people, and every individual, conscience imperceptibly changes, and undergoes modifications, according to the inconstancy and multiplicity of prejudices? Let us adore the Supreme Being, and we shall, with a single breath, overthrow these phantoms of reason, which assume only a false appearance, and vanish like a shadow before immutable truth.

Total neglect of religion leads to neglect of the duties of man.

Note 14.

The abilities of man are either innate or acquired; natural or artificial. There is great risk of confounding those different divisions. Suppose Marcus Aurelius's nurse had substituted her own child for the prince, directly after his birth; the citizen child would, therefore, have enjoyed the same education, which, as it was, Marcus Aurelius had the same in every respect, the same physically as well as morally. And yet we admit that he would not have become perfectly the same emperor: either better or worse: suffice it; he would, it is true, have become like him, but not perfectly the same.

So far as the abilities were acquired, they must be the same in both; for the same causes produce the same effects; but so far as they were innate, there might be some difference in them. The question may therefore arise: whether the substituted Marcus Aurelius, too, would have become a virtuous man, or whether he might have an innate disposition, in consequence of which he may, in spite of education, have become a Caius Caligula or some such infamous being?

But that which is acquired, may have been acquired either naturally or artificially. A production is natural to the soil, when it grows

without the assistance of man; but that which requires care and cultivation is called artificial, and is a product of industry. When we are speaking of man himself, every habitude is natural to him, which he acquires without designed training or learning, which he acquires and possesses *tanquam aliud agendo*, without having premeditated it; but so far as intentional and apposite preparation, training and learning must be gone through in order to realize a certain degree of habitude, so far that habitude is called artificial. The more designed training a certain habitude requires, the more appositely and regularly that training must be gone through, the more artificial the habitude; the less, the more natural.

Whether there are naturalists in virtue; that is, whether one may, without intentional study of virtue, without intentional learning and training regulated by rules and precepts, become a virtuous man, I suppose, is not of the question. But whether virtue may be learned at all, I should think admits of an inquiry: and then next, whether it may be compared to a science, or to an art. In other words; how much is, in regard to morality, to be placed to the account of the judging faculties; and if they are not able to do all, what besides does contribute to one's endeavoring to acquire a habitude in virtue?

That judgment alone is not sufficient, is evident from the striking examples of heroic miscreants, who united with the judgment of angels the propensities of devils. What was there in the way of their judging faculties, that they exercised themselves more in vice than in virtue?

And yet those heroic miscreants, were after all, but fools. No blockheads, it is true, but still infatuated wretches, who wrought their own destruction. They sought happiness, and perhaps theoretically knew what happiness was; yet acted practically, as if they did not seek it, or had no notion of it. How is this riddle to be solved?

If it be said that a weak judgment accompanied by impetuous desires constitutes a disposition to vice, a stronger judgment along with slow desires must form a disposition to virtue; and yet there exists no eminent virtue without strong desires.

We approach somewhat nearer the mark, by placing the disposition to vice in an excess of desire over judgment. Want of proportion between judgment and desire produces, where there is an excess of judgment, stoical indifference; where there is an excess of desire, viciousness.

However, the psychological divisions of the soul, seem, upon the whole, not yet sufficient to account for that moral phenomenon. The word judgment is too general a one. There are various sorts of judgment, of which one man may possess this, and

another that; the same as there must be one kind of imagination for the poet, and another for the painter, the sculptor, and the architect. The good-natured simpleton must possess a sort of judgment, which the most crafty knave wants. He sees that man cannot be happy himself, without promoting the happiness of others. Perhaps he does not know how to set about to promote the happiness of others; and perhaps uses the most unfit means. Still he feels that man cannot be comfortable while others are in distress; nay, that he himself is comfortable, the more comfortable he makes others. Can Cæsar Borgia, with all his diabolical acuteness, have had that judgment, that moral sort of penetration? Give the musical professor all the imagination of the poet, and he will still continue an indifferent composer, if he do not possess the sort of imagination which suits his subject, and the exigencies of his art. The name imagination is a general one; but every virtuoso has need of his peculiar imagination. And so it is with judgment.

The custom of language makes a distinction between judgment and feeling, between prudence and good-naturedness. Philosophy, it is true, may possess more acuteness than the common usage of language, but it seldom has more wits. It should not throw again into confusion, what the other has made plain. And although, as the Determinist

must admit, it all in the end comes down to judgment, still judgment is not all of the same sort and quality. Every moral action requires two different sorts: judgment of the end and judgment of the means. The former is beneficence; and, when it is not distinctly recognised, but only felt, good-nature; the latter is called prudence. Both united are wisdom. The wise man unites prudence to beneficence. He is firmly resolved to work as much happiness as he can, and knows how to select the means to accomplish it. But I shall be sure not to deny good-natured simplicity all virtue; even when, with the best of meaning, it does harm, it has a greater share of real virtue, greater merit, than the useful miscreant. I beg leave to pursue these thoughts, although they do not immediately belong to the question before us.

Our own happiness is the final aim of all our wishes. We attain it, partly directly, by endeavoring to increase our own corporeal and intellectual perfection; partly indirectly, by promoting happiness, by rendering others perfectly happy, and thereby feeling happy ourselves. We ourselves are either the aim and the object at once; or we are only the final aim; but the object is a being beside us, in whose happiness we take an interest. The former inspires us with self-love; the latter with love of others. Without self-love, love of others

cannot subsist; for it would be an object without a final aim: without love of others, there is no such thing as satisfying self-love; for self-love indispensably requires also objects beside ourselves.

In respect to self-love, prudence and wisdom coincide; and there is no difference between the fool and the knave. We have all the will to promote our own welfare, we must have it; and we are only mistaken in the choice of the best means. How does that happen? I think in this manner.

We sin against self-love, or transgress our duty to ourselves, mostly by a kind of wrong calculation. The present operates powerfully; the voluptuary sacrifices the future to it, and certainly will repent of it, whenever the present shall be expired, and the future approach. In a similar manner, the visible is preferred to the invisible. The visible makes a forcible impression, as long as the craving is not satisfied; the grossly sensual yields to it, although he knows better, and neglects the perfecting of the mind. The miser, too, makes wrong calculations. His imagination represents to him his wants greater, and his means smaller, than they really are: and in every expenditure, final poverty stares him in the face. All those errors of calculation we may, if we like, attribute to a weakness of judgment; but certainly it is only a certain judgment, a certain degree of it, which these unhappy people are destitute of.

The virtues of self-love chiefly consist in the habitude of weakening, according to the directions of virtue, the impressions of the present, the visible; and of strengthening those of the absent, the invisible; in order that the spell may cease, and the understanding be no longer prevented from comparing the present to the absent, the visible to the invisible, and from striking a balance. A control over feeling, and the power of weakening its impression by reason, is stoicism. The habitude of feeling the absent with the vivacity of the present, the invisible with the vivacity of the visible, is enthusiasm. From this it will be seen, why even the duties of self-love require a certain degree of enthusiasm, in order that stoicism may not be pushed to an extreme on the other side.

The social virtues are founded on a similar habitude of inspiring the cold virtue of the stoic philosopher with the fire of the enthusiast, and of forming a comparison between, and duly calculate the remote and the near, the immediate and the mediate. The lowest degree thereof is love of posterity, of one's family in general, which man considers as a continuation of himself; and the readiness to sacrifice sometimes to that love private interest itself. The brute creation possess a certain degree of it, by a kind of natural instinct, to which we give that name, until we shall have

learned to understand it better; and the commonest and most thoughtless man is capable of it. Nay it has often become a source of the greatest crimes.

As it is a mean vice to place one's little self, in cases of collision, above every thing, and always prefer gross egotism to love of one's family; so may also a predilection for one's family, beyond justice, love of country; and again the latter, beyond the universal love of mankind, obtain an undue preference; and the habitude of conceding that preference become a vice. Enormous crimes are seldom perpetrated for the sake of meeting mere selfish desires, or of gratifying sensual lust only. It is mostly love of one's family, which drowns the voice of humanity, and drives man to become a defrauder, thief, or highwayman. So ambition sometimes will speak louder than country and humanity; nay, at times it is love of country itself, which removes all consideration of justice and philanthropy. Again a kind of error of calculation, which may be called weakness of judgment, but which may very well subsist along with much prudence, with much of *a certain sort* of judgment. Therefore for this, too, the remedy is nothing else but stoicism and enthusiasm:—Stoicism, or a control over nearer relations, the power of lessening their impression, and bestowing on them no more interest than is due to them, according to the rules of

reason and of truth; and enthusiasm, or the power of giving more force and energy to the more distant relations of moral life; of hearkening, like Socrates, to the voice of country and the laws, when love of life, the entreaties of friends, and the tears of one's family deprive one of one's senses; of hearkening, like Regulus, to the voice of the most rigid justice, when the pleadings of one's children, kinsmen, friends, and the country at large unite with love of life, and loudly call for preservation. For the same reason, the sage will be just, nay sometimes inexorably severe, when an ordinary good-natured man would be compassionate; nay, when an otherwise base man would perhaps be sooner mollified. The sage loves not only what he beholds, he is not moved only by what is near, present and visible; but his affection comprehends the latest posterity, alike with those which he carries in his arms; the most distant countrymen, alike with those present; men in the remotest regions and times, alike with his neighbours and acquaintance: he sees with the eye of the mind; and with wise moderation, bestows on every relation of social life, as much interest, as much of his affection, as is due to it in accordance with the whole.

In a word: *the power of resolving feelings into syllogisms, and rendering the conceptions of the under-*

standing plain and intelligible, that, in my opinion, is the grand secret which he must possess, who is ambitious of reaching the summit of heroic virtue.

If we are contented with common notions, we may give judgment credit for all this, and say: In the end, virtue and vice come down to living, diligent, and effective judgment of good and evil; but, surely, it is a sort of judgment which one may possess both with and without remarkable prudence in ordinary life, with or without great knowledge of arts and sciences. Nay, he who considers how limited human powers are, will certainly sooner expect it without, than with, an extraordinary talent of any kind.

What has perhaps not a little contributed to the production of heroic virtue is, that the ancient polities strongly favored both stoicism on the one hand and enthusiasm on the other. In their academies and public instruction, stoicism for the greatest part prevailed; and their liberal arts embodied ideal objects, adapted general abstract ideas to immediate delineation, winged imagination, and promoted enthusiasm for friendship, posthumous fame, country; and a high feeling for what, without enthusiasm, can be expressed in words only.

MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

Note 15.

The cause of religious intolerance, under the bloody scourge of which so many ages have been writhing, indeed, is generally the rudeness of the age; but more particularly, incorrect notions of the Godhead, and of its relation to man. Those incorrect notions must have arisen principally amongst nations who boasted of a revealed religion; for they only could soonest be capable of the arrogant thought, that their ideas were the only true ones, their religion the only divine, and themselves the only favoured people of God; whence the natural conclusion, that other nations, who knew not of that revelation, or who declined admitting it, must be enemies of God, and reprobates. Now, as such, they could not, of course, expect any other treatment, than what they actually met with. I am far from maintaining that the cause of those errors lies in the revelation itself, and from perhaps founding thereon a reproach to that heavenly benefactress of mankind. No; not the religion proclaimed by the Godhead itself, but the wrong notions which the weak understanding of man had of it, in times not irradiated with true enlightenment; the false doctrines which disfigured it—were the cause of the saddest conceit that ever disgraced humanity, a conceit, which like a hideous monster ravaged with

steel claws in the bowels of God's creation, transformed this goodly earth into the most frightful hell, stifled every sense of humanity, mocked the most sacred feelings, sneeringly tore asunder the sweetest, the closest ties, and marked its sanguinary career with carnage, flames, despair, and execration. Again I say, divine religion was not the author of those horrors; not the religion which preaches only the God of love and meekness; not the religion of which the holiest law is: Love thy neighbour like thyself; love thy enemy; bless them who curse thee. It was not religion which put the blood-reeking sword in the hands of the fanatic; it served only as a pretext to malice, revenge, and blood-thirstiness, in order, under the cloak of sanctity, to gratify, with more ease and with greater boldness, the most unbridled passions.

The first wrong notion, which they who believed themselves in possession of a divine religion revealed by God, deduced from it was, that they fancied God had thereby given them a preference to the rest of mankind, had chosen them exclusively as his favorites, and that they alone were deserving of his blessings and benefactions. If this notion were correct, it might justly be concluded from it, that they who were not favored with the happiness of a revelation, must have been less beloved by

God, less considered by him as his children; and from this idea, once excited, it certainly is not far to the other; viz. that they who will not let themselves be persuaded of God's revelation, who refuse to be received into the bosom of the only saving church, are God's enemies, and are deserving of his ire and punishment; and consequently, could neither be received by his favorites, with the same brotherly love as their own co-religionists; but, on the contrary, must be objects of hatred to them. They must have believed, that they could not more warmly evince their zeal for the true religion, than by using their utmost endeavours to convert the others; and if they could not succeed in it by the mild way of persuasion, even to have recourse to severe means. Excited fanaticism, and the fury of passion, too, now acted parts in the piece; they began to persecute with greater and greater cruelty, and to exterminate from the earth those whom they imagined to be God's enemies, in order that the true religion might flourish the more, and the number of its votaries increase. In this, they reposed on the fanatic maxim, that the end sanctifies the means; and in order to attain that end, they stuck at no means, however unlawful and atrocious. Now if these conclusions necessarily follow from these premises, we think it is worth while to examine somewhat more narrowly their correct-

ness; for if we can prove them false, the whole system built thereon must at once fall to the ground along with them.

Now the assumption of those premises rests on the false notions of the Godhead, which they entertained in the infancy of reason. The idea of a Universal Father of mankind was then, far less than in our times, the prevalent one; fancy could imagine the sublimest of beings no otherwise than according to human conceptions. God was angry, punished, rewarded like a human being; he was jealous of his honour, and avenged himself on those who did not adore him as he wished to be adored; he, on the other hand, selected those who did so for his special favourites, was their God in particular, their Protector, their Father, their Benefactor. That ideas of this kind are any thing but suitable to the exalted dignity of the Godhead, we think scarcely requires demonstration. Even a human parent, if he pretend to be one to the whole extent of the word, will cherish all his children with equal affection, although not treat them in the same manner, but according to the individual character of each of them; but his object with all of them is, to make of them happy and good men. Would the Godhead act differently? Impossible. All men are his children—the Christian, the Jew, neither more nor less than

the Mahometan, the Pagan, and the savage wandering in the lonely desert. He wills that all shall attain the degree of happiness of which their natural disposition renders them capable; but just because they so vary among themselves, he cannot make use of the same means with all. Still he gave them all, without exception, a sure and approved guide, namely, reason, and along with it the principle of morality, of which the voice is sounding in every one's breast, incessantly admonishing him to walk in the road of virtue and rectitude. If he chose some amongst them as particnlar depositaries of his divine will; if he informed them more fully than others of his attributes, of the mode of worship particularly pleasing to him; if he gave them more definite rules of conduct than common human reason perhaps might give them; let them thankfully adore his mercy and inscrutable will, but not proudly magnify themselves above their brethren, with whom, perhaps, he accomplishes the same object in another way more suitable to them; but who, therefore, are not neglected or slighted, nor, as they think, debarred of that particular proof of his providence. Who can fathom the mysteries of the Godhead? Who knows the thousand and thousand ways and means which his wisdom adopts to bring whole nations, as well as single

individuals nearer to their destination? Did he not raise up in every nation, men, who with their mighty minds worked on their contemporaries, who proclaimed to them the great and sublime one, and who strove to enthrone virtue, and effect the downfall of vice? And if they did not boast of the special privilege of revelation, still whom had they to thank for the superiority of their intellectual faculties, but Him, the fountain of all blessings? He designed to work on their contemporaries, through them, as well as through those whom he favored with a more express revelation. He gave them the faculty of becoming teachers of the nations. He so ordered circumstances and relations, that they could make a proper application of those faculties, and failed not to crown their efforts with his blessing. He, thereby, showed men how mistaken they were, who believed that this or that nation was particularly dear and acceptable to him; on the contrary, he thereby made himself known as the father of all men, whom he loves all together, whom he desires to be happy all together.

Another, and as erroneous an idea, which principally spread the spirit of persecution amongst men, was, that a certain particular mode of worship only is acceptable to God; that, therefore, he could love and reward only those who are in

possession of it; and that every other must incur his displeasure. What, then? In the adoration due to God does every thing depend on expression; or does it not rather entirely depend on inward feeling? Can that not be the same by whatsoever form it is excited? Is God like paltry man, who is to be approached only with certain ceremonies and bows, with a certain etiquette of respect? O learn, ye who still cling to the unessential, and on account thereof but too often neglect the essential! learn that the true worship of God consists in the spirit only, that it is not with sacrifices, nor with outward ceremonies, that we must worship him, but with holy feelings of the heart, feelings of gratitude, of love, of adoration of him; with an intense feeling of our dependence on Him, our Father; with full reliance on his care and providence; with true love of virtue, and with irreproachable persuasions and actions; and, as to the manner in which those feelings and affections are expressed, that is a matter of indifference to Him. According to those immutably true principles, we must judge of all the passages of Holy Writ, which seem to contradict those assertions. Thus God caused Moses to prescribe many ceremonies which his adorers were to observe. He would not thereby signify that this mode of adoration, and no other in the

world, was pleasing to him: no; but it was necessary that some ritual law or other should be given to the Israelites, and that they who then were yet infants in judgment, should be linked more firmly to the essential by means of the unessential and gratuitous. He gave them positive ritual laws, because He could, on no account, leave to them, how He was to be worshipped, without exposing them to the risk of neglecting his worship altogether. Those ritual laws were to be distinguished from those of other nations, because He was, in general, pleased to let them have a more perfect knowledge of himself than other nations: they were also to distinguish themselves from them outwardly, that they should be the less in danger of exchanging their superior knowledge for an inferior. For the same reason he forbade them to represent Him visibly in any shape whatsoever; not because that it would have, in any way, derogated from his divineness, if a people, yet weak of understanding, had endeavoured to give, by a visible delineation, greater distinctness to their idea of God, whom they were not yet able to comprehend in his pure spirituality; and to exhibit to the corporeal eye something to which the mind might tie the intuitive perception of the eternal and invisible; but for the sake of preserving the purer and more spiritual ideas

communicated to them, and to prevent their being superseded by those of a more material and sensual nature. It is thus that such and similar commands of God must be reconciled with what reason teaches about him, according to externally true principles. It certainly is not a true principle of religion that reason must be subordinate to the claims of revelation. Has God not given us reason as well as revelation? Is not that which reason once admits as true, eternal and necessary truth, and just as infallible as the Godhead, its author? Has not, on that account, the Lord himself constituted it the sole judge of all our thoughts and actions? Revelation, therefore, neither may nor can contradict it; and whenever it does it does so only in appearance; and we must, by searching after the inward and deeply lodged sense, try to remove the discrepancy; for God can never contradict himself. However, in Holy Writ, he could speak only as with his children, only in a manner that could be intelligible to them, at a period when they were yet but children in understanding and in the faculty of judging. Will not a father speak in quite another manner to a son of fifteen years than he does to one of four; then why should God not observe the same when he is speaking to us? What the father tells the elder, must be expressed in quite other terms than

would be suitable for the younger ; that which is truth, and necessary for the former, is not so for the latter. Just so does God proceed with man. In Holy Writ he speaks only to weak and sensual men of an uncultivated understanding; He had to be regulated by their notions and exigencies, if they were at all to comprehend him, lest they should lose the substance of his laws through the mode of expression. Now the substance alone is the aim of revelation, not the figure, not the expression in which it was clothed. As soon, therefore, as reason has arrived at maturity in a people, it becomes their duty to separate the shell from the kernel; and, surely, it was for this purpose that God gave reason to man; also with regard to revelation, it is the Supreme Judge. Let it not be said that, if so, there would have been no occasion for revelation ; there certainly was occasion for it in the infancy of the human race, in order to guide the understanding into the right path, as early as possible; and to preserve it from great aberrations, there is still occasion for it, notwithstanding men have attained a higher degree of perfection; for the eternal truths of religion cannot be demonstrated to man under too many aspects. As the divinity does not appear to us in a visible form, reason, if it were left quite to itself, would easily fall into doubts as to its claims; whereas if

there be a revelation, and the principles of reason were to coincide with the doctrines thereof, it will, thereby, come to an infallible conviction of its truth. Thus reason and revelation go hand in hand; they support one another, and lead man to one goal; to happiness and truth. That only is to be considered eternal truth, in which both agree; all the rest, in which a seeming discrepancy exists, is unessential, and must be modified according to the principles of the Supreme Judge of all our thoughts and opinions.

