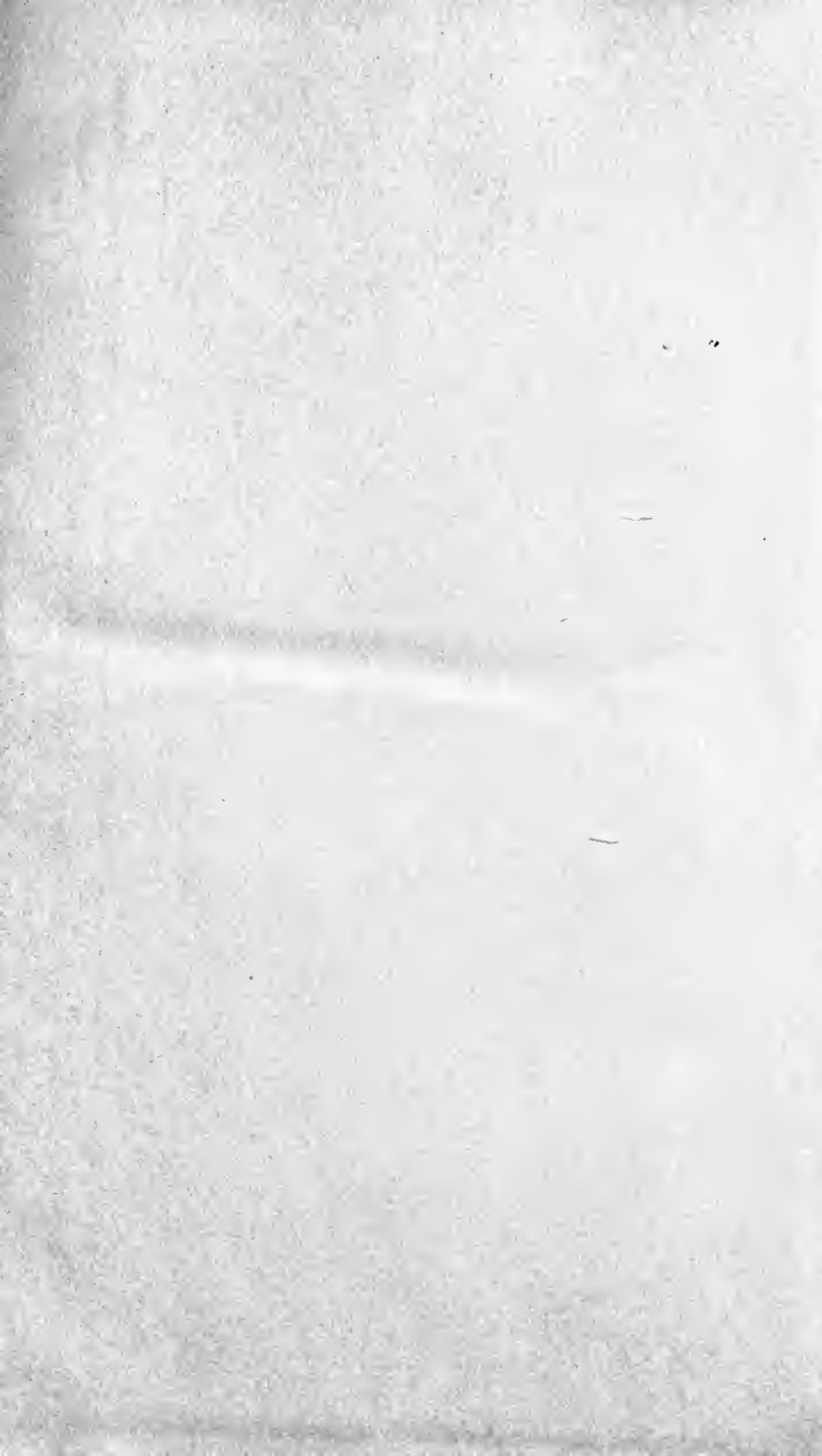


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THE
PLENARY INSPIRATION.

OF

THE SCRIPTURES

ASSERTED,

AND

THE PRINCIPLES OF THEIR COMPOSITION
INVESTIGATED,

WITH A VIEW TO THE REFUTATION OF

ALL OBJECTIONS TO THEIR DIVINITY.

IN SIX LECTURES,

(VERY GREATLY ENLARGED,)

DELIVERED AT ALBION HALL, LONDON WALL.

WITH AN APPENDIX, ILLUSTRATIVE AND CRITICAL.

BY THE REV. S. NOBLE.

Φησιν ο Κελσος,—"Ει μεν δη δελησσιν αποκρινεσθαι μοι ως ε διαπειρωμενω, παντα γαρ οίδα, αλλ' ως εξ ισθ παντων κηδομενω ευ αν εχοι."— Δοκει δε μοι τοιστον τι πεποιηκεναι, ως ει τις τη Αιγυπτω επιδημησας, ενθα οι μεν Αιγυπτιων σοφοι, κατα τα πατρια γραμματα, πολλα φιλοσοφεισι περι των παρ' αυτοις νενομισμενων δειων, οι δε ιδιωται μυθωσ τινας ακησαντες ων τωσ λογωσ εκ επισανται, μεγα επ' αυτοις φρονεσιν ωετο παντα τα Αιγυπτιων εγνωκεναι, τοις ιδιωταισ αυτων μαδητευσας, και μηδενι των ιερωων συμμιξας, μηδ' απο τινωσ αυτων τα Αιγυπτιων απορρητα μαδων. *Orig. cont. Cels. L. i.*

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PREFACE.



So numerous are the works which have been produced in vindication of the divine authority of the Scriptures and of the truth of the Christian Religion, so high the reputation of many of them, and so unquestionably great their merit, that it might almost appear like presumption in any one again to handle this argument. Certainly, however, while fresh attacks upon the foundations of the Christian Religion are continually being made, it is necessary that fresh works should be composed in its defence; even though they added no more that is new to the vindication of Revelation, than the renewed ranks of its assailants produce against it.

But laudable and useful as the production of works of this class is, he who now solicits the attention of the Public would never have appeared as an Author, merely to add to their number. He has long been impressed with a serious conviction, that fully to meet the difficulties which infidel writers have raised, it were necessary to put the controversy on a different ground from that which has been taken by the most popular of the Christian advocates. He is of opinion, that the ablest of their works are more adapted to silence, than to satisfy, even an ingenuous inquirer. The former effect is or ought to be produced, when such circumstances and considerations are al-

leged as cannot be accounted for upon any other hypothesis than that which supposes the truth of the religion : but to accomplish the latter object, the circumstances in the documents of the religion, which, as the Sceptic thinks, are incompatible with the belief of their divine origin, must, also, be satisfactorily explained. This is what few of the modern advocates of Revelation attempt; and they who have attempted it have seldom satisfied even their own friends: indeed it is now usual to admit, that some of the difficulties are such, as, in the present state of knowledge upon the subject, or by any principles which have yet been applied to it, are inexplicable. With this drawback, the success with which they have handled the other part of the argument too often fails to produce any deep conviction; notwithstanding they have proved, with a completeness which leaves little room for fair denial, that Christianity, in general, may,—nay, must be true, whether all the seeming difficulties in its records can be explained or not.

The perpetual theme of modern defenders of Christianity, is, Miracles; which, they shew, were certainly performed by Jesus Christ and the apostles, and which they extol as the proper evidences of a Divine Revelation. So far as relates to the latter assertion, the Deist is ready enough to take them at their word: he admits that miracles are proper evidences, and desires, therefore, to see some performed. With the express terms of this request, the Christian advocate declines to comply; but he undertakes to prove, instead of it, that the sceptics of former ages might, if they pleased, have had that satisfaction.

But do not both parties here somewhat mistake the matter? If the evidence of miracles were so convincing as the Deistical writers usually suppose, how come some

of their acutest reasoners to object to Christianity on that very ground,—because it records them among its documents? If, on the other hand, that evidence were so essential as the Christian advocates admit, how can we account for their having ceased; and ceased, not only in countries were the profession of Christianity is established, but even where attempts are made to sow in new soils the seed of the gospel? Ought not this palpable fact to make the Christian hesitate about affirming so confidently, that miracles are so highly important as evidences of the truth of Revelation? Ought it not to lead us to conclude, that, either separate from, or in addition to, this use of miracles, some other cause was required to their exhibition; and that, this ceasing to operate, they ceased also? Thus may we not infer, that they were performed under the Jewish dispensation, because they were suited to the nature of that dispensation, and to the Jewish character; that they were performed also at the commencement of Christianity, on account of its original connexion with Judaism; because, likewise, the Jewish dispensation was not finally terminated till the destruction of Jerusalem, which put a total end to the types and shadows of the ceremonial law; and because, in general, they were suited to the state of the human mind at that time? but that the cause of their entirely ceasing soon afterwards*, was,

* What was the exact period of their cessation,—whether, with some, we suppose the power of performing them to have died with the Apostles; or, with others, to have continued for one, two, or three centuries afterwards; or even, with the Roman Catholics, to exist still; is of little consequence; since few will contend that, after the Apostles, it was constantly enjoyed by the teachers of Christianity, or was so exercised as to add much effect to their preaching. The phænomena which may have sometimes attended private acts of faith, or, as most will prefer to say, (in regard, at least, to modern cases,) of imagination, belong to a different order.

because they were not suited to the nature of the Christian dispensation, nor to the state of the human mind which was introduced with, or produced by, that dispensation? It is certain that, with the introduction of Christianity, the human mind received a capacity of being enlightened by the substance of those things of which the Jewish law, with the miracles wrought to confirm it, and those also wrought among the Jews by the Founder of Christianity, were types: and this new state of the mind required evidences more congenial to its own nature.

Now this view of the subject does more for the support of Christianity, by nullifying the demand of the Deist for present miracles, than would be effected in its behalf by miracles themselves, could they still be produced. For certain it is that miracles would not have that convincing effect which both parties ascribe to them. Accordingly, when they were wrought by the first teachers of Christianity, the conversion of opposers does not appear to have been their chief intention: on the contrary, where opposition prevailed, it is said of the Saviour himself, that he could not do many mighty works, because of their unbelief*; and never did he perform one when defied to it. Still, because no one, in those days, doubted the possibility of such performances, the fame of them spread abroad. But we well know what excuses the Jews readily framed, for refusing to believe the Revelation thus authenticated to them: and are we sure that even all of those, who now are loudest in condemning the folly, in this respect, of the Jews, and who take most pains to prove the infallibility of miracles as evidences to a Divine Revelation, would accept any doctrine which they now reject as contrary to their reason, could its advocates

* Mark vi. 5; Matt. xiii. 58.

work a miracle for their satisfaction? Would they not presently evince as much ingenuity as the Jews, in evading the force of the miraculous proof, and justifying their adherence to their former opinion? We may infer the result from the example of a celebrated controversialist,[†] and a strenuous advocate for the efficacy of miraculous proof; who yet scrupled not to affirm in one of his publications, that were an angel from heaven to announce to him a certain doctrine, which many think they plainly read in the Scriptures, he would tell him in reply, that he was a lying spirit: If then a celestial visitor would have been so rudely treated by this mighty polemic, who also was an eminent philosopher, what would be the fate of a human teacher of any obnoxious doctrine who should pretend to confirm it by miracles? Would he not be reviled as a juggler and a cheat? would not the philosophic science of his antagonists be put in requisition to devise for the phenomena some plausible solution from natural causes? and would not some secret method of putting these causes into action be the utmost that would be allowed to the operator? The only difference between the philosophic and the Jewish opponent would be this; that while the one allowed a positive miracle to have been wrought, but assigned the cause of it to Satanic energy, the other would deny any miracle at all, and would ascribe the whole to the energies of Nature.

Let us suppose, however, the Deist to be somewhat more candid, and to be capable of being satisfied, at the time, that a miracle had been performed: Imagine him then to appeal to a modern inheritor of the Apostolic gifts, (if any such existed,) enumerating the difficulties with which, to him, the documents of Revelation seem to be attended, affirming that certain statements in the Sacred Records appear to him repugnant to reason and

+ Dr Priestley.

replete with contradictions, and begging to be informed how the difficulties may be reconciled, and the record containing them viewed as altogether worthy of a divine origin : And suppose the Christian teacher to answer, “ I will presently convince you that the Record *is* from God ; but as for the difficulties in it, you must reconcile them yourself in the best manner you can ;” and were immediately to perform some notable miracle : How would the Deist be affected by it ? Would the wonder displayed before his eyes remove all darkness from his mind ? When thus certified that the Revelation came from God, would he understand it any better ? If he before thought it unworthy of God, would he now see the ground of his error ? If it before appeared to him to include contradictions, would these immediately vanish ? In short, though silenced, would he be satisfied ?

Now this appears nearly to resemble the situation, in which the inquirer, whose attention has been directed to the difficulties which have been raised by Infidel Objectors, is placed by the defences of Christianity most in esteem, when they insist so much upon the miracles wrought at its origin. A compulsory conviction (, compulsory as far as it goes,) is produced, that the religion thus evidenced *must* be true : but the question as to *how* it *can* be true, is left just where it was before : and yet till this also be seen ; till the question of reason be as satisfactorily answered as the question of fact ; no conviction can penetrate very deep. The miracles wrought by the first promulgators of Christianity, are certainly brought again, by the labours of modern advocates, almost before our senses ; but, happily, not quite : for if they were, the effect would be, to deprive the mind of that superior freedom which Christianity, among its other benefits, was introduced to restore, and not to open the

understanding, but to close it. A sceptic thus convinced that the Scriptures have the sanction of divine authority, would be placed in the situation of an Englishman and a Protestant in such a country as Spain: in his heart he might think the government a tyranny and the religion priestcraft; but being quite satisfied of their power, the fear of the Inquisition might compel him to hold his tongue. It is not congenial to the nature of the human mind to acquiesce in implicit faith contrary to the dictates of its own understanding: and if this is not congenial to the nature of the human mind in general, assuredly it is peculiarly repugnant to it at the present day, when so astonishing a spirit of inquiry has so universally gone abroad. The sceptic will now ask, “ While the phænomena of nature are in every direction becoming intelligible, and we are admitted to see the *rationale*—the philosophy, of every other science, is Theology for ever to present nothing but dogmas, for which faith is demanded while understanding is denied? Will she, alone, never answer the request for her reasons, but by alleging her miracles? ”

Let not, however, these remarks be misunderstood. Nothing is further from the intention of the writer, than to depreciate the merit, or undervalue the utility, of the vindications of Revelation here alluded to: all that is meant to be insinuated is, that they require something in addition to render them fully efficient to their object. If, while the Deist is convinced by them that miracles were actually wrought at the commencement of Christianity, and that Revealed Religion had a divine origin, he is induced, in consequence, to suspect that the circumstances in its documents which he regards as revolting to reason only appear so because they are not understood: the conviction wrought in him may be lasting, and may finally be exalted into an enlightened faith. But to secure this

result, it surely is necessary to lead him, as well as to drive him;—to resolve his doubts and remove his difficulties, as well as to assure him, that the religion is true in spite of them all.

It has long, then, been the conviction of the writer of these pages, that such a view of the Volume of Revelation might be presented, as should be adequate to this object : but he little thought that ever he should venture to attempt it himself. The present work is entirely the product of circumstances, and its publication is what they who do not acknowledge a Providence in every thing, would call purely accidental.

The public mind having for some time past had the question respecting the divinity of the Christian Oracles thrust before it in every possible shape, it occurred to the Author, during the last winter, that some benefit might be communicated, at least to a few, by the delivery of some Lectures, in a public Lecture-room, upon the subject. The thought and its execution were equally sudden ; so much so, that the chief part of each Lecture was composed, amid other engagements, and, at first, without the most remote view to any other mode of publication, in the week which preceded its delivery. The approbation with which the effort was received, by a numerous and respectable auditory, far exceeded the Author's most sanguine expectations. From the commencement, urgent solicitations were made to him to allow the Lectures to be printed ; and when, towards the conclusion, he announced his determination to comply with the request, it was received with the strongest expressions of satisfaction. This statement is made simply from a sentiment of gratitude, and to account for the appearance and form of the work ; but without any idea on the part of the Author, that the decision of his auditory will in the slightest de-

gree influence, or even that it can afford any means for anticipating, the decision of the public at large, before whose tribunal he has thus been encouraged to venture. It is also necessary to state, further, that when he consented to publish the Lectures, he really was not aware of what he had undertaken. So hastily had they been prepared, that, when he had finished reading them, he hardly knew of what they consisted. He was well apprised that much revision would be necessary, and that many important things had been cursorily passed over, which must be more distinctly treated: but he fully expected that the whole would have been comprised in less than three hundred pages. The work was put immediately to the press, and the first Lecture was printed without any very considerable alterations from the original copy: the five others, however, have been enlarged, upon an average, to three times their original extent; and a copious Appendix has also been added.* Altogether, the book has assumed dimensions much beyond what was wished; but for this it is hoped, the importance of the subject will be a sufficient apology. As neither the whole of the work, nor any large portion of it, was ever under the Author's eye together, till it was irrevocably fixed in print, he is aware that it may afford abundant occasion for the severity of criticism: he would wish therefore that it might be judged by its matter and design, rather than its manner and execution. If the former merit condemnation, let condem-

* To the last Article of the Appendix,—the Remarks upon the late excellent Bampton Lectures by the late Rev. Mr. Conybeare,—no reference occurs in the Work itself, the Author not having read them till that part of his Work was printed in which the notice of them would properly have come: he takes the opportunity, therefore, of making the reference here.

nation be awarded; but for the latter he craves some indulgence. The mode of its origin necessarily threw the work into a popular form, which it still retains, especially in the first Lecture: but the Author has endeavoured to render it not unworthy the attention of the lover of studious inquiry and of biblical literature, while he has mainly endeavoured to assist the pursuit of the earnest investigator of revealed truth. The question respecting the divinity of the professed Oracles of Revelation, is equally momentous to the simple and to the sage; and this, he hopes, will be accepted as an apology by the learned, for his having treated it in a *concio ad populum*.

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* Erroneously marked in the place referred to, (3.)

† Erroneously marked (4.)

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Page 17	line 6	<i>After treated dele of</i>
— 49	— 27	<i>Dele then</i>
— 116	— 2	<i>For bringing prominently, read bringing prominently forward</i>
— 126	— 14	<i>For men read man</i>
— 171	— 14	<i>For is read are</i>
— 190	— 24	<i>For where read whose</i>
— 193	— 13	<i>For that read then</i>
— 247	— 12	<i>For Bishop Randolph read Dr. Randolph</i>
— 271	— 15	<i>For Judah read Judæa</i>
— 366	— 22	<i>For bodies read their bodies</i>
— 398	— 13	<i>For first read second</i>
— 406	— 32	<i>For should read shall</i>
— 424	— 9	<i>For sufficiently read sufficient</i>
— 514	— 7	<i>For uncircumcised. That read uncircumcised, that</i>
— 569	— 8	<i>For image read images</i>

The reference to Dr. Paley, in the Note, p. 334, should be to his *Evidences*, Pt. II. Ch. iv. § lii.

LECTURE I.



INTRODUCTORY. INFIDEL OBJECTIONS STATED.