But I am too far digressing from the proper object of this article, namely, that of informing the reader of the sources of formerly prevailing intolerance. I wanted to show the absurdity of being intolerant to our fellow-creatures, of scorning, and with bitter hatred persecuting them on account of external difference in religion. Its absurdity and nonsensicality, I believe, will sufficiently go forth from what has already been said; and thus I may pass to that part of the present article, in which I shall prove that the main cause of former intolerance to those of a different opinion, must be looked for in the false notions of the essential and non-essential in religion. When we go through the history of persecutions among the different religious sects, we shall find that all the reproach cast by one party

on another, came down to a difference in what is called dogmas of faith. They did not hate or persecute one, because he was a worthless and immoral character, but because he revered Moses, or Jesus, or Mahomet, as the founder of his religion; because he fixed on Sunday or on Saturday for divine worship; because he was made a member of his church by baptism, or by circumcision; because he considered Holy Writ by itself, or the Talmud in conjunction with it, as the Norma of his creed; because he admitted this and not that ceremony; in short, they worried one another for matters which lie entirely without the essence of religion, and frequently for the slightest and most trivial differences. But then, wherein does the proper essence of religion lie? I answer, without hesitation, not in dogmas of faith; not in ceremonies and solemnities, but solely in morality and in virtue. Of dogmas of faith, there are but very few that can be considered essential, and in them, all men, except a few deluded ones, agree. I mean the dogmas: that there is an only, eternal, first cause, who created the universe, and all that is in it: that our soul is immortal, and that after this life, another state awaits it, in which we shall meet with reward or punishment, according to our deeds; that is, in which we shall be happy or unhappy. In these

Dogmas there exists no difference amongst men; they belong to the eternal truths taught both by reason and revelation. Besides them, the essential of religion lies principally in the law of morality implanted in all men. Man is to be irreproachable in thought, word, and deed; and if he be so, it is of no consequence after what external fashion his religion is clothed. Now, the admitting of those principal dogmas is so closely interwoven with the laws of morality, that the latter cannot subsist nor be observed without the former; while both united, constitute the principle and essence of religion. Men may, therefore, differ ever so much in the external form of their worship, and in religious dogmas, if they but agree with us in those principles (and so they all will, as soon as their understanding is so far cultivated that they can see the truth of them), they are our brethren, whom we are to love, and whose welfare we ought to endeavour to promote. Ah, if this were solicited and studied by every one, as it ought to be solicited and studied, how well the human race would be off! All sectarianism, all ill-will on account of religion would disappear; and what neither councils, nor anathemas, nor Autos da fé could accomplish, would of itself become the salutary result. One God, one religion, one spirit of love and meekness would reign on earth,

and call lost Paradise back to our plains! The names of Jew, Christian, Mahometan, or Pagan, would no longer cause division of its inhabitants: every one would behold in his neighbour only Man, a child of the Universal Father, an heir of future bliss; and in the discharging of his duty towards him, find the highest idea of all that religion requires of him. O that they would once arrive, those glorious times, when not only intolerance to those of different opinions will no longer be met with, but when even the ideas of toleration and abiding will be as foreign to the mind, as the terms will be to the language! For, to tolerate or abide still implies that, in fact, I have a right to do the contrary; but that out of particular magnanimity, I show mercy instead of justice. No: neither must toleration be any longer on earth; for it still supposes a possibility of the reverse: it makes mercy of what is nothing but irremissible duty, what should on no account be otherwise; it makes of the free man a slave; it is high treason to the cause of humanity, an insult to God, who lets his sun rise, and his showers descend, without any distinction, on the just and the unjust, the virtuous and the wicked; on those who fancy to be in possession of the only saving religion, and on those whom they think are excluded from it. Ay; to that it must come at last with

mankind, if they really do pretend to true enlightenment, if they are desirous of attaining the grand object of philanthropy, to strive at which is their destination, the will of their great Creator. Then religion will no longer be a sound without a meaning, an idea containing nothing; but it will be the daughter of the Godhead; the holiest, the noblest thing that man knows of; his trustiest guide through life, his sweetest comforter in the hour of death, his safest conductor to the unknown realm, which he then will anticipate with a cheerful mind.

Note 16.

The celebrated chevalier Michaelis took this passage in great dudgeon; so much so, that he threatened he would write to London about it! This wrung from Mendelssohn the tart remark: "To me, the Jew, the thirty-nine articles of faith of the Anglican church, certainly appear like thirty-nine stripes inflicted on the soul;" alluding to the Mosaic punishment of forty stripes, which maximum the Talmud reduces to thirty-nine; "forty stripes less one." ארבעים חסר אחת Compare Deut. xxv. 3. Mishna, Tract Maccoth, cap. 3; and Paul's Epistle to 2 Corinth. xi. 24.

Note 17.

Apropos of Oaths.—It has been said;—"At any

rate a Jewish functionary could not possibly administer an oath to a Christian." Pray where does the impossibility lie? Do not many Christian functionaries administer oaths to Jews? A Jew who dislikes to pronounce the words "Jesus Christ, &c." where they are introduced in the formula, (if there yet be many such Jews!) no Government will choose as a functionary or magistrate. Intelligent Jews look upon Jesus as a generous enthusiast, whose character in all other respects deserves regard; they therefore think of him, as no doubt many Christian magistrates do. In such transactions as administering an oath, a Jew is not a Jew, nor a Christian a Christian; but they are both magistrates. They treat the party before them, according to his religious views; they bind his conscience in the only manner that conscience admits of being bound; they make him confirm the truth by whatever may be sacred to him. I think nothing can be more plain.

Note 18.

Valentine Tschudi, Catholic pastor at Glarus in Switzerland, who died in 1755, went over to the reformed church, and retained his curacy notwithstanding. As both religious rites were solemnized in his parish, he proposed that one clergyman should suffice for Catholics and Protestants, which

would be a great saving to the parishioners, to whom he offered his services for that purpose, which were accepted. Accordingly he used to perform divine service after the Roman ritual first, and then in Zurich fashion; and as he took particular care to avoid all controversial points, he pleased both parties. Those who wondered at his extraordinary toleration, and taxed him with profligacy, he would ask: "Do you think that because one is a Catholic in the morning, and a Protestant in the evening, one may not be a Christian all day long?"

Note 19.

The high esteem in which Moses Mendelssohn was held by all classes of society, from the monarch down to the mechanic, and the confidence which was placed in his love of truth, is a matter of notoriety. But it is not quite so generally known, although not less remarkable than true, that a divine of the evangelical persuasion, once called upon him in a confidential manner, and made him acquainted with his manifold scruples. Counselled with philosophical gravity, and tranquillized by mild representations, the pastor *did not resign* his spiritual office, as was his intention. This circumstance perhaps stands unparalleled on either side.

Mendelssohn once received a letter from a certain Paul B—s—t, apparently a Roman Catholic. It contained various questions of conscience, about which his opinion was requested. The nature of those questions may pretty well be guessed, from the following reply, which contains abundant seeds of moral definitions, at all times worthy to be themes of thought and enquiry.

"Sir,

"I must confess that I was not a little surprised at the contents of your letter of the 13th of March. What in the name of wonder made you apply just to me, and from Cologne too, on matters of conscience?* To direct you in the path of truth and virtue, there are excellent men enow in your own church, who are deficient neither in judgment nor uprightness. So also there are works, in which those subjects are discussed with skill and strict justice; those desirous of information meet in them with more light and solution than can be conveyed in a letter. Besides, I find that the importation of

* Cologne, at that time a free imperial city, where none but Roman Catholic worship was allowed to be exercised, and which no Jew was suffered to enter on any account; Jews, travelling from Holland to Frankfort or back, were obliged to make a circuit of about fifteen English miles, by crossing the river Rhine at one extremity of the city, and re-crossing it on the other.

philosophical books is not prohibited in your parts. You may therefore read and ponder on what wise men of all nations have thought and written on those points of conscience. How insignificant is what I myself am able to add to that great mass! However, as you appear to have none but the fairest intention, I shall as fairly and in few words answer your queries. The rest must be supplied by your own meditations, and the study of approved authors.

"What I think on the first point is this: *let every one act according to his own convictions, and rest perfectly assured that he will not displease his Creator in doing so.* But there is, at the same time, to be recommended the caution of first most scrupulously using the faculties given us by God. in ascertaining the rationality and stability of such conviction. Whenever this has been done with every possible care and circumspection, we shall no longer have anything to reproach ourselves with, or to fear of our judge, should even our convictions be erroneous at bottom. Mere scruples and doubts, however, ought not to have any influence on our practical morality. As long as we have not arrived at full certainty, we must, so far as practice goes, keep steadfast to the principles to which we were brought up, and which we received of other estimable men. This is our duty to truth,

so far as concerns ourselves. But so far as concerns our neighbours, and how far it is incumbent upon us to communicate to others, truths acknowledged by ourselves—that duty is subject to narrower limits, which I cannot particularize here, nor are they directly relevant to the matter in question. However, it seems to me beyond a doubt that there are immutable truths of which I may be convinced sufficient for my own practical use, and conduct, without being morally obliged to reveal them to—or force them upon—others; nay, at times, I am even morally bound to withhold them.

"Between amorous desire, and other sensual desires, there is principally this line to be drawn. Sensual desire, by its nature, has, throughout, merely pleasure for its object; amorous desire, by the nature of the transaction, aims at more, at the procreation of a sentient being, of a being susceptible of both mental happiness and afflictions. *The wilfully counteracting this aim of nature, when it may be attained, is downright sinning.* This requires no further proof or demonstration. But when nature is left to take its course, both persons place themselves under an obligation to contribute as much as lays in their power, towards the happiness of that sentient being, that is, towards his maintenance, training, and his well-doing in the

world. This joint duty, constitutes of itself a kind of *natural partnership*, and is but one remove from *marriage*. It is further incumbent on the male, as a conscientious duty, to protect the female during pregnancy, and likewise to give her every possible security, that he shall share with her the care and trouble of providing for the child. Here the best security is a legally binding contract; and this is what we call *marriage*. Whatever else civil laws have added to it, is subservient to circumstances, and admits of alteration; but the essential of marriage is founded on the law of nature and of reason. Perhaps there existed few young people, who did not at times sin against this; but they should not forget that sin they did, and not fancy that it was a mere innocent gratification they indulged in. No; the thing is of great and main importance, and alike with every other offence against the laws of God, attended with distressing consequences. And doubly unhappy is the youth, who intoxicates his conscience with specious reasons, with sophisms; and thereby ministers a provocation to passions, fierce and ungovernable enough of themselves.

"Fare you well! and continue to walk with earnestness and zeal, the path of truth and virtue.

I am with great respect,

Your Obedient Servant,

Berlin, April 24, 1773. MOSES MENDELSSOHN.

Note 20.

—— quæro, faciasne, quod olim
Mutatus Polemon? ponas insignia morbi
Fasciolas, cubital, focalia: potus ut ille
Dicitur ex collo furtive carpisse coronas,
Postquam est impransi correptus voce magistri.

Q. Horatii Flacci Satyr: Lib. ii. Sat. 3.

—— I beg to know, if you will act as the reformed Polemon* did of old? Will you lay aside those ensigns of your disease, your rollers, your mantle, your mufflers? As he, in his cups, is said to have privately torn the chaplet from his neck, after he was corrected by the speech of his fasting master.

Note 21.

The following prayer by a Roman Catholic pastor deserves a place here, as a proof of the tolerant dispositions of many Christian clergymen.

A PRAYER FOR THE JEWS.†

"Almighty and Eternal God! I pray to thee, for

* Polemon, a notorious rake, that went drunk into the school of Xenocrates, by whom he was reformed; and afterwards he became his disciple.

† A prayer-book for enlightened Roman Catholics, edited by Philip Joseph Brunner, D.D. and pastor of Tieffenbach and Eichelberg. With approbation of the most reverend the Vicar Apostolic of Bruchsal. Seventh Edition, Heidelberg on the Neckar, 1804, p.326.

the welfare of a scattered nation, which has been made to suffer such great oppression, and so much contempt, particularly in former times. Alas! the troubles of that unfortunate people, seemed to many of us, a triumph of the doctrine of Jesus; and in order to render that triumph the more splendid, they aggravated their afflictions, and destroyed in that bustling race every germ of civil and domestic happiness. The religion of Jesus became hateful to them, because so many of its followers were their perpetual, and as it were, their sworn enemies. Religious pride, so unworthy and inimical, shall never delude and corrupt my heart. Since I, O God! have learned of Jesus, that all men are brethren, I will respect in them, the nature and the rights of man, which they have in common with me. Their misery itself, and their civil degradation, shall always inspire me with the most effective desire to console them, to alleviate their sufferings, and to upraise them from the stunning blow of their former destruction, by my sympathy with their fate. Amen."

As a pendant to the above prayer, I subjoin another, composed by Moses Mendelssohn, in 1779, for a class-book, published by his friend, David Friedlander.

PIOUS EJACULATION OF A PHILOSOPHER.

"Infinite being! Creator of all the worlds! Father of all the Spirits! Father of the angels, of man, and also of the worm! To thee all natures owe their substance, their existence and their preservation. Thou impartest of thy divine attributes to the finite; thou givest the clod, reality; the plant, life; the brute animal, enjoyment; and man, the privilege of knowing good from evil, and of acknowledging thee, O Father of all! But thy infinite goodness preserves and sustains also him, who confoundeth good with evil, and also the more unhappy one who denieth thee, and saith, there is no God! For thou rulest choiceless nature only with constraining Omnipotence; but to the world of spirits thou hast left liberty and free agency, which with paternal mildness, thou gently directest to a final purpose.

"The vicious man who is a slave of his passions, it is true, troubleth the order of his soul, his inward peace, and maketh himself unhappy; for harmony and concord is the bliss of spirits. But vain are his endeavours to distract the order of the whole, which thy omnipotence maintaineth with irresistible strictness. However, the daring one may oppose thee; his actions must at last, ply to thy all-wise purposes. Thy Providence manageth

the struggle of the passions, as it doth the conflict of the elements.

"Tyranny and concupiscence execute thy divine commands equally with thunder and subterranean fire. All evil, moral as well as physical, must turn to good in the end; and all, all accord with the grand harmony with which this vast universe resoundeth in praise of thee.

"O, thou author of wisdom! cause us to be wise, that we may be happy. May our will agree with our destiny, our inclinations with thy designs; and may every thought, every act of ours be a harmony in creation's immense psaltery. O, teach us to know thy all-goodness, to enjoy thy bounties, as liberally and plenteously as thou distributest them; and to receive with thanks and gladness the adversities which thou intendest for us, even because it is thou who intended them for us. Cause us to search after truth, to love our brethren, when they search after it along with us; to honour them, if they find it, pity them if they err, and forgive them with our whole heart if they offend us, even as thou forgivest us, O thou source of truth and love!"

Note 22.

Ceux qui sont dans le dérèglement disent à ceux qui sont dans l'ordre que ce sont eux qui s'éloignent de la nature, et ils croient, le suivre. Comme

ceux qui sont dans un vaisseau croient que ceux qui sont au bord s'eloigment. Le langage est pareil de tous côtés. Il faut avoir un point fixe pour en juger. Le port règle ceux qui sont dans un vaisseau; mais où trouverons-nous ce point dans la morale?"—*Pasqual.*

"Dans cette seule maxime, reçue de toutes les nations: Ne faites pas à autrui ce que vous ne voudriez pas qu' on vous fît."—*Voltaire.*

The lawless will tell the rightful, that it is them who depart from nature, and they themselves believe they are following it; the same as those on board of a vessel, believe the shore is moving away from them. That language is heard on all sides; we want a fixed standard whereby to judge of it. The harbour is the standard, whom those on board the vessel go by; but where shall we find such a standard in morals?

In that only maxim received by all nations: Do not unto others what you would not have them do unto yourself.

Note 23.

—— The third objection (says an ancient author) brought by those that will not admit the Jews' books to be read, seems to have more reason in it than all the rest. For if they be indeed full of scoffings against the life of him who hath given us ours; if they accuse his actions, detest his

doctrine, and condemn his memory, as ignominious; in a word, if they are full of nothing but blasphemies against Jesus Christ, who is he that could endure to read them? And here Sixtus Senensis triumphs over his enemies, and reckons up all the impieties the Israelites were ever guilty of; and there is scarcely any one kind of wickedness or villany that he lays not to their charge. In a word, he numbers up, as well all the erroneous points of their belief, as their reproachful speeches which they vomit up against the Son of God; so that one that had not read their books, and known the truth of the business, would judge them to have been written rather by devils than by men. But this author [who had not written against this nation, but, as almost all others have done, merely out of the hatred that is generally borne toward these *Deicides*] thought, peradventure, that after the burning so many Jewish libraries in Italy, and after that himself had been an eye-witness of twelve thousand volumes burnt to ashes at Cremona, he thought, I say, that after so rigorous an inquisition, there could have been no more books left, by which we might have been able to satisfy ourselves in the truth of those things that are objected against the Jews. But he had forgot to burn the writings of Galatinus too, or rather of Sebondus [for I shall make it appear, in another

place, that Galatini was never the author of that learned book, intituled, *De Arcanis Catholicæ Fidei*]. He had, I say, forgot to burn those learned writings, too, which prove, and make it clearly appear that the blasphemies which the ancient Rabbins uttered against Jesus Christ were not meant at all of Christ our Redeemer, but of another Jesus very far different from ours. And this is so known a truth, that the most furious among the Jews dare not deny it, unless they deny their Talmud; so that this confession being so much the more forcible, because it proceeds from the mouth of our adversaries, it quite overthrows all that Senensis and those of his persuasion have brought to the contrary. I will not say but that the later Rabbins do more perversely handle the controversy, which is betwixt them and us; namely, whether Jesus Christ be the true Messias or not; and that, among the heats of so weighty a dispute, they do sometimes speak irreverently of our sacred mysteries. But [which is a very wonderful thing, and which ought to convince all the enemies to the writings of these men] among so great a number of arguments that are brought against us by R. David Kimchi, and R. Joseph Alboni [two Jewish Rabbins, who were both very learned, and very zealous for their own religion], you shall not find one opprobrious speech uttered against

Jesus Christ, as that he was a seditious person [as he was called in his lifetime] or a magician, or an impostor, or a malefactor, or any other the like blasphemous terms: notwithstanding there are scarcely any of our Christian writers that have written against the Jews, which do not give them very hard language. They dispute, indeed, whether the Gospel be a law or not; but not, whether the author of it were a wicked man or no. Nay, on the contrary, they rather confess him to have religiously kept all the commandments of the Decalogue. They say, indeed, that he was but mere man, and not God; being blinded by the confession which this God of Love made of himself: *Ego sum vermis, et non homo,* i.e. but I am a worm, and no man (Ps. xxii. 7); but they do not say that he was a wicked perfidious person. They accuse his apostles, indeed, of ignorance; as, when St. Paul saith, that the Israelites demanded a king of Samuel, who gave them the son of Kish, being about the age of forty years; whereas the Scripture seems to say otherwise. As also, when St. Stephen said, that those that went down with Jacob into Egypt were seventy-five souls in number; whereas in Genesis, it is said there were but seventy in all. And so likewise in divers other passages, which have been, long since, often reconciled and cleared of error. They deny, indeed,

that the Eucharist, a great body, in all its parts, cannot possibly be in so small a morsel; but they do not say that the institution, and use of it in the Christian church is diabolical, as the heretics say. In a word, they deny, indeed, that Jesus Christ is the true Messias; but they do not say that his doctrine is against God. Those that desire to be more fully satisfied in this controversy, may have recourse to a tract, written by Genebrand, against those two learned Jews above named. To conclude, then, both against Senensis and all of his opinions, I affirm that the ancient Rabbins are so far from reproaching our Saviour Jesus Christ, that, on the contrary, they allow of his doctrine, and confirm the history which is delivered us.

Bechai, who has examined our religion with too much tartness, goes yet farther than all this, and says: that "Jesus Christ [whom notwithstanding he will not acknowledge to be the Messias], in order to his foundation, was raised again upon the day which, as we have said, is assigned to the sun; and having been a man perfectly solary, he was consequently very beautiful, and of a fair, lovely countenance, and of a very quick and daring spirit: as may appear," saith he, "by that act of his, in driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple; and by his disputing with the

doctors of the law, at the twelfth year of his age."—*Unheard-of Curiosities, by J. Gaffrel.*

Note 24.

"Spirit," says Benedict Spinosa,* in his Tractatus Theologica-politicus, means, in Hebrew, as much as *mind,* or the expression of one's mind; and, therefore, the law itself, on account of its expressing God's mind, is called the Spirit of God. "That spirit," adds he, "quickens, whereas the other kills."

The oldest passage in Holy Writ, in which the Spirit of God occurs, says: "It hovered upon the face of the waters, or moved its wings" (Gen. i. 2). From that passage, and another, in which that same "hovering" is mentioned, man imagined, in course of time, a heavenly phenomenon, which stirred on the elements of the creation, and set them into motion. Peace and tranquillity, a gentle agitation and warming was the effect, which they most liked to represent to themselves, as of that

* Benedict Spinosa belonged to the Portuguese Jewish religion. He lived in Holland, known as a very virtuous and noble-minded man, although persecuted by many Zealots of his own persuasion. Much has been said by his friends and enemies for and against his doctrine. However, although his metaphysical principles are not at all to be recommended still as a man and a philosopher, he deserves to be, at least, better known, and more duly appreciated by our Co-religionists.

spirit as dwelling in them. It was a breath of the mouth of God, animating and refreshing the whole human frame. Inward tranquillity, combined with great but silent activity, perpetual and heavenly peace of mind, such as it is in the power of nothing on earth to bestow, was the character of the Spirit of God, with which he marked his favourites.

Instead of all the other passages, I shall quote only the prophet Isaiah's beautiful description of some future king, "upon whom shall rest the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and see justice done to the meek of the land. He shall smite the earth with the word of his mouth; and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked, for justice and truth shall be the girdle of his loins" (Isaiah xi). Wisdom and knowledge, particularly occult wisdom and occult knowledge, were, moreover, the principal gifts of that divine spirit.

For a very ingenious commentary on the Spirit of God, as it lives and rules in revealed religion, a commentary written with intense feeling, with powerful energy, I refer the reader to *Herder's Oldest Record of the Human Race* (Riga, 1774). I

beg leave to quote only one passage of that learned and ingenious Commentator's on the difficultly understood word *Spirit:* "What spirit precisely is, can neither be described, nor traced, nor painted; but it may be felt, it expresses itself in words, efforts, energy, and efficacy. In the visible world, we distinguish spirit from body, and attribute to the former every thing which animates the latter to its very elements, which contains and excites life, which attracts and propagates power and vigour. In the most ancient language, *spirit* is, therefore, an expression for invisible striving power; body, flesh, frame, corpse, on the contrary, the designation of dead inactivity, or of the organic abode of an instrument, which the spirit residing in it uses like a mighty artist.

The Spirit of God, this fine ethereal essence is banished from religion by a too far carried ceremonial system. Sensual man, so attached to externals, etches the letter on his memory, clings fast to the consuetudinous, and cannot disengage himself from his delusive conceits. As he has no surmises of the sublime spirit, which alone fortifies, animates, blesses, and raises heavenward; he adores the empty dead form, gnaws the juiceless shell, and never gets at the inward, sweet, and refreshing kernel. No; not the latter, nor

ceremonies, prejudices, consuetude, laws or compulsive observances, constitute true religion, but the spirit does; that is, the light and force of truth.

Religion which degenerates into uneasy superstition, or consists in an unprofitable belief in inconceivable things; religion which occupies the mind of man merely as a science, as a theory of certain phenomena in the physical and moral world, but leaves his heart unmended and untranquillised; religion, which is not animated by the Divine Spirit, and does not manifest itself by deeds and efforts; such a religion is of no value at all to the truly religious man. This is the doctrine also of our prophets: "Wherefore do we fast?" says Isaiah, "thou, O Lord, dost not see it; wherefore do we mortify our flesh? thou takest no knowledge of it. The fast endeth in strife and debate; ye smite the weak so as to make the crying heard on high! Call ye a fast required by God, that a man shall only afflict his soul, bow down his head as a bulrush, and spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Call ye that fasting in honour of God, that a day acceptable to him?

"Undo the bonds of tyranny;
Deliver from the burden's pressure;
Give freedom to the captive,
Withdraw the neck from under every yoke.

O to the hungry deal thy bread,
And open to the indigent thy door;
If naked, clothe him,
And estrange thyself not from him, who is of thine own flesh.

So shall thy light break forth like the dawn of morn;
Health speedily re-visit thy soul.
Then virtue goes before thee,
And the glory of the Lord concludes the train.*

Isaiah lviii.

The prophet Micah talks in the same strain: "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee? To do justly to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Micah vi.): and so also Hosea: "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." (Hosea vi.)

Can there be a purer religion than that preached here? Is not sincere philanthropy, adoring God in practice and in truth, and an indefatigable striving after the greatest moral improvement,

* According to D. Friedlander's German translation.

the best religion? The man whose religion consists in benevolence, whose doctrine goes to inculcate universal love,—what though the Turk curse him for not making a pilgrimage to Mecca, and the monk damn him for not paying his devotions at Loretto, and the Jew anathematize him for omitting ever so trifling an observance customary in only one particular congregation—he smiles at them; but he relieves the unfortunate and delivers the oppressed. He is morally satisfied that faith without works is a body without life in it, and that righteousness will open to him the gates of heaven, sooner than the most scrupulous observance of hollow ceremonies.

So the wisest of all ages thought; so the most virtuous amongst all nations acted. "The Esseans," says Philo, "serve God with true divine adoration. They do not, indeed, slaughter beasts for sacrifices; but they endeavour to sanctify their dispositions.*"

"It has been already remarked by our ancient doctors," says Maimonides, "that it is not right to

* Philonis Opera Omnia, exedit. Th. Mangey, Londini, 1742. Tom. ii. p.137.

This Philo was a Hellenist Jew, and lived in Egypt, a short time before the destruction of the Second Temple. He was a great orator, and most learned man, who wrote many books, of which forty-three have come down to us. Some also believe him to be the author of the book entitled "The Wisdom of Solomon."

propose to one's self the worshipping of God, or the observing of his commandments, for the sake of anything whatsoever. And this was also the opinion of a man who had arrived at truth; I mean Antigonus of Socho. He used to say: Be not like servants who serve their master for the sake of receiving a reward; but be like servants who serve their master without a view of receiving a reward. By this he meant: that we are to serve God out of Love.* Our doctors have said: In the following of his commandments, consists the greatest pleasure. Rabbi Elieser remarks: Therefore there is pleasure in the commandments themselves, and not in the rewards. You will, perhaps, say: I will study the law that I may get rich, be entitled Rabbi, and rewarded in a future life; but Holy Writ says: "Thou shalt keep all those commandments, to love the Lord thy God." Deut. ix. 9.

Spinosa says: (L. c.) "Is he without religion, who acknowledges God as the Supreme Good, and accordingly recommends to love him with our whole soul? Whose doctrine is, that therein consist our greatest happiness and our greatest freedom?

In the common opinion of people, Religion,

* Ethics of the Fathers, cap 1.

Philanthropy, and generally, whatever requires vigour of mind, is considered a burden, of which death relieves them, and then they hope to be recompensed for their slavery. Still the dread of terrible punishment after death, is with them a far stronger motive than the hopes of reward. If they were deprived of those prospects, so as to make them believe that the soul perishes along with the body, they would totally give themselves up to the imaginations of the thoughts of their heart, and let their actions depend on their desires only. They would sooner consign themselves to chance, than hearken to the suggestions of reason. But acting thus is, in the main, as absurd, as if one should want to feed on poison, or other pernicious matter, because he does not believe that even the wholesomest victuals would sustain him for ever."

In another place, he says: "According to my own conviction, revelation is based solely on the wisdom of its doctrine, and not on miracles; and the reverse is ignorance. With me, miracles and ignorance are synonymous terms; because they found the existence of a first cause and the truth of religion on miracles, want to explain an abstruse subject by one still more abstruse, which they do not comprehend at all. I admit, with the believers in miracles, the insufficiency of the human understanding; but again, let me ask them

whether we may possess that knowledge of nature, to enable us to say how far its powers go, and by what they may be exceeded? As no man can maintain this without presumption; so miracles must, as much as possible, be accounted for by natural causes; but of that which we can neither explain, nor pronounce absurd, we must withhold our judgment, and found religion on the doctrine of wisdom only.*

Absurd and pernicious as is the opinion that a mere scientific education, whereby the religious and moral feelings are not at all acted upon, is alone sufficient for the civil and individual welfare of mankind, just as absurd, but of far more dangerous and prejudicial consequences, it is to attempt to maintain, that a religious education alone is the foundation of human happiness; and that therefore, all knowledge and information that lies beyond the precinct of religion is quite superfluous and useless. I say, that assertion is absurd;

* This is not the place to enter at large upon the correctness of this reasoning. Thus much, however, seems to me certain, that a moral conviction, a conviction founded on the consciousness of freedom, and yet at the same time, on miracles, is very much like a square circle. Mr. Philipson, in his life of Spinosa (Brunswick 1790), remarks: Much may be objected to miracles: they may be disbelieved altogether; and religion resting on itself, and without foreign support, will, for all that, stand firm enough.

for he who has a perfect notion of the real nature of religion, knows how strongly it itself patronizes the sciences, and how barren a thing a bare knowledge of religious dogmas is, if not supported by arguments and reason; if not enriched and adjusted by them. The human soul, from its nature, is inclined to thinking and examining, it will have nothing thrust upon it by force; it will know objects presented to it, not only by looking at them; but it wants also to find out why they are so, and what purposes they serve; to attempt to impose upon it aught of the truth and utility of which it does not indirectly receive a hint, would be destroying its nature, or any how degrade to the inferiority of animal instinct, its dignities, which consist in the free exercise of its powers. Now, the danger and harm, with which that opinion is fraught, will become very clear to him who reflects ever so little on the nature of the human heart, and who is not an utter stranger to the course of general events. With the unenlightened and illiterate, the spirit of positive religion, in general, leads to intolerance; and it may be confidently assumed, that wherever that pest of humanity has raged, stupidity and gross ignorance have laid the foundation for its spreading; the same as, on the other hand, solid knowledge and science have always been accompanied by toleration and philanthropy.

If the said assertion be fraught with such injurious consequences, how much more dangerous and prejudicial must be even the conceit that religion will absolutely tolerate no sciences along with it; that it is in its nature to discard from it whatever, beside itself, may enlighten and edify the human mind; and that, therefore, he who would be truly religious, and mindful of the real salvation of his soul, must hate the sciences outright, and shun them as the marrers of his peace and happiness. One would scarcely believe, that there are men, who can entertain such a foolish conceit, seeing that common sense, and but a little mature consideration are diametrically opposed to it. And yet there are found, amongst our co-religionists, men, who are not only themselves wedded, with their whole soul, to a conceit so dangerous, and so degrading to humanity, but who even consider it their duty to propagate it amongst the many;—I say, whose sacred calling it is, to take care of the the right education of those placed under them, and therefore, distinctly to represent to, and forcibly impress upon, them, every thing which may tend to their happiness. They avail themselves of the consideration in which they are held by the common people, to make them believe, that it is impossible to be thoroughly saved, when one has taste or feeling for any science, and does not with

implicit confidence, do homage to everything which they themselves offer under the name of religion. It would carry me too far from my purpose, were I to state all the absurd vouchers, with which they endeavour to legitimatise their assertion, since it is not at all my intention to contest them; but on the contrary, to shew by reason, as well as by our holy religion, that it is our paramount duty *to fortify our mind by a reliance on God, and enlighten our understanding by useful knowledge.* Those two united bring man to true perfection, both here and hereafter; a separation of these two props of human happiness, infallibly leads to aberrations and wrong ways; inasmuch as it either plunges us into the frightful abyss of infidelity, or into the mire of superstition. The good Creator has not given man reason for no purpose; of what advantage would it be to him, if he were forbidden to make a free use of it? "Put a torch in the hand of him who was born blind, or fasten a pair of wings to the back of an ant," says a Hebrew poet, "they would be a useless burden to both of them." To cultivate reason, the finest advantage of man over the brute animal, to improve it by judgment and knowledge, that is the end which the kind Creator proposed with man; and wholly to attain that end is man's destination. But as there is not necessarily a connexion between judgment and moral

persuasions, inasmuch as we meet with whole nations who are behind the rest of mankind in cultivation, yet excel them in good-heartedness; the same as, on the contrary, we have seen very accomplished and learned men, who, at the same time, had very deeply sunk into vice; so it cannot be denied that moral faith, particularly when supported by the force of a divine religion, is most necessary to human happiness. The worth of the human race is discovered only then, when reason and religion have formed a heavenly union.

What reason approves of, religion cannot reject. Truth is sole and immutable; and cannot contradict its own sentiments. A religion which denies reason all value, even thereby betrays its own spuriousness; on the contrary, they should support and assist one another: such is the will of the Supreme Legislator; and religion is therein adapted for man, that he, as a being endowed with reason, can see its truths, and comprehend them; for him it was necessary; to superior beings it would be superfluous; to inferior ones, useless. Now by what can the understanding become more enlightened, and the mind more polished, than by sciences and knowledge; it is they that give nourishment to the soul, that imbue it with love of truth, and make it susceptible of all that is good and fair. "Wisdom has built her temple, and erected it on

seven pillars. Her feast is prepared, the wine poured out, and the table furnished. She sends forth her maidens, and causes to be proclaimed in the highest places in the city: Let him who is simple turn in here: to the inexperienced she calls out herself: Come, eat of my bread; here, drink of the wine, which I have poured out. Forsake foolishness, and it will be well with ye; in the path of reason ye will be happy." Prov. ix. 1—6.

He who denies that scientific knowledge is necessary to religion, maintains one of the greatest absurdities.

Religion, that is, belief in a revelation of truth, and the persuasions, actions, and hopes, arising therefrom, is a mystical apprehension of rational ideas. It reposes, indeed, on authority, avoids all abstract representation, and wraps itself in a visible garb, which fancy supplies it with; but it nevertheless presupposes rational ideas, and only seeks to bring the truths, necessary and immutable by reason, still more out, by visible representation. Its essential component parts, namely a belief in God, Providence, Immortality, and Retribution, can no readier and better be vouched for, than when reason coincides with the judgments of conscience; then only they determine man to good actions; then only he considers the commandments given

by religion, as the will of God, on the keeping or transgressing of which, his temporal and spiritual happiness or woe depends. Without rational reflection, without due examining of the moral attributes of the Godhead, which man ought to endeavour to imitate as much as possible, he is constantly in danger either to be led by prejudice or superstition, to make even immoral actions pass for divine commands, or, when he is beset by the passions, to yield to the syren voice of voluptuousness, which frequently stifles stunned conscience. Man still remains his own law-giver, his own judge, who may easiest be corrupted. Conscience chides, threatens, punishes; but a mere *perhaps* may soon destroy its efficacy: and how easily will not unpunished offences be forgotten? But how very differently runs the speech of conscience, when reason, at the same time, announces the will of God, and amidst the tempest of sensual lust and desires, throws the preponderating weight of conviction into the scale of decision. The threats of Reason are more peremptory and more emphatic, it says: "Wicked man, after thou hast convinced thyself of God's wondrous works, and of the secrets of nature, how canst thou dare to act against his divine and holy will; how darest thou to bring on thee the displeasure of the Godhead, and thereby prepare for thee eternal

woe, for the sake of thy lust, which affords thee but short and transient enjoyment? Consider about it; forego a brief pleasure; let Wisdom and Piety be thy constant companions, that thou mayst be happy both in time, and in eternity."

"But perhaps the Jewish religion forbids the free use of reason?"

This question can puzzle only him who judges of the Jewish religion, by its followers amongst the mass of the nation. The more nonsensical and preposterous the external customs, the more mystical the practice of them, the holier they are with them. Even that which is irrational in the woring and acting, he deems conformable to the sactity of religion, because he will be deceived by the false conceit: that fetters must be put on the human understanding, lest it should soar beyond itself; that man's propensity of thinking, of expressing his thoughts, and acting accordingly, ought to be restricted as much as possible. Now, in the whole compass of religion, we nowhere find either a reason or a commandment for compelling thinking man not to think, or talking man to be silent. On the contrary, it expressly commands: "Know thou the God of thy Fathers, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all

thy might" (Deut. x. 6). "The way to love God," explains the Talmud, "is that of enquiry." איני יודע היאך אוהבין את המקום, אלא הוה מתבונן בדרכיו ·

Whoever casts any thing like a searching look into the inner sanctuary of religion, and is not satisfied with amusing his mind with its mystic outside, will allow that there are positively no errors in religious matters, of which the exposure may not be useful. What Antisthenes said of men in general: "He who fears others is a slave," certainly holds most good of Truth; he, who shuns her gaze, will never discover his own faults. Blind belief, without conviction, is no true belief; for the former is possible, only as long as one is willing to believe; as soon as the will ceases, all command to believe is in vain; on the contrary, it only provokes resistance. Nor will he ever arrive at a true knowledge of religion, who is always admiring only her outward garb, and plays with it like a child with a doll; the goddess despises his trifling, and will never turn her countenance towards him. "A true knowledge of Holy Writ," says the learned and enlightened Maimonides, in his introduction to *More Nebuchim*, "is that correct insight acquired by an explanation of the metaphors and allegories existing in the language of the prophets." The prophets were wont to adorn

the most important truths with figures of the imagination; hence they were called by the Laity, "Sayers of Parables." For already Solomon says (Prov. i. 6), "To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings." Medras likens the essence of religion to a pearl lying hid in a dark room, and of use to the wise man only, who knows how to dispel the darkness with the light of the understanding. Even so Solomon calls the surmises of truth and morality, which religion excites through sublime objects and forms of the imagination: "Apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. xxv. 10).

But deep insight and sound study are necessary, not only for the essence and spirit of religion; but its externals, too, require knowledge, and the application of the understanding enlightened by the sciences. Indeed, how would it be possible to appreciate the beauties of the Bible, the simplicity and artlessness which reign in all its narratives, the sublimeness and inspiration of the Psalms and the prophetic orations, the graces of flowery Isaiah, the elegiac and pathetic air of a Jeremiah, the lofty and energetical appeals of a Micah, and more the like, without sound philological knowledge, without a critical tact of all the beauties of oriental allegory. Nay, even in default of a

geographical and historical knowledge of the nations and empires of antiquity, many passages in the Bible, many narratives, which have a reference to only certain events and circumstances, are quite unintelligible to us. Without a knowledge of the human heart, the Proverbs of Solomon, which are all founded on experience and practical life, are mere idle talk of no intrinsic value. Are not most of the declamations in the book of Job, particularly the latter, the more interesting to the enquirer into nature, because he beholds all those delineations in real nature? Does not man become wiser, better, and more enlightened, when he is comparing the divine sentences, which he finds in the Bible, with the great book of nature; and there sees them portrayed as if in a highly polished mirror? What the Spirit of God proclaims to him there, he sees here accomplished; what it lets him darkly conjecture there, here quite distinctly offers itself to his sight. "Ask thy father, and he will show thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee" (Deut. xxxii. 7.) The important events of the world, the revolutions of nations and states, the great and useful discoveries which only and solely could have been brought about by freedom of thinking, speaking, and acting, all convey to us a clearer and more thorough knowledge of the Omnipotence, the goodness

and wisdom of God. We find, all through, religion animating us to acquire a rational knowledge of God: the real expression every where used is: "*Know* therefore this day, and *consider it in thine heart*, that the Lord is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else" (Deut. v. 39). And again: "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise loving-kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight saith the Lord" (Jerem. ix. 23, 24). But how is this knowledge possible without enquiry? We learn to know the master only by his works, without a thorough knowledge of those works, our knowledge of the greatest of masters, our adoration of him will always be no more than superficial information, temporary wonderment, which frequently blinds us, and leads us into errors.

It is, indeed, difficult to conceive how a zealous adherent to the Talmud can occupy himself with its study, without having also acquired a thorough knowledge of the sciences so nearly allied with it. The subjects of which the Talmud speaks are partly of a religious, partly of a moral, and partly

of a theological nature. The study of the religious laws requires, as every one conversant with them cannot but allow, not only Logic, but also Geometry and Astronomy. Many passages in Talmud, as well as in its Commentators, are utterly inexplicable to him who is only superficially acquainted with those sciences. Does not Talmud itself impose the study of Geometry and Astronomy as an irremissible and sacred duty, by saying: כל היודע לחשב בתקופות וגמטריאות ואינו מחשב, עליו הכתוב אומר: ואת פועל ה׳ לא הביטו ואת מעשה ידיו לא ראו, *i.e.* "He who possesses the ability of practising astronomy and geometry, and does not:" of him it is said (Ps. xxv. 5), "He does not contemplate the work of God, and sees not his handiwork." The moral and theological treatises in the Talmud are known to be of a nature that they cannot be properly understood, without some fundamental knowledge previously acquired by a diligent study of those sublime subjects. Besides, we find that the most eminent Talmudists themselves were lovers of the sciences, that they made them their chief pursuit, esteemed the men celebrated for them amongst other nations, and very frequently hinted, plainly enough, that both the temporal and eternal welfare of man indispensably required a knowledge of them. Thus it is said in Medras Rabba.