Prevalence of infidel sentiments, and of an increasing tendency to think meanly of the Scriptures. — Their Plenary Inspiration generally relinquished. — Design of these Lectures stated. — Necessity of Revelation. — The character that must belong to a Composition which has God for its Author. — Inquiry proposed: Do the books called the Holy Scriptures come up to this character? — Answered in the affirmative by the Lecturer, but the proof reserved for the subsequent Lectures: — Answered in the negative by the Deist, on the alledged grounds, that the books in question contain statements that are contradictory to each other, some that are at variance with science and reason, and some that are repugnant to morality; and that, beside these positive objections, the greater part of them is occupied with indifferent and insignificant matters. — General reply, that all such objections arise from taking a merely superficial view of the Scriptures, and

from an ignorance of their true nature ; and that they may be retorted so as to assist in proving what the true nature of the Scriptures is.—Appeal to the reader, on the ill consequences of infidelity.



THERE is a prediction in the second Epistle of Peter*, which can hardly fail to present itself to the thoughts of every believer in Divine Revelation, when he reflects upon the deluge of infidelity, which, in the present times, is seen pouring upon the world. The apostle says, “there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts:” upon which it has been justly remarked by advocates of Christianity, that the circumstance of the wide diffusion of hostility to Revelation which it is the lot of the present generation to witness, itself affords a testimony of the truth of the Scriptures; since it is the fulfilment of a prophecy which the Scriptures contain. Another divine prediction of Holy Writ, will also frequently occur to the recollection of him who contemplates this state of things: Jesus Christ says, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” † It is now generally admitted by expositors of Scripture, that

* Ch. iii. ver. 3.

† Matt. xxiv. 35.

the so often occurring prophetic figure of the passing away of heaven and earth, denotes the overturning of ecclesiastical and civil establishments. Of these occurrences the present generation has seen more extensive examples, than have before been witnessed since the first establishment of Christianity; and were it not for the divine assurance that the words of Jesus Christ shall not pass away,—(and these words, in fact, include the whole of the Word of God, since we are assured by Peter that the spirit which inspired the old prophets was the spirit of Christ*;—were it not for this divine assurance,) we might almost expect, when we observe the activity with which deistical publications are circulated, and the avidity with which, in too many cases, their poison is imbibed, that, amongst the moral and civil revolutions of which the present is so remarkable an era, all belief in divine revelation would be abolished from the human mind; the awful consequences of which would be, to place the moral world in a situation precisely similar to that in which the world of nature would stand, were the sun to be abolished from the firmament. In a neighbouring nation we actually have seen this revolution temporarily effected. Profligacy of manners and atheistical writings had together destroyed, in a great portion of the people, all reverence for revealed truth: persons of

* 1 Ep. i. 11.

this class possessed themselves of the government ; and decrees were issued proclaiming Christianity abolished, and disowning any Divinity but the Divinity of reason. The horrors that ensued, by exciting a re-action, prepared indeed the way for re-establishing the profession of Christianity ; but as this is there disguised among the mummeries of Popery, it is not likely, though now favoured by the government, to make many but political conversions : and the disregard to the Word of God appears to be nearly as great as ever, though contempt for it is not so indecently expressed. Indeed, there is ample reason for believing, that, in all Roman Catholic countries, infidelity, in a greater or less degree, is prevalent with most of those, who consider themselves raised above the vulgar by station and acquirements.

Are the Protestant countries on the continent of Europe exempt from the contagion ? There is reason to apprehend, that the poison of infidelity is here also spreading, not less rapidly than where it is fostered by the corruptions of the church of Rome: of which ample evidence might be afforded. But here also another extraordinary feature, discovering the tendencies of the present age in regard to the belief in revelation, becomes conspicuous. Not only is absolute infidelity very prevalent, but the religion that is professed is more and more assuming a character, which renders it different from infidelity, less in sub-

stance than in name. The most low and unworthy ideas of the Christian Redeemer are daily superseding the honour that is his due; and, in the same ratio, ideas equally low and unworthy regarding the inspiration of the Sacred Volume, are spreading with celerity. The church of Geneva, so long regarded by a large portion of the Christian world as the centre of illumination, has published a reformed creed, disavowing any belief in the divinity of the Saviour: and the universities of Germany, which have formerly rendered such essential services to the cause of Biblical Learning, seem now to be labouring, through the works of their Professors, to reduce the standard of inspiration to as low a degree as is consistent with any belief, that the books which claim it contain a system of true religion; so low indeed, that it becomes difficult to perceive wherein they differ from the productions of writers who do not pretend to be inspired. A few years since, Dr. G. Paulus, a Professor in the University of Jena, and a Clergyman, published a new edition of the works of the celebrated atheist or pantheist, Spinoza, with a laudatory preface, in which he maintains, that the sentiments of this acknowledged infidel respecting the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, are the same which, in the hands of Professor Eichhorn of the University of Gottingen, have led to such superior elucidations of the holy

Volume. This Professor Eichhorn has published an Introduction to the Old and New Testaments, with several other works on Biblical criticism, which have been hailed with enthusiasm among his learned compatriots, as prodigies of erudition and genius. By erudition and genius he doubtless is distinguished: but how far his works tend to *exalt* the Scriptures, however they may elucidate questions connected with their language and with oriental antiquities, will be seen when it is stated, that, like our excentric countryman, Dr. Geddes, he denies any inspiration to Moses. And it is well known that similar latitudinarianism, miscalled liberality, characterizes the works of the modern German literati, and teachers of Christianity, in general.

Let us now turn our eyes for a moment to our own country. Britain may undoubtedly be regarded as the Latium of modern times. As in Latium, according to the fables of the ancient mythologists, the virtues of the golden age took refuge after they had been banished from the rest of the world; so is it in Britain, unquestionably, that the greatest portion of true religion is in these ages to be found. Here also, however, the destroying plague has been let loose; and its ravages have been extensive. Owing in part to the freedom which the human mind in this favoured country enjoys, and the liberty of publishing its thoughts which is

necessary to the keeping alive of this inestimable privilege, deistical and atheistical writings have long been here abundant: a Hobbes set the example to Spinoza, as did a Toland and Tindal to Voltaire: and the most desponding anticipations were long ago formed by the friends of religion, of the devastating effects which might finally result from the audacity of its assailants. What would these worthy persons have thought, had they witnessed the indecency, as well as audacity, which characterizes the efforts of infidelity in the present age? In their times, but comparatively a few speculative persons entertained any doubts of the truth of the Christian religion: and the attacks which were then made against it only excited attention in the reading portion of society, which in those days was comparatively small: nay, the authors of such attacks then only addressed them to men of education, and thought the attempt to unsettle the faith of the multitude too desperate an experiment. How different this conduct from that of the present generation of the opposers of Revelation! Wisely concluding, that the less informed the mind is, the less will it be capable of detecting the fallacy of their arguments, the infidels of the present day chiefly aim at accommodating their publications to the taste of the mob; whose passions, also, they labour to enlist on their side, still more than to convince their understanding.

Arrogant assertion, coarse ridicule, affected contempt, bold falsehood, and overweening dogmatism, with unfounded representations of the happiness which would ensue were mankind liberated from what they call the tyranny of kings and priests, and placed under no controul but that of the presumed infallible guide, Reason;—these are the chief weapons by which they now make conquests: and as there is undoubtedly much in the human heart, to which all this is congenial and agreeable, their success has certainly been extensive and alarming. The profligate, to whom the restraints of religion are irksome, finds it extremely consolatory to be assured, that the principles which govern his conduct are really “the Principles of Nature”: and the sciolist in learning feels it highly gratifying to his vanity, to decry as fallacious, all that is beyond the reach of his puny attainment. Scepticism—as incredulity is flatteringly called,—may be termed a short road to universal knowledge: for he who derides as idle speculation whatever he cannot grasp by the exercise of his sluggish senses, is in his own conceit as wise as the archangel, to whom all the mysteries of God’s providence stand open, and all the wonders of the Creative Energy are known.

Here then are two classes of persons among whom the contagion of infidelity has spread rapidly indeed. But is it among such, only, that its

converts are to be found? This we would by no means presume to assert. No doubt, many have had their minds unsettled in regard to the truth of revealed religion, who were not prepared to take the inoculation of infidelity by a predisposed state of the mental organization; many even, to whom it would be a great relief, could they have their doubts removed to the full satisfaction of their understanding. These are they who have had their attention directed to certain difficulties which appear to exist in the sacred volume; and which must ever appear as real difficulties to those who are not aware of the true nature of every divine composition, and of the design *for* which, and the principles according *to* which, it is written; although when these are correctly understood, all seeming inconsistencies at once disappear. Whilst then these difficulties are so industriously brought forward, and presented to the attention with every comment that can help to make them appear insuperable; whilst also an antidote of sufficient power is not afforded by the writings which have been published in reply,—for such, I fear, must be allowed to be the fact;—we cannot so much wonder at the immense increase of infidel sentiment at the present day; an increase which is really tremendous and appalling; such as must excite the strongest apprehensions of the final issue with all who do not confidently rely on the assurance of

Jesus Christ:—"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away."

And whilst the fortress of revelation is thus furiously assailed by those without, how is it defended by those within? Alas! by giving up its outworks to the enemy, and leaving unguarded a passage to the citadel. I am not now speaking of the works that have been written in defence of Christianity; but of the principles which, in modern times, have been laid down from high authority, regarding the inspiration of the Scriptures themselves. By way, as it would appear, of compromising the matter with the enemy, the doctrine of the *plenary* inspiration of the Holy Word has, within a recent period, been generally relinquished by those who sit in Moses' seat, and who pronounce, *ex cathedrâ*, what the church is to believe. I allude not to such as are generally regarded as apostates from the orthodox faith; but the authorities to which I refer, are the acknowledged oracles of the orthodox church. The present Bishop of Winchester, for example, in his work designed for the instruction of young clergymen, called "the Elements of Christian Theology," lays down the doctrine upon this question thus: "When it is said that the Sacred Scriptures are divinely inspired, we are not to understand that God suggested every word, or dictated every expression. From the different styles in which the books are written, and from the dif-

ferent manners in which the same events are related and predicted by different authors, it appears, that the sacred penmen were permitted to write as their several tempers, understandings, and habits of life, directed; and that the knowledge communicated to them by inspiration on the subject of their writings, was applied in the same manner as any knowledge acquired by ordinary means. *Nor is it to be supposed that they were thus inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered.* They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not, upon every occasion, stand in need of supernatural communication; but whenever, and as far as, divine assistance was necessary, it was always afforded." Again he says, "Though it is evident that the sacred historians *sometimes* wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from revelation the knowledge of those things which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe, that by the general superintendance of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they borrowed their information," (and which he states afterwards were accounts written by uninspired men) "and prevented from recording *any material error.*" He is here treating of the

writers of the Old Testament ; of the writers of the New Testament his sentiments are the same. He says, “ If we believe that God sent Christ into the world to found a universal religion, and that, by the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost, he empowered the apostles to propagate the gospel, as stated in these books, we cannot but believe that he would, by his immediate interposition, enable those whom he appointed to record the gospel for the use of future ages, to write without the omission of any important truth, or the insertion of *any material error*.” And these sentiments are generally received as orthodox— are quoted from Bishop Law, and recommended, though not expressly adopted, by the late Bishop Watson, in his answer to Paine, and are laid down in numerous works as the true principles of Scripture Inspiration. What ideas the profoundly learned Bishop Marsh, one of the Professors of Divinity at Cambridge, entertains of the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures, is evident from his laboured scheme to account for the composition of the three first gospels, as given with his translation of Michaelis’s Introduction to the New Testament ; in which he supposes a principal and a supplemental sketch of the Saviour’s life and discourses to have been first drawn up by unknown authors,—to have had various additions made to them afterwards as they passed through various unknown hands,—and at last to

have been digested by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, with further additions, into the form of their respective gospels. Other statements of this nature might be mentioned; but they all agree in the leading principle of allowing only a very partial inspiration to the sacred writers. Bishop Lowth, for instance, is a name ever to be mentioned with respect by the Biblical student, for his valuable Prelections on Hebrew poetry, and Version of Isaiah: but when he represents the prophets as borrowing ideas from one another, and as improving or debasing what they thus borrowed according to the sublimity of their poetical genius or the purity of their critical taste; does he not degrade them, in a great degree, from prophets to mere poets? He certainly endeavours to elevate our esteem for their talents as men; but he assists in abolishing our reverence for their writings as flowing from the immediate dictate of God.

Now how do Deists receive these concessions so liberally made? The advocates of Revelation may be regarded as saying to them, "See! we have come half way to meet you: surely you will not obstinately refuse belief, now that we require you to believe so little." What does the Deist answer? He says, "You are admitting, as fast as you can, that we are in the right. If you, who view the subject through the prejudices of your profession, are constrained to give up half of

what we demand, unbiassed persons will augur from the admission, that truth would require a surrender of the whole." No, my friends and brethren! he who would effectually defend the Christian faith must take his station on higher ground than this. What! tell the world, that to escape the increasing influence of infidelity, they must surrender the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures! As well might we tell them, that to obtain security when a flood is rising, they should quit the top of the mountain to take refuge in a cave at its base.

Assuredly, this is a state of things, calculated to fill the breast of the sincere and humble Christian with profound concern, if not with deep alarm. On the one hand, he beholds Divine Revelation assaulted with unprecedented fury and subtlety by those who avow themselves as its enemies;—on the other, he sees it half betrayed and deserted by those who regard themselves as its friends. Every devout believer in Revelation feels an inward predilection for the opinion, that the inspiration of a divinely communicated writing must be plenary and absolute. He feels great pain on being told, that this is a mistaken notion;—that he must surrender many things in the Sacred Writings to the enemy, to retain any chance of preserving the rest;—that he must believe the writers of the Scriptures to have been men liable to error, as a

preliminary to his assurance that the religion of the Scriptures is true. Surely, every one whose heart does not take part with the assailant of his faith, must be glad to be relieved from the necessity of making surrenders so fatal. The bowed staff eagerly springs back to its natural straightness, when lightened of the weight under which it bent: so he who has relinquished the doctrine of plenary inspiration, only because he saw no other way of accounting for the difficulties which have been pointed out in the Sacred Writings, will return to it with joy, as soon as he sees how those difficulties may be explained, without the hypothesis of error in the inspired penmen. Reflection, then, upon these things, has occasioned a desire in myself and some friends, to bring before the public, a view of the nature of the Holy Word in which this is done,—a view which, I strongly feel, is the only one that places the Divine Book beyond the reach of injury from infidel objections. It is, however, with much diffidence, that I address an auditory from a station, which is at other times occupied by some of the ablest men, whom the Christian ministry of this metropolis can boast:* [and I feel the same self-distrust, in a still greater degree, on addressing the public from the press.] My only

* A series of Lectures on Scripture Biography was then in a course of delivery at Albion Hall, by the most eminent Ministers of the Independent Connexion.

hope of obtaining acceptance, is founded in my conviction of the solidity of the sentiments, which I am to be the very inadequate organ of unfolding: sure, also, I am, that no candid minds will be less pleased with the truth, because it is offered through a channel, which they might not previously have supposed adapted to convey it. The defence of the oracles which contain the revelation of the Christian religion, is the common duty of all who assume the Christian name: and all who are sincerely attached to the Christian cause, will extend the right hand of fellowship to any one, be he otherwise who he may, who can point out a new line of defence, and shew how the divine authority of Revelation may be more effectually upheld. We are assured, also, that the Lord's care over his church can never be intermitted; that in proportion to the magnitude of the dangers to which she is exposed, will be the communication of means by which she may be defended: and it is perfectly in harmony with the ordinary economy of Divine Providence, that those means should come from a quarter whence they are least expected. Confiding then in the divine support, on the one hand, and relying, on the other, on the charity and love of truth which must ever reign in the bosom of the true Christian;—appealing also to the liberality and regard to pure reason which is constantly professed by the Deist; I beg the favourable and earnest attention of this

auditory, [and of the reader,] while I discuss the subjects announced for consideration in these Lectures.

The question of the *Necessity of Divine Revelation*, has been so frequently and so satisfactorily treated by others, that, as it is my wish, as far as possible, to avoid going over ground that has been trodden before, I shall not dwell long on this part of the subject.

The view which I would take of this question, is this. It is certain, that all the facts with which history brings us acquainted in regard to the state of mankind in former ages, and all those which are supplied to us by the observations of travellers respecting the present state of mankind in the different countries on the globe, afford the most decided evidence, that, without aid from Revelation, man is little better than a brute;—that to Revelation are owing all the superior excellences which ennoble his character as a man. Infidel writers talk of the light of reason, and they speak of the duties of man in society, with every thing necessary to his moral and intellectual improvement, as being easily deducible by the light of nature. The high utility of these sources of intelligence I readily admit: but when I hear such assertions as these, I always feel a wish to be informed how it has happened, that the light of nature never conducted man to

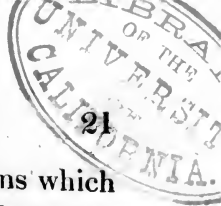
these discoveries, except when Nature had the means of lighting her candle at the torch of Revelation. It is evidently from the general improvement in the intelligence of the human mind which Revelation has produced, that modern infidels have been enabled to illuminate their reveries with some beautiful truths: These truths were not discovered to them either by the light of nature or the light of reason: they took them first from that religion in which they had been brought up; and then, finding them recommend themselves by their own evidence, and to be agreeable to the light of reason and nature, they have ascribed them to that source; and thus they set up the offspring of Revelation to destroy the authority of the parent.

Never yet was a nation known to have emerged from barbarism to civilization, without instruction communicated, either immediately or traditionally, from Revelation. According to the testimony both of the Scriptures, and of other ancient authorities, all religion, which was all originally founded in Revelation, began in the east, and has thence been diffused in the west; and it is well known, that the same has been the tract in which civilization has flowed over the world. The first created men had, as the Scriptures assure us, the knowledge of God and of their duty communicated to them by immediate Revelation. After the flood, Revelation was con-

tinued in the family of Noah, by whose posterity all the powerful and highly polished nations of antiquity were founded. Even the Grecian and other ancient mythologies were corruptions of the originally true religion communicated by Revelation to Noah and his descendants. This takes away the plea of those, who would appeal to the philosophers of Greece as examples of the efficacy of the light of nature. This plea has indeed been well answered by Leland and others, who have shewn, that, under the name of philosophy, the most ridiculous fancies in theory, and the most corrupt abominations in morals, were often foisted on mankind, and that a man would wander in darkness indeed, who should draw all his light from such fountains alone. But admitting, for argument's sake, that it would be safe to take the best of the philosophers as guides in religion and morals: it is a well known fact, that both Plato and Pythagoras derived a part of their systems from the priests of Egypt, whom they went expressly to consult; and though the pure light of Revelation was in Egypt greatly obscured, yet it is certain that all the true knowledge of a religious nature which the Egyptians possessed, was what remained from their original descent from the son of Noah. As natives of Greece then, where the religion derived from the revelation to Noah existed under one form of corruption,

and as students in Egypt, where the same original religion existed under another form of corruption, Pythagoras and Plato possessed themselves of all the remains of knowledge which tradition had preserved from that Revelation. I would by no means affirm, as some learned men have done, that Plato borrowed any of his ideas from the Jews, or that the writings of Moses afforded any of the materials for the Grecian mythology: but there was a revelation existing in the world before that given by the instrumentality of Moses, and which was similar to his in substance, though different in form; and this, turned into symbolic representations, was the foundation of the popular religion, whilst the ideas veiled in those symbols were the basis of philosophic speculation, among all the distinguished nations of antiquity.