כל תלמיד חכם שאין בו דיעה נבילה טובה הימנו *i.e.* "a Theologian, who is quite destitute of other sciences, is no better than the carcase of an animal that died of itself." The very learned and highly esteemed R. Samuel Jarchinae (see vol. i. p. 200), used to boast נהירין לי שבילי דרקיע כשבילי דנהר דעי *i.e.* "I am as well acquainted with the streets of heaven (astronomy) as I am with the streets of Nahardea.*

1. The Existence of God.
2. Providence.
3. Retribution.

On those three main truths rest all religious and moral laws, all lessons and duties; even ceremonies and solemn customs, by their nature, are, and can be, nothing else but mere means to lead to those truths, draw our attention to them, and thus, as much as possible, prepare us for both temporal and eternal happiness. Were it not for that purpose, ceremonies would be mere mechanical motions, of no value themselves, which degrade us in the eyes of sensible men, and which cannot be acceptable to God. But how would it be possible to reach that aim, if we were not allowed to ponder on their nature and meaning; if we were bound to do homage with blind adherence to

* One of the former three celebrated Jewish Universities in the Persian empire, viz. *Soria*, *Nahardea*, and *Bombeditha*.

everything, of the intrinsic value, end, and purpose of which we have no adequate knowledge?

But I think I hear some people object.—Will proper remedies not operate, unless we are acquainted with their intrinsic virtue? Is it absolutely necessary that a patient should be a judge of the medicine required for his cure?

Certainly not, I reply; and for this reason,—because it is not absolutely necessary for a patient to be acquainted with the nature of his complaint; the medicine operates quietly, and has nothing to do with what the patient knows or does not know. But it is altogether different with him who labours under a mind diseased: he, of all others, if he be at all in earnest about a cure, must be well acquainted with the character of the complaint which gnaws his vitals; then, what efficacy can there be in those remedies, with the quality of which he is not acquainted? There is not a greater inconsistency than that of acting without considering, merely because the thing has been considered by others before us.

Let us, therefore, not hug the notion that religion, or that which is of the holiest and most important consideration to mankind, is incompatible with a pursuit of science; but, on the contrary, let every thing be sacred to us which may increase our knowledge, enlighten our understanding, and

inform our mind. Let the oracular sentence of Wisdom—" On the path of understanding alone ye may be happy," be our constant guide!

Next, as to divine worship among the German Jews. Since there exists no more than one true Jewish religion, it ought to be our endeavour to comply with that public worship which approaches nearest to that venerable original religion; and, on the other hand, to seek to abolish every thing which, sanctioned by the former oppressed condition of the Jews, is apt to divert us from its true spirit. It is time, at last, carefully to clear the true doctrines of our Divine Lawgiver, and of the worthy interpreters of Holy Writ, of the dross which has so lamentably accumulated amongst us, through the chaos of writings for which we have to thank the later Polish Rabbis; for it is they alone which give occasion to many vacillating ideas, and, we may say, also to prevailing irreligiousness. The common man, in no few instances, takes the figurative representations in Holy Writ, for realities; while, the real promises and meanings are frequently either construed as not to be fulfilled in this, but in a future life, or considered as secondary things: nothing can be more evident than the injurious effects which this must have. Minor and insignificant rites have thus got into greater credit, while, frequently,

the violating of the sacred duties of humanity was scarcely thought any thing of. The unscholared but lucidly-thinking Jew, who is often required by his bigoted co-religionist to consider some trite type or other, a downright holy will of God, commonly draws his conclusions respecting religious doctrines from those laughable things; and the reason of his irreligiousness is thus tolerably well accounted for. A rational interpretation of such mystical and allegorical passages, of which we can, after the oriental fashion, produce a great many, then generally comes much too late. Let the people, therefore, be made to understand what is intrinsically good, and what is indifferent or useless. But, generally, all difference in respect to religious customs, between the German, Polish, Italian, Oriental, and Portuguese Jews, as they are called, should, at length, cease; and we should all of us adopt solely the usage of the three latter denominations, with whom divine worship is very nearly the same; whereby a great step in our improvement would be made. The superiority of those Jews to us is universally acknowledged. As, partly a proof of my assertion, we have but to compare their synagogues, their municipal regulations, nay, even their ceremonial code, (which, nevertheless, we too respect) to our own

synagogues, our own regulations and ceremonial order, and, at the very first view, we shall be obliged to concede the palm to them. Order and stillness prevails in their places of worship; they say their prayers with true devotion, and uplifting of the heart. The voices of the singing keep time, and no one outroars another; the Hebrew which they speak is pure and euphonical; their respective mother tongues, unadulterated, and not blotched with exotic particles, like that of many of the German Jews; their sermons are exemplary, and their code of ceremonies contains, or at least pays no regard to what the estimable (but in this article rather over-zealous) Rabbi Moses Iserls frequently will have us observe, merely because it was the custom, so and no otherwise, in his own birth-place, Cracow, in Poland (a country different in every respect from others), two hundred and fifty years ago!

What would be also particularly to be recommended to our brethren is, that *national spirit*, or what the French call, *esprit du corps*, might be more common amongst them, the same as it was with their forefathers; and that they would more love, befriend, and give employment to their co-religionists. They to whom the world, with its manifold sources of industry and its innumerable chances, is wide

open; and who, as it were, have only to ask in order to have,—neither want, nor acknowledge the preference given them.

Again, our religion demands that we shall banish all hateful passions from amongst us; as, for instance, implacable hatred,* superciliousness and domineering, and more the like. This includes also the closely watching our fellow-man, in order to see whether he acts in, or thinks about, religious matters differently from what we ourselves do—a great vice, to which many Jews are addicted! We are by no means knowers of the human heart; it is God alone, who searches, knows, and directs it. The Rabbinical sentence, כל ישראל ערבים זה בזה, *i.e.* one Jew is answerable, and must suffer for another,—bears in Talmud a reference quite different from that in which it is usually applied. It is principally to be construed in this manner: that, leaving alone the duty of being morally inclined, every Jew is also bound never to violate the laws of morality; for this reason: because it is unfortunately the case, that when *one* Jew has been doing wrong, the whole body of the Jews are forthwith bitterly reproached

* Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou mayest reprove him (if he have offended thee), but do not bear him a lingering grudge on account of the offence. Love thy neighbour like thyself. Lev. xix. 17, 18.

for it, which tends to any thing but their advantage.

As the limited space of a note will not allow me to add several other necessary observations, I shall yet remark only this: in respect to the hurried interment of the dead, you ought to be directed by the rules and customs of the land you live in. I refer to the excellent tract on this subject, by the late Professor Marcus Hertz; and pray you to consider that, according to the Talmud, the burying of a Jew was, in former times, postponed several days, on his children representing that, in conformity with the then prevailing manners, they had, out of respect to the deceased, to assemble for the funeral, several friends living at a great distance. Now if this was allowed merely for the sake of state, how much readier should it be granted to a child or near relative shuddering at the idea of seeming death? Is it not, in the latter case, a bounden duty to grant it? The length and observance of the days of mourning, as they are called, also admit of mitigation; since Rabbis cannot but know, that in questions of that sort, the more absolvatory decision is always abided by—

הלכה כדברי המקיל·

A great portion of the foregoing proposals, it is true, are applicable in those countries only in which

Jews have acquired the rights of the subjects at large; nevertheless, much of it may be applicable also in other countries. However, as the exact purpose of this article is principally to animate the Jews to whatever is good, it is of course, understood, that, acording to their laws, they are to remain true and faithful subjects, also in those countries in which civic rights have not yet been granted them. That they should have them, is certainly the will of Providence, and governments perhaps are actuated by other motives, for not yet accomplishing that meritorious work.

Note 25.

"Fuyez ceux qui, sous prétexte d' expliquer la nature, sement dans les cœurs des hommes de désolantes doctrines, et dont le scepticisme apparent est une fois plus affirmatif et plus dogmatique que le ton décidé de leurs adversaires. Sous le hautain prétexte qu' eux seuls sont éclairés, vrais, de bonne foi, ils nous soumettent impérieusement à leurs décisions tranchantes, et prétendent nous donner, pour les vrais principes des choses, les inintelligibles systêmes qu'ils ont bâtis dans leur imagination. Du reste, renversant, détruisant, foulant aux pieds tout ce que les hommes respectent, ils ôtent aux affligés la derniere consolation de leur misere, aux puissants et aux riches le seul

frein de leurs passions; ils arrachent du fond du cœur le remords du crime, l' espoir de la vertu, et se vantent encore d' être les bienfaiteurs du genre humain. Jamais, disent ils, la verité n'est nuisible aux hommes; Je le crois comme eux, et c'est à mon avis une grande preuve que ce qu'ils enseignent n'est pas la vérité."—*J. J. Rousseau.*

Shun those who, on the pretext of explaining nature, sow in the hearts of men afflicting doctrines; and whose apparent scepticism is as positive and dogmatical again as the decided tone of their antagonists. Under the high-flown assumption that they alone are enlightened, sincere, and plain dealing, they imperiously submit us to those harsh decisions, and pretend to give us as the true principles of things, the unintelligible systems which they have built in their own imagination. Moreover, subverting, destroying, trampling under foot every thing which men hold sacred, they deprive the afflicted of the last consolations in their sorrows, and take from the mighty and rich the only bridle of their passions; they pluck from the bottom of the heart, remorse of crime, the hopes of virtue, and still boast of being the benefactors of the human race. "Truth," say they, "can never be pernicious to man." I think so too; and, in my opinion, this is a strong proof that what they are teaching is not truth.

They boast, in modern times, of toleration, discarding of prejudices, &c.—still it will hardly be possible to produce an instance equal to that in the year 1130, when the grandson of a Jew, Peter de Leon, Monk of Clugni, known by the name of *Anatlet*, was chosen Pope, at a public election at Rome.

Note 26.

Die Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts (the training of the human race). See the Collection of his Works.

Note 27.

צדיקים אף במיתתם קרויים חיים

"The just are deemed still to exist though they be dead."—*Talmud.*

The name of Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon, is still pronounced with sincere affection, and respect due to merit, by all who know the worthy Israelite by his works.* His profound knowledge, which brought profit and instruction, not only to the Eastern, but also to the Western Jews, acquired him the very imposing predicates of

* His nation usually call him רמבם, which four letters stand for, Rabbi Moses Ben (the son of) Maimon (Maimonides). The Jews are wont to designate their celebrated men by initials; for instance, רמבן, R Moses Ben Nachman; רלבג, R. Levi Ben Gerson; רדק, R. David Kimchi; רשי, R. Solomon Jarchi, &c.

כבוד המזרח, the glory of the Orient; and נר המערב, light of the Occident. His insight into metaphysical sciences, and the lofty strain of mind which he shows in his manner of treating speculative subjects, caused him to be compared to an eagle נשר הגדול; and, finally, his exemplary life, which he knew how fitly to unite with his genuine learning, drew from all who were acquainted with him the most unfeigned encomiums, which they distinctly set down as a legacy to posterity, in the words: ממשה עד משה לא קם כמשה *i.e.* from Moses to Moses,* the world witnessed not such another Moses.† Not amongst his own nation only, but also amongst other nations, whom his fame reached, and particularly by the Christians learned, who know how to value imperishable merit in any mortal, his name remained not unrevered.‡

* The high respect in which that great man was held, will appear from the circumstance, that in the prayer "Kadish," than which there is none more holy in the Jewish Liturgy, his name was always mentioned in the words: ובחיי דמרנא רמ"בם. See his Epistolary Remains.

† The same encomium was bestowed on Moses Mendelssohn by his friends.

‡ Richard Simon, in his critical history, observes that amongst all the Hebrews, it was Maimonides, who, great as was the fame which he had acquired amongst the Israelites, is of still greater consideration with the Christians.

Cordova, in Spain, was the cradle of Maimonides; and according to his own statement, his birth dates from A.M. 4899, A.C. 1139.* His father†, as well as several of his ancestors, were men of the first consequence amongst their co-religionists, as they filled the office of דיינים, or judges, which could not have been conferred but upon the worthiest and most distinguished members of the community; they, therefore, as well as Maimonides himself, belonged to that class of Jewish Doctors which bore the title of גאונים (Geonim).‡ That his training as a *child* must not have been of the usual kind, the *man* sufficiently answered for; and his writings, which have descended to posterity, undeniably prove with what great success he must have studied the sciences, particularly physic, the Aristotelian philosophy, and Talmudical theology. Not only

* This statement is found at the end of his commentary on Mishnah (פי" משניות), in the Neapolitan edition of 1492, and all the Arabic authors agree with the same.

† Maimonides' father was also a very learned man, who, according to the credible testimony of his eminent son, in Commentary on Mishna, has written several works, which the latter found of great service to himself.

‡ That honourable title was the meed of those learned men, who lived after the completion of the Talmud, and who deserved well by their elucidations of the same, or became otherwise celebrated by their talents.

Hebrews, but also Arabs, gave him who thirsted after knowledge the best instruction in several languages and sciences; and amongst the latter, it was *Avarroes*, whose instructive tuition he very much profited by.

Maimonides lived several years tranquilly, like a philosopher, in his native country, enjoying the esteem and love which he had acquired. But (if we may believe an ancient report stated by *Jechia*), malicious calumny threatened the ruin of his character and fame, and compelled him to leave his native land, the fountain-head of his education, and fly, in his thirtieth year, to Egypt. There he studied several languages and sciences, with a degree of zeal which rarely goes unrewarded, gathered fresh blossoms of the tree of knowledge, and slaked his burning thirst at the-never-dry-spring of eternal knowledge. The sultan left him not unnoticed, and appointed him his physician in ordinary. There, indeed, the furies of life, the great persecutors of real merit, the envy and jealousy of his rivals annoyed him, and sought to lay snares for him; however, his star was auspicious to him, calumny was defeated, and merit triumphed.*

* It is said, in Shalsheleth Hakabala, the physicians entered into a medical discussion with Maimonides, in the presence of the sultan; and, strange enough, the result of the conversation

Both *Abulfaradash* and *Casiris's Bibliotheca-Arabico-Hispanica*, T. 1. p. 239, allege another cause of his flight; namely an edict, which *Abdalmomen Ben Ali Alkumi*, king of Cordova, issued in his dominions, some years previous to the expulsion of those Jews and Christians, who refused to become converts to the Mahometan religion.

Maimonides outwardly complied with the said edict, and carefully observed the religious customs of the Mahometans, until he had completely settled his affairs, and an opportunity offered to remove to Egypt. On his arrival with his family at Fostat, he openly confessed to Judaism, opened a school

was, that the physiciuns offered to swallow a poisonous draught, prepared by Maimonides, without experiencing its deadly effects, if he would first visit his own palate with a similar one of their composing. A term of three days was fixed upon. When the appointed day arrived, Maimonides communicated the circumstance to his disciples; they were alarmed at the daring attempt; but the philosopher laughed at it, and made them prepare all the medicine which he intended to take both before and after the draught, and thereupon waited on the sultan. The rivals, too, attended; they prescribed the drug to courageous Maimonides, he drank it up, repaired to his own house forthwith, took the antidotes prepared, and appeared again three days afterwards before the astonished sultan. Now it was the physician's turn; they swallowed the poison prepared by Maimonides, and its fatal effects showed itself in the presence of the sultan. Maimonides was promoted, and his enviers put to shame.

of philosophy, was admitted in the College of Physicians, and earned his living as a diamond merchant, until, after the extinction of the dynasty of the *Alides, Alfadl Abdel Rahim Ben Albaisan,* chief of the *Gozites,* became Master of Egypt. The latter became acquainted with Maimonides, took him under his protection, appointed him his physician in ordinary, with a yearly salary, and defended him against the charge of *Abilarab Ben Moisha,* a Spanish jurist, on account of his feigned conversion to Mahometanism; by proving that a compulsatory conversion is unlawful*, and therefore of no effect.† We shall not anticipate the opinion of our readers, as to which of those versions is the more probable. Suffice it, we know him to be under Egyptian protection, and there we shall follow him now.

Self-denial and living only for his fellow-

* The Rabbins have a very fine expression for this; namely, כבר מושבע ועמוד הוא i. e. "He has sworn to the true faith, long ago, (namely on Mount Sinai)".

† This is in substance, what the two above mentioned authors report, with whom Herbalt, in the Biblioteca Oriental. agrees. But by adding, that Maimonides, notwithstanding his great skill in medicine, is said to have never ventured to practise it, because he would not trust to his own judgment alone: those authors have carried his modesty rather too far, while Maimonides himself never expressed himself to that effect; nay, his own statement and letters will prove quite the contrary.

creatures is a predominant trait in the character of Maimonides; to value time as the supreme good, another. There are, in the memorandums of his engagements, but a few hours spared him every day by his professional duties; nor does he allow even these to himself alone, but, on the contrary, devotes them to instructing, teaching, and to the well-being of others; and in that blessed occupation he seeks happiness and recreation. The quantum of time, which he had to devote to his profession as a physician, appears in one of his letters to his learned friend and former pupil, Rabbi Samuel Aben Tibon.* "However great the pleasure, with which I anticipate your arrival,† I shall be but little able to pay the tribute due to friendship, that of passing the period of that visit in the circle of science. You know that I have to attend every day, professionally, on the king, at Cairo, as well as on several others of the court, which takes up the whole of the forenoon. On my return home, I find my anti-room crowded with persons of all classes, who scarcely allow me to sit down to a very frugal dinner. To serve them, is then my

* He who, much to Maimonides's satisfaction, translated his great work *Morah Nebuchim*, and others, from the Arabic into Hebrew.

† We remark, once for all, that the letters of Maimonides, cited in this article, are not given verbatim, but only in substance.

first business; and very often the day closes before I have gone through all my tasks, which frequently are multiplied by literary queries addressed to me, until night finds me fatigued and exhausted."

It is, therefore, greatly to be admired, that in those few leisure hours, Maimonides could furnish so many, and such important works; that he could acquire so many sciences, as arithmetic, geometry, mathematics, rhetoric, astronomy, physics, music, astrology, &c. and ascend higher and higher still, on the never-ending ladder of perfection.* Whoever is acquainted with that philosopher's works, will be convinced that he was no stranger in the above-named sciences; and that his mind thirsting after truth, allowed itself no rest. When he recommended to any one of his friends, or forbade him, the study of some sort of knowledge or other. styled as a science†, it was done on good grounds, from sound conviction, and not as an echo of others: he would see before he judged. "Not a single work in Arabic about that science—" he wrote to the learned at Marseilles—"have I left unread; I sought to penetrate into the spirit of those writings; and I am now convinced that there is no such thing as reading a single syllable in the

* See his Epistolary Remains.

† His letter to Rabbi Solomon Ben Tibon.

Book of Fate, although one have studied those works ever so much. Accordingly no Greek philosopher ever engaged upon, nor wrote anything about them; to Chaldeans, Egyptians and others only, that science served as the source of their creed, and of their prejudices. And if we find in Talmud, Medras and Mishna, opinions which evidently betray the efficacy they attributed to astrology; it is by no means right to place any faith whatsoever in those individual opinions, and distrust one's own judgment. Man has eyes given him to see!"

A list of this philosopher's works, which render him immortal, and in which his spirit speaks to us to this very day, seems to me to be indispensable to his biography. And it will perhaps be equally as interesting to the intelligent reader, to be briefly informed withal, of the nature, purpose, and history of some of his most important productions.

1. פירוש המשנה a complete commentary on Mishna in Arabic; in which, particularly, the explanation of כל ישראל exhibits many truths, and abounds with beautiful remarks. The whole commentary was subsequently translated into Hebrew and Latin.