The sceptic may laugh at the assertion, but I am satisfied that they who can view things in their causes will see its truth; that, whatever they who would separate science from religion may pretend to the contrary, Revelation is, in an indirect manner, the fountain-head of all science; for it is in consequence of the elevation of the faculties that is occasioned by the reception of the truths which are the objects of revelation, and the consequent illumination of the mind with heavenly light, (allow this phrase, ye advocates of the light of nature!—for if there be



such a thing as Revelation, the perceptions which are its offspring must be the progeny of heavenly light,) that it becomes receptive of higher degrees of natural light, and is capable of making greater discoveries in the truths which are the objects of science. It is true that these may be separated, and that men may excel in natural science, who ridicule every thing spiritual: yet it is only in consequence of their receiving the outward part of the sphere of illumination, which continually flows from God into the human mind, through the medium of those who receive the internal part of it, by admitting the truths of Revelation, that progress is made in natural science. All real intelligence, on whatever subject, must unquestionably be the product of a sphere of illumination flowing continually from God. The highest objects of this illumination must be the truths that relate to man's welfare as an immortal being,—the lowest, those which conduce only to his well-being in this world. Intelligence in the former respect then, must be considered as the operation of an interior sphere of divine illumination; and intelligence in the latter, as the operation of an exterior sphere of the same. Now the former must be to the latter, just what the soul is to the body: and the latter can no more be entirely separated from the former without extinction, than the body can be separated from the soul without death. Again:

Illumination in spiritual things is to illumination in natural, what the heart is to the members. If the femoral artery be divided and secured, the limb will still receive nourishment through the anastomosing vessels: this answers to the case of the existence of scientific attainments, with those who deny religion; who yet receive the exterior sphere of illumination from God, in consequence of living in connexion with those who receive the interior sphere also: but separate the limb entirely from communication with the heart, by dividing all the vessels, and the limb will speedily waste away: and this exhibits the fate of science, were it altogether separated from Revelation. Transplant then a colony of atheistic philosophers (Deists, as retaining from Revelation the belief of a God, would not be proper subjects for the experiment:—but transplant a colony of atheistic men of learning,) to a remote corner of the globe, and allow them no communication whatever with the disciples of Revelation; and the certain effect would be, that they would degenerate by degrees into absolute barbarism. To what cause can be attributed the wonderful superiority in literature and the arts, which the inhabitants of Christendom have so long maintained over all the other nations on the globe, but to their minds being more receptive of light of all kinds, in consequence of their admitting the light of Revelation? How extraordinary too

is the power which they derive from this source! See how they have covered the whole western world with their colonies, and how the aboriginal inhabitants have faded from before them! Behold what an empire they have established in the east, almost without colonization, by the pure force of moral superiority! It is not meant to be asserted that they have always made the best use of their superiority, but only that it unquestionably exists. Superiority in arms is, undoubtedly, the offspring of superiority in arts and science; and these are the products of natural light, which is the offspring of spiritual; and thus Christians are the arbiters of the destinies of the world, because they are the depositaries of the Word of God. As the tropical climates so immensely excel all others in the luxuriance of their vegetable productions, because they receive most directly the recreating energies of the orb of day; and as all other countries are productive or otherwise according to the proportion which they obtain of the vivifying beams, till, at the poles, perpetual sterility reigns: so are the powers of the human mind invigorated or otherwise in proportion to their reception of the beams of Revelation, and when excluded from these, they languish in the torpor of dulness and ignorance. Paradoxical then as the assertion may sound in the ears of some, it is a certain fact, that could those who cul-

tivate science without regard to religion, and who reject the Holy Word, the parent of all science, accomplish the object which some of them have aimed at, of destroying the Holy Word by the aid of her rebel progeny; they would accomplish much more than they intended: in digging a grave for Religion, they would open one, in which, not long afterwards, Science also would be entombed.

In one word, Until an instance can be adduced of a nation that has flourished in arts, morals, and civilization, without any assistance from Revelation, we have full reason for concluding, that Revelation is necessary. For the attainment even of these natural benefits,—in order to man's enjoyment of the true excellences and attaining the perfections of his nature, in this life, the light of Revelation is indispensable: of the existence and attributes of God, of his own immortality, of the existence and nature of a life hereafter, and of the means by which he may there attain the true end of his being, without the light of Revelation, he would know nothing at all. Here then it becomes indispensable indeed; and therefore, in all ages of the world, it has been afforded.

Since then we have such ample reason for concluding, that a revelation from God, under some form or other, is absolutely necessary to the well-being of man:—on the supposition that

God, to make the advantages of revelation constant and permanent, should cause it to be communicated in a written composition; what is the character which, we may justly conclude, such a written revelation would assume? Our ideas on this question will be regulated by the ideas we have conceived of the nature of God Himself: certainly, if these are such as are worthy of the Father of creation, we shall be led to expect something of a most exalted nature in a written revelation of his will. Who then is this wonderful Being, whom we assume to be the author of the writings called the Holy Word? Infidelity itself must allow, that this question cannot be more appropriately answered, than is done, as from the mouth of the Lord Himself, by the prophet Isaiah: "I am the First, and I am the Last, and beside me there is no God." "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth, in a measure, or weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who has directed the spirit of the Lord, or, being his counsellor, has taught him? With whom took he counsel, or who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: be-

hold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing: Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, and the beasts thereof for a burnt offering! All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him as less than nothing, and vanity. To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto him?" He is "the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy."* It is by such images as these that the prophets of the Old Testament depict the grandeur of the Author of the Bible; nor does the New Testament describe him in less impressive terms. When he manifested himself to John, as related in the first chapter of the Revelation, it is written; "I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, Who Is, and Who Was, and Who is to Come, the Almighty."† —I forbear to add any thing to these scriptural representations: for in attempting to delineate the ineffable perfections of God, all human language must fall infinitely too low:—yea, this is a theme of so transcendent a nature, that the tongues of angels could never do it justice. Let us elevate our ideas as far as we possibly can above all that is earthly and gross;—let us form the grandest conceptions we possibly can of the intense ardour of the Divine Love, of the transcendent brightness of the Divine Wisdom, and of the immense extension of the

* Isa. xlv. 6, xl. 12 to 18, lvii. 15. † Ver. 8.

Divine Omnipotence: and then let us recollect, that these Divine Attributes are infinitely beyond all that the highest efforts of imagination can conceive.

Now whilst we are meditating on these three grand attributes of Deity,—his Love, his Wisdom, and his Power;—if we would endeavour to picture to our thoughts how far they might respectively be exerted, we certainly could never conceive any thing beyond what the Scriptures represent them as having actually performed. Thus if we were to consider in what works the Divine Love might most evidently be displayed, we assuredly could imagine nothing more replete therewith than the wonders of our own creation and redemption. For the Lord doubtless created mankind expressly with the design to bless them with every felicity: he also provided an eternal heaven in which that felicity might be permanently enjoyed: and what could Infinite Love do more? Yet the Love of the Lord has done more. For when man had entirely receded from the end of his creation, such was the mercy of *Him by whom all things were made, and without whom was not any thing made that was made**, that he assumed man's nature by incarnation in the world, in order to lead him back to his Maker and to bliss.

If again we were to consider within ourselves,

* John i. 3.

in what manner the Divine Power of the Lord might be most evidently displayed, we could not possibly imagine any more stupendous exertions of it than those which we see around us. For what amazing power must that have been, by which this fair globe was formed, and peopled with innumerable inhabitants; by which the enormous orb that gives us light and heat was created; and by which myriads of other such immense repositories of heat and light, each with a train of dependant worlds, were called into existence, and arranged in an order that baffles all human intellect to conceive, through the boundless fields of immeasurable space!

Since then these manifest exhibitions of the Divine Love and the Divine Power are of so immense and magnificent a nature, must we not expect that an immediate revelation of the Divine Wisdom would be equally wonderful and glorious? That in all the works which we have already mentioned the Divine Wisdom is apparent, and that none of them could have existed without it, is, indeed, a certain truth: still we may imagine a method in which the Divine Wisdom might be more immediately and expressly discovered. The readiest means we have of judging of the intelligence or understanding of men, is, by their sentiments and conversation; and if a man writes a book, we expect to find

in it the plainest evidence of his wisdom, knowledge, and mental attainments. Suppose then the Lord God Almighty himself should reveal his Wisdom in this manner; suppose he should write, or cause to be written, a book for the instruction of man; should we not conclude, that such as the Lord God Almighty is, such his book would be? should we not infer, that such a book, like its author, must, as to its contents, be infinite and divine? Should we not expect to see the glories of eternal wisdom shine forth from every page? All mankind, with one voice, must answer these questions in the affirmative.

Here then we come to the great question that is at issue between the Christian and the Deist. It cannot be denied, we see, that a written Revelation that is really from God, must answer the character which we have attempted to depict: Do then the writings contained in the book called the Bible, come up to this character; and are we, on that account, authorised to receive those writings as the Word of God? I hesitate not to reply, with the fullest confidence, that they do; and I hope to make this in some degree evident before the conclusion of these Lectures.

By the Deist, however, such an answer as this may be received with the utmost scorn. He will readily enough admit, that a book that is really communicated by divine inspiration, ought to

answer to the character which we have just described: but he will declare, that he can discover no traces of such a character in the book called the Bible. He will affirm, that such a character as this can by no means belong to a book in which there are many statements that are contradictory to each other; many that are contradictory to reason and science; many that are contradictory to just morality; and the greater part of which book, moreover, is occupied with matters of an indifferent nature, unworthy of the concern of an Infinite Being. To these four heads may all the classes of infidel objections to the Scriptures be reduced. Some of the objections are, in my estimation, fully refuted in the many valuable defences of the Scriptures which have been published by various authors; but some of them, I candidly acknowledge, have not, in my opinion, been adequately met: the reason, I apprehend, has been, because the generality of those who have written in modern times in defence of the Sacred Scriptures, had not those just ideas of the primitive ages respecting their true nature and design, which alone can meet every objection fully and without reserve. I will here give a slight statement of the nature of each of these four classes of objections: and I will not shrink from stating them with all the force of which they are susceptible:—because I am completely satisfied, that the views I shall develope in

the succeeding Lectures, will be fully adequate to overthrow them all. It is of no real use to present things partially and unfairly: this always gives opportunity of triumph to an enemy; and will only secure the attachment of a friend, so long as we can secure his remaining in ignorance.

Great stress has been laid by infidel objectors upon their charge of contradictory statements of facts: and of the instances alleged to be such, they have collected a great number.

Thus, after Moses had directed Aaron, saying, "Take thy rod, and stretch out thy hand upon the waters of Egypt, upon their streams, upon their rivers, and upon their ponds, and upon all their pools of water, that they may become blood; and that there may be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood, and in vessels of stone*;"—and after it is related, in the two next verses, that the miracle was performed accordingly;—objectors affirm that Moses must strangely have forgotten himself, to say in the verse following, "And the magicians of Egypt did so with their enchantments." When all the water of Egypt was turned into blood before, how, it is asked, could the magicians repeat the operation?—But the varieties observable in the manner in which the different evangelists state the events of the life of Jesus Christ, sometimes disagreeing in the order of time, and sometimes

* Exod. vii. 19.

in the circumstances with which the facts were attended, have afforded an extensive field for opprobrious animadversions. When Matthew*, in relating the temptation of the Lord Jesus Christ in the wilderness, makes it conclude with the rebuff he gave the tempter on being offered the dominion of all the kingdoms of the world on condition that he would worship the Satanic deceiver; whilst Luke† places last the suggestion to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple in proof of his being the Son of God;—it is argued, that the whole is a fiction, marked as such by the prevarication which so commonly attends the testimony of witnesses who undertake to support a falsehood: and Christian advocates, while they deny the inference that the whole or any part is a fiction, allow that one of the relaters must have been mistaken in regard to the order of time, and that, though he relates true events, he relates them from his own imperfectly informed mind, and not from divine inspiration. Again, the objectors ask, What credit is to be given to the veracity of writers,—and, especially, what becomes of their claim to divine inspiration,—when they misquote so grossly the books which they esteemed sacred, as to assign to one writer what is only to be found in the book of another? Thus Matthew, on occasion of the purchase of

* Ch. iv. 10. † Ch. iv. 9.

the potter's field with the refunded price of the treachery of Judas, says, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field; as the Lord appointed me.'"* The only passage in the Old Testament which bears any similitude to this, is not in the book of JEREMIAH, but in that of ZECHARIAH.† And the harmonizers of Scripture have seen no way of surmounting this difficulty, but by one of two equally dangerous admissions;—either that Matthew *was* mistaken; or that the book of Jeremiah has come down to us in a very mutilated state. The only other example of deistical objections from alleged contradictions which I shall mention, is that drawn from the account of the two thieves who were crucified with Jesus, as given by Matthew and by Luke. After relating the cruel scoffs with which the Saviour was insulted by the Jews as he hung on the cross, Matthew says‡, "And the thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth:" whereas Luke§ affirms that only one of them displayed this brutality, and that he was rebuked for it by the other; who, so far from mocking, "said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when

* Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. † Ch. xi. 12, 13. ‡ Ch. xxvii. 42.

§ Ch. xxiii. 39 to 43.

thou comest into thy kingdom." This difference is accounted for variously by the commentators, some of whom say, that when Matthew speaks of thieves, in the plural, he only means one of them; whilst others suppose that they both, at first, joined in the scoffs, but that one of them afterwards repented. But the objectors treat these solutions as mere evasions; affirm that the passages are in direct opposition; and ask in triumph, which we are to receive as the pure Word of God.

The second class of Objections—the imputed contradictions to science—chiefly regard the Mosaic account of the creation and the deluge. The account of the creation in the first chapter of Genesis, it is alleged, cannot possibly be true; because the science of geology, which within a few years past has received such great improvements, fully evinces that the whole globe of earth, with its innumerable tribes of inhabitants, vegetable, animal, and human, was not formed within the short space of six days, as there detailed. Besides, it is affirmed, that, independently of geology, reason alone proves the inaccuracy of the statement: for light is said to have been produced on the first day*; whereas the sun, moon and stars were not created till the fourth day †; and it is very certain, as we now often experience on a very cloudy night when

* Ver. 3, 5.

† Ver. 16, 19.

the moon is below the horizon, that without sun, moon, and stars, there cannot be any light. It is likewise related, that all the vegetable creation was produced on the third day*, thus before the formation of the sun; yet every rustic knows that without the heat of the sun there can be no vegetation. So also the history states, that, after Cain had killed his brother, he was terrified lest every one that met him should kill him, to prevent which a mark was set on him by God†;—which evidently supposes, that at this time the earth had numerous inhabitants; although, according to the record, none were then living on it, beside Cain, but his father and mother, who would know him whether a special mark were set on him or not. With regard to the deluge, they affirm it to be improbable that any general deluge ever should have existed, after the globe was once brought into a state adapted for the support of a human population; and they raise great objections as to the possibility of providing room in the ark sufficient for the accommodation of the immense multitude to which the prescribed numbers of animals of all species must have amounted‡, and to contain, besides, an adequate stock of provision. According to the history, Noah with his companions, animal and human, remained in the ark a year and ten

* Ver. 11, 13. † Gen. iv. 14, 15.

‡ Cha. vii. 2, 3.

days* : and a long period must afterwards have elapsed before the devastated earth produced a sufficiency of new food for their support. This objection has been answered by calculations to prove the immense bulk of the ark, which, it has been shewn, must have been equal in magnitude to twenty first rate men of war, and to more than forty of the largest Indiamen ; but this, while it is alleged to be still quite insufficient for the purposes required, has furnished the infidel with another objection, who contends, that no vessel of such magnitude could be made to cohere together.

But the most serious class of Objections against the divinity of the Sacred Scriptures, is that which has recently been urged in such shameless terms, declaring the Bible,—which well-disposed minds have revered for ages as the code of all perfect morality,—to be the most immoral book in the world ! Certainly, to ground this charge, as is in great part done, upon those passages in which criminal practices are mentioned for the express purpose of being condemned, and of warning mankind against the dreadful consequences which must overtake the perpetrators ; or even to ground it upon the incidental mention, without comment, of the commission of great crimes ;—surely this evinces the accusation to have originated in nothing but deep malignity against the Bible,

* Gen. vii. 11. viii. 14.

its Author, and its friends. But the charge deserves more attention when they support it by instances of criminal conduct in persons that are spoken of as peculiarly accepted by God. Thus they dwell much upon the case of Jacob, who, at the instigation of his mother Rebekah, defrauded his brother Esau of his father's blessing, by a most extraordinary deception practised upon Isaac, and supported, when the old man suspected it, by the strongest asseveration of a deliberate falsehood.* By the example of the same patriarch, who had two wives and two concubines;—and indeed of nearly all the Jewish worthies and kings, a sanction is given, they allege, to polygamy and concubinage; an opinion also which has not been confined to Deists, since Dr. Madan, a clergyman of the Church of England, published a well-known book with the design to prove, from the above examples, that polygamy and concubinage are allowable to Christians. But the objectors contend, that worse things are sanctioned even than these; for by the examples of Ehud and Jael, licence is given to assassination. The former was one of the Judges, raised up, it is said, by the Lord, to deliver Israel when in subjection to the Moabites; and who, under the pretence of carrying a present to the king of Moab, obtained a private audience, and then sheathed a

* Gen. xxvii. 6 to 29.

dagger in his bowels.* Jael was the wife of Heber the Kenite ; and when Sisera, the general of the army of Jabin king of Hazor, was defeated by Deborah and Barak, “he fled, to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite; for there was peace,” it is expressly said “between Jabin the King of Hazor, and the house of Heber the Kenite. And Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, Turn in my lord, turn in to me: fear not.” And when she had thus inveigled him into her power, and had lulled him to sleep, she drove a nail through his temples†: for which act, it is said of her in the prophetic song of Deborah and Barak, “Blessed above women shall Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite be; blessed shall she be above women in the tent.” ‡ As for the scandals to which the conduct of David has given rise, who, though called the man after God’s own heart§, was guilty both of murder and adultery || ; these are too painful to dwell upon. Moved by such seeming incongruities, the Marcionites and Valentinians, with other early sects of Gnostic Christians, regarded the God of the Jews as an evil genius,—as “the prince of this world” whose power Jesus came to destroy¶: and the modern Deists charge Christians with blasphemy, for receiving the record of such transactions as the Word of God.

* Judges, iii. 15 to 22. † Judges, iv. 17 to 21. ‡ Ch. v. 24.

§ 1 Sam. xiii. 14; Acts, xiii. 22.

|| 2 Sam. xi. 2, 15.

¶ John xii. 31, xiv. 31.

The last class of Objections against the Sacred Scriptures, is drawn from what persons uninformed respecting their true nature, deem the insignificance of a large portion of their contents. What sort of ideas (they ask) must we form of the Divine Being, on the supposition that he is the Author of the Bible, when we find whole books filled with directions for the performance of ceremonies, which in themselves can be of no importance*; when we see chapters taken up with precepts respecting what sort of food his servants should eat, and what sort of clothing they should wear.† What minute cares must we suppose to engage his breast, when we see him giving such exact instructions about the dimensions of the Tabernacle, and the size and form of all its vessels! ‡ What useless services must we imagine him to be pleased with, when we find him commanding such a variety of sacrifices to be offered, and giving such precise orders respecting the manner in which the minutest part of the rites was to be performed! § And what contracted and partial attachments and antipathies must we suppose to reign in his bosom, when we behold him exhibiting a peculiar regard to the insignificant nation of the Jews ||, to the

* See Leviticus throughout, and much of Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy.

† Levit. xi. Exod. xxviii. † Ex. xxv. to xxxi.