2. יד החזקה, משנה תורה contains all that the Talmud teaches about the civil and canonical jurisprudence of the Jews, as well as the most minor observances and ceremonies, arranged in

admirable order, and delivered in an elegant Hebrew style. It was more than an Herculean task, thoroughly to study all the Rabbinical writings, which appeared since the composing of the Talmud to the times of Maimonides, and render the quintessence of that legion of books, in his own work. (One would almost be tempted to believe Jechia's version in *Shalsheleth Hacabala*, that it took him twelve years to write it, in a cavern, and isolated from all commerce with men). According to the learned author's laudable intention, that immortal work was to be the only valued code for *all* Israelites; *in order that the Rabbins shall not be obliged to waste precious time on stale disputations on the Talmud, on its Commentators, and the Commentators upon the Commentators.* Here are his own words in the preface to Yad Hachasakah:

ובזמן הזה תכפו הצרות יתירות ודחקה השעה את הכל ואבדה חכמת חכמינו ובינת נבינינו נסתר ' לפיכך אותן הפירושין וההלכות והתשובות שחברו הגאונים וראו שהם דברים מבוארים, נתקשו בימינו, ואין מבין ענינם כראוי, אלא מעט במספר, וא"צל הגמ' עצמה הבבלית והירושלמית וספרא וספרי והתוספתא שהם צריכין דעת רחבה ונפש חכמה וזמן ארוך, וא"חכ יודע מהם הדרך הנכוחה בדברים האסורים והמותרים ושאר דיני תורה היאך הוא, ומפני זה נעתרתי חצני אני משה בן מימון הספרדי, ונשענתי על הצור ב"ה, ובינותי בכל אלו הספרים, וראיתי לחבר דברים המתבררים מכל אלו החבורים

בענין האסור והמותר והטמא והטהור עם שאר
דיני תורה כולם בלשון ברורה ודרך קצרה עד שתהא
תורהשב"עפ כולה סדורה בפי הכל, בלא קושי ובלא
פירוק, ולא זה אומר בכה וזה אומר בכה, וכו,

However, the great man did not attain his object! The wrangling spirit of many Rabbins proved victorious, and directly on the appearing of the work, raised many complaints against it, which the unthinking multitude considered grave enough, because they were proferred, as usual with hypocrites, under the cloak of piety. The philosopher saw, with patience, modest truth supplanted by impudent folly: he considered that to be mistaken, is the common lot of man; he was not angry with his opponents; but did what every man of sense would do: he pitied the blind ones. His thoughts thereon are most clearly expressed, in the following letter to his favorite pupil, Rabbi Joseph.

"It was not thirst of renown, nor ambition, which prompted me to compose my work; but love of truth, and of my nation, whom I wanted to put into possession of a book, which might have served them as a guide, and have saved much wrangling and disputing. I knew very well that it would fall into the hands of people who would unmercifully make me a prey to their puny criticisms, and upbraid me with errors, when they are too short-sighted to enter into the spirit of the

book; or too proud to ascribe that want of judgment to their own blindness, but to my ignorance: and—if theological matters be of the question—even accuse me of indifference to certain religious dogmas. All this I know very well; but I know equally well that lovers of truth will think this work not unworthy of attention; that they will duly appreciate my merits, and acknowledge that only uncommon industry could have accomplished such an undertaking. And if I knew but one whom I thought capable of such judgment, for instance, you, my dear friend, I esteem myself amply rewarded. How much the more contented may I then be, since even several French Rabbins favored me with their approbation in writing, and earnestly encouraged me to proceed with my work. Of a certainty, I am persuaded that a time will come, when love of truth and right will vanquish the spirit of controversy, and when this work alone will be made use of in Israel, as a standard, to the exclusion of all others. Indeed, how could I hope that they would not substitute a wrong meaning to my work, when even the holy books themselves have not been spared; into the spirit of which those separated unto the Lord alone can penetrate?* Whosoever would be vexed at every

* Maimonides does not so much glance at many an ex-

perversion of truth, would not have an hour's peace in all his life!

3. ספר המצות. An Enumeration, Arrangement, and Explanation of the 613 Precepts and Prohibitions. (This is also translated into Latin.)

4. שמונה פרקים לרמ"בם. A Psychological Treatise, in eight sections, on the soul, its faculties, distempers, and their cures; on Destiny, Virtue, Vice, &c. This learned treatise is prefixed to his Commentary on the Talmudical tract *Aboth*, by way of introduction, to enable the reader to form an idea of Divine Revelation, and Prophetic Inspiration.

5. אגרת תימן. An Epistle of Maimonides to the Jewish Inhabitants of Arabia the Happy, for the purpose of enlightening their notions about the belief in Messiah, and of animating them to keep faithful to the religion of their forefathers, and not let themselves be either persuaded or forced to embrace Mahometanism.

6. מלות הגיון. Principles of Logic, together

pounder of Scripture, as on the contrary, at many so called דרשנים Preachers, and מוכיחים Admonishers, who either prove by a scripture-text, every thing which their crooked understanding, or their morbid fancy, or the abortions of their wit, produces; or are daring enough to maintain that this or that sacred writer has been of their opinion, in this or that passage of Holy Writ.

with a perspicuous explanation of the principal philosophical terms. (Moses Mendelssohn has written a very profound commentary in Hebrew on this little work, which should be read and well digested, previous to entering on the study of Moreh Nebuchim.)

7. מורה נבוכים. A Treatise, in three Divisions, written by Maimonides (in the fiftieth year of his age), in the Arabic tongue, and translated into Hebrew, by R. Samuel Aben Tibon. It contains the Jewish Theology, as founded on philosophical principles; the principles of the Aristotelian philosophy; their truth or fallacy; and——but I might fill a whole page with an account of the subjects which that work embraces. It is impossible to have a just idea either of Maimonides' learning and acuteness, *or of the perpertual validity of the Mosaic religion*, or of the treasures hidden in the writings of the prophets, when one has neglected to make the interesting acquaintance of only that work. It excited a prodigious sensation amongst the Jews, and particularly exasperated against its philosophical author, several French Rabbins, who were sworn enemies to science in general; and who, after his death, sought, under the cover of religion, to render the work suspicious to their congregations, as if the destruction of faith (of false, not of pious faith) and morality were

absolutely united with the study of it.* At Montpelier, in particular, a certain R. Solomon Ben Abraham, rose at the head of two of his disciples, with the purpose of prejudicing several of the credulous against the work. However, thanks to the genius of humanity, even in those days, men of sense and feeling interfered, to whom truth appeared to be more dear than life itself. They were several Portuguese, men of true learning (amongst whom there was also the celebrated *Rambān,* R. Moses Ben Nachman), who most zealously took the part of Maimonides, still living in their heart, tore the mask off his shameless detractors, and excommunicated them until they should have repented of their folly. "For the sake of the happiness of our nation, for the sake of the homage due to divine truth," they wrote to several congregations, "suffer not the abuse of those impudent men, and pay no regard to their learning. All authorities should unite to take the part of Maimonides, to vindicate his immortal name, and his doctrine—a doctrine which delivers us

* Solomon Maimon, a most profound thinker and philosopher, discovered in that work treasures, which were supposed to have been found only in the modern Kantean philosophy; and Moses Mendelssohn, in some of his philosophical writings, betrays a most intimate acquaintance with Maimonides's works.

from the night of ignorance, and lets the resplendent sun of true enlightment shine upon us. A man versed in so many languages and sciences, a man who planted every where the tree of knowledge, the fruit of which opens the eyes of the purblind of understanding, and inspires him with a becoming sense of his great Creator—show no more respect to such a man! Wherefore do they seek at all to render the study of the sciences suspicious to us, *since the Talmudists recommend it?* Was there ever one allowed to become a member of the Sanhedrin, who was not versed in several sciences?" "O leave nothing untried," says another epistle to the same effect, "to bring those infatuated men back into the road to reform: and if you cannot succeed; well, then shun a commerce with them who mislead the people, and who will not believe in God, and in his servant Moses."

8. מאמר תחית המתים. A Treatise on the Resurrection (Hebrew).

9. ס׳ הדרשות. Sermons.

10. ס׳ הנבואה. On Prophecy.

11. פי״ היסודות ועקרי אמונה. On the Fundamental Truths of Religion, and the Articles of Faith.

12. טעמי המצות. Satisfactory Reasons for the positive and negative Precepts, in Arabic.

13. ס' ההשואה. A Theologico-Philosophical illustration of several Allegories and Parables, in Talmud.

14. An Arabic Commentary on some Talmudical Tracts.

15. On Idolatry. (Translated into Latin by Vossius. Amsterdam: 1642. 2 vols. 4to.)

16. About the Circumstances of the Case of Jesus Christ. (Translated into Latin by Genebrard: 1737. 8vo.)

17. Aphorisms after Galenus. (Bologna: 1489. 4to.

18. A Treatise on Diatetics. (Latin. Lyons: 1535. fol.)

19. On the Forbidden Food. (Latin. Translated by Marc, Wöldik. Copenhagen: 1734. 4to.

That Maimonides is the author of more works still, particularly on physic, which partly still exist in Oriental languages; partly have not descended at all to us, is more than probable. At any rate those enumerated are sufficient to prove that he very conscientiously husbanded the span of life meted out to us mortals; that he wisely occupied the station in which he was placed by the invisible hand of Providence, and that, even on the brink of the grave he ceased not

more and more enriching his mind with knowledge. Still towards the close of his life, he studied the cabalistic sciences with the ardour of youth. "If I had acquired that sort of knowledge sooner," he is said to have declared, "I would have given the world so many a production more.*"

So perfect was a man even in the eleventh age! A man, who had collected the greatest treasures of Jewish learning, having, at the same time, to attend to his professional duties. O that many leading teachers amongst the German Jews, would look into the history of that man's life, and draw a close parallel between themselves and that illustrious model! Why should they think (I am speaking of some of them) they have done every thing, when they peruse the Talmud, and study its commentators? Do they really believe, that the study of the sciences is detrimental to morality? Are they really of opinion that the Talmudists—whom, it is supposed, they strive to imitate in all things—did not apply themselves to the sciences? Have the many passages in Talmud, from which it clearly appears that several Talmudists were masters of many sciences, really remained un-

* See what ריט"בא, the author of the book מגדול עוז, says, in his treatise יסודי התורה, sect. 1.

known to them?* And in default of being acquainted with the sciences, how many pages, nay, whole tracts of Talmud, must not appear as dark and unintelligible to them, as the hieroglyphics to an Egyptian camel driver, *as the tracing board to the uninitiated?* Indeed, it would be desirable and salutary for the future, should they, who are now accomplishing themselves for the function of Rabbis be introduced also in the sanctuary of the arts and sciences; for the laws of Mount Sinai are not infringed by the laws of Mount Parnassus; nor will goddess Religion frown on the Muses should they offer her their their services.—But I return to Maimonides. The system of morality which he taught was neither of that gloomily ascetic nor cynic nature, which itself is the cause of its being suspected by every sensible man—but of an amiable and captivating one: he did not teach, that we ought to renounce the pleasures of the senses, and reject every thing superfluous; not that we ought to exchange an elegant mansion for a solitary hut; nor that we should mortify our flesh, and fast, whereby we shall, peradventure, earn a key to the gate of

* See הוריות י"ג, Horiuoth, p. 13; שבת ס"ז, Sabbath p. 67; פסחים ד"ק"ח, Pessachim, p. 108; סוכה ד"ח" Succa, p. 8; ר"ה ד" כ"ה, Rosh Hasanah, p. 25, &c. &c.

heaven: no! his ethics are calculated for man, who has important duties to discharge also to his body; who will be not only a citizen of heaven, but also a citizen of the earth; only he must not cleave to this earth, and not want to crawl on it like a worm. "Our religion," says Maimonides (Shemona Perakim, sect. 4), "our religion, in the exercise of which we are to seek for our perfection, mentions nothing of all that (namely, of renouncing the pleasures of the senses, &c.); on the contrary, it has in view that man, trained conformably to nature, shall observe a golden medium, be temperate in eating and drinking, and in the pleasures of legitimate love; that he shall dwell just and loyal, in a civilised country, and not in solitudes and amidst desart mountains; not offend his body by coarse habiliments. Religion very much cautions against that absurdity. What answer did the Lord cause to be given to the Israelites, when they asked whether they should continue the fast of the fifth month? What message did he send them by the prophet Zachariah? "Your fasting and your mourning—what do these profit me? Let there be right and justice observed between man and man. For my part, your fast days may be changed into feasts, if you but love truth and peace!" By truth (אמת) intellectual—and by peace (שלום) moral—perfec-

tions are meant; it is by them only the harmony of the universe is maintained, &c. &c.

Of the Rabbins of his times, of their intellectual accomplishments, &c., it seems he did not think very highly. Ranging, in three classes, the opinions which then existed about the Talmud, he thus expresses himself in regard to the former: "Every thing they find in the writings of the sages, they take literally, without apprehending the profound meaning that is hidden in it. With them the absolutest impossibilities belong to the realm of reality; because they have no conception of the sciences; because thinking is foreign to them; nor do they possess knowledge which might excite their attention. Hence it never enters their mind, that those sages might think of something altogether different from what they themselves discover in it; although, by taking the words literally, as those sages wrote them down, they should find in them the greatest absurdities, which sound sense cannot but think extremely laughable! O, what want of understanding! How commiserable is that class of men! they ween, indeed, they are testifying regard and veneration to the beatified sages; but, of a surety, they know not how they are degrading them. They are those who are preparing the downfall of religion, who darken her light, and totally frustrate the purpose of God.

Instead that even other nations, when they become acquainted with our statutes and doctrine, shall not be able to refrain from exclaiming: "Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people!" on learning our religion, as set forth in the interpretations and deductions of those men, they necessarily and reasonably will say: what a foolish and ignorant set of people this is! O that those expounders of the law would rather keep their mouth shut, and not be the heralds of their own imbecility!"* Upon the whole, Maimonides is a sworn enemy of every thing like blind faith, and is very averse to separate *acting properly* from *knowing properly*.†

Of his domestic relations we have not exactly any certain accounts; and, therefore, can communicate no more, than that he was a happy father of an only son, called Abraham‡, whom he gave (as cannot be expected otherwise) a judicious and learned education, and who had been diligent in realising his parent's wishes: the most tender love of his son is unmistakingly expressed in Maimonides' letters to him, while, in them, a

* Compare Chelek, and convince yourselves from Maimonides' own words, of which even the above translation falls very short in emphasis.

† See particularly *Morch Nebuchim*, vol. iii. sect. 54, 56.

‡ Jechia in Shalsheleth, p. 35.

thousand golden rules of life are laid down, which he recommends to his dutiful son for his guidance. The anxious parent particularly directs his still inexperienced child's attention to the choice of his society, and of his reading. He above all recommends to him to study diligently the writings of the philosophical, lucidly, and liberally thinking Aben Ezra; while he expressively forbids him to waste precious time on the works of many of the French Rabbins, to shun all intercourse with them, and not to consider their ideas of religion the truest and most correct, notwithstanding they spend the best time of their life in reading and studying the Talmud, their religion being more sensual than spiritual, and themselves not in the right way which leads to God.

ושמור נפשך מאוד מדברי רוב חבורי אנשי צרפת, אשר לא יראה להם שחם מכירים הבורא יתברך אלא בעת אכלם וכו׳, ויחשבו אז להשיג בהם הבורא יתברך בכל שעה, ושהיא קרוב בתפלותיהן וצעקותיהם בקראם בתלמוד וזולתו מחבורו
וכל אחד מהם יקח על הרוב שתי נשים עד שלא יהיה קבע מחשבתם אלא בתשמיש באכילה ושתיה ובשאר הנאות הגוף, לא בדבר אחר, ויאמינו כי השי׳ קרוב להם ושמע להם מזה: לא זו הדרך, ולא זו העיר להתקרב אליו יתברך: אלהיהם עבוד, ותורתם שמור, ומהם מאוד הרחק, ואל תחבק חיק,

See Maimonides's Letters, p. 3.

On the whole, Maimonides very often takes the field against those, and similar Literati, with a host of sarcasms; and when he is speaking on that subject, one can always see, by his words, how he must have been vexed at seeing men, who really had good parts, but, out of prejudice sought to smother them in the birth, men, in whose hands was placed the destiny of whole congregations, and who, instead of going before them in a pillar of fire, to give them light, seek (and the number of their imitators is not inconsiderable) to lead them astray with a dark lanthorn.

Thus much of the illustrious man, who deserves to be called the pride and the ornament of his nation. He bore the heavy burden of life with philosophical calmness and patience; his fellow-men he loved, and his enemies he treated with meekness. An age of seventy years fell to his share on earth, and then he was ripe and able, and prepared to change a state abounding with defects for the life of perfection. His death threw all the synagogues, both in the East and in the West, into the most painful consternation. At Cairo, Alexandria, and Jerusalem, a general mourning for three days was proclaimed, and fast-days appointed. His mortal remains were conveyed to the Holy Land and interred there. Peace be with thy immortal ashes, thou venerable

man of God! Yet now we cannot but with sorrow think of the loss of so great a man; but will it be credited that fanaticism sought to persecute him even after his death? In the days of רמ"בן (R. Moses Ben Nachman) and רד"ק (Kimchi), there were yet deluded men enough, in whose mind the religious phrenzy against, and hatred of, the Moreh Nebuchim, stirred up by several French Rabbins, was still burning, and changed his well-learned epitaph: "*the most excellent of mortals*," into that of "the anathematised," "the unbeliever," (if ever there existed a true believer it was he). Not until after many years they repented of their folly, and sought to make amends for it. Still such infatuation, if at all excusable, was rather more so in those times than in our enlightened age. Notwithstanding which, there were, not many years ago, in Europe's *Camera Obscura*, Poland, Rabbins, who hurled anathemas on the head of the celebrated Wessely (המליץ ר' הירץ וויזל נ"ע) for having drawn up a prospectus for the education of Jewish youth, more to the purpose, more in unison with the spirit of the times; for having brought to the notice of many a blinded one, the sentence in Medras.

"כל ת"ח שאין בו דעה נבלה טובה ממנו," and finally, for daring to pronounce the Talmud food

indigestible by a five year's stomach, *i.e.* by a child five years old."—*G. Salomon.*

The proper purpose of the foregoing sketch of a history of the life of our great teacher, R. Moses Ben Maimon, will be sufficiently obvious to every intelligent Israelite, to obviate the necessity of explaining it here more at large.

Yet it may, in certain respects, not be altogether superfluous for the editor of the preceding article to add a few words, which, inserted in the right place, might prevent misapprehensions, and be of use to the good cause.

If, indeed, the mode of thinking and acting of great and illustrious men, represented in a proper light, tend to excite vigorous imitation, wise and meek Maimonides, incontestably deserves, of all others, to be held up to the nation as a fine and heart-stirring example and model; seeking, at the same time, thereby to resuscitate and reanimate, here and there, in the minds of Israelites, those religious, mild, and better feelings, which, in our times of egotism, have been but too frequently suppressed by might and main, and, alas! have disappeared.

For want of necessary materials, genuine and authentic accounts, it has been impossible to the author of the preceding article to furnish a complete biography of the revered sage. In a bio-

graphical respect, therefore, his production must be considered as only synoptical fragments, which, nevertheless, embrace many a subject which may be of utility and profit to our co-religionists.

When we consider the veneration with which every Israelite, let his way of thinking be what it may—is inspired at the mere mention of the name of Maimonides; the respect which our Portuguese brethren bear to the manes of that sage, and to what a high degree they revere his works; it cannot, indeed, be expected, that there should be readers who are displeased with the contents of the preceding article; since it consists, for the greatest part, of passages out of Maimonides' writings themselves, or out of the works of other celebrated Rabbins of former times. But if there be people who are displeased in this respect, notwithstanding, they accordingly must chide, only and solely, those learned men for having said the truth so unreservedly; and thrown out certain hints, which, in the present era of thinking, would tolerably well fit many of our contemporaries.

But who would be exactly to blame for this? surely, neither our excellent Maimonides, nor those wise Rabbins of former times!

It is, indeed, absolutely inconceivable to every one, who only skims the pages of Maimonides' works, how there could be men who, on the one

hand, highly revered that illustrious character; while, on the other, they frequently, with zeal altogether unexampled, declared war against freedom of thinking on theological matters. They, thereby, distinctly gave to understand, that they themselves were not familiar with the sense of the holy writings, in that respect, or would not be; seeing it is diametrically opposed to blind faith, and very frequently speaks only of *knowing* and *discerning*.

In our days, too, we can produce not a few so-called Jewish scribes, who consider thinking in matters of religion, and reading of works which treat of those subjects, most dangerous even at a riper age; although one is not then, so easily led in the erroneous way of unbelief by books, as in one's tender youth.* They are, therefore, professed enemies of sciences in general, and they boldly maintain that the only way of becoming a sound Hebrew Theologian is, not to waste one's time on the study of other sciences, else one cannot possibly become perfect in Jewish Theology.†

* I beg to remind the reader of the notorious interdict of the Barcelona Rabbin, Selomah ben Adereth, and thirty-six other Rabbis, that no Israelite shall read philosophical works before his twenty-fifth year, on pain of anathema.

† The spirit of inquiry, says Mendelssohn, somewhere in his works, must be constantly stirred anew, and kept up, if a truth,

Here, one can scarcely refrain from calling out unto them: How can you venture this irrational assertion, when you are sufficiently refuted in it, by even the notorious better mode of thinking, and of acting, observed by Maimonides and other wise Rabbins? Why, was it not those, so highly-praised Jewish theologians (and justly so) who

which we acknowledge is to be of any value. Knowledge, without examination, is, at times, of far worse consequences than examining without knowledge; or rather, it ceases to be knowledge of truth, the moment a thesis is received, and becomes popular, without that it is thought any further necessary to test the grounds on which it is said to rest. It is true, that the doubts excited by the latter, lead sometimes to an abrogation of all principle, and have a most frightful influence on the morals and actions of men; but the prejudices into which truth itself becomes changed, through indolence in examining; the blind faith with which we adhere to certain theses, without examining them, lead to superstition and fanaticism, which are no less dangerous to the happiness of man. Atheism and superstition, scepticism and fanaticism, are both diseases of the soul, which threaten its moral dissolution. Providence not unfrequently ordains a malady, for the purpose of removing another of an opposite nature, and restoring to the body its health. We should, therefore, calmly listen to every doubt stated to us, and think every objection acceptable, if even it bid fair to overthrow our whole system. In the naturally circular course of things, truth leads to peace of mind, peace of mind to indolence, and indolence to superstition. Then the exciting of a spirit of doubt, and of the most subtle inquiry, is a boon of Providence, to bring man, by a rejection of every principle, back in the road to truth.

besides theology, almost indefatigably engaged their minds on other useful sciences: nay, even on speculative subjects, as philosophy, &c. Did they on that account less deserve the title of Rabbi, or were they less pious, single-minded, and virtuons, because they considered enquiry into theological matters allowable, if not the duty of a thinking being? Do place your hand on your heart, and in honor of those great minds, and to the disgrace of many a scribe of these days, at length, freely and publicly own, that you are egregiously mistaken in making the above assertion, or, at any rate, that you do not wish to be so, in the sight of the zealots, because it serves your interest better as it is!

At all events, it must have been much easier to Maimonides, and other venerable rabbins of former times, correctly to form a comprehensive view of Holy Writ, and thereupon, deliver sound judgments; since they could draw at untroubled fountains, and naturally were unacquainted with the chaos of later writings, which not unfrequently lead the human mind astray, and the present authority of which gives occasion to so much wrangling and disputing. They were, therefore, easily enabled to throw light on the most important subjects, because they saw clear themselves, and their enquiries were the produce of their judgment.

Already on the one part, the encouragement, and mode of instruction of their excellent teachers themselves,* and their own profound study of theology, on the other, rendered an acquaintance with the sciences a great want to them. They saw, how impossible it was, to obtain a correct notion of so many things mentioned in Holy Writ and in Talmud, if they did not endeavour to learn to know those things themselves. They did not possess the self-sufficiency of many a Jewish scribe of the present day, who entertain very high opinion of themselves, and think, that they are doing a great deal, when they can support their odd notions by some opinion or other of one of the later flimsy Hebrew authors, and thereby ween they are giving those notions a colour of truth. In doing so, they, indeed, are not in want of short-sighted people, who know not how to distinguish between the works of the earlier and the later Rabbins, and on whose approbation they may depend. More than one sad instance might be quoted of the welfare of entire families having been at stake, and for no other reason, but because the Jewish judge was not pleased to use a little more

* Maimonides' teacher was the celebrated Rabbi Aben Migasch, a disciple of the still more celebrated Rabbi *Isaak Al-Fasi.*

than common exertion, in consulting earlier authors; in instituting a more minute examination of the case, or even, when necessary, make, as he is bound in duty, and by the proper rule prescribed, the legal case before him to agree with the nature of business, and the conventional customs of our times,* in order thereby to educe a correct result.

However, the German and Polish Rabbis reckon the shortest way, the best; and they think themselves perfectly justified in for instance, sticking to, the work שפתי כהן and others the like, and thereby save the trouble of considering.† So it is also the case with the decision of ceremonial points, where frequently a mere caprice of the author of מגן אברהם suffices to warrant some condemning judgment or other. There they usually draw the logical conclusion: since, in the year 1692, a publisher in Poland hit upon the thought of adding that work, in marginal notes, to a part of the Jewish code ארבע טורים, it must, at all events, be excellent!

* The Talmudists, it is known, call that דמי מילתה למילתה

† Compare this with Rabbi Jonathan Eibeschützer's: *Urim Wethumim*, which founded on Rabbi Heiam Jonas's work, קונטרים להרב ר'חיים יונה נ"ע, terribly shakes the said work, by a sound refutation of many of its legal decisions.

Men like the celebrated and venerable Rabbi Al-Fasi, Maimonides, and others, did not by any means, thus consult their ease. It was the oral instruction of their profound teachers, and their own contemplations, combined with their diligence, which raised them to the proud eminence on which we behold them; and on no account, parrotting, pluming with strange feathers, or mechanical proceeding, which lowers the dignity of thinking man.

Yet now, the Jewish scribes in the Eastern countries are commendable and worthy of imitation, since they do not deviate from the right path, in their study; and beware as carefully as possible from treading into the labyrinths of error, or unprofitable controversy.

And here, my co-religionists! I beg you will not suppose, that it is my intention to shew you the situation of things, purposely in an unfavorable light. I am far from such an uncharitable thought. Prompted solely by the most cordial wishes of my heart, that our holy and venerable religion, may not be profaned in the sight of the people, by wrong conclusions, and the above mentioned rigorous judgments; from that pure motive alone, I have here *said* as a word in time, so many a thing, which, generally, is only *thought* by this or that person. The more to draw the attention

of my co-religionists to that important subject, was all I aimed at.

It is nevertheless, a matter of satisfaction, to see, that notwithstanding the paucity in general, of good teachers of the people, the number of sensible theologians is more and more increasing amongst us. Better knowledge by degrees steps in the place of error, the kingdom of truth becomes more and more extended, and illumined by the torch of reason, the road through earthly life gets more and more lighted. Thank God! we can now produce Rabbins, who most honorably distinguish themselves; and justly deserve to be venerated by their fellow-creatures. Those estimable men cannot possibly be of the question here; and if either the author of the sketch of Maimonides's life (who, in his own remarks, cannot at times control his youthful zeal for the true and the more eligible) or I myself should have expressed some sentiments, which, perhaps, will not meet with a kind reception from many people; we must console ourselves with considering that this is generally the lot of them, who venture to speak out the truth. The votaries of truth, on the contrary, will, we are sure the less find fault with the whole, as it merely intends the promotion of the public good. I may, therefore, confidently hope that the Rabbinical sentence: "words which come from the heart, go

to the heart" will not prove inapplicable here and there.

Both the author and the editor will feel happy, should they attain the grand object they proposed to themselves, in inserting the article and the supplement to it. Namely, may thereby, a sense of religion be powerfully strengthened in the common Israelite, and his understanding be enlightened on the many things, by which he is environed; and may the teachers of the people amongst us, generally, be thereby the more incited and animated to better reflection, and to forbearance; in order once more to verify the biblical text (Deut. iv. 6.) which says: "Surely, this great nation is a wise and understanding people!"

Rabbi Jedaias Hepenini (known also by the name of *Abonnet*) author of the Hebrew work.

בחינות עולם (a test of the universe) lived above 500 years ago at Montpelier in the French province of Provence. He was one of the deserving men of his times, who laudably distinguished themselves from many of their colleagues, by solid knowledge, and particularly, by a more enlightened and a more liberal mode of thinking. A judge and admirer of the Greek philosophers, he followed their footsteps, he highly esteemed and honored the sciences, and sought both in them, and in the religion of his forefathers, for general principles.

He was, above all, a great reverer of his predecessor the celebrated Maimonides, whose philosophical, moral and religious maxims he made his own; and according to which he endeavored to represent, in the above-named work, clothed in a poetical garb, his ideas on the vanity of earthly life, on the immortality of the soul, and on the nature of religion. This is not the place to dwell more at large on the merits and intrinsic value of the book; let it suffice when we say generally, that it was for a long time the favorite reading of the most celebrated Jewish men of letters, who even thought it worth the while to write long commentaries on it; and, that on account of the poetical spirit which breathes in it, the author earned the epithet of המליץ i. e. "The Poet." The 14th chapter is particularly remarkable; on it he establishes the principles of the *pragmatical virtues* in the two faculties of the soul: reason, and activity, שכל וחריצות and, according to which he thinks he has found the true sense of the biblical expression רוח עצה וגבורה (the spirit of counsel, and of valour). To know, to will, and to be able, ידיעה, בחירה, יכולת, are with him, the elements of all human knowledge and striving; the only principle of which is: reason illumined by the light of judgment and religion.

It is much to be lamented, that none of his other

excellent works, which he is said to have composed in several scientific departments, have descended to posterity. Meanwhile his epistle, written with a noble intention, to the celebrated and very learned Rabbin, Rabbi Salomo Ben Adereth רש"בא, at Barcelona, deserves to be mentioned. When the then prevailing fanaticism succeeded in lodging complaints with the above named Rabbin, against the learned French Jews, as being, through their too strong bias for philosophy, heretics and contemners of religion, and who, in their public discourses and sermons, sought to promulgate dangerous principles ; the latter considered it due to his office and to religion, speedily to put a stop to that mischief. And to that end he coalesced with several rabbins and elders in his parts, for the purpose of issuing by a special letter, an ordinance: that no one shall study philosophy, until he have arrived at the age of twenty-five. Rabbi J. Hapenini, animated with a noble zeal for the dignity of the sciences and inspired with patriotic love of his countrymen, wrote, by way of an apology, the above-named epistle, which on account of the curiosity and depth of the subjects of which it treats, and the liberal and refined tone which prevails in it, deserves to be appreciated, as a fine monument of his erudition, and humane feelings. Its principal contents embrace a vindication of the cha-

racter of the Jewish men of letters of his own country, blackened to the said Rabbin; whereby he seeks to banish the spirit of fanaticism, as destructive of everything truly good and noble. He therefore sought to weaken by undeniable proofs, the suspicion thus excited, represented the pure and noble intentions of the accused, in the public expositions and interpretations of the allegorical tables found in the Talmud and the Medrassim, from among which he selected some, and shewed the sublime meaning of the same. To this succeeds an animated picture of the manifold utility of the sciences, and of the great influence of metaphysics, even in respect to religion; then follows an account of the several Jewish Literati, who had accomplished themselves in the school of wisdom, since the death of Rabbi Saddia Gaon to the times of Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon; and at the conclusion he states the motives which prompted him to write the epistle. All those subjects are not only set forth with their grounds and results, but also with Rabbinical eloquence; and although in a very mild and unpretending tone, still they are argued with dignity and energy. It is very remarkable that even Rabbi Salomo Ben Adereth inserted and published that epistle in his learned correspondence תשובות רש"בא. And although it is not stated there that

the said apology effected the rescinding of the above-mentioned ordinances; still the inserting of it is a sufficient proof, that the Spanish Rabbi acknowledged the merits of his philosophical correspondent, and thereby did attest his own love of truth. O, that many of his present successors would imitate him therein!

Note 28.

Let us cast one more look at the principal matter of the Pentateuch, which contains not only our religious laws, but all laws necessary to the preservation of a state, such as civil, municipal, &c. &c. Not all the laws contained in the Pentateuch are to be considered religious laws, which must remain unaltered; but (with the exception of those properly religious) laws dependent on local circumstances or times, and constantly changing along with them, the same as every other secular law. But, even the proper religious laws given by God to man, may fitly be brought under two main divisions:—

1. Laws which apply to the Holy Land only—מצות התלויות בארץ—viz: local and temporal laws. Laws, which are considered as memorial laws,—מצות זכרון—to remind of the Giver and preserver of all things; but which, by Moses'

own commands, were to cease, directly after our having lost possession of the said land.

2. Unconditional or personal laws חובות הגוף, laws which every Israelite is bound to keep, in whatever country he may be, and in all times.

The former were lost immediately on the extinction of the Judæan state; nor were they strictly kept, even during its existence, as appears from the frequent reproofs by the Prophets. Those of the second class, on the contrary, became the more rigorous, and also the more multifarious. Every chief magistrate or Sanhedrin was authorized to remodel the ritual observances conformably to times and circumstances.* Such amended or supplementary statutes and customs were sanctioned as *exigences of the times*, or as so-termed preventive laws. This authority is founded on a law given by Moses himself, in virtue of which, any magistracy for the time being, and consisting of Jewish members, is entitled to decide according to times and circumstances, in cases which were not specifically decided by him and all decisions of similar cases, by former judges, are of no force

* *Rash Hashana.* Sect. ii. p. 25. says: ירובעל בדורו, כמשה בדורו, וכו׳ i.e. Jerubbaal's decisions were as good an authority in his times, as Moses, were in his.

then.* That addition to, and altering of the ceremonial laws; subsequently gave occasion to the compilation of the Talmud, of which the ordinances תקנות of Esra, and the men of the great synod אנשי כנסת הגדולה had already laid the foundation. In writing down the same, the customs then known from tradition, many of which owed their existence to single Talmudists, who introduced them into their own communities, as local and preventive laws—were also admitted. It was given to the nation, as it were, as an equivalent for the ceremonial rites, which got lost along with the downfal of the state, and withal for the purpose of, in some measure, preserving its individuality. The nation eagerly received every thing, which had the least reference to their ancient polity, or was apt to remind them of it, and carefully saved it as a relic of their

* Rash Hashanah. L. c. ובאת אל הכהנים הלוים, ואל השופט אשר יהי בימים ההם וכ"ו, לא תסור מן הדבר אשר יגידו לך ימין ושמאל on which Jarchi comments (Deut. xvii.) אין לך אלא שופט שהוא בימיך, אפילו אומר לך על ימין שהוא שמאל, ועל שמאל שהוא ימין i. e. you are to follow only the decision of the judge of your own times; but of that you are not to deviate either to the right or to the left. And if he even tell you that what was right in former times is wrong in the present, you are to abide by what he says.

former polity.* Under these circumstances, the more discreet Talmudists, fearing, from the enthusiastic trifling of many visionaries, a confounding of the laws in general, and the disfiguring of those of Moses in particular,† they divided the whole of the tenets in two main classes, in the oral or traditional, and the written law * * * . תורה שבכתב , תורה שבעל פה By the written

* No wonder then, that with such an inordinate appetite for all ancient apophthegms and traditions, the compilers of the Talmud snatched at all the sweepings of the sundry colleges; hence many an ungallant *morçeau*, and, not unfrequently, some rather hyperbolical story, has slipped in; but which must not, by any means, be laid to the charge of the whole *Corps-talmudique*. How often do we not find in Talmud : לית הילכת' כותי ' i.e. this judgment is not legal; and in later writings דברי יחיד הם i. e. this is only the opinion of one person?

† Abtalyon said: ye sages, be cautious of your words, lest ye be doomed to captivity, and carried captive to a place of infected waters, and the disciples who follow you, should drink of them, by which means the name of God may be profaned (Tract Aboth. Cap. 1); or according to *J. Euchel:* Express yourselves so explicitly, and be so distinct in your definitions, that your precepts may admit of no misconstruction whatever; for, perhaps, you will be obliged to depart hence, one of these days, that is, to go the way of all flesh, and, thereby, be prevented from explaining the dark passages, and so, infected waters (viz: false doctrine and libertinism) will be uncovered, which the disciples might drink, without first obtaining an explanation, and the name of God be profaned.

*

law, they meant the Mosaic proper; whereas, by the oral, those which had come down to posterity by tradition: and in order to perpetuate that classification, they established the rule.

תורה שבכתב אי אתה רשאי לאומרה בעל פה,
תורה שבע"פ אי אתה רשאי לאומרה בכתב

i. e. the written law may not be delivered by word of mouth (the original text must continue for ever in its written form and order, without being perverted by oral delivery); the oral law may not be committed to writing (oral traditions and interpretations, which depend on times and circumstances, are not to be established as a written *norma*).

Thus the more wise amongst the Talmudists were jealous of the honor of the nation; and thus they strove to prevent every possible disfigurement of the laws, which characterised the people and its legislator. With them, too, as with the great law giver, toleration and universal philanthropy were the corner-stones of morality. Such oblique hints, in which traces of intolerance and misanthropy might be discovered, are by no means chargeable to the generality of the Talmudists. Those sentiments have never been publicly approved of by them, and much less held up as a *norma* and precept. On the contrary it is said:

כל שרוח הבריות נוחה הימנו, רוח המקום נוחה הימנו וכו'

i.e. with whomsoever the spirit of mankind is gratified, the spirit of the Supreme is gratified. It is but fair to do justice to those single Talmudists, too, who here and there expressed inimical sentiments. Consider the barbarous times in which the Talmud was composed, the tyranny and oppression under which the Jews frequently lived; it was that, which wrung those hostile feelings from some, no doubt, cruelly outraged Talmudists. No reasonable man will pretend of me, that I shall feel well disposed towards my enemy who robs me of my all, of my property, honor, liberty, maltreats me, and puts it out my power to resist him; nor will he blame me for expressing hostile sentiments towards that enemy. When I am in captivity, and surrounded by none but tyrants; one, however, who seems to possess a human heart, feigns friendship to me; and I find myself deceived even by this one, am I not forced to conclude, that even those amongst them, who seem kind, are bad and wicked? Such things the Jews but too frequently experienced at the time, when the Talmud was being composed. Thanks to all-merciful God, and to the rising sun of enlightenment, those dark clouds of religious animosity begin, at last, to disappear; the spirit of philanthropy, which pervades every good legislation, will soon animate us all, who all adore one

God, who are all the children of one father! O, may the time speedily arrive, of which the Prophet Zephaniah (iii. 9), in lofty inspiration, foretels "For then will I turn the languages of the nations into a pure one, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent."

Note 29.

THE ancient Hebrews represented the stars of heaven, either altogether, or severally, by the letters of the alphabet; in the same manner expressing and distinguishing them, as they are still expressed, by the names of *Aries*, *Taurus*, &c. And when all the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, or whatsoever they were, were ended, they then went on to express the rest of the stars by two letters together; by this means making up a word, to which they added a third letter; the more perfectly to express the nature of the star or constellation. And perhaps a man may be able, by this doctrine, to put an end to that long dispute, that hath been raised concerning the signification of those names of stars, which we meet with in the Bible: as, for example עש, (Job ix. 9; xxxiii. 32.) which is interpreted *Arcturus*, or as *Aben-Ezra* will have it, *Ursa*. Now, we know very well that עש signifies not Ursa, neither in the Holy Scriptures, nor in any other author: but the name of this beast in Hebrew is דוב; see Isaiah, Jeremiah,

and Daniel. These two letters, therefore עש joined together, might perhaps be only the bare characters of the constellation of *Ursa Major*.

And by this we may see, that the ancient Hebrews fancied not the figures of any living creatures in the heavens, as other nations do. The ancient Arabians imitated the Hebrews in their astrological practices, as Abarbanel testifieth: till at length, the example of the Greeks made them make use of living creatures. Yet they forbare to express any human figures, as having an eye to the zeal of the Hebrews, Thus they represented the sign of Aquarius, instead of a man pouring out of water, by a mule with a pannier on it, and laden too with vessels or barrels; of Gemini, by two peacocks; of Virgo, by a sheaf of corn; of the Centaur, by a horse; of Ophiucus by a crane, or a stork, as is to be seen in some Arabic globes; of Andromeda, by a sea-calf; and of Cephius, by a dog; and so of the rest. The Egyptians also, and Persians, following therein the steps of the Hebrews, represented the stars only by certain characters; till the example of their neighbours drew them also, at length, to set down the figures of living creatures, as the same author testifieth: who says, that the Persians chiefly, and, after them, the Indians and Egyptians, expressed by figures, not only the several constellations, which are represented on the globe; but also all other

figures that they could imagine at the beginning of every sign, and in each degree of it.

The Indians then, the Egyptians, Persians and Arabians, having all thus introduced the figures of living creatures into their astrology; the Hebrews were necessitated to imitate them, in some sort; and to take up, though not their figures, yet the names of them at least. Yet did they nevertheless abstain from the very names also of those figures of men, which the Arabians made use of. Thus they call Aquarius דלי which signifies not a man, but a vessel to take up water with: Sagittarius, קשת, which signifies only a bow; Saturn, שבתאי, Rest: Mars, מאדים, red, which is the color of this star; Venus, נוגה, brightness, a name very suitable to this planet; Jupiter צדק, Just, becouse it makes them so who are born under its influence; Mercury, כוכב, signifying only a star; or else כתב to write, or writing; because this planet is very favorable to learning. And there is but one only sign, of all those that have any human figure, that hath retained the human name, namely. that of the Virgin, which is called in Hebrew בתולה, although it is often called by the rabbins שבלת, the ear of corn. So true it is that the nation is not only very free from idolatry; but even from the name also of whatever it conceives to be an idol.