§ Lev. i. to vii. &c. || Exod. xix. 5.

exclusion of the rest of the world; or when we hear of his commissioning prophets, with all the solemnity of divine authority, to denounce anathemas, not only against great metropolitan cities, such as Babylon*, or Nineveh†, or Damascus‡, but against the insignificant abodes of an insignificant population,—such as the villages inhabited by the tribes of Moab and Ammon!§ Can the Father of the universe (they demand) feel such concern, and command it to be written in his Book for the information of the remotest generations, about the domestic affairs of nations whose very name was shortly to perish from the earth,—about the condition of cities which were presently to crumble into dust, and confound the skill of geographers to decide where they stood? Such solicitudes as these (our opponents will allege) might not be unbecoming in those fancied deities of the ancient heathens, who were supposed merely to preside over particular districts; but how (they ask) can we conceive them to dwell in the breast of your great I Am, the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, the Creator of myriads of worlds?

Such, under a general form, are the strongest objections which the adversaries of the Scriptures make to their divine authority; and some of them, it must be candidly admitted, are such as to embarrass the rational inquirer, who enters on the

* Jer. l. li. † Jonah i. iii. ‡ Amos i. iii. § Jer. xlvi. xlv.

study of the subject without a correct idea of its proper bearing. However, plausible as they may appear, I undertake to affirm, and hope in the succeeding lectures to make good the affirmation, that to adduce from such considerations an argument against the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, is entirely to mistake the whole nature of the case; that the argument thence deduced falls to the ground of itself, as soon as the true nature of the Word of God is seen, and the design is regarded for which it was given to mankind; that, in fact, the existence of such things in the Scriptures as we have adverted to, affords no argument at all when adduced to prove that they have no origin in Divine Authority, but yields an irrefragable one when applied, as it only ought to be applied, to evince, that the Scriptures must contain much more in their bosom than is extant upon their surface. We propose then to wrest the weapons of the infidel out of his hands, and make them assist in establishing this great truth; to prove by their aid, not that the Scriptures are not the Word of God, but that they are; to demonstrate by their help, what is the genuine **DIVINE STYLE OF WRITING**,—what are the true characteristics of a **DIVINE COMPOSITION**.

I will conclude at present with exhorting all who favour me with their attention, to be care-

ful to cherish such thoughts of God, and of a revelation from God, as are worthy of the subject. Let us above all things be on our guard how we lightly fall in with the prevailing infidelity of the times. I have no doubt that there is nothing against which the Divine Providence is more anxious to preserve mankind, (so far as it can be done without infringing that freedom without which man would not be a man,) than from falling into contempt for the Holy Word: and that man cannot more perversely abuse the noble powers with which he is endowed, nor run more directly counter to the designs of his Maker, than when he reasons himself out of all reverence for the written revelation of the Divine Will. Little as it may generally be supposed, the Holy Word is the chief medium of communication between man and heaven, and indeed between man and God; which communication is cut off, and man falls into a merely natural and animal state, in proportion as he regards with contempt this highest and best of his Maker's gifts. *Confirmed* infidelity—such as extends to scorn and hatred against revelation—is in most cases the result of depravity of heart; how speciously soever this may be glossed over before the world by subtle reasonings, and a proud display of merely natural, superficial virtues; though indeed even this covering is cast away by some of the present race of Deists and

Atheists; whose works exhibit such malignity of disposition, as sufficiently evinces the foulness of the source whence their sentiments issue. Most true is the saying of the Apostle; that “if the gospel be hid,”—(*finally*, that is;—for we are not to judge harshly of those who, with sincere intentions, are embarrassed by honest doubts,—) “it is hid to them that are lost:”—that is, to those who are so enslaved to worldly and selfish lusts, as to be unwilling to hear any thing, which, by calling them to higher pursuits, would disturb them in their sleep of darkness and of death. I make not these remarks with any wish to intimidate:—the freedom of the rational faculty in the present age is too complete to admit of intimidation:—but I make them to induce those whose tendency to scepticism has not settled into confirmed negation, fairly to weigh both sides of the question before they decide, and to go into the inquiry with that solemnity of attention which is reasonable, where so much is at stake. These I would intreat especially to regard that assurance of Jesus Christ, so consonant to pure reason,—that rectitude and purity of object in making our inquiries, is the best preservative against error in drawing our conclusions: “If any man,” says he, “will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.”* This is the only safe rule, where

* John, vii. 17.

the thing inquired into is religious truth : and my conviction is, that they who act in the spirit of this rule will find their reverence for the Holy Word continually increase, and their understanding of its contents continually improve, till they are satisfied that, like the Word incarnate, it "proceeded forth and came from God."

LECTURE II.

THE TRUE NATURE OF THE SCRIPTURES CONSIDERED.

Design with which the Scriptures were given, and the Nature of their Composition, stated for proof.

I. That the title "the Word of God," and the Plenary Inspiration which that title implies, are claimed by the Scriptures; and that this is recognized by many critics. II. Proofs, from rational and philosophical grounds, that a Composition which is really "the Word of God," must contain stores of wisdom in its bosom, independently of any thing that appears on the surface. III. That the Composition received as the Word of God, continually assures us that it is inwardly replenished with such wisdom:—1. This intimated by the writers of the Old Testament;—2. Expressly declared by the Lord Jesus Christ;—3. And by his Apostles:—4. Generally believed by the Christian Church, for many ages, from the Apostles downwards, and still recognized by the best Interpreters. IV. But this great truth having been abused, that endeavours have been made, during the last two or three Centuries, to

restrict the meaning of the Scriptures to their literal sense alone. Admitted, that all Points of Faith are to be established by the literal sense : But that the objection against a further sense would fall to the ground, could it be shewn, that the Scriptures are written throughout according to an immutable Law or Rule, a knowledge of which would, in explaining them, substitute certainty for conjecture, and cut off the sources of vague interpretation.

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IN our opening Lecture we took a brief view of the present state of public opinion, on the subject of the divine inspiration of the Word of God, or Holy Scriptures ; and we have seen that, while absolute infidelity is at present more prevalent throughout Christendom than at any former period since the establishment of the Christian religion ; while the attacks upon the credibility of the Christian revelation were never so unremitted and daring ; the cause has been half betrayed by many of its advocates, in the lax notions which they inculcate respecting the nature of Scriptural inspiration. We also drew a faint picture of what *must* be the character of a composition which has God for its Author ; we stated the four leading classes of objections by which

infidels deny this character to belong to the writings called the Holy Scriptures; and we advanced it as a fact, to be afterwards proved, that all difficulties would disappear, were the true nature of the Holy Scriptures distinctly understood, and the design for which they were given fully discerned. What this design was, we now proceed to state.

When well-meaning men have been induced to make the admission, that the sacred writers might not, on all occasions, be inspired, it has been in consequence of not considering, any more than the opposers to whose railings they have so far yielded, what was the sole design for which the divinely inspired volume was composed. Things, for example, that appear like contradictions, have in some places been pointed out; and though most of these admit of being satisfactorily answered even in the literal sense, yet, because some of them, if we confine our attention to the literal sense alone, are attended with real difficulty, many, even of the sincere friends of Christianity, have admitted, that the Scriptures may, in some instances, have proceeded from fallible authors,—from penmen who were not at all times inspired! This admission they have made, to open a door for retreat, in case any of the statements made in the letter should be proved by an adversary to be indefensible. But surely had it been consi-

dered, that whatever proceeds immediately from God, in the nature of a communication of his will, must be spiritual and divine, and that the sole design of it, in every part, must be, to improve man in the wisdom of salvation ; it would have been seen, that merely historical circumstances, however important to the actors in them, can never be of such moment in the eyes of an Infinite Being, as that the communication of even the most correct knowledge respecting them can be a thing to have place in his express Word of revealed Wisdom, unless things of far higher consequence be at the same time referred to and represented by them. Hence, when we find such things spoken of in a book which its Divine Author assures us was given from Him, and which bears so many marks, both internal and external, that evince the truth of this assurance ; we ought to be satisfied, that things of far higher, even of eternal moment, are shadowed forth, and represented to us, under these historical relations ;—as we shall see presently is also expressly declared by the Lord and his Apostles. In short, we ought to conclude, (as we shall find both reason and Scripture assure us must be the case with every composition that has God for its Author,) that in the Sacred Scriptures there is an internal or spiritual sense, distinct from the letter, but contained within it, and no otherwise capable of

being conveyed to human beings in this world of nature; which spiritual sense must treat, not of natural things, but of spiritual; not of things relating to the body of man and his transitory life, but to his soul and life eternal: And we ought to conclude further, that although the historical circumstances detailed in the literal sense are in general substantially true, having occurred as they are related, yet if there are any of them that are in any respect contradictory, the reason must be, not because the narrative is not divinely inspired, but because the letter has been forced, in such instances, to bend a little, as it were, under the weight of the important matters contained within it, to express which more fully, a slight turn has been given to the literal narration. Nor is there, in this supposition, the smallest degree of inconsistency. For every composition, either human or divine, must be judged of, according as it is adapted to express the Design of the Author. But a revelation from God cannot be designed to improve us in natural knowledge, but in heavenly or spiritual. If then the literal sense of the Holy Word is so adjusted, as to be a proper vehicle for the divine realities of a spiritual kind with which it is inwardly replenished, ~~then~~ it answers the Design for which it was given, whether the literal expression, regarded by itself, be in all respects perfectly coherent or not;—whether

the historical occurrences, respecting which, regarded by themselves, it is no part of the Divine Author's plan to communicate information, are detailed with all possible clearness or not. In short, if the Design for which a revelation from God must be given, had been steadily kept in view, and the outward expression had been judged of accordingly, it would have been seen that the Word of God does, in every part, contain a spiritual sense, which treats solely of the Lord, his kingdom, man's soul, and his improvement in heavenly graces, and that the literal sense is constructed purely in subserviency to the spiritual: and then the objections against its divine inspiration would never have been raised, or, if they had, would soon have obtained a completely satisfactory answer. To evince that this is its true character, will be the main object of this and our subsequent Lectures.

I. The first thing necessary to the clearing up of this argument, is, to ascertain, what is the kind of inspiration which the Scriptures claim for themselves.

Here then the fact, that the title, "the Word of God," is claimed by the Scriptures for themselves, is alone sufficient to satisfy us, that they assume to have been written by a plenary divine inspiration. For what can "the Word of God" be, but divine speech or revelation flowing from

God? And if this is given us by the instrumentality of men, then must they, so to give it us, have been divinely inspired:—otherwise what they wrote would not be the Word of God, but the word of men,—of illuminated men, perhaps, but whose writings could convey nothing more than they themselves conceived and apprehended—the mere sentiments of the writers.

1. That the books of Moses claim to be *the Word of God*, is expressed by its being so repeatedly said, that “the Lord spake unto Moses, saying*,” and also, that “Moses wrote all the words of the Lord †:” And whoever has looked into the writings of the prophets, knows how often they make the declaration, “The word of the Lord came unto me, saying.” ‡

2. But that the title “Word of God” is properly applied to the Sacred Scriptures, is evinced by the use of the expression by the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Speaking of the law written by Moses, he first observes, “For *Moses* said, Honour thy father and mother: and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death:” and then he adds, “But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, he shall be free; and ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his

* See almost every Chap. in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers.

† Exod. xxiv. 4. ‡ See the Prophets throughout.

mother; making *the Word of God* of none effect through your tradition.”* Thus we see that the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which we may be sure do not rank higher than those of the New, are denominated, by the highest authority, “the Word of God:” of course they must have been given by a plenary divine inspiration.

The same expression is used again, and the idea conveyed by it affirmed of all that is properly called “the Scripture,” in another debate of the Lord Jesus Christ with the Jews. When they were about to stone him for having said, “I and the Father are One,” he reasoned with them thus: “Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods to whom *the Word of God* came,—and *the Scripture cannot be broken*,—say ye of him †,” &c. Here, not only is the revelation communicated to the Jews called by its real Author, “the Word of God,” but it is authoritatively declared, that “the Scripture cannot be broken;” where the word “broken” is admitted by the Commentators to be idiomatic, the meaning being, that the Scripture is not to be contradicted or denied,—that its authority is not to be infringed. The purport of the clause, then, paraphrased into familiar language, is clearly this: “If he called them gods to whom the Word of God came—*and this you cannot deny, because the authority of*

* Mark vii. 10 to 13.

† John x. 34, 35.

the Scriptures is unimpeachable,—say ye of him,” &c. . Thus then the revelation given to the Jews is recognized by “the Word made flesh,” as *the Word of God*; and the attributes of that Word are assigned to what is emphatically called *the Scripture*, which is declared, on this ground, to be, what no partially inspired composition can be, absolutely infallible,—an authority which, on no pretence whatever, is to be impugned. The same sanction, conveyed by the same expression, is given by Jesus Christ to “the law and the prophets,” or to the whole of the ancient Scriptures, when he says, after referring to them, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.”* Here, to break one of the least of the commandments of the law and the prophets, does not mean merely to live in the neglect of it, but to weaken its authority: the word in the original is the same as in the passage just quoted from John, and means literally *to loosen*, or *dissolve*, that is, *to take away its obligation*. The unlawfulness of this, we find, in regard to the least of the commandments of all the law and the prophets, Jesus Christ most decidedly affirms: what then are we to think of those who tell us, that “it is not to be supposed that *they* [meaning Moses

* Matt. v. 19.

and the prophets,] were *even thus* inspired [meaning, even according to the lowest notions of inspiration,] in every fact which they related, or in *every precept which they delivered.*" Did not Bishop Tomline see, when he penned these awful words, that he was herein "loosing," or destroying the authority of, at any rate, some of "the least of the commandments," and was thus setting his authority in opposition to the authority of Jesus Christ, who so solemnly recognizes the whole as to the immovable Word of God.

3. But perhaps it may be objected, that the title, "Word of God," is nevertheless only applicable to such parts of the Scriptures as contain precepts expressly delivered in the name of God. We do not, however, find that Jesus Christ makes any such distinction; so that we have divine authority for denying that any such distinction exists. Besides, what a door for uncertainty would this throw open! If the writers who recorded those precepts which they deliver in the name of God, were not inspired throughout, they might as easily err in this part of their duty as in any other; and thus it would be impossible for us to know whether what they delivered as divine precepts were really such or not. However, we are not left to decide this question by our own reasonings; for, in addition to the unlimiting declarations of Jesus Christ, the Apostle Paul gives us the strongest

assurance we can possibly require, as to the entire inspiration of the whole. He says, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*:" And it is here to be noted, that the five words, "given by inspiration of God," have but one word [$\theta\epsilon\omicron\pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$], answering to them in the original; and that is one so expressive, that it conveys all that our translators have stated, with that addition of force which results from condensation. A single word might be framed in English to convey the same meaning, but it would sound harsh, as being unusual: We however might say, "All scripture is *God-breathed*:" which indeed is just the same in sense as "given by inspiration of God;" only the word "inspiration," being derived from a Latin, and not an English root, does not convey to English ears the primary meaning that belongs to it, which is that of *breathing-in*. Nothing then can be more conclusive than this passage for the full inspiration of the whole of the Word of God. All Scripture was inspired, or *breathed-into the writers*, by God,—was the result of a divine *afflatus*, which took such entire possession of the inspired penmen, that it was not they who wrote, further than as to the mere motion of the fingers, but God himself who wrote with their hands. This is what is included in the idea of "Inspiration of God;" and to restrict it to any thing short of

* 2 Tim. iii. 16.

this, is to charge the Apostle with having spoken at random, without understanding the meaning of his language.

Paul however does not stand alone in this testimony. He is supported in it by Peter, who affirms the same doctrine, though in quite different terms. "Prophecy," says he, "came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God *spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*"* It is here to be remembered, that the Jews called the writers of the historical books "prophets," as well as those of what we call the prophetic books; as is known to every one who has seen a Hebrew bible. Now of all these holy men, the Apostle affirms, that they spake, not by the will of man, but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost: clearly excluding their own will, and of course their own understanding, from any concern in the matter. And here also it will be useful to attend to the force of the principal original word. The Greek term [*φερομενοι*] translated "moved," is one that conveys a much stronger idea than that of the gentle sort of impression to which we apply the term "moved:" It means *carried away, —rapt, —transported; —taken altogether out of themselves, and possessed entirely by the power of God.* So positive is the language of the heaven-taught writers on the subject of divine

* 2 Ep. i. 21.

inspiration; and so decisive is the testimony which they bear to the plenary inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures.

Such being the strength and unequivocal nature of the expressions in which the inspiration of the Sacred Scriptures is affirmed by infallible authority, it really seems extraordinary how they who undertake to explain the divine books, should ever have thought of limiting their inspiration to so low a degree of it, as is unworthy of the name altogether: and it can only be accounted for by the reason before assigned; that being pressed by the Deist with the difficulties which some passages present, and not reflecting that these should lead to a higher mode of interpretation, the Christian advocates have seen no way of maintaining the general credibility of the sacred penmen, but by allowing their liability to little mistakes. It would however be but a sorry expedient for the preservation of a country situated like Holland, when threatened with an inundation from the fury of the ocean, should they who have the care of the dykes, fearing lest these should be washed away, purposely make a gap in them, as a means of averting the destructive effects of the waves: here, every one sees, that the country, though in a more gradual manner, would equally be drowned; but the dykes, though no longer of any use, might possibly be preserved. By admitting only such an

inspiration as does not exclude fallibility, religious establishments may perhaps for a time be preserved: but the objects for which they were instituted will be undermined and subverted. Infidelity will be confirmed and extended; and the Faith that remains, being emptied of its spirituality, will differ from infidelity in little but in name. Religion will degenerate into a cold morality, which Deism may supply almost as well.

4. Such laxity, however, did not characterize the sentiments of former times. Though now it is otherwise, the general belief once was, that inspiration really is inspiration; and they who wrote upon it, did not attempt to define the *thing*, to be something entirely different from what is expressed by the *name*. This might be proved by copious evidence, if necessary; but it will be quite sufficient here to give the statements of Bishop Marsh, in the Notes to the third Chapter of his translation of Michaelis; for though he had such low ideas of the nature of inspiration, at least as far as regards the inspiration of the Evangelists, when he formed his singular theory of the origin of the three first gospels, he seems, when he translated the first part of the Work just mentioned, which was several years previously, to have been inclined to favour the higher views of the subject: at least, he had, and has, too much integrity to keep them out of

sight. He there, complaining of his Author for not himself giving a definition of Inspiration, says, that “some understand an inspiration of words, as well as ideas, others of ideas alone; a third class understand by inspiration an intervention of the Deity, by which the natural faculties of the sacred writers were directed to the discovery of truth; and a fourth class assume a kind of negative intervention, by which they were prevented from falling into material error; some again assume a total inspiration, declaring that the supernatural influence of the Deity was extended to the most minute historical accounts, while others suppose that it was confined to certain parts of Scripture.” And, as the authorities for the opinion, that inspiration extends both to words and ideas, he gives “most of the German divines of the last [or seventeenth] century, and many in the present” [the eighteenth—for this was written in 1793.] The Author whom he translates,—Michaelis,—seems very unsettled in his own mind, both respecting what he should determine inspiration to be, and what books in the Bible he should regard as possessing it; it appears, however, that where it exists at all, he thought it must be plenary, applying to this subject a passage of Paul, which in our translation stands thus: “We speak not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing na-

tural things with spiritual*:" which declaration he renders thus: "We deliver doctrines in words taught by the Holy Ghost, explaining inspired things with inspired words." I do not quote this version by Michaelis as adopting it, or as accepting his application, in the context, of the doctrine he appears to mean to deduce from it; but only as evidence of what this great scholar's opinion of inspiration really was: Hereupon Bishop Marsh justly remarks, "*It seems then, that he understands a verbal inspiration, agreeably to the sentiments of many ancient Fathers, and many modern divines, who have considered the Apostles and Evangelists merely as passive instruments. It is true,*" the Bishop adds, (and we shall consider the sentiment in the sequel,) "that this hypothesis renders it difficult to account for the great variety of style observable in the Greek Testament: on the other hand, several writers, especially Ernesti, contend, that it is difficult to abstract an inspiration of ideas from an inspiration of words." Assuredly, it is difficult: and this avowal from the celebrated Ernesti, will perhaps be felt as the more valuable, when it is remembered, that he was by no means uninfected, on some points, with the lax principles of the moderns; so that his testimony in favour of plenary inspiration, must be considered as drawn from him by the unassisted force of truth. I will

* 1 Cor. iv. 13.

only add further upon this question, that what the sentiments of profoundly learned British divines formerly were respecting it, is sufficiently indicated in the maxim adopted by Pococke, and prefixed as a motto to the *Notæ Miscellanæ*, appended to his *Porta Mosis* of Maimonides: it is this: “There is not in the Law or Holy Scripture a single letter, on which matters of the greatest importance [in the Hebrew, great mountains,] are not dependent.” *

These testimonies, I trust, will be sufficient to show, that many writers, and those of the highest authority, have heretofore believed, that when Jesus Christ terms the Scripture the Word of God, and declares that it must not be broken, or its authority impeached; and when the Apostles assure us that it is given by inspiration of God, and that those who wrote it were carried out of themselves by the Divine Spirit that possessed them; they really mean what they say:—those, therefore, who may now be disposed to believe that they mean what they say, will find a cloud of witnesses to support them. It is true, that, at present, the fashion of the times runs the other way; but it is not a new thing for heaven and the world to stand in opposition: and, on this point, the authorities are sufficiently great and numerous to render the profession of

* אין בתורה אפילו אות אחת שאין ההרים גדולים
תלויים בה.

the truth honourable in the eyes of men, as well as in the sight of God:

This question, respecting the nature of the inspiration which the Scriptures claim for themselves, though of the greatest moment to the Christian, will be little regarded by the Deist: it was, however, necessary to consider it, because we shall find it pregnant with consequences, in which the Deist also is deeply interested.