This way of expressing the celestial constellations, by letters and characters, being presupposed;

the ancient Hebrews, when they went about to erect a nativity, observed in what day and under, what sign, the child came into the world; and what planet ruled at the hour of its birth: all which particulars they afterwards set down in twelve places, which they call מחתלות that is *Ligaturæ*, the same which the astrologers now call houses. Now these ancients had perfect knowledge of all the particulars above specified, by looking on the table hereafter described, which Rabbi Kapol Ben Samuel hath rescued from oblivion, in his book intitled עמוק עמוקים וכל דבר קשה i. e. "Deepness profound, or a collection of recondite subjects," printed at Cracow in 1498.

The twenty-four hours of Night and Day.

The Signs for the beginning of the Morning.							*The Signs for the beginning of the Night.*						
ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	מ		ח	ש	נ	צ	כ
צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	ח	ש	נ	צ	ב	מ	ל
מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש
ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ
נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ
כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח
ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ
ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ
צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל
מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש
ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ
נ	צ	כ	מ	ל	ח	ש	ל	ח	ש	נ	צ	כ	מ

This table seems somewhat difficult at the first appearance; and yet it is not so, if one but consider, that the seven letters of each row, running from the right hand toward the left, or from the left hand to theright, signify the seven planets; and these are the first letters of their several names which are the following:

שבתאי	Saturn	Saturday.
צדק	Jupiter	Thursday.
מאדים	Mars	Tuesday.
חמה	Sol	Sunday.
נוגה	Venus	Friday.
כוכב	Mercury	Wednesday.
לבנה	Luna	Monday.

Now, if I would know what planet rules at the first hour of the night on Saturday (that is to say, the first hour after sunset), I have recourse to the table, where having found the letter ש which stands for Saturn, I say, that this planet rules at that hour. And so, going down along that column, under the said letter, I find that Jupiter, which is noted by this letter צ, rules at the second hour; מ, that is to say Mars, at the third; ח the Sun, at the fourth; נ Venus, at the fifth; ר Mercury, in the sixth; ל the Moon, in the seventh; and again ש Saturn, in the eighth; צ Jupiter, in the ninth; כ Mars, at the tenth; ח the Sun at the eleventh; and lastly, נ Venus, in the twelfth. Then going

down further in the same column, I find that כ Mercury rules over the first hour of the day; ל the Moon, over the second; and so of the rest.

And yet there may be two doubts raised upon this table. The first is, why it should begin with כ Mercury, which is the planet of Wednesday, rather than with ח Sol, which is the planet of Sunday? Seeing that this day was the first created.

The second is, why the days follow not the order of the planets? or why Sunday follows next after Saturday?

To the first of these Rabbi Kapol answers:* that the planets, as well as the rest of the stars were made, or created upon the fourth day: and that according to this order, Mercury was to rule the first hour; as any one may see, says he, who will but take the pains to compute the revolution of days.

To the second doubt, we answer; that the days observe not the order of the planets; because that, according to the order that they are ranked in, they make, in their courses, by an equal interval, as it were, seven angles of a geometrical figure, called *Isosceles* or *equicrural;* the basis whereof are the sides of a *Heptagon* described within a circle.

* Seder זרעים cap. 9. Tract. ברכות fol. 19. col. 2.

But now all the characters of this table are according to the modern Jews. The ancient table from which Rabbi Kapol Ben Samuel drew that before set down, is of exactly the same construction, and wherein you are to proceed in the same manner as in the other; only the planets have other characters, which are these: ל Saturn; מ Jupiter; ם Mars; ב Sol; ן Venus; ס Mercury; ע Luna.

These ancient fathers then, having found out the planet that ruled at the nativity of a child, presently began to foretel in general terms, according to the quality of the sign, what manner of person it was like to be. I say, in general terms; not standing to reckon up so many particulars, as astrologers now a-days do, who will undertake to assure us, that if a child be born in an hour, for example, that Saturn governs, it will be an arrogant, slothful, dreaming, melancholy, subtle, wary, impudent, sad person; and shall love black things, be very meagre and lean, shall have much and black hair, shall be pale, envious, hollow-eyed, given to stealing, shall keep his anger long, will be stubborn and self-conceited, and shall not much care for the company of women; he will soon grow grey, and shall not be very rich; he will be a hater of all company, and will be given to talk to himself; and above all, will be a

faithful keeper of secrets. The ancient Hebrews, I say, took no notice of all these particulars; neither do they admit of any distinction of signs human, and brutish; double or single; right or crooked; terrestrial or aquatic; fruitful or barren; strong or weak; lying or standing; seeing or hearing; loving or hating; but they said only that the child would be healthful or sickly, without particularizing any disease; that it would be fortunate or unfortunate, without specifying wherein. And in brief, they foretold in general terms, the good or ill that should befall it, according to the benevolent or malignant nature of the signs. For they saw, that Saturn by reason of its being so cold, and Mars by reason of its great dryness, were very malignant: Jupiter and Venus being temperate, were very favorable stars, as also was the Sun, and Mercury of a different nature. But as for the Moon, they thought so diversely of it, that when it was at the full they accounted it fortunate; but when it was horned, they thought it to be so malignant, that if a child were born under certain of its aspects, it died not long after: or, if it lived, it would prove to be guilty of crimes as great as its temper was black. And this is that, which moved the wise women among the Hebrews to write, or cause it to be written upon the walls of their bed-chamber, at the time of their falling in travail, these words.

אדם חוה חוץ לילית, Adam, Eve; out Lilith, or let not Lilith enter here. Now this Lilith is no other than the Moon; being a name derived from לילה Night. I shall not here set down what strange conceits the more superstitious Jews, that came a long while after, have vented concerning this demon called Lilith, which they said, has its residence in some certain influences of the Moon. But I conceive that the Greeks and Latins, who borrowed the greatest part of their Theology from the idolatrous Syrians and Chaldeans; have, among the rest, lighted upon these traditions of Lilith, which they called by the name of Lucina, accounting her the goddess that ruled in chief at child-births; because they had heard say, that the Moon being at the full, was a very favorable planet to women with child: which gave occasion to Horace to say thus of her:

AD DIANAM.

Ob amicam partu feliciter lavatam sacrum annum pollicetur.

Montium custos nemorumque, Virgo,
Quæ laborantes utero puellos
Ter vocata audis, adimisque letho,
Diva triformis:

TO DIANA.

He promises an annual thanksgiving for the happy delivery of his mistress.

Virgin, protectress of the mountains and the groves, thou three-formed Goddess, who thrice invoked, hearest the young women in labour, and savest them from death.

But that we may not any longer dwell upon fables, you may perceive that the wise men among the Hebrews acknowledged their good or ill-fortune, to have been caused by this star, as *Chomer* testifies; and that either by its being in the full, or in the wane: seeing that they called it by two names; by a masculine ירח, which signified good fortune; and by a feminine לבנה, which denoted ill-fortune. And possibly the Latins also may have imitated them in this particular, in these two names of this planet *Lunus* and *Luna*. And perhaps for this reason it was, that the heavens were called *Cœlum* and *Cœlus*; or else the heavens were so called, because it was favourable to some, and either indifferent, or else adverse to others.

As concerning the planet Saturn, these ancient Hebrews stood in great dread of it: because they did observe that those that were born under the dominion of that star, were melancholy and sickly. And this is the reason that the Chaldeans, who gave themselves over to the worship of many false Gods, observing that this star was very hurtful to them, thought good, by some sacrifice or other, to render it more propitious and favourable to them. And there being no other sacrifice more proper for it, than that whereon it so often shews its sad effects; that is to say, new-born children; they began to sacrifice of these to this planet under the

name of Moloch, or as it were מלך, a king, because it reigned imperiously over men, or rather showed itself a tyrant over them, by afflicting them with diseases, and a thousand other disasters, at its own pleasure, as tyrants used to do. And this is confirmed also by that other name of Baal by which the idol of this star was likewise called, which signifies as much as Master or Lord. And my opinion is, that from thence it is that the Greeks and Latins have taken occasion to invent the fable of Saturn eating his own children. I shall not here proceed any further in setting down the rest of choice observations concerning this Moloch, which are delivered by Aben Ezra on Amos i. ; because they are too long to be inserted here.

We have shown what stars these ancient astrologers accounted malignant in the nativities of children: let us now see, which were those they accounted benign or favourable; and from whose aspects they presaged all good fortune to the new-born child. Abarbanel then says, that Sol was the chiefest from whom they took their omens of good? and this was the reason, says the same author, that when God caused King Hezekiah to be born again as it were the second time, he made a choice of the sun to be the sign by which this miracle should be wrought. Next after the Sun, they accounted Venus to be most propitious; and perhaps from

this observation of the ancients, it was, that next to the Sun and Moon, this planet was most especially worshipped throughout the whole East, as it is affirmed by Rabbi Kapol Ben Samuel. These ancient Hebrews acknowledged also the planet Jupiter (which they sometimes called גד, and sometimes מזל טוב and those which come after them כוכב צדק) to be a very favourable star. For which reason it was, that the new married man was wont to give his bride a ring, whereon was engraved the before-named words מזל טוב, that is to say, in the natural signification of the words, a good star, or good fortune; desiring by this ceremony, that she might be delivered of all her children under this favorable star: as it has been observed both by Aben-Ezra and Chomer; insomuch that the latter of those authors affirms, that even in his time there were some that were so curious (as he calls them) in these observations, that they would not lie with their wives, but at some certain hours; to the end, that if they should prove with child, they might be brought to bed under this star, whose revolutions they were most diligent in calculating. But these strange fancies never entered so much as into the thoughts of the ancient Hebrews (as the same Chomer affirms) who observed only that which a certain pure innocence dictated unto them; attributing no other

effect to the stars than what were merely natural; and whose causes were imprinted on these celestial bodies, by him who created all things in their perfection.

But it is now time that we answer this weighty objection that is made against us: namely, that seeing that the Holy Scriptures make not any mention of these astrological curiosities, in the lives of the patriarchs, whom we affirm to have been calculators of nativities, a man may very well account them to be false if not dangerous: seeing they are grounded only upon the fantastical conceits of the Rabbins, who are known to have been of the faction of the judiciary astrologers. I shall then here make it appear, that these astrological curiosities may be proved out of the Holy Scriptures.

We read in Genesis xxx. 11. that Leah, Jacob's wife, called one of her sons by the name of the planet Jupiter which is called Gad, under which no doubt he was born.

ותלד זלפה שפחת לאה ליעקב בן ; ותאמר לאה בגד
ותקרא את שמו גד

"Et peperit Zilpah," (saith the Latin, following the original) "ancilla Leah ipsi Jacob filium; et ait Leah, Bagad; et vocavit nomen ejus, Gad."*

* The English Bible has: "Leah said *a troop cometh*, and she called his name Gad."

The vulgate translation and St. Jerome, instead of Bagad, translate Fœliciter, which is the same with "cum bona fortuna," as it is proved by St Augustine, who reprehends those who presumed from this text, that the ancients worshipped fortune. And that it may clearly and evidently appear, that the vulgar translation understands by גד Gad, "Fortuna bona," which is one of the epithets that is given to the planet Jupiter, as is acknowledged on all hands; we need but turn to Isaiah lxv. 11. where the same word is rendered by Fortuna:—"Qui ponitis fortunæ (לגד) mensam et libatis super eam."* The Septuagint also had long before given the same interpretation of this word, rendering בגד "in fortuna."

Now that גד is the planet Jupiter, Aben-Ezra testifieth expressly, where he says: that the Targum purposely retained this word, as being the most proper for the expressing of this star. And Abarbanel, upon the same text of Genesis, expounds this passage without any scruple at all, thus וגד זה כוכב צדק, i. e. this Gad is the planet Jupiter. The learned may also have recourse to the great Masoreth, where this word is reckoned in the number of those fifteen, that are written imperfectly, and yet are read, as though they were perfect, and

* The German translation of Augusti and de Wette also, has Gad; but in a note says: by some Sol; by others Jupiter.

wanted not any letter. And this is the reason that in all the correct Hebrew Bibles, you always see this word in the text, expressed by a little mark a-top of it, which sends you to the margin, where you find it written at length בגד. All those things being considered, it will appear more evidently, that this child of Jacob's was born under the most propitious planet Jupiter, which is for this reason, called by the name of Gad, which name was also given to the same child. Now if it be demanded: why do we not then meet anywhere else with the same example? Rabbi Kapol Ben Samuel answereth: that this was observed, chiefly, by reason of the jealousy that was betwixt the two sisters, Leah and Rachel, Jacob's wives. For Leah, seeing that her sister had two children already, which made her so proud, as that she began to boast, "With great wrestling have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed." (Gen. xxx. 8.) fearing, lest that after she should have given over child-bearing, her sister would have the upper hand of her, and that she should no longer be beloved by her husband; she gave her maid unto him, and caused him to go in unto her; and as soon as she perceived her to be with child, she observed so well the time of her falling in travail, that seeing her bring forth a male child, and that under the planet Jupiter too, as she

had learned to speak from her husband, she, accounting herself now more happy than her sister, would have him called also by the name of this so propitious a planet.

And these were the astrological observations of these patriarchs, which were so much the more holy and religious, in that they wrought in these good men, a continual admiration of the works of God. But those that came after them, mixing superstition with this astrology of their forefathers, it came in a short time to be corrupted, and to lose its first purity.

I have collected these secrets partly out of Rabbi Moses Ben Maimon,* to whom Scaliger hath given this testimony: "Primus inter Hebræus nugari desivit," i.e. The first among the Hebrews who forbore trifling; and partly out of Rabbi Aben Ezra, whom the same Scaliger calls. "Magistrum Judæum; et hominem supra captum Judæorum," i. e. "A Hebrew doctor, and a man of superior ideas to the Jews." Out of Rabbi Eli, whom Augustus Ricius calls "Verum utique scientiarum omnium plenum," "a man particularly well versed in every science. Out of Rabbi Isaac Hazan, whom the Jews conceive to have been the author of the astronomical tables of Alphonsus.

* In lib, Horiot et passim in lib. Mis. Thorah, et Morah Neb. lib. Taamin, in lib. Melchamoth Haschem, &c. &c.

Out of Rabbi Abarbanel, Rabbi Isaac Israelita, Rabbi Jacob Kapol Ben Samuel, Aben-Aré, and Rabbi Chomer.

Note 30.

We will now shew, that it is uncertain whence idolatry took its beginning; whether from astrology or otherwise. Marcilius Ficinus reports, out of Mercurius Trismegistus, that the Egyptian priests, being unable by reasons to persuade the people, that there were any Gods, or spirits, which were above men, were constrained to call down demons, or spirits into statues; and to bring these forth to the people, to be an object of their adoration. These are his words: "Addit, sapientis quondam Ægyptios, qui et sacerdos erant, cum non possent rationibus persuadere populo, esse Deos, id est, spiritus aliquos super homines; ex cogitesse magicam hoc illicitum quo dæmones allicientes in statuas, esse numina declararent." i. e. "The former Egyptian Magi, who were at the same time priests, seeing that they could not convince the understanding of the people of the existence of gods; that is of spirits something more than human; invented that unlawful magic by which they lodged demons in statues, which they declared to be gods." And hence came idolatry. Bechai, a learned Rabbin, who lived about the year 1291,

A. C. approves not of this opinion. For in his tract of "Strange Gods," which is put at the end of his comment upon the first chapter of Genesis, he assures us, that idolatry sprung merely from the presumption of *Cham's* posterity: which is not much different from what we read in history. For *Ninus* erected altars to his father; and *Belus* caused himself to be called a God. And thus, other proud princes following their example, endeavoured to work this persuasion in the minds of the more simple, that themselves were Gods, though they appeared in the form of men. Thus *Nero* despoiled the altars, intending to have no other deity acknowledged by the people, save his own. *Augustus* called himself the son of *Apollo;* as *Domitian* did of *Pallas;* by this means denying his own mother that bore him. *Alexander* believed himself to have been the son of *Jupiter Ammon.* In a word, historians are fond of these kind of fooleries; which passing for truths, among the simple vulgar, it at length became a maxim with them, that whosoever had lived well in this world, and had by some generous action, deserved the title of a hero, after he was dead, presently became a God, and so had statues erected to him by the people (in memory of his high exploits); which they afterwards worshipped with such veneration as is due to God alone. And perad-

venture the princes of the East, especially those of Babylon, for the more firm imprinting of this error into the minds of their subjects, added the name of some deity to their own; as for example, that of *Baal*, to *Hanni*, which being joined together, make *Hanni-bal*, by leaving out one letter, for the more smooth pronunciation; and so in *Hasdrubal*, and many others. This conjecture may give some light to that passage of Heurnius, in his *Philosoph. Barbar*, where, speaking of the philosophy of the people, he saith: "Ille apud principes Babylonicos mos vigebat, ut aut Dei alicujus nomen sibi assumerunt; aut plurium divorum, Heroumque, et fortudine excellentium virorem aliquot combinata." i. e. "Those amongst the Babylonian princes who flourished most, either assumed the name of some god, or united to their own that of one of the several deities, heroes, or men of exellent valour."

This opinion, though it seem to carry very much probability with it, yet does it no way satisfy Rabbi Moses (Maimonides): who is of this persuasion, that idolatry took its beginning, from the too much honouring of those statues, that were permitted in the ancient law; as those of Laban,*

* And here we are to take notice of the errors of divers authors, concerning these Teraphim; and first, of Elias Levita, in Thisbi; who reports, that they were made after this manner. They killed a man, that was the first born, and wrung off his

and the golden calves of Jeroboam. The author of the Book of Wisdom is of another opinion;

head; and having embalmed it, they placed it upon a plate of gold, on which was first written the name of the unclean spirit, that they would call upon: and so, hanging it up against a wall, and placing lamps and torches about it, they worshipped it. A very subtle invention this; but somewhat a dismal one. And who can imagine the people of God ever guilty of it? The conceit of Aben Ezra (on Gen. xxxi.) is altogether as false, though not so scandalous: for he says, that the Teraphim were certain instruments made of brass, like sun-dials; by which they knew the particular hour and minute, that they were to practice their divination in. Rabbi Eliezer in פרקי אליעזר. cap. 36. is of opinion, that they were certain statues, made in the form of a man, under certain constellations; whose influences, (which they were capable of receiving) caused them to speak at some certain hour, and give an answer to whatsoever was demanded of them. And the reason, saith he, why Rachel stole away her father Laban's images, was, for fear that Laban, having recourse to them, might learn which way Jacob with his family had taken. Some writers have affirmed [G. Malmesbury de Gest. Reg. Angl. l. 2. c. 10.] that the use of these images hath been sometimes practised by one of the most pious doctors, and most learned bishops of the church: But these are fooleries. Rabbi David Kimchi is also deceived, when he says: that the Teraphim were certain images, whose figure is yet unknown, by which the ancients were instructed concerning future events: being, as it were, like those oracles, which oftentimes spake by the mouth of the devil. This false opinion of his is taken up by Cardinal Cajetan, Sanctes, Vatablus, Clarius, Selden, and Marinus, in his Arca Noæ. Mercerus in Thesau. Heb. also goes along with the stream of interpreters, and says, that these images were, as the household-gods of the ancients: "Ut penates," saith he, "lares sumpserim."

affirming that the worshipping of idols took beginning from hence; that a father being very much

Philo Judæus is yet farther out of the way than all the rest: for the account he gives of them is so gross a one, as that any, the most simple old woman, would be able to judge it fit to be accounted fabulous. For speaking of the story mentioned in the 17th of Judges, he says: "That Micah made of fine gold and silver, three images of young lads, and three calves, one lion, one dragon, and one dove; so that if any one had a mind to know any secret concerning his wife, he was to have recourse to the image of the dove, which answered his demands: if concerning his children, he went to the boys: if concerning riches, to the eagle: if concerning power and strength, to the lion: if it any way concerned sons or daughters, he went to the calves: and if it were about length of years, and days, he was to consult the image of the dragon." A very pretty fiction in truth! But leaving these people to their own ignorance, and errors, we say, with St. Jerome, an author more worthy of credit, in matters of the Old Testament, than any interpreter whatever, either Greek or Latin, that these Teraphim were sacred images belonging to the priest, Teraphim (saith he, with Aquila), "propriè appellantur *μορφώματα*, id est, figuræ et simulachra, quæ nos possumus, in præsenti duntaxat loco, Cherubim et Seraphim, sive alia, quæ in templi ornamenta fieri jussa sunt, dicere. "Figures" and images, called in this passage only, cherubim and seraphim, or other things, which were wont to be used as ornaments of the temples."

This opinion of his is so sound, and so true a one; that he must be no rational man, that prefers it not before any other. You have it also again expressed in other terms, in his "Epist. ad Marcellam 130." "In Teraphim," saith the learned father, "vel figuris, varia opera, quæ Teraphim vocantur, intelligentur, etc." "Juxta igitur hunc sensum et Micha, cum veste sacer-

grieved for the death of his son, caused his image to be made, to the end, that by seeing his resem-

dotali, cætera quoque, quæ ad sacerdotalia pertinent ornamenta, per Teraphim fecisse monstratur," i. e. "By Teraphim, or images various things are understood. Micah's sacerdotal robes, or any other the like decorations, therefore, all come under the appellation of Teraphim."