II. It being then certain, that the Scriptures claim to be "the Word of God," according to the full meaning of that weighty expression; and it being likewise true that many of the greatest Biblical scholars deemed the claim thus made by the Scriptures too positive to be evaded, so that we must as much believe them, when they assert their own plenary inspiration, as when they assert any thing else: we beg to be allowed to assume, for the present, for argument's sake, that they really are the Word of God: and with this admission, we proceed to offer proofs, from rational and philosophical grounds, that, if so, they *must* contain stores of wisdom in their bosom, independently of any thing that appears on their surface.

If the Bible could, throughout, be understood, and would, in every part, afford a clear, intelligible, and instructive meaning, by consulting the literal or grammatical sense of the words

and phrases alone; or if by thus restricting our researches after its meaning, we could always obtain as clear a one as is to be drawn from the works of uninspired writers; there would then be more reason (but by no means sufficient) for contending, that it never was meant to contain any thing more: but when we find in it passages, to which, unless we allow them an internal sense, we must deny any intelligible sense at all;—we surely must reject the notion, that the literal sense is all that is intended,—a notion so derogatory to the divine inspiration of the Sacred Writings, and which, if suffered to regulate our views of them entirely, would compel us to think less highly of the Word of God, than we do of many of the compositions of men. However, I do not mean to beg the question, but to shew that the possession of stores of hidden wisdom, is not only necessary to vindicate for the Scriptures their title of the Word of God, but is an inseparable characteristic of every Divine Composition; that without it, no writing whatever, were its outward form just what the sceptic would require, (would he define what that is,) can be entitled to that appellation..

Who then does not see, that the difference between Compositions that are really the Word of God and the compositions of men, must be as great, as between the works of God and the works of men? And wherein does the latter

difference most remarkably consist? Is it not in the interior organization which the works of God possess, beyond what appears in their outward form? When we look at a picture or a statue, which are among the most exquisite productions of human ingenuity, after we have seen the surface, we have seen the whole: and although there are pieces of curious mechanism which contain a complication of parts within their outside case, this only carries us one step farther: when we look at any of the parts, we see the whole;—the interior texture of the material of which they are composed not being the work of the human artist, but of the Divine Creator. Whereas, when we look at any of the works of his omnipotent hand, beautiful and exact as they are in their outward form, still the most beautiful and wonderful parts of them are within. Some of these hidden wonders are discoverable to the diligent inquirer by means of dissections and by the aid of glasses: but when the most ingenious investigator has extended his researches into the interior construction of any natural production to the utmost limits that human means can conduct him, he must, if he is a wise man, be convinced, that what he has thus discovered, is, after all, but general and superficial, compared with the greater wonders which still lie concealed within. The most expert anatomist never, for instance, reached the seat of

the soul,—still less the principle of consciousness and life of which the soul itself is merely the organ ; all which, and even the material forms which are their first envelopes, still lie beyond the most subtile forms that the gross observation of the senses can discover. The farther, however, the observation of the senses can extend, the greater are the wonders which appear. Just so it is with the Word of God: and so it must be, if it has in reality God for its Author.

An attention to one or two more unquestionable truths, will make this fact more evident; and will discover to us with the utmost certainty, what must be the character of a composition that is rightly named “ the Word of God.”

God, we know, is a Being Infinite and Eternal. He made the world, and all things in it; gifting, in particular, every living object with faculties suited to its nature, or to the use it is designed to perform in the grand whole. But although every thing in nature plainly bespeaks its Divine Author, he has not, in any part of nature, a visible existence. His immediate, personal residence, is far above the sphere of this world, or of the universe, of nature,—yea, above that of the worlds of spirit, the abodes of angelic beings: “ for behold, even the heavens, and the heaven of heavens, cannot contain Him:”—much less this gross, material world, the lowest sphere of his divine activities.

Now man, while he is an inhabitant of this natural world, enjoys the gift of speech: and there can be no doubt that he will retain this valuable endowment when he departs hence, to move in a higher sphere of existence. Indeed, there can be no doubt that this faculty must be enjoyed, in some mode or other, by all orders of intelligent creatures, from man on earth to the angels of the highest heavens, and even up to the Creator himself, from whom finite intelligences receive it. But as the personal forms of angelic beings are not visible to the corporeal eye of man in the world, so neither is their oral language audible to his bodily ear. Hence the Apostle Paul informs the Corinthians, that when he was caught up, as to his spirit, to the third heaven, he heard there “unspeakable words, such as it is not *possible*” (according to the marginal reading of our bibles, which is allowed to give the true meaning which the original word bears in this place;—such as it is not possible) “for man to utter.” There cannot be a plainer testimony to the difference between spiritual and natural speech or language. While the Apostle was in heaven and in company with the angels there, and was thus, for the time, in a state similar to theirs; he heard and understood their discourse, and possibly took a share in it: but when he returned into his natural state, as an inhabitant of the natural world, though no

doubt he retained some of the general instruction which was communicated in the angelic discourse, as to the ideas, he found he could recollect nothing of the words in which it was conveyed to him, but only the conviction, that, by natural organs, they were altogether ineffable.

If then the words of angels are such as are unspeakable to man; what must the words of God be, as they proceed immediately from himself? Doubtless, they must be far above either the hearing or the comprehension of any finite being; and they must be immensely, indeed, beyond the hearing or the comprehension of the inhabitants of the natural world. Before they could become apprehensible to them, they must pass through the spheres inhabited by the higher orders of intelligent creatures, who would hear them in their own spiritual language. For the Divine Being to speak, immediately from his own mouth, in natural language, must be as impossible, as it is for him to appear, in all the glory of his Divine Person, before the natural eye. Consequently, if the Word of God, as we have it, in natural language, is really his Word, its literal sense must be a covering, with which it is invested to adapt it to the apprehension of the inhabitants of the natural world; and the essentially divine speech must lie concealed far within. And as between the immediate personal residence of Deity and outward nature, must be arranged the abodes

of all intermediate intelligences ; so between the immediate divine speech of the Lord and the natural expressions into which it falls when it descends into the domains of nature, must be distinct forms of Divine Truth, adapted to the apprehension of all orders of angelic beings.

But to resume the analogy between the Word of God and his works. From all that has been advanced it may be seen, that to suppose the literal sense of the Word of God, (upon the assumption that it is rightly so named,) to be all that it contains, because nothing more is obvious to a superficial inspection, is just as reasonable as to affirm, that the human body consists of nothing but skin, because this is all that meets the unassisted eye : but as the researches of anatomists have assured us, that within the skin which covers our frame there are innumerable forms of use and beauty, each of which consists again of innumerable vessels and fibres ; whilst, after science has carried her discoveries to the utmost, the principle that imparts life to the whole still eludes the search : so the letter of the Holy Word, which may be regarded as *its* skin, includes within it innumerable spiritual truths, adapted in some measure to the apprehension of spiritually minded men, but more completely to the intellects of purely spiritual beings ; whilst the Essential Divine Wisdom which gives life to the whole, is beyond the com-

prehension of the highest finite intelligence, and can only be known to its Infinite Original. And such must be the character of the *whole* of the Word of God,—as well of those passages which afford a clear, instructive sense in the letter, as of those which do not: for the Word of God, to be truly so, must be like itself throughout, and must every where be composed upon one uniform principle. Every mind that reflects deeply upon the subject, will, I am persuaded, see, that to deny the Holy Word, to possess such contents as we have described, is equivalent to denying it to have God for its author. It makes it nothing more than the word of men;—of men pious, perhaps, and enlightened, but still finite and fallible.

Such then are the views to which even reason, fairly consulted, would lead us, when we inquire, what must be the nature of a composition, which is, really and truly, the Word of God: We must now then proceed to inquire, how far these agree with the views which are presented by the Writings which take that title, on the subject of their own nature.

III. We continually find the Holy Word itself, in its very letter, directing the reader to elevate his mind above the merely literal expression,—above the natural ideas and images which compose its outward language,—and to

explore the deep and truly divine wisdom that is contained within; thus the very letter repeatedly assures us, that the Word of God contains stores of wisdom in its bosom, independently of any thing that appears on the surface. This testimony it bears to itself in all its parts,—in the books of the Old Testament, in the discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the writings of the Apostles.

Many plain intimations are afforded by the writers of the Old Testament; but I will just notice one or two in the Psalms alone:

I. What can be meant by that passage in which the Psalmist prays, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law?”* Is not this a plain declaration, that the Law or Word of God does contain within it wonderful things, which cannot be discerned unless the eyes of the mind, or the intellectual faculties, be opened to discern them?—thus, things which do not appear immediately on the surface, but lie stored up within? And that these wonderful things, or divine mysteries, are not only contained in those parts which give outward indications of it, by the obscurity and evidently mystical character of the language in which they are expressed, but in those parts likewise where the letter is perfectly plain and simple, is openly declared in the 78th Psalm,

* Ps. cxix. 18.

which begins with these words: "Give ear, O my people, to my law, incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a *parable*, I will utter *dark sayings* of old." Now nothing can appear more extraordinary, to those who think of nothing further, when they read the Scriptures, than what appears upon the face of them, than to find such a declaration as this prefixed to such a composition as follows. When the writer has declared in so solemn a manner, that he is about to open his mouth in a *parable*, to utter *dark sayings* of old, the reader is naturally led to expect, in the continuation of the Psalm, a series of mysterious language, containing an enigma in every word. But what does follow? Nothing, whatever, but a very plain abridgment of the history of the Israelites, from their departure out of Egypt to the reign of David, couched in language that is not even elevated by poetical figures, but appears to be the natural style of sober matter of fact. Can there then be a plainer declaration than this, that the whole of the Israelitish history has a parabolic meaning,—that the language in which this history is given, plain and simple as it appears, is in reality a series of *dark sayings*? Every sentence of a composition written in the style of this Psalm, which, making allowance for the metrical arrangement, is similar to that of the historical parts of Scripture in

general, is, in fact, more dark, in proportion as it outwardly appears more plain. The hidden spiritual meaning is, in reality, rendered more recondite, by the plainness of the literal historical meaning, the simplicity of which tends to chain the attention to the narrative of facts, and to prevent it from looking for any thing beyond. Let any person read this Psalm, one of the plainest, in its literal sense, in the whole book, and remember at the same time that the inspired writer is throughout speaking parables,—uttering dark sayings;—and he must confess that every literal expression here contains a hidden meaning; and, of course, that it is at least highly probable, that the case is the same throughout the Holy Word.

We find then from this testimony of David, that such is the character of the law of Moses, and of the historical narratives of the Old Testament;—it will therefore be more easily admitted, that such must be the character of the prophetic books also. We proceed then to consider the evidence of the New Testament on the subject; and we will begin with that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Were we to adduce all the testimony which is afforded in the discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ to the spiritual nature of the Scriptures, we should find ample matter for a Lecture by itself; wherefore we must confine ourselves to a few instances.

One very strong testimony, but the force of which might be overlooked by a reader who does not consider the purport of the chief expressions, is given by Him when he says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." * Some have found it difficult to reconcile this declaration with the fact, that the greater part of the Mosaic law actually was abolished by the establishment of Christianity, the observance of it not being enjoined on Christians, and the power of observing it being taken away even from the Jews, by the destruction of their city and temple, where alone the chief of the ceremonies could be performed. It is indeed said, and with truth, that the whole of the ceremonial law was fulfilled by Jesus Christ in his own person: but this does not account for the abolition of it afterwards: otherwise we must suppose the moral law, which he fulfilled likewise, to be abolished also: and this has never been asserted by any but the wildest Antinomian perverters of Divine Truth. It is besides evident, that he is not here speaking of what was done in his own person, but of what would be the effect of his doctrine, or of the illumination of the human mind which he came to impart. When therefore Jesus Christ declares, that he came to fulfil the law and the prophets, he means that he came to prevent

* Matt. v. 17.

them from being any longer regarded merely as to their surface or shell; to bring to light the divine things with which they are inwardly filled; and to establish a church which should be in the exercise of that spiritual worship, of which the carnal worship of the ceremonial law was a figure or type. The word "fulfil," being now no longer used except in its secondary senses, which are, "to answer a prophecy or promise by performance,"—"to answer a desire by compliance,"—"to answer a law by obedience;"—the English reader of the New Testament is apt to forget its primitive meaning, which is, to fill full,—“to fill till there is no room for more*;"—which also is the primitive and proper meaning of the Greek word [πληρωω] for which it is used: to *fulfil* the law, is then to *fill it full*;—and this is, to discover the substance of which the ceremonies were shadows, and the inward principles from which the outward acts, even of the moral law, must be performed. The Divine Speaker immediately proceeds to illustrate his meaning by examples. After referring to the Mosaic prohibitions of murder and adultery, he proceeds to forbid all uncharitable sentiments and unclean thoughts; and after referring to the Mosaic law of retaliation, he inculcates the most unbounded forbearance and forgiveness: by which he instructs us, that those precepts of the ancient law

* Johnson.

convey much more than the letter expresses; that under the prohibition of murder, every degree of hostile feeling is interdicted; that the prohibition of adultery extends to every species of uncleanness; and that the law of retaliation is a representative appointment only, exhibiting an immutable arrangement of the Divine Order in the government of the universe, which is such, that no evil can be practised or intended, without falling eventually upon the contriver; but that this law is reserved, as to its execution, to the Unerring Judge alone; and is not meant to be that by which man is to regulate his conduct towards his trespassing brother. These then are examples by which Jesus Christ shews, how, in the dispensation which he came to institute, the law was to be fulfilled; in "the newness of the spirit, not in the oldness of the letter*:" by introducing into the outward observance of the moral code the inward spirit and life; and by substituting for the ceremonial observances those vital graces of which they were the types. It was thus that the righteousness of the disciples of Jesus Christ was to exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, who thought of nothing further than an outward obedience.

There are however other instances, in which Jesus Christ still more plainly refers to the

* Rom. vii. 6.

divine wisdom included within the veil of the letter of the Holy Word. What a remarkable statement is that, where it is said, after his resurrection, when he discovered himself to his disciples, "Then opened he their understandings, that they might understand the Scriptures!"* Is it not plain from this, that the Scriptures contain a hidden meaning, not explicitly discovered in the letter, which cannot be understood unless the understanding be *opened* to perceive it? Thus this statement is a counterpart of the prayer of the Psalmist before adverted to; "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law:" and both together illustrate that saying of Jesus Christ, "Verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see the things which ye see, and have not seen them, and to hear the things which ye hear, and have not heard them†:" words which imply, that even the sincere lovers of truth, who lived under the Jewish dispensation, in which divine things were either enigmatically expressed in the Sacred Writings, or darkly shadowed out in the symbolic rites, could not have that clear understanding and perception of heavenly mysteries, which were brought to light by the coming of the Lord, and by that new illumination of the understanding which he then afforded.

* Luke xxiv. 45.

† Matt. xiii. 17.

This plain distinction between the outward language in which divine Truth is conveyed, and the divine wisdom which is included within it, is what is intended by the Lord Jesus Christ, in that otherwise unintelligible question and answer, which he proposes and gives, respecting the obstinacy and blindness of the Jews. He says to them, "Why do ye not understand my speech?" and he answers the question by adding, "Even because ye cannot hear my word."* Here he makes a plain distinction between his speech and his word. To a superficial reader the two expressions may appear synonymous: but to suppose that they are so, is not only to impute the most insipid tautology to the Divine Speaker, but the most palpable no-meaning: for the whole sense of the declaration is concentrated in the difference which is pointed to between his "speech" and his "word." Understand by his "speech" the outward expression and literal sense of his divine communications, and by his "word," the pure truth which is concealed within; and the sense of the declaration at once appears, and is to be found to be most weighty and important; nor can any other interpretation render it worthy of the Author. Here then we are clearly taught this most momentous truth: that unless the hidden wisdom of the Lord's divine communications be acknowledged and attended

* John viii. 43.

to, the outward expression of them will never be understood.

We will quote only one more testimony from the immediate lips of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the sixth chapter of John he holds a long discourse with the cavilling Jews, couched entirely in those dark sayings which so generally constitute the letter of the Holy Word. He tells them, that He is the living bread which came down from heaven, of which if a man eat he shall live for ever: to which he adds, "And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* This puzzled the Jews extremely, and they "strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus, however, enforced his assertion, and "said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you:" which affirmation he dwelt upon at some length.† This confounded even many of his disciples, and they said, "This is a hard saying: who can hear it‡?" meaning, Who can understand and receive such a paradox as this? But it is added, "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, He said, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of Man ascend up where he was before?" And he subjoins, as a key to the

* Ver. 51.

† Ver. 52 to 58.

‡ Ver. 60.

mystery, “ It is the spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing : the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”* How is it possible to state more decidedly, that it is the spiritual meaning of divine language which is to be looked for, and that we are not to abide in the gross, carnal interpretation? And how plainly are we hereby instructed, that the difficulties which stagger and offend many, when they look at the mere outward covering, or “ flesh” of the Divine Word, would disappear, could they raise their ideas to a perception of its “ spirit” and its “ life!”

It is clear enough then, from these declarations, what is the nature of the words of Jesus Christ; and also what is the nature of the whole Word of God, if it really is the “ Word of God,” *God-breathed*—“ given by inspiration of God :” viz. that it every where contains much more than meets the eye or ear. We are now to see how far the Apostles bear a similar testimony.

3. Not then to dwell upon that passage of Paul, in which he says, that “ the letter killeth, the spirit giveth life†;” although this might be shewn to be strong to our purpose ; we will advert to a few of the numerous instances in which this Apostle directs the attention of his readers to the spiritual signification of the Scriptures of the Old Testament—those of the New being not

* Ver. 61, 62, 63.

† 2 Cor. iii. 6.

then written; or such of them as were written not generally known.

Speaking of the pilgrimage of the children of Israel in the wilderness, the Apostle states, that "they did all eat of the same *spiritual* meat, and did all drink of the same *spiritual* drink: for they drank of the *spiritual* rock that followed them; and that rock was Christ."* Here we are evidently taught, that something more was conveyed by the manna which was given them from heaven, and the water that was produced for them from the rock, than merely natural food and drink for the support of the body; as also, that the rock itself, out of which the water was obtained, was representative of the Rock of Ages: for that the rock in Horeb was not literally Christ, is sufficiently evident: yet the Apostle says, "and that rock was Christ;" he must mean then, that it was a representation, figure, emblem, or type of Christ, who alone, as being "THE Truth†," and "THE Word‡," can refresh the fainting soul with streams of "living water§," which is an emblem of pure Truth, communicated by the Word, from Himself?

The same Apostle gives a spiritual meaning of so apparently plain a history as that of Abraham, his wife and concubine, and their sons, Isaac and Ishmael. "It is written," he

* 1 Cor. x. 34.

† John xiv. 6.

‡ John i. 1.

§ John iv. 10, vii. 38.

observes, "that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman: but he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman by promise. Which things," he continues, "are an allegory:" and he accordingly explains them, as being emblematical of the Israelitish and Christian dispensations.* Now if this plain narrative contains an allegorical or inward meaning besides its literal or outward sense, what reason can be given for doubting, that the whole of the historical relations of the Divine Word do the same? If Isaac, from his birth, was a type of the Christian Dispensation in general, may we not conclude, that the nation descending from him represented, in their history, all the particulars of the same? or, what is substantially the same thing, all the spiritual things belonging to the Lord's true Church under every dispensation? This, we have already seen, is taught us by David; and we shall see in the sequel, that there is abundantly more scriptural evidence of the same great truth.

But we have not yet done with the testimony of Paul, who inculcates this fact more explicitly still, because more generally, when he says, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward

* Galatians iv. 22, to end.

in the flesh: but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the *spirit*, and not in the *letter*.”* In these words we are clearly instructed, that when the Jews are mentioned in Scripture, we are to understand, not merely the descendants of the man named Judah, or the inhabitants of the country called Judæa, but the member of the Lord’s true church, under whatever dispensation; and that the initiatory rite of Judaism was representative of the purification of the heart and its affections; as is also plainly declared by Moses himself.†

Of the nature of the Mosaic writings, the Apostle gives us several more examples in the Epistle to the Hebrews. With what force of argument does he demonstrate, that Melchizedeck was a type of the Lord Jesus Christ! ‡ So, how positively does he assert the typical nature of all the ceremonial institutions! Thus, speaking of the priests, and of the gifts which they offered according to the law, he says, that they “serve unto the example” [*υποδειγμα*—properly, according to Schleusner, *that which presents something visible to the sight*] “and shadow of heavenly things:” which interpretation he confirms by adding, “as Moses was admonished of God, when he was about to

* Rom. ii. 28, 29.

† Deut. x. 16, ch. xxx. 6.

‡ Chs. v. and vii.

make the tabernacle; for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern [τυπος] shewed to thee in the mount."* Soon after, taking up more particularly the subject of the tabernacle constructed by Moses, he affirms, that it "was a figure for the time then present †:" and he presently calls the rituals of the tabernacle worship "the patterns [υποδειγματα] of things in the heavens," and speaks

* Heb. viii. 5. It is necessary to remark, that the words τυπος in this passage, and αντιτυπος in that to be noticed immediately, have meanings exactly the reverse of those which the words *type* and *antitype* have acquired in English. With the Apostle, the *type* is the *pattern*, and the *antitype* is that which, as a *copy*, answers to the *type*: but with us, the *type* is the *copy*, and the *antitype* is the *original*, or *pattern*, of the *type*. This seems to have originated in inaccurate writers confounding the Greek particle *anti* with the Latin particle *ante*. To bear the popular meaning, the word should be spelled *antetype*: though then it is an incongruous compound from two languages. The ambiguity introduced by the translators in the use of the word *pattern*, should also be noticed. In the passage above, they use it in the sense to which it is now fixed,—as the *original* from which a *copy* is made: but in the next quotation they use it in the sense, not of a *pattern*, but of a *copy* taken from a *pattern*. It must further be noticed, that the word αντιτυπος, in the passage quoted below from Peter, does not mean an *antitype* in either of the senses here explained, but *something that answers to another thing of the same order as itself*; not as a *copy* to a *pattern*, or as a *pattern* to a *copy*, but as *two similar things, of the same kind or degree, that exactly match each other*.

† Heb. ix. 9.

of them in contrast with "the heavenly things themselves*;" immediately adding, that "the holy places made with hands, are the figures [αντιτυπα] of the true."† Agreeably to this view of the Mosaic rituals, he speaks of "the law" as "having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things‡:" where by "the image," as has been judiciously remarked, he means, what is respectively a substance;—a solid statue being a substance respectively to its own shadow.

We find then that the testimony of the Apostle Paul is very copious and conclusive: He affirms the representative character of the persons mentioned in the Old Testament; of all the particulars attending the celebration of the Mosaic worship; of the history of the Israelites in general; and, in fact, of every thing connected with that people and church: and he repeatedly calls our attention from the mere "letter" of Scripture, to the "spirit" that resides within.

The epistolary writings of the other Apostles, and the remains of their discourses, being small in extent, and almost entirely occupied with practical exhortations, are less explicit on this subject. Peter, however, plainly discovers, in two or three instances, what his sentiments respecting it were. Thus, in his first sermon,

* Heb. ix. 23. † Ver. 24. ‡ Ch. x. 1.

he not only applies to the gift of the spirit, which they had just received, the following part of a prophecy of Joel,—“It shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my spirit, and they shall prophesy:”—but he cites the remainder of Joel’s prediction also, as then receiving its accomplishment;—“And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.”* Now although the words first quoted may be considered as bearing, in their literal sense, a relation to the effusion of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, it is only in a sense quite different from that of the letter, that the other part of the prediction was then fulfilled.

The same Apostle assures us, that there is a symbolic meaning in the history of Noah. Having mentioned the ark, “wherein a few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water;” he adds, “the like figure [ἀντιτυπον] whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the

* Acts ii. 16 to 21.

putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."* Here we are expressly told, that the waters of Noah were as truly a figure of something spiritual, as are the waters of baptism, these being the *fellow-type* to the other: their import is also briefly stated.

But not only does Peter mention particular instances in which a spiritual sense is contained within the letter of the Scriptures, but he also declares that this is the case universally, when he says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise, in your hearts:"—If he had concluded here, he would have clearly described the fact, as it exists. The prophetic writings are called *a light shining in a dark place*: how beautifully does this describe the difference between their literal expression and the divine wisdom within it!—the light denoting the pure truth of their inward meaning, and the dark place in which it shines the obscurity of the letter, which is such, that, to discover the light, devout contemplation is necessary, until it shines as the day-star in our own minds also. But to make the fact more certain, and to encourage us to the study of the

* 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21. See Note above, p. 83.

Scriptures under this view of them, the apostle adds, "Knowing this first; that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation."* Now the Scriptures would be of "private interpretation," if their meaning were confined to the natural occurrences to which they usually refer in their letter,—if nothing more were intended beyond the persons and things there commonly mentioned. I am not unapprized of the other modes in which this statement has been explained; but I am fully satisfied that this is the only one which comes up to the apostle's meaning. If regard is to be had to the context, both that which precedes and that which follows, as well as to the proper force of the words, the meaning surely must be that which is quoted by Dr. Doddridge from Dr. Clarke and Mr. Baxter, who understood the passage as if the Apostle had said, "Scripture is not to be interpreted merely as speaking of the particular person of whom it literally speaks; but as having a further sense, to which the expressions of the prophets were overruled under the influence of the Spirit," &c. Evidently, if the meaning of the Scriptures is not be regarded as appropriated merely to the persons and things of which they treat in their letter,—if they thus are not of private but of universal interpretation; then they must contain an interior sense, a hid-

* 2 Pet. i. 19, 20.

den-wisdom, adapted to the edification of every Christian in every age of the world.

The evidence, then, to the nature of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, is already very complete: but had all the other writers of the New Testament been silent on the subject, we still should have had sufficient information to guide our judgment, in the book that closes the canon of Scripture. In this book—the Revelation of John, how full is the testimony which we find to the hidden wisdom contained in all the affairs and writings relating to the Jewish dispensation! It would, however, engage us too long, were we to examine it in detail: suffice it then to say, that much of the imagery of this book is taken from the state of things which existed under the Mosaic law. Though written, according to the best computations, upwards of twenty years after the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, it contains repeated mention of both* ;—as also of the ark†,—of the altars of incense‡ and of burnt offerings§,—of the twelve tribes of Israel ||, notwithstanding ten of them had long before been entirely dispersed and mixed with other nations; beside many of the persons** and places†† treated of in the

* Ch. iii. 12, xxi. 2, xi. 1, 19, xv. 5, 8, xvi. 1, 17.

† Ch. xi. 19. ‡ Ch. viii. 3. § Ch. xi. 1. || Ch. vii. 4 to 8.

** Ch. ii. 14, 20, ch. iii. 7, v. 5, xi. 3, 4, (see Zech. iv. 11 to 14.

†† Ch. xi. 8, chs. xvii. and xviii. xxi. 2, &c.

sacred history of the Jews; all which furnish the writer with a copious store of imagery that is evidently purely symbolic: how plain then is the inference, that these things belonging to the circumstances of the Jewish dispensation, and which are here incontrovertibly used as mere symbols, bearing a spiritual meaning, were equally symbols, and equally bore a spiritual meaning, when they really existed in, or in the vicinity of, the land of Canaan, and when they are spoken of in the letter of the other books of Scripture.*

Thus it is perfectly clear, that every thing relating to the Jews as a people, typified something belonging, either to the true Jews spoken of by Paul, who are such *inwardly in the spirit and not outwardly in the letter*, or else to those mentioned in the Revelation, “who say they are Jews and are not†;” in other words, either to the true or to the merely professing members of the Church universal: and as the whole of the Sacred Scriptures, in the literal sense, refers to such things, it follows, that the whole of the Sacred Scriptures contains an inward meaning distinct from that of the letter,—that they are replete with stores of wisdom in their bosom, independently of what appears upon the surface. And it follows further, that in forming a judg-

* See this argument farther deduced in the Appendix, No. I.

† Ch. ii. 9, iii. 9.

ment of their pretensions to inspiration, we are to be guided by their inward contents, and not solely by their outward form and appearance. To allude again to the image used by the Lord Jesus Christ, we are not to be offended at the "flesh," because we have not discernment to discover "the spirit."

4. It having thus been so plainly taught by the Lord and his apostles, that the Scriptures are, in their inward bosom, spirit and life, it will be expected that the primitive Christian Church, which derived its ideas of the nature of the Scriptures from the teaching of the apostles, must universally have allowed them to possess this character: and, accordingly, ecclesiastical history, and the writings of those times which are still extant, shew that such was the case. Indeed, no truth in history is more certain than this; that for at least fourteen or fifteen hundred years, few who received the Scriptures at all, ever thought of denying that they contained mysteries in their bosom which do not appear upon the surface. It is true that some were dissatisfied, and even disgusted, with the interpretations which had been given by others, and rather sought to ascertain the true literal sense than to explore what might lie beyond: but few ever thought of affirming, that nothing beyond the letter was included in them. The accounts which are contained in that well-known work,

Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, abundantly prove this: and as it is not our intention here to inquire what the interpretations were, which, in consequence of their admission of a hidden sense, were given of Scripture by ancient Christian writers, but only to establish the fact, that they believed it to contain such a sense; the statements of this author will be sufficient for our purpose.

(1.) Mosheim was himself one of the modern writers who lay it down as a "golden rule," that the Scripture contains but one sense, which is that of the letter; on which his translator, Dr. Maclaine, found it necessary to remark, that "this golden rule will often be found defective and false*," unless many exceptions be made to it: Mosheim, however, was strongly attached to it; and hence the opprobrious language which he uses in regard to all who maintain the opposite opinion, must be received with many grains of allowance. Such being his sentiments, he evidently is much annoyed at being obliged to record, that the belief of a hidden sense was universal in the primitive ages: he, however, does record it, though he depreciates the writings of those who adopt the principle. Thus, speaking of the mode of interpreting Scripture in the *first* century, he says, "It must be acknowledged, that even in this century,

* Cent. xvi. Sec. 3, Pt. 2, Ch. 1, § 16, Note (a).

several Christians adopted that absurd and corrupt custom, used among the Jews, of darkening the plain words of the Holy Scriptures by insipid and forced allegories, and of drawing them violently from their proper and natural signification, in order to extort from them certain hidden and mysterious significations. For a proof of this we need go no farther than the Epistle of Barnabas, which is yet extant.* It is well he did not say “the epistles of Paul;” for we have seen that Paul quite as decidedly favoured the practice of drawing from the plain words of Scripture, not, indeed, insipid and forced allegories, but weighty and just ones; and it must be remembered, that Barnabas was an apostolical man, the friend of Paul and the other Apostles, and sometimes called an Apostle himself†: although then Barnabas might err in his application of the general principle,—that there is a hidden sense in the Scriptures,—we hardly can suppose that he was mistaken in the principle itself. The intimate friend of the Apostles must have known, whether this principle was acknowledged by them, or not.‡

* Cent. 1, Pt. 1, Ch. 3, § 2.

† Acts, xiv. 14.

‡ Mosheim indeed, with some others, does not allow the author of the epistle of Barnabas, to have been the Barnabas who was the companion of Paul; but upon no other grounds, than because he does not consider the epistle to be worthy of such a man. He allows it, however, to be a production of the first century; and none of the early Christians seem to have denied its being genuine.

When he comes to the *second* century, speaking of the veneration with which the Holy Scriptures were then regarded, Dr. Mosheim says, that many employed their "useful labours in explaining and interpreting them." As the chief of these expositors he mentions Pantænus, the head of the Alexandrian school of divinity; Clement of Alexandria, whom he had before described as "the most illustrious writer of this century, and the most justly renowned for his various erudition, and his perfect acquaintance with the ancient sages," and whose works, "yet extant, abundantly shew the extent of his learning, and the force of his genius;" Justin, "a man of eminent piety and considerable learning, who from a pagan philosopher became a Christian martyr;" and Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, whose works are "remarkable for their erudition," though not for "their order and method:" and of these distinguished lights of the church he says, that "they all attributed a double sense to the words of Scripture, the one obvious and literal, the other hidden and mysterious, which lay concealed, as it were, under the veil of the outward letter."*

Proceeding to the *third* century, and commemorating the pains then taken by some to multiply correct copies of the Scriptures, he mentions the celebrated Origen in these words:

* Cent. 2. Pt. 2, Ch. 3, § 4, 5; and Ch. 2, § 5.

“But Origen surpassed all others in diligence and assiduity; and his famous Hexapla*, though almost destroyed by the waste of time, will remain an eternal monument of the incredible application with which that great man laboured to remove the obstacles which retarded the progress of the gospel.” † He had previously ‡ given the character of Origen in stronger terms still. Speaking of the principal writers of the third century, he says, “The most eminent of these, whether we consider the extent of his fame, or the multiplicity of his labours, was Origen, a presbyter and catechist of Alexandria; a man of vast and uncommon abilities, and the greatest luminary of the Christian world that this age exhibited to view. Had the justness of his judgment been equal to the immensity of his genius, the fervour of his piety, his indif-
 fatigable patience, his extensive erudition, and his other eminent and superior talents, all encomiums must have fallen short of his merit. Yet such as he was, his virtues and his labours deserve the admiration of all ages; and his name will be transmitted with honour through the annals of time, as long as learning and genius shall be esteemed among men.” Higher eulogy

* A work in which he exhibited, at one view, six copies or versions of the Scriptures, after the manner of the modern Polyglotts.

† Cent. 3, Pt. 2, Ch. 3, § 4.

‡ Ibid, Ch. 2, § 7.

could not easily be penned: and the reserve that is made on the score of his judgment, may fairly be ascribed to the prejudice of the writer against any but the literal interpretation of Scripture. No literary pursuit requires a more accurate judgment than sacred criticism: and Origen is universally allowed to have been one of the most laborious and judicious critics that ever lived. He was in no respect inferior to the Weststeins and Griesbachs of our days, in that species of erudition and industry to which they devoted all their attention. He displayed the utmost diligence and acumen in fixing the text, and ascertaining the literal sense, of Scripture: but he did not, like many who have followed him, in modern times, in this walk of biblical literature, because he excelled in it, extol it as the whole, or the highest. This great man, then, strenuously maintained that the chief wisdom in the Scriptures lies beyond the letter. "He alleged," to quote again from Mosheim, "that the words of Scripture, were, in many places, absolutely void of sense; and that though, in others, there were indeed certain notions contained under the outward terms according to their literal force and import, yet it was not in these that the true meaning of the sacred writers was to be sought, but in a mysterious and hidden sense arising from the nature of the things them-

selves.”* Mosheim adds, “*A prodigious number of interpreters, both in this and the succeeding ages, followed the method of Origen, though with some variation; nor could the few who explained the sacred writings with judgment, and a true spirit of criticism,*” [so our author is pleased to give *his* opinion; though we have seen that Origen himself was one of the greatest of critics,] “oppose, with any success, the torrent of allegory that was overflowing the church.”† Very strong testimony, this, as to the state of opinion in those ages on the *nature* of the Scriptures. And it must be kept in mind, that this is all that we are concerned with. I undertake not to vindicate the interpretations themselves, but only the general principle which all such interpretations assume;—that there is in the Scriptures more than meets the eye.

But if I would not vindicate the interpretations of these early times, farther than as regards their general principle, still less would I defend, in any other respect, the expositors of the following ages. It will not however be without its interest and its use, if we take, from our author, a rapid sketch of the state of Scripture interpretation, through the succeeding ages, to the period of the Reformation from Popery.

As after the third century many deviations from the pure Christian doctrine and worship became

* Cent. 3, Pt. 2, Ch. 3. § 5.