Now seeing that the images of Seraphim, or Cherubim, are by a general name called Teraphim, who can accuse the Eastern people of sorcery for using them, any more than Laban who did the like? Certainly the Holy Scriptures, which reprove so sharply all manner of vice, never reprove him at all for doing it: neither is it at all credible that Jacob would have served an Idolator so long a time, and at length marry his daughters too. It may be also probably conjectured, that David made use of those images; seeing that it is storied, (1 Samuel xix. 16.) "That his wife Michal took an image and put it into his bed; using this subtle device to save her husband's life." Why did David then suffer it? Or why was it not at all reproved by God? If it be objected that Jacob commanded all his household to put away all the strange gods, "Put away," said he, "the strange gods that are among you: (Gen. xxxv. 2.) and that he himself also hid them in a pit, covering them with earth under a turpentine-tree (ibid. 4.): I answer, that there is nothing more clear, than that he there speaks of the household gods of gold and silver, which his sons took from the Sichemites, when they spoiled and ransacked their city, for having ravished their sister "and spoiled even all that was in the house," (Gen. xxiv). And that this is so, appears by this, that though this blessed patriarch had been so long time sojourning in this country, yet he never made any mention at all of false gods, till the time of this pillaging of the Canaanites, who were a people given to all

blance, his grief might be somewhat assuaged. But honoring this image too passionately, he

manner of idolatry; which was the reason (say the most learned of the Rabbins) that *Abraham* made his servant swear unto him, not to take a wife for his son *Isaac* out of this people, "And I will make thee swear," said he, "by the Lord, the God of heaven and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell" (Gen. xxiv. 3), because he knew that they were idolaters. The same charge did Isaac give his son Jacob. *Hamahalzel*, therefore, concludes with this truth; that certainly, in the time of these patriarchs, there were some certain wonderful images, or statues, by which God made known his will to his people. If it be demanded, why then did not *Moses* make a particular description of these images? I answer, that this wise law-giver, knowing how extremely inclined to idolatry, the people, whom he conducted, were, makes no other mention of them, save only in one passage: being unwilling to forget them wholly, lest any thing of the history should have been left out.

I do the more boldly propose this doctrine, after this Persian writer; because I see, that in all ages, God hath made known his wonders, and whatever accident of importance was to happen, throughout the universe, by some sensible thing. If you please but to look upon all ages past, you shall not find any one, where (according to this truth) some new prodigy did not foreshew the good, or the evil accidents, that were to come. Thus we see, that a little before the time that *Xerxes* covered the earth with his million of men, there appeared horrible and dreadful meteors, as presages of the evils that afterward happened: as there did likewise in the time of *Attila*, who was called *Flagellum Dei*, i.e. the scourge of God. And to go higher, was not poor *Jerusalem* forewarned of her approaching misery, which made her the most wretched of all cities, by

began at length to worship it as a god: so great is the power of love! "Acerbo enim luctu," saith

many of the like prodigies? For there was often seen in the air, armies of men in battle array, seeming to be ready to charge each other: and one day, at the feast of Pentecost, the high priest entering into the temple to offer the usual sacrifices, which God regarded now no more, there was heard a sudden noise, and a voice immediately following it, which said נעבור מזה *let us depart hence.* I shall not speak of the brazen gate which opened of itself, without being touched by any body: and all the other prodigies which are spoken of by *Josephus. Appian* hath reckoned up what miraculous things were seen and heard, before the breaking out of the civil wars; as namely fearful voices, and strange runnings up and down of horses, which no body could see. My purpose is not to make this note swell by reckoning up all those examples: one only of them would have been sufficient to the learned, to have confirmed the truth of what I have delivered; I shall therefore draw this conclusion, from all which I before delivered; that seeing, that God hath formerly miraculously foreshewed, and doth still, at this very day, foreshew, by divers signs, and in very many things, what events shall follow: he may then as well have shewed it heretofore, by one only particular means: such, peradventure, as was that of Laban's images, which we may probably guess to have been the *Teraphim* spoken of by *Hosea* (iii. 4), כי ימים רבים ישבו בני ישראל אין מלך ואין שר ואין זבח ואין מצבה ואין אפוד ותרפים i.e. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without *teraphim.* And then, the ancient Persians, as *Zoroaster*, having kept themselves to the use of one kind only of those figures; following the example of the first fathers, who inhabited their country; are they

this excellent author, "dolens pater, citò sibi rapti filii, fecit imaginem; et illum, qui tunc quasi homo mortuus fuerat, nunc tanquam Deum colere cœpit, et constituit, inter servos suos sacra et sacrificia." (Sap. xiv. v. 15. et seq.) i. e. "So keen was the grief of a father mourning for the loss of a son, that he caused a statue of him to be made, and began to compare him, who was no more than a dead man, to a god, instituting for him, amongst his household a temple and a priest." You may see the rest in the book itself; which the libertinism of those times hath expunged out of the Canon. The observation which Mr. Selden hath made upon the Hebrew word עצבים, seems to confirm this latter opinion; for "this word," saith he, "signifieth both *Idola* and *Dolores*; "Quod quotannis, statuis, et monumentis mortuorum dolore afficerentur," i. e. "Statues and mortuary monuments, at which they annually expressed their grief." Notwithstanding he is in an error afterwards, in the prosecution of this truth; when he

presently to be condemned as magicians? The last reason for which the Persian magicians are condemned, is thus answered by Hamahalzel: "I deny not (saith he) but that our ancient astrologers did make certain images, under such and such constellations, both of gold, silver, wood, wax, earth and stone; from the use of which they did also reap much benefit. But that it was either by enchantment or witchcraft, there is no man will ever be able to prove."

says: "that Terah, Abraham's father, was the first that ever worshipped idols." But this is to adventure to say more, than the history of Moses gives warrant for; and to be so uncharitable, (that I say not insolent or rash,) as to accuse the ancients without witness. For as for the testimony of Cedren, who says, "that Abraham threw his father's idols into the fire; and that his brother Aram, endeavouring to preserve them was burnt;" I find no such thing in any of the Hebrew historians: so that we may say of this opinion, as St. Gregory did of another, as gross as this; "Eadem facilitate contemnitur, qua probatur," i. e. "the same is more easily denied than proved."

In a word, we must even be content to satisfy ourselves with Justin Martyr, (Advers. Gent.) St. Cyprian, (De Idol. van.) St. Hilary: (De Trin. lib. 1.) Rabbi Moses Maimonides, (Moreh Nebuch. lib. 2.) Lactantius, (Divin. Instit.) and the Abbot Serenus in Cassian (Colat. 8.); and conclude, that as the black art is certainly known to be, though its beginning is not; no more is that of idolatry. And, indeed, these same authors now mentioned, that we may look after no other witnesses, are of opinion that this abomination was on foot before the flood: and many others think, that it was not till after, while the wonderful works of God were yet fresh in the memories of man. And this, in

the opinion of Alexander Halensis (Part ii. Quæst. 138.) was the reason of idolatry. "Propter recentem memoriam ejus, qui fecit cœlum et terram, quam ex disciplina patrum habuerunt." "On account of the recent remembrance of him who made heaven and earth, as they had it from the teaching of the fathers."

And when all is done, an argument to prove the uncertainty of the source whence idolatry is derived, might very well be raised from the uncertainty, and diversity of the opinions here delivered concerning this particular; were not that out of the Book of Wisdom, to be received as the truest, by reason of the sanctity of the book. However, we do not yet see anything to the contrary, but that astrology is innocent and clear from the crime that it is charged with. We will now by the way set down that which no author either of the Greeks or Latins hath yet discovered; and which reason must needs allow as most true.

Bechai then saith, that the ancient Chaldeans are very falsely accused to have been such wicked men as people would make them; and to have worshipped the stars. For, saith he, if the first *Nazarenes* (he means the Christians) were so good men, as they have been reported to have been, in the first ages of their belief; why may we not as well believe the same of the first men, who were

created with a thousand times more simplicity, than ever hath been found in any of their posterity since? And who can believe that they should so give themselves over to those vile abominations, wherewith they now stand charged? This argument is not much different from that of *Alexander Halensis*. Nevertheless *Bodine* is quite of another opinion, and scoffs at those authors, who will have the first ages to have been such golden and silver ones. But if he had weighed the business rightly, he would have found, that those vices, of which the ancients are accused, are so small, in comparison of those that the corruption of the times hath since brought forth; that they deserved rather to have passed for merry pranks only, and to have been ranked among venial sins. But to return to *Bechai*. That which he observes, and, which, I say, hath been observed by no man else, is: that those fires which they made in honour of the sun and moon, were lawful, and kindled to a good end. For, saith he, they testified the same thing to God, which God testified to them by the sun, and by the moon, which is nothing else but a great light. They kindled these fires then, by way of returning him thanks for his; and, looking up to the stars, they prayed to the angels, which God had there placed for to move them about, to the end they might be favourable unto them. But as

the best things come at length to be corrupted, *Cham*, or his posterity, looking no higher than to the fire, began to worship it; and so, terminating their adoration in the sun and moon, they paid them those honours, which the first Chaldeans meant to none but to the author of these stars alone.

This opinion of the learned Rabbin may be proved by two or three conclusions. The first is, that the wise men of the former ages had knowledge of the invisible God by the things that are visible. Now of the things that are visible, there is none that so powerfully proves that there is a God, than the wonderful effects of the sun, and moon, and the rest of the stars. They had knowledge of God therefore by the stars. And whereas the Apostle saith, that though they knew him they glorified him not afterwards, he speaks of those philosophers who had knowledge of him only by his natural way; but the first Chaldeans, besides this way of knowledge, had knowledge of him also by revelation. It is probable then, that this latter way, joined with the former, brought them to a just acknowledgment of him, which they expressed by these fires, which they kindled in honour of him. Another conclusion is that these Chaldeans had not yet dealt with spirits: and although that, after the flood, a great part of that

people, whom the pride of *Cham* had corrupted, had addicted themselves unto them; yet notwithstanding the greatest part still kept themselves to the laws of their fathers, and would not acknowledge any other demons, save those spirits, which they conceived to have their residence in the stars. But I should perhaps be thought to talk idly with this Rabbin, had I no other proof of this, but what I have out of his school. But these truths are acknowledged also by *Jamblicus*, who is of the same persuasion. "Chaldæos verò," (saith *Ficinus*, speaking of this philosopher) "Dæmonibus non occupatos, Ægyptiis anteponit." "The Chaldeans, as not prepossessed by devils, he prefers to the Egyptians."

See also what Porphyry says, speaking of the oracle which was enforced to say that

> Chaldæis, quæ vera esset sapientia tantum,
> Hebræisque ipsis concessum agnoscere; pura
> Æternum qui mente colant Regumq: Deumq:

"To the Chaldeans and Hebrews only was it given to know those things which are true wisdom, to adore with a pure mind the eternal King and God."

The fires then which they kindled before the sun and moon, were not consecrated to demons. And as for those spirits, whom they prayed to in these stars, the practice is so lawful, as that we ourselves, in our Litanies, do also invocate them. And, but that these words would be an occasion

of scandal to the ignorant, I could very well say: O angel of the sun, and thou, O angel of the moon pray for me, &c.—*Gaffariel, L. c.*

Note 31.

THAT conceit was grounded on a false persuasion that the Jews worshipped the head of an ass, hogs, and the clouds. Apion, as Josephus affirms was was the first that forged the charge of idolatry against the Jews out of his own brain: and notwithstanding that this excellent author of the Jewish antiquities has learnedly confuted him; yet Plutarch still takes it up for a truth, and Tacitus also, after him, brings it in, in his history as a prodigious thing; insomuch that the fable at length passing for a truth, it hath gone for current, even with the most serious historians. Now this worship of the Jews (say their writers) was after this manner: There was an altar erected, under which having performed some certain ceremonies, a golden statue of an ass was set upon it (some make mention of the head only), then the chief priest having censed it, all the people, putting their hand to their mouth, bowed down, and worshipped it. The very same adoration they used to the statue of a hog.

"Judæus licet et Porcinum nument adorat,"

says Petronius, i. e. "The Jews think proper to worship also hogs as gods:" as also to a golden vine; but with this difference (says Plutarch with Strabo, Frogus Pompeius and Diodorus Siculus) that the priests, when they sacrificed to Bacchus, were crowned with ivy, and going with flutes and drums sounding before them, they bowed down before this golden tree, which was religiously preserved within their temple. Concerning their worshipping the clouds, the opinions are divers: some assume that the Jews had some figures of them in their places of devotion: others say not. But these are mere fancies. So that, to make it more clear than noon-day, that this nation is noways guilty of these crimes, even Tacitus himself, who had before accused them of idolatry, forgetting what he had said, adds presently after, "Nulla simulachra urbibus suis, nedum templis esse:" i. e. "That they have no images in their cities, much less in their temples:" so far are they from worshipping the statues of a hog, or vine, or the figures of the clouds.

And yet see what Juvenal (Sat. 14.) reports of them.

"Nil præter Nubes, et cœli numen adorant," i. e. "They adore nothing but the clouds and the God of Heaven." Strabo writes the very same: and in the reign of Theodosius and of Justinian,

they were generally called Cœlicolæ, and for this very reason. See the constitutions of this emperor (lib. 15. tit. 3. leg 18).

But if it be true, that the Jews should have given themselves over to the worshipping of these idols here spoken of, how comes it to pass, that their God should never, in all the scriptures which he has given them, lay this crime to their charge as well as any other? And here we cannot say of this, as we used to say of other books: that a thing may have been, and yet not have been spoken of. For in this law, which all acknowledge to be most severe, the case is otherwise: for in point of crimes not so much as the least is omitted. Neither can any one say that idolatry has sprung up since the writing of the Old Testament: for besides that the enemies of the Jews would have then cast it in their teeth as most abominable, the above-named authors affirm, that the law forbidding them the eating of hog's flesh, had not been given them, but merely because they had worshipped this beast. But why then do they not, by the same reason, conclude, that this people had worshipped conies, hares, camels, ostriches, and ravens, since the eating of these was also forbidden them?

We say then, that these are mere calumnies, or rather fantastic opinions, grounded upon the Jews, so religiously abstaining from the flesh of

this beast, in obedience to the precept given them, for their better preservation from the leprosy, a disease they were otherwise very subject to; and here you see the original of the fable. As for the golden vine, and the honours they are said to have paid to Bacchus, I cannot discover in any author, the rise of this error; and I conceive, the first that spoke of this, might perhaps mistake the name of the Jews for some other people; as we see it usually happen in authors, in the like case. Or else, some apostate Jews having been seen practising these acts of idolatry, it was consequently concluded, that the whole nation was guilty of the same.

But an account may more easily be given of the cause of the error, in the business of their worshipping the clouds; which might spring from that miraculous cloud, which was light on one side, and dark on the other, and was a guide to the children of Israel in the wilderness. Or, perhaps this other reason, which I shall now give, why the Jews were called Cœlicolæ, worshippers of the heavens, or the clouds, may be more satisfactory: namely, because they worshipped God, who is often called in the Hebrew tongue, שמים, a word that signifies also the heavens.

As for their being said to worship the head of an ass, those that impute the beginning of that error to the great service the Hebrews had done them by asses, at their coming up out of Egypt,

seem not at all to speak with any probability. And yet Tacitus seems to me much more ridiculous, when he says that the Jews worshipped asses, because they found them out water in the wilderness. "Sed nihil æquè" says he, "quam inopia aquæ fatigabat; cum grex asinorum agresti, è pastu, in rupem nemore opacam concessit. Secutus Moses, conjecturâ herbidi soli, largas aquarum venas aperit," and presently he adds, that in recompense of this benefit, "Effigiem animalis, quo monstrante, errorem; suumque depulerunt, penetrali sacravere."

A pleasant fable this, which yet is confuted by what the same author himself elsewhere writes, as shewn before. I should therefore rather say, that the affection which every man bears to his own religion, is so eager and violent, that in all ages, and upon all occasions, those of a contrary belief have been very apt to fall foul upon each other. The Jews, therefore, either for having been bound up by so many commandments, or else, for having been so obedient to their God, might have been called asses, as Charles the Fifth was wont to call the French, for being so tamely obedient to their kings. And even the primitive Christians were not free from this very injury; for their common epithet was, "Asinarii," as Tertullian reports; till the time of that emperor, whose excessive

hate against Jesus Christ carried him on to that height of unparalleled malice, that he caused a statue to be erected, bearing the figure of an ass, holding up a book with one of his hoofs, with this inscription on it: "Deus Christianorum ononychitis."

Note 32.

By כמיות,* (amulets). They are called in Hebrew מגן; in Chaldee, Egyptian and Persian צלמניאם, which signifies a figure or image; in Arabic תצלמח or צלמם, and in Greek στοιχεῖα. The Hebrew word Maghen, though, it signifies a scutcheon, or any other thing noted with Hebrew characters, the protecting virtue whereof is like a scutcheon or shield: and although these characters, according to the opinion of those that are most versed in these theological mysteries, are some kind of imperfect images; yet notwith-

* The word כמיוה may have been corrupted from כמיה which signifies, *as the waters of God*, because you shall see some agates streaked in such manner as to perfectly represent the figure of waters; and the word God is here added, according to an idiom frequent in the Hebrew tongue; which, when speaking of anything of excellence, usually adds this holy name after it. As: garden of God; host of God; hills of God; cedars of God, &c. &c., *Cameo*, and the French *Camayeu* may also have been derived from it.

standing the word in this place is not properly taken for an image that is graven, carved, or painted; because that the Jews, in making any such, should have sinned against the commandment: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image." *Maghen*, therefore signifies properly any piece of paper, or other the like matter, marked or noted with characters drawn from the Tetragrammaton, or great name of four letters, or from any other. This word signifies, though improperly, figures and images; because these also, as well as the characters of the Tetragrammaton, serve, as it were, instead of a buckler, or shield of defence, against diseases, lightnings and tempests.* The Chaldee word Tsilmanaija comes from the Hebrew צלם, an image; and the Arabic word Talisman may likewise have been derived from the same root; Talisman being corrupted from צלסמם Tsalismam, by the transposition of one letter only.

By Cabala; which requires, for the perfect understanding of it, that a man should be skilful in its three parts, namely Gematrie, Notaricon, and Temurah. The first of which (the name whereof גמטריא, Gematria, is corrupted from the Greek Γεωμετρια, or else the latter from the other) considers the numbers that are contained in the

* See Jerusalem, vol. i. p.

letters, and by comparing them with others the like, gives an explication of what was before obscured. As for example where it is said in Genesis, concerning the Messiah יבא שילה, "Shiloh shall come," these Hebrew letters make up the number 358, which is the number also of the letter of the Messiah משיח. So that the prophet saying, "until Shiloh shall come," it is as much as if he had said: "until the Messiah shall come." The second part is of use, when the several letters of a word represent each of them a whole word: as in this device of the Romans S. P. Q. R. "Senatus Populusque Romanus;" and in this Hebrew name אדם, the first letter of which signifies עפר dust; the second דם blood; and the third מרה bitterness or gall; intimating that man is nothing but bitterness and sorrow; but corrupt blood and sin; and lastly, but dust and ashes.* The third and last part, the name whereof, Notaricon, is taken likewise from the Latin, or else this Latin word, from the Hebrew נתר, which signifies to transfer or transpose (a word very proper to the art of anagrammatism), is, when either two or more words are united together, or are read backwards, or otherwise, after the manner of anagrams; or else

* Or, more philosophically (if such frivolities deserve that name) that these are the component parts of the human body. *Ed*

are divided into several other words, by the transposition of the letters; as for example, where God says to the children of Israel; ילך מלאכי לפנך, "my angel shall go before you;" where it is demanded, what angel this was? and it is answered; that it was Michael: because the letters of the word מלאכי, transposed, make up that name.*

Note 33.

"EINE Geringschätzung Gottes," according to Mendelssohn's translation of Deutron. xxi. 23. Compare Exod. xxii.; Deut. xxv, 4.; Isaiah iii. 5; and several other texts. Radix קלל.

Note 34.

סנהדרין ההורגת אחד בשבע נקראת הובלנית
ר' אלעזר בן עזרי אומר אחד לשבעים שנה. מכות
דף ז' משנה:

A Sanhedrin which causes one man to be executed in seven years, is called a destructive one. Rabbi Eleazer Ben Ezri says: one in seventy years.—Mishna, Tract Maccoth. p. 7.

* Gafferel. L. c.

J. Wertheimer & Co., Printers, Finsbury Circus.