† Ibid. § 6.

general, it cannot be deemed surprising if the interpreters of Scripture should be found to have fallen into serious errors, and grievously to have misapplied the great general truth, that the Scriptures contain a sense beyond that of the letter. We find, however, that all the eminent names in the church continued to adhere to this truth, with very few exceptions, down to the age of Luther. The most learned of the fathers of the *fourth* century, were Eusebius and Jerome; and these Mosheim puts in his list of allegorical interpreters: he claims Augustine as adhering to the letter; but he cannot mean that this father denied there to be any thing beyond the letter; since his writings contain many beautiful spiritual interpretations. In the *fifth* century he only gives the names of one or two who confined themselves to the literal sense, as exceptions to the general practice. In the *sixth* century the number of interpreters is described as considerable: Among the Greeks, our author states, the principal were Procopius of Gaza, Severus of Antioch, and Julian; and among the Latins, Gregory the Great, Cassiodorus, Primasius, Isidore of Seville, and Bellator. The commentators of this age, he affirms, may be divided into two classes: the first of whom merely collected the interpretations of the ancient doctors of the church, (who, we have already seen, proceeded in their writings upon

the admission of a spiritual sense,) which collections afterwards acquired the technical name of *chains*; and the other class followed their own ideas, setting up Origen as their great model. The *seventh* century produced but few expositors: The Grecian doctors all followed the allegorical mode: but "the Latins," says Mosheim, in his usual sarcastic style, "were so diffident of their abilities, that they did not dare to enter these allegorical labyrinths, [under their own guidance, he means,] but contented themselves with what flowers they could pluck out of the rich collections of Gregory and Augustine." In the *eighth* century, both the Greeks and Latins confined themselves almost entirely to the task of compilation: but those who framed any thing of their own, as Alcuin, Authpert, and the venerable Bede, all men of the greatest abilities, always sought for the "hidden and mystical meaning, which they usually divided into allegorical, anagogical, and tropological." The same description applies to the writers of the *ninth* century, with the partial exception of two, Druthmar, and Bertharius: Mosheim continues to divide the rest into compilers and original authors; and he thus describes the form which the system of Scripture-interpretation had now assumed: "The fundamental principle, in which all the writers of this class [those who were not mere compilers] agree, is, that, beside

the literal signification of each passage in Scripture, there are hidden and deep senses which escape the vulgar eye; but they are not agreed about the number of these mysterious significations. Some attribute to every phrase three senses; others four; others again five; nay, their number is carried to seven, by Angelome, a monk of Lisieux, an acute though fantastic writer, and who is far from deserving the meanest rank among the expositors of this century." The *tenth* century was an age of great darkness, which produced few expositors of Scripture; and these were chiefly mere compilers. There were more writers in the *eleventh* century, and of the same two classes. In the *twelfth* century the number of interpreters is described as great, but, unless Rupert of Duytz is to be considered as an exception, the same character is given of them as before. "The Christian interpreters and commentators of the *thirteenth* century, differ very little," says Mosheim, "from those of the preceding times. The greatest part of them pretended to draw from the depths of truth, what they called the internal juice and marrow of the Scriptures, *i. e.* their hidden and mysterious sense:" he adds, (and, I doubt not, correctly; for I repeat, though I conceive their general principle to be right, I readily concede that their application of it was wrong,) "and this they did with so little dexterity, so little plau-

sibility and invention, that most of their explanations must appear insipid and nauseous to such as are not entirely destitute of judgment and taste." This I quote, because he mentions as examples, beside Anthony of Padua, our Archbishop Langton, and Hugo de St. Cher, or Cardinal Hugh de St. Caro; whence we see, as in former instances, that although the biblical expositions of those days might be unsound, they often proceeded from the most solid judgments of the age, and from men who deserved well of posterity. The common reader of the Bible is indebted for the facility of finding and remembering its various contents, to Archbishop Langton, who first divided it into chapters, and who moreover is called by Mosheim's translator, "a learned and polite author, for the age in which he lived:" and the more diligent student owes the help he derives from a Concordance, to Cardinal Hugo, who compiled the first that ever was made, and whose work has been the model of all the Concordances which have followed, whether in Hebrew or Greek, in Latin or English: he, likewise, had so much of the sober-minded critic in his character, that he compiled a very learned collection of the various readings of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin manuscripts of the Bible. In the *fourteenth* century, except Nicholas de Lyra, all the commentators followed the methods already ex-

plained: and of those of the *fifteenth* century the same character is given. This brings us to the era of the reformation; when the desire of receding as far as possible from the Roman Catholics, who continued to adhere to the old system, joined to disgust at the manner in which the doctrine of a spiritual sense had been abused, by being applied to confirm the errors of the Roman Catholic church, induced some of the Reformers to reject it; though it has continued to have many eminent advocates among them to the present day. If it could be shewn that the doctrine itself was a corrupt invention of the Romish church, there would be reason for rejecting it: but when it can be proved to have been the belief of the primitive ages, and this because it is taught in the Scriptures themselves, we ought to take the pains to separate the errors that have been attached to it, from the truth itself and not reject both together. As, during many ages, every thing connected with religion suffered the most grievous perversion, it is not to be wondered at that the same fate attended the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures: but to deny the truth of the principle on this account, is just as reasonable as it would be to deny the truth of the declaration—"All power is given to me in heaven and in earth*,"—made by the Lord

* Matt. xxviii. 18.

Jesus Christ, because to this doctrine has been attached the monstrous appendage, that the Pope is his Vicar.

I will conclude this statement of the sentiments of the primitive and middle ages on the subject of Scripture-interpretation, in the words of two eminent luminaries of the Anglican Church. Archbishop Wake, one of the most learned and pious prelates that ever sate in the English Metropolitan Chair, in the introduction to his translation of "the Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers," has some remarks in defence of the spiritual expositions of Scripture, and of Barnabas in particular. He says*, "I need not say how general a way this was of interpreting Scripture in the time that St. Barnabas lived. To omit Origen, who has been noted as excessive in it, and for whom, yet, the learned Huetius has lately made a reasonable apology; who has ever shewn a more diffusive knowledge than Clemens Alexandrinus has done in all his composures? and yet in his works we find the very same method taken of interpreting the Holy Scriptures, and that without any reproach either to his learning or judgment. What author has been more generally applauded for his admirable piety than that other Clement, [Clemens Romanus, a disciple and "fellow labourer†" of Paul,] whose epistle to the Corin-

* Ch. vii. § 25.

† Phil. iv. 3.

thians I have here inserted? and yet in that plain piece we meet with more than one instance of the same kind of interpretation; which was nevertheless admired by the best and most primitive Christians." So Bishop Horne, in the Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms, speaking of the testimony of the ancients, has these words: "They are unexceptionable witnesses to us of this matter of fact: that such a spiritual method of interpreting the Scriptures, did universally prevail in the church from the beginning."

So far then as authority is to be consulted in the decision of such a question, the weight of evidence for the spiritual sense of the Scriptures is irresistible. What regard is to be had to the doubts of a few moderns, when opposed to the unanimous decision of all antiquity,—to the unvarying acknowledgment of so many ages? Although, through part of its course, the doctrine of spiritual interpretation may have been rendered less clear by the foulness of the channel through which it flowed; and although it has, in modern times, been made less distinguishable by a mixture of other waters; it unquestionably had its rise in the virgin days of Christianity: Unless then it is to be contended, that the farther from the fountain, the purer the stream, it must be admitted, that the doctrine of spiritual inter-

pretation is the pure doctrine of the Christian church.

(2.) The Reformation from Popery introduced in the Christian church a great variety of opinions; and it would be a very extensive task to trace, through the numerous sects which have thus sprung up, the fluctuations of sentiment in regard to the principles of Scripture-interpretation. And the task would be nearly as unprofitable as it would be tedious: since the opinions of the moderns can have no other weight, than that which they derive from their evident reasonableness and agreement with Scripture: as authority, they have none. I shall confine myself therefore to a few English testimonies; only observing, once for all, of the modern writers in general, that while the ancients generally believed the spiritual sense to extend throughout the Scriptures, few of the moderns allow it this complete universality; on the other hand, while many of these deny its existence generally, few of them refuse to admit it in particular instances. This qualification then must be applied to the testimonies I shall adduce from them in favour of a spiritual sense; but we shall see in the sequel, that, if we make the admission at all, we must, with the ancients, make it universal.

As the most recent of modern testimonies of

importance, I select that of the Rev. T. H. Horne, with an older author or two cited by him: we shall also have occasion to refer to other authorities in our subsequent Lectures. In his laborious "Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures,"—a work which has rapidly passed through three editions, and has been received with the general applause of biblical students, Mr. Horne expresses himself thus: "The spiritual interpretation of Scripture has been as much depreciated by some commentators and biblical critics as it has been exaggerated and carried to the extreme by others: but if the argument against a thing from the possibility of its being abused be inadmissible in questions of a secular nature, it is equally inadmissible in the exposition of the Sacred Writings. All our ideas are admitted through the medium of the senses; and consequently refer, in the first place, to external objects: but no sooner are we convinced that we possess an immaterial soul or spirit, than we find occasion for other terms, or, for want of these, another application of the same terms to a different class of objects: and hence arises the necessity of resorting to figurative and spiritual interpretation. Now, the object of revelation being to make known things which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man to conceive,' it seems hardly

possible that the human mind should be capable of apprehending them, but through the medium of figurative language or mystical representations." * In this passage, as it appears to me, the question is placed upon exactly the right ground; and a clue is at the same time given to the discovery of the law or rule according to which the Scriptures are written, and by which their spiritual sense is to be decyphered. It is perfectly true that our ideas are received, in the first instance, by the instrumentality of the senses: these, however, can bring us acquainted with none but external and sensible objects; the images of which, thus obtained, become, nevertheless, the basis of all our future thoughts, and, in numberless instances, are transferred from their primary notions, and used as the signs of totally different things. It has been objected by Infidels, that as all our ideas have a reference to the objects of outward nature, and we cannot think even of immaterial things without the help of images thence compounded, this is a proof that nothing but nature has a real existence, and that all beyond is purely the creature of the imagination: but this is a most gratuitous assumption: the true statement of the case would be, that there is between material and immaterial objects such a sort of regular analogy, that the former present the most appropriate

* Vol. 2, Pt. 2, Ch. 1, § 5.

signs for the expression of the latter. We shall see in the sequel, that it is by this immutable principle that the Word of God is written. Mr. Horne has established this truth by a beautiful quotation from Dr. John Clarke, who states it thus :

“ The foundation of religion and virtue being laid in the mind and heart, the secret dispositions and genuine acts of which are invisible, and known only to a man’s self ; therefore the powers and operations of the mind can only be expressed in *figurative* terms and external *symbols*. The motives, also, and inducements to practice, are spiritual, such as affect man in a way of moral influence, and not of natural efficiency ; the principal of which are drawn from the consideration of a future state ; and, consequently, *these*, likewise, must be *represented* by allegories and similitudes, taken from things most known and familiar here. And thus we find in Scripture the state of religion illustrated by all the beautiful images we can conceive.— In the interpretation of places, in which any of these images are contained, the principal regard is to be had to the *figurative* or *spiritual*, and not to the literal sense of the words.—Of this nature are all the rites and ceremonies prescribed to the Jews, with relation to the external form of religious worship ; every one of which was intended to shew the obligation, or recom-

mend the practice, of some moral duty, and was esteemed of no farther use than as it produced that effect. And the same may be applied to the rewards and punishments peculiar to the Christian dispensation, which regard a future state. The rewards are set forth by those things in which the generality of men take their greatest delight;—and the punishments are such as are inflicted by human laws upon the worst of malefactors: but they can neither of them be understood in the *strictly literal* sense, but only by way of *analogy*, and *corresponding* in the general nature and intention of the thing, though very different in kind.*

“But,” adds Mr. Horne, “independently of the able argument *a priori*, here cited, in favour of the mediate, mystical, or spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, unless such interpretation be admitted” [in conjunction, he means, with the truth of the literal sense,] “we cannot,” [in the conclusive words of the late Bishop of Calcutta,] “avoid one of two great difficulties: for either we must assert, that the multitude of applications made by Christ and his apostles, are fanciful and unauthorized, and wholly inadequate to prove the points for which they are quoted; or, on the other hand, we must believe, that the obvious and natural sense of such passages was never intended, and that it is a mere

* Folio Collection of Boyle's Lectures, vol. iii. p. 229.

illusion. The *Christian* will object to the former of these positions; the *Philosopher* and the *Critic* will not readily assent to the latter.”* This powerful writer says again, in a passage not quoted by Horne, that, without such a two-fold explanation, “it will be impossible to place any of the citations in the New Testament, except, indeed, direct and avowed prophecies, on any better footing than that of being accidentally apposite to the occasion. A quotation from the Psalms, by St. Paul, will not, in its application, possess any advantage over a quotation from Horace by Addison.”†

Here then I am contented to rest my case, in regard to the question, of the propriety of claiming for the Scriptures a spiritual sense, upon the supposition that they are rightly designated “the Word of God.” If philosophy, and the immutable nature of things, are to be consulted, “the Word of God” *must* contain such a sense within it. If the testimony which the Scriptures bear to themselves is to be regarded, they *do* contain such a sense. If “the multitude of applications” made of texts “by Christ and his Apostles” was not “fanciful and unauthorized,” the double sense of Scripture is irrefragably established. If the concurrent acknowledgment of all who lived in the best

* Doct. of Greek Article, p. 580. † Ibid. p. 588.

days of Christianity is of any authority, we are constrained to admit this sense. If the preservation of this acknowledgment through so many centuries, even through the ages of the greatest darkness, when the sentiments arising from it, together with all the doctrines of the Christian religion, suffered gross perversion;—if this, nevertheless, is an index that points to the source whence the acknowledgment was derived;—then is the doctrine that the Scriptures do contain such a sense, a fundamental doctrine of the true Christian religion. And, finally, if the force of truth has pointed out this conclusion to the most intelligent of the moderns; if these, after throwing off the trammels of authority, and recurring to the original sources, are constrained to confess, that the spiritual sense of the Scriptures cannot be denied, without denying their truth altogether: assuredly we ought to embrace the doctrine, as we would embrace the palladium of the Christian faith. We shall find in the end, that, when rightly apprehended, it will prove a palladium indeed, by its power of preserving the Christian faith from the assaults of its opponents.

IV. But, as has already been observed, though the testimony to the fact, that the Word of God contains stores of wisdom in its bosom, independently of what appears on the surface, is so ample, objections, during two or three

centuries past, have been made to it, and its credit has gradually diminished. The belief in the spiritual sense of Scripture, has run parallel with that of its plenary inspiration: as this has declined, so has the other. Indeed, they are inseparably connected: for, as we have seen, if the Word of God is written by a plenary divine inspiration, it must contain interior treasures within its outward shell, necessarily formed there by its descent from the Inmost of all things into the world of nature; whereas if it is not so written, it cannot include such hidden wisdom; at least, whatever it might thus contain beyond the letter, would be, in the latter case, the result of artificial contrivance in the writers, not, as in the former, naturally inherent in writings so imparted: and the looking at the spiritual sense thus, as a merely artificial contrivance, has greatly helped to bring it into doubt. We have seen, also, that the expositions of this sense usually offered, have not been such as were adapted to recommend it. Things of little moment, savouring only of the little minds of men, and quite unworthy of the wisdom of Deity, have too generally been produced as spiritual interpretations: and where more elevated ideas have been presented, satisfactory reasons not being assigned for them, they, also, were liable to be ascribed to the mere fancy of the writers. Among the explications thus offered,

there was likewise an endless variety, and generally as much disagreement. When, therefore, so much error was thus mixed up with the practice of spiritual interpretation, it was not extraordinary that, however true in itself, discredit should in time be thrown upon the principle also. Thus many began to shut their eyes to the Scripture testimonies in its favour; to regard it as merely opening a door to uncertainty and confusion; and to insist that the letter of the Holy Word should alone be studied, as the only basis of certainty, and as containing, in fact, all that was intended to be revealed.

Nothing can be farther from my intention, than to depreciate, in the slightest degree, the literal sense of the Scriptures, or the importance of studying it with diligence: on the contrary, I am fully sensible of the obligations which the Christian world owes to the learned moderns, who have endeavoured to revive a knowledge of the original languages of Holy Writ, and to restore the true import of its words and phrases. Their labours have furnished the biblical student of our days with more efficient helps to the right understanding of the letter of the sacred pages, than have been before enjoyed since the times when Hebrew and Greek were living languages: and if the partial neglect, or even denial, of the spiritual sense, was necessary to turn men's minds to the study of the literal sense, with the

concentration of powers necessary to its complete elucidation; we may see, in the end for which this was permitted, an object worthy of Divine Providence; for we see the means hereby provided, by which the study of the spiritual sense may be placed on a safer basis than it ever stood upon before. Most heartily do I concur in the observation of Bishop Lowth, that "the deep and recondite senses" of Scripture, "must owe all their weight and solidity to the just and accurate interpretation of the words. For whatever senses are supposed to be included in the Prophet's words, Spiritual, Mystical, Allegorical, Analogical, or the like, they must all entirely depend on the literal sense. This is the only foundation upon which such interpretations can be securely raised; and if this is not firmly and well established, all that is built upon it will fall to the ground."* Every one must also admit the following remark to be equally true and candid: "Strange and absurd deductions of notions and ideas, foreign to the author's drift and design, will often arise from the invention of Commentators, who have nothing but an inaccurate translation to work upon. This was the case of the generality of the Fathers of the Christian Church, who wrote comments upon the Old Testament: and it is no wonder, that we find them of so little service in

* Lowth's Isaiah, Prel. Dis.

leading us into the true meaning and deep sense of the Prophetic Writings." Whoever then assists us better to understand the letter of the Scriptures, is entitled to our thanks; and to our forgiveness if, while intent on this, he should have undervalued their spirit.

But the literal sense of Scripture, and the right understanding of it, have also important uses of their own, independently of that which they furnish in yielding a foundation for the higher meaning to rest on. Although there is a great part of the Word of God, which, without the spiritual sense, would be quite useless as to any spiritual improvement, yet there are other parts in which the most important truths are presented to view in the very letter; and this in sufficient abundance to establish all the points of faith that ought to be insisted upon in the codes of Christian instruction. Unquestionably, all doctrine should be drawn from the literal sense, and proved by it: by this, likewise, should all controversies be decided: and nothing which cannot thus be shewn and established, should be considered as binding upon the conscience of any one: otherwise, there would indeed be reason to complain of uncertainty in regard to the foundations of our faith; since the spiritual sense of any particular text, though capable of being clearly exhibited to the intellectual eye, can never appear so un-

questionable to a mind that judges solely on the evidence of the senses, as a statement of the same truth in plain words. The letter of the Holy Word is therefore so constructed, that the doctrines most necessary to salvation may therein be openly discerned. Although the divine truth and wisdom contained in the Scriptures, only shine with all their glory in the spiritual sense, they do not assume their full power, till they appear in a plain statement in the letter; as the energies of the human mind, assume, as their instrument of action, the human hand. We have compared, in a former part of this Lecture, the letter of the Word of God to the skin that covers the body, and its hidden contents to the interior organs and members; but, to illustrate the present subject, the Holy Word in general may be compared to a beautiful female, clothed in becoming drapery, but whose face and hands remain uncovered: thus, while the greater part of the letter of the Scriptures consists of truths veiled over by natural images, which cannot be decyphered without a key, the things most indispensable to be known are openly displayed.

The spiritual sense of Scripture is not however without its use, in the framing of systems of doctrine also: but its use here will be, not to present the truths which are to be believed, independently of the statements of the letter, but to prevent us from mistaking one of the

two classes of passages just alluded to for the other, and thus bringing prominently and understanding according to their outward expression, some obscure texts, as if (to carry on our comparison) they belonged to an important feature of the face, while they form part, in reality, of the skirt of the garment. Every one knows that there are statements in the Scriptures which appear to be in opposition to each other; as when it is sometimes said of the Divine Being, that he repenteth*, and at others, that he repenteth not.† It is evident that both these assertions cannot be true in the same sense: and yet, if they equally form part of the Word of God, they must both be true in some sense: what then is the plain inference, but that the one passage delivers the naked truth, the other, the truth covered with the veil of a mere appearance taken from human ideas? In both declarations, a spiritual sense is included: but in the one it only exalts and extends, in the other it is required to correct and rectify, the statement of the letter. Deny any sense beyond the letter, and you fix such passages in irreconcilable opposition: you have then no alternative, if you still believe the Scriptures to contain a system of truth, but to fix your attention wholly on the one class of passages, and slur over the other without notice: and you may even select for your

* Gen. vi. 6.

† Numb. xxiii. 19.

preference the class of passages which present the truth under a veil, and may confirm in your mind, as the genuine truth, the outward enigmatical expression, to the neglect of the truth itself, which other passages openly discover. This has been the immediate origin (though not the final cause,) of all the mistakes, which, in various ages, have been obtruded on the world as the doctrines of the Scriptures:—an insight into the interior meaning of the Sacred Word would have corrected them at once.

We see then, on the one hand, that the most devoted adherents to the letter of Scripture need not oppose the belief of its containing a farther sense besides, under the apprehension, that this would abolish the former: so far from making void the letter, by viewing it in connexion with the spirit, we thereby establish the letter. On the other hand we see, that a reference to the spiritual sense is highly requisite, to secure us from error in the interpretation of the literal. Like soul and body, they are equally necessary to each other. As the soul, without the body, could not make its existence perceptible in the world of nature; so neither could the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, without the letter, be communicated to the inhabitants of the natural world: and as the body, without the soul, would be void of life; so would be the letter of Scripture, if entirely separate from

its spirit. It is the translucence of the spirit through the letter which makes this the vehicle of conveying divine truth to the mind, and which presents the truth, in greater or less fulness, even to those, who deny its distinct existence; just as the body of man derives from the soul the life it exhibits, even in the case of the materialist, who will not believe that he has a soul within him. There must be an animating principle somewhere; and the inquiry must be highly important which would teach us what it is.

But many fear to admit this idea, in regard to the Scriptures, under the impression, that any departure from the letter must necessarily introduce uncertainty and confusion. The objection would be well founded, if no rule could be laid down of general application, but we were to be left to mere conjecture, every expositor being guided solely by his own fancy; in which case, although, like Justin Martyr*, he might be persuaded that he had been endowed with a special gift for understanding the Scriptures, others, not seeing any reason for his explanations, must be prone to doubt their truth. But could it be shewn that the Scriptures are written throughout according to an immutable Law or Rule, a knowledge of which would, in explaining them, substitute certainty

* Dial. Par. 2. p. 352, 390.

for conjecture and cut off the sources of vague interpretation:—then this objection, which is the only plausible one, against their containing a spiritual sense, falls immediately to the ground. That they *must be* written upon one uniform principle, follows as a necessary consequence, upon the supposition that they proceeded from a plenary divine inspiration: that they *are* thus written, and what the Law or Rule is according to which they are written, we shall endeavour to evince in our subsequent Lectures.

Here then we pause, for the present. The questions which have been considered in this Lecture are highly important: we have reviewed them at some length: and I hope sufficient reason has been shewn, to incline every serious and candid mind to determine them in the affirmative. At least, I cannot think I am myself deceived so far, as to be following an error which has nothing to give it the air of truth: I cannot but believe, that reasons which appear to me to establish beyond all doubt the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, must at least appear to others of sufficient weight to entitle the subject to a full and fair examination. This is all that I solicit. I trust that every Christian will be ready, on sufficient evidence, to accept views which tend so immensely to exalt in his

estimation the Word of God; and that the Deist also will listen attentively to considerations, which, if true, prove it to be the Word of God indeed.

LECTURE III.

THE LAW OR RULE EXPLAINED ACCORDING TO WHICH
THE SCRIPTURES ARE WRITTEN.

Preliminary remark, on the Reasons why the Scriptures are not written in plainer language—Short Recapitulation. I. A Universal Rule of Interpretation afforded in the Mutual Relation, which exists by creation, between things natural or material, spiritual or moral, and divine. II. The nature of this Relation considered:—1. The whole Universe an out-birth from the Deity whence it bears, in all its parts, an immutable relation to the attributes which belong to the Divine Essence.—2. That on all things belonging to the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds, the Divine Creator has thus first stamped a certain image of himself:—3. And that he has done the same, though under a totally different form, on all the objects of outward and material nature:—4. Whence all things in Nature, being outward productions from inward essences, are natural, sensible, and material types

of moral, intellectual, and spiritual antitypes, and finally of their prototypes in God. III. That, were the Relation between these different orders of existences fully understood, a style of writing might be constructed, in which, while none but natural images were used, purely intellectual ideas should be most fully expressed.—1. That this is in a great measure intuitively perceived by all mankind, and is the origin of many forms of speech in common use.—2. Palpable instances of the occurrence of such forms of speech in the Holy Word.—IV. That in ancient times this constant Relation between things natural, moral or spiritual, and divine, was extensively understood;—1. Proved from intimations in the historical parts of Scripture. 2. Confirmatory remarks, drawn from the mythological fables of the Greeks and Asiatics, and the Hieroglyphics of Egypt.—V. That in this Relation, then, is to be found the Law or Rule according to which the Scriptures are written, and that a knowledge of it will afford the key by which their “dark sayings” must be decyphered.

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WE now approach a part of our inquiry of the very greatest importance; for we are now to investigate what the Law or Rule is, by

which the Holy Scriptures or Word of God are written; and this, being a subject of deep investigation, will require to be gone into with very close and serious attention. It is not indeed, in itself, extremely difficult of comprehension: on the contrary, I am satisfied that it is capable of being made very plain and easy; and even, if sufficient attention be given, that the arguments and instances by which it may be supported, will be found as interesting, as the subject itself is great and important: but it is usual with many, in this superficial age, to be indisposed to any inquiry that requires the exercise of fixed attention. Especially on the subject of religion, it is common, with great numbers, to be unwilling to regard any thing which is not obvious at first sight. Indeed, this forms one of the objections of Deists against the Christian Revelation in general; and will perhaps be still more positively urged against the view of it, which we are endeavouring to establish: we will therefore here meet it with a few remarks.

The Scriptures contain many things, the Deists allege, which, it is allowed on all hands, are hard to be understood; if then the belief of them is so important to man's welfare, why, they demand, is not some standing miracle wrought to assure us of their truth? And one of the most determined infidels has insolently

suggested, as a suitable expedient*, that God ought to cause a permanent inscription to appear on the face of the sun, assuring mankind, through all countries and all ages, that the Scriptures are true. But they who propose such expedients as these, only shew how utterly ignorant they are, both of the nature of God, and of the nature of man; and how destitute they are of any idea of the laws of infinite wisdom, by which God regulates his dealings with man. A conviction forced upon man against his will, would not be permanent, nor really beneficial to him; but, on the contrary, it would expose him to the danger of incurring far greater guilt than he can possibly rush into while he is left to the uncontrolled exercise of his own freedom, and while the light of Divine Truth is not poured on his mind with such lustre, as absolutely to compel his assent. It is for this reason, among others, that divine revelation is always couched in language that is in a great measure parabolic and obscure. Though capable of being easily understood, at least as to every thing essential, by those who are influenced by a sincere desire to know the will of God in order that they may do it,—according to the divine declaration of Jesus Christ—“ If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be

* Paine, Age of Reason, Part 3.

of God*;"—it yet is not made so plain throughout, as to aggravate the condemnation of those, who, being indisposed to do his will, and only anxious to find pretences to free themselves from the obligation of doing it, would be, in fact, the more offended at any revelation, just in proportion as they found it more difficult to devise plausible reasons for denying its authority. The former class of persons—the humble inquirers,—are meant by the disciples, and the latter—the pertinacious cavillers,—by the “others,” or “them that are without,” in that saying of Jesus Christ in which he developes the law of Divine Mercy and Wisdom on this subject: “To you,” he says, addressing the disciples, “it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven; but to others, in parables; that seeing they might see and not perceive, and hearing they might hear and not understand†:” by which words is not meant that an arbitrary distinction is made between one portion of mankind and the rest, but that divine revelation is so framed, as not to *force* conviction on the understanding, where there is a determined resistance in the will; because, if such persons should be made to assent for a time, their evil propensities would afterwards break out and carry them away: they would then deny the clearest demonstra-

* John vii. 17. . . † Luke viii. 10. Mark iv. 11.

tions of divine truth; and even had miracles been wrought for their conviction, they would deny these also, resolving them into some unaccountable operations of nature. The guilt thus incurred would be that of profanation. This state is described by Jesus Christ in the mysterious parable of the man out of whom the evil spirit went, but who, finding no rest in his new state, returned to his former house, taking with him seven other spirits more wicked than the other; of whom the Lord says, "And the last state of that man is worse than the first."* The first state of this man, is the state of unreformed ^{man}men in general: the going out of the evil spirit, is his commencement of a new order of life, in consequence of opening his mind to a conviction of the truth of divine revelation and its doctrines, which banishes for a time his spirit of incredulity: his walking through dry places, seeking rest and finding none, implies, that he finds his new state to be without enjoyment, because in contrariety to the lusts which were delightful to him, and which he is still unwilling to relinquish: his returning to the house from which he came out, is a relapse into his former state of mind; but that this state is now attended with profanation, and is incomparably worse than before, because, to return to it, he is obliged to extinguish the

* Matt. xii. 45.

convictions he had received, is expressed by its being said, that he took with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and that the last state of that man is worse than the first. It is, then, because Divine Providence is ever watchful to prevent man from falling into so deplorable a state as this, that difficulties are allowed to appear on the surface of the Word of God; and it is for this, among other reasons, that it is so generally written in the language of parable.

I expect, however, that the infidel (by which term I mean the *confirmed* denier of revelation, —one whose denial is grounded in a wish to justify himself in the gratification of his corrupt passions,) will call this, *preaching*. Be it so. I would however entreat him seriously to look at the doctrine so preached. He must, I am sure, find it agreeable to the purest reason, though such as reason, unenlightened by revelation, might not have been able to discover. He must also admit, that the economy of Divine Providence which the doctrine unfolds, is equally wise and beneficent,—such as might be expected to direct the conduct of a Being of infinite wisdom and goodness, in his dealings with a frail creature, like man. Whether then this be *preaching* or *philosophizing*, there is assuredly a strong presumption that it is *pure truth*: and this should recommend it to the

favourable attention of those, who affect to hold pure truth in so much veneration. Would mankind but view the Scriptures according to their real nature, as faintly described in our last Lecture, and understand them by the Rule which we are next to endeavour to explain, they would find *them* philosophizing according to the purest truth in every part,—every where preaching the most soul-exalting lessons of heavenly wisdom!

I have been led to make these remarks, that we might not appear to leave too long out of sight one of the objects of these Lectures,—the refutation of infidel objections to divine revelation,—while we are chiefly intent upon the other,—the proof of the plenary inspiration of the Word of God:—though this, indeed, carries with it the former: for when once it is seen that the Word of God is actually written by a plenary divine inspiration, all objections against its being received as such, fall to the ground of course. In our last Lecture, then, we endeavoured to prepare the way for the establishment of this point. We shewed, first, that the Scriptures do claim for themselves the title, “the Word of God,” and do affirm of themselves, that they are written by the fullest inspiration of God. We then considered, from rational and philosophical grounds, what must be the nature of a composition which has God

for its Author; when we found that the Word of God must be exactly like his works,—that as these contain within them wonderful parts which do not appear on their surface, so must the Word of God include in its bosom boundless stores of wisdom beyond what appears on a superficial inspection. In the third place, we examined whether this conclusion of reason is supported by any plain declarations of Scripture; of which many instances were presented: indeed we found the Lord Jesus Christ directing his hearers to regard the inward spirit and life of his words, and not to suppose his meaning confined to the outward expression: we ascertained, also, that the Apostles, in their writings, continually testify to the existence of an inward or spiritual sense throughout the Word of God; and we demonstrated, in addition, that hence this belief, in the days of primitive Christianity, was universal; that, for many ages, it was never doubted; and that it has continued to be the opinion, to a greater or less extent, of many intelligent theological writers down to the present day. We take this testimony then, joined with the inherent reason of the thing itself, to be conclusive as to the reality of the fact,—that the Word of God does, in every part, contain a spiritual sense, treating of things in which man is interested as a spiritual being and an heir of immortality.

We are not obliged, however, be it again remembered, nor do we by any means undertake, because we conceive the fact,—that the Scriptures contain a meaning beyond the letter,—to be a matter of absolute certainty, to defend all the interpretations which at various times have been offered to the world, as resulting from, or as being, this spiritual sense: we are even ready to allow, that very idle and unfounded explications have sometimes been obtruded on the public, under the pretended sanction of this great general truth; and we are not surprised that some of the critics, disgusted with the uncertainty which prevailed in the efforts to decypher the spiritual sense, by persons who possessed no certain rule to guide them in the attempt, have relinquished the principle altogether, and have begun to teach, that the Scriptures are to be understood in their literal sense alone. But we contend most decidedly, that the abuse of a good principle is no argument against its legitimate use. In all other cases this maxim is accepted as an axiom: if we deny it, we must deny every thing; at least we must involve ourselves in the cheerless gloom of universal scepticism. Indeed, to argue from the abuse of any sentiment against its use, will plunge us continually into the most palpable absurdities. It is a truth, for instance, which all men of reason admit, that there is a God. We find this

belief universal throughout the world. Now because it is unquestionably true that there is a God, it certainly by no means follows, that all the notions which all nations and religions have taught respecting him, are true likewise: but most assuredly it does not follow, because most nations and religions have erred in their notions of God, that, therefore, there is no God at all: on the contrary, the general belief, in some shape or other, in the existence of a God, however superstition and ignorance may have clouded the pure truth respecting his nature and the mode of his existence, has always been regarded as an insuperable argument in favour of the sentiment, that the existence of a Divine Being is certain, beyond dispute. Equally strong is the argument, from the general belief of there being a spiritual sense in the Scriptures, that there really is such a sense: and inconsistent or unfounded notions respecting the nature of that sense, no more prove that there is no such sense at all, than similar errors attending the belief in the existence of a God, can prove that there is no God:

I. Now what has been wanting to recommend the spiritual sense of the Word of God to the acceptance of the calm, reasoning mind, has been, a certain rule by which it may be decyphered. Could such a rule be shewn to

exist, the objections drawn from the tendency of the admission of a spiritual sense to introduce uncertainty and confusion into the explanation of Scripture, would, as stated in our last, fall at once to the ground: and the existence of such a sense, which multitudes have acknowledged by a kind of intuitive perception, would then be bottomed upon the clearest rational induction;—would indeed admit of demonstration not less convincing, though of a somewhat different kind, than that which evinces the truth of any problem in mathematics.

Such a rule, then, it is conceived, is afforded, in the Mutual Relation which exists by creation between things natural or material, spiritual or moral, and divine; which is such that the lower order of objects answers to the higher, as certainly and immutably, as the reflection in a mirror answers to the substance producing it.

But, alas! though this was a subject well understood in the times of remote antiquity, it now is not only generally unknown that the Holy Scriptures are written according to this Relation, from which, therefore, we may obtain a Universal Rule for their interpretation; but it is even far from being generally known that any such relation exists. Approximations have indeed been recently made towards its re-discovery, as will be noticed in the sequel; and there is reason to expect that, ere long, it will

seriously occupy the attention of the scientific and religious public. In the hope of promoting this desirable event; and because all that is to follow in these Lectures will refer to it as a first principle; a slight attempt shall here be made to give a general idea of its Nature.

II. That there exists, by the laws of creation, a Mutual Relation between things natural or material, spiritual or moral, and divine, may be concluded from the indisputable fact, that every thing in a lower sphere of existence is produced for the sake of something in a higher; and if so, every higher thing, for the sake of which any object of a lower kind is produced, is the proximate cause, by derivation from the First Cause, of the existence of the latter: and there must be an uninterrupted series of such causes and effects, each intermediate effect becoming, in succession, a proximate cause of existence to something beneath it, from the First Cause itself, to the lowest effects of all. Every proximate cause, also, by the urgency, and for the sake of which, something beneath it was produced, is, likewise, the real essence, or ground of being, of such lower production, which, on its part, is thus an outward form, manifesting the existence of such distinct essence. This will lead us to see, that the lower orders of objects must answer to the higher, as certainly and immutably,

as the reflection in a mirror answers to the substance producing it. Thus, for example, every lower thing that exists is produced to serve, either more nearly or remotely, to the use of man: this being the second cause of its existence, the thing itself is actually an image, under a different form, of something that is in man: and man himself was produced to satisfy the divine love of God—thus for the sake of God, that there might be a being in the world capable of receiving, in a conscious manner, gifts from God, and of returning them to Him in love and adoration: and God himself thus being to man both the proximate and First Cause of his existence, man must be, in a certain manner, an image of God; and the most immediately so of any thing that the world contains. We accordingly are assured by divine Revelation, that man was created in the image and likeness of God. And if man, altogether, is, in a certain manner, an image of God, it follows evidently, that every particular thing which exists in man, (so far as he stands in the order of his creation,) is an image of something that exists in God: and, indeed, every thing in him which is not in the order of his creation, but which he has introduced by the abuse of his faculties, still has reference to something that exists in God, though not as an image, but as an opposite. In short, as God is

the Origin and First Cause of all things, it is evident, that nothing whatever can exist which has not some sort of reference to something that is in Him; which reference is nearer or more remote, in proportion as the sphere in which it stands is nearer to the divine centre or to the extreme circumference of the universe. Thus things natural and material bear a secret Relation to things moral and spiritual, and these again to things divine.

1. This will be seen yet more evidently when it is considered, that the proper mode of viewing the creation, is, to regard it as an Out-birth from the Deity;—as a production essentially distinct from the Producing Cause, but necessarily bearing, through all its parts, to that Infinite Cause, and to the infinite essential properties and attributes existing in that Cause, a constant and immutable relation. Among the objects of the visible creation, man, the acknowledged image of his Maker, stands in the highest degree of this relation, and the inert substances of the mineral kingdom in the lowest. This truth is not invalidated by the fact, that the latter came first into existence. It must unquestionably be true, that, in the creation of the world, the globe of earth and water, or the unorganised parts of its composition, though lowest in rank, must have been the first that were formed: but why?

because their uses were indispensable to the higher orders of existence, to afford them nutriment and a basis. Then, doubtless, the vegetable kingdom succeeded, because, without both these, animals could not exist. Thus the higher orders of creatures must have appeared by degrees, and last of all man himself; as he could not begin to exist till every thing necessary for his use was provided. Still it was for the sake of man that all inferior things were produced: man was in the divine mind through the whole process: thus every thing produced was an image of something that was to exist in him, and the spiritual and moral essences of all inferior things were concentrated in him; as he himself was to be an image of the Creator, in whom alone exist, in their first principles and divine essences, all the powers, faculties, and virtues, which were to exist derivatively in man. In fact, the Deity, in the work of creation, cannot be considered as operating at random, producing things which have not in himself their divine prototypes or grounds of being. To produce such things, the Creator must step out of Himself, which is impossible. As the tabernacle with every thing in it, which Moses was instructed to make, was to be made after the pattern or antitype shewn to him in the mount*, or was to be an outward type of

* Exod. xxv. 40, xxvi. 30.

such things as exist in heaven; so, no doubt, when God created heaven and earth with their inhabitants, he formed every thing after the image of divine prototypes existing in himself;—after the pattern of the ineffable attributes and perfections which exist only in his own divine essence. Thus the whole universe, instead of being, as it is sometimes inconsiderately regarded, a production of mere caprice, little better than the offspring of blind chance, was, unquestionably, what may most expressively be called, an Outbirth of the Deity: and if so, it must bear, in all its parts, an immutable relation to the attributes or essential properties, which belong to the nature of that Omnipotent Being.

2. If then the whole Universe is thus an Outbirth from the Deity, and hence bears, in all its parts, an immutable relation to Him who gave it birth; this relation must be more immediately perceptible in the spiritual part of the creation. If, on all things that exist, the Divine Creator has stamped, in some mode or other, a certain image of himself, more especially must all things belonging to the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds, be marked with that image. We will endeavour to make this plain, by considering the two most important particulars in which the divine image is stamped on man—the head of the visible creation: for

extensive as this subject is in itself, it happily can be reduced to a few general principles; and when these are distinctly seen, the immense multitude of particulars into which it diverges will create no confusion.

That there are two general principles to which all the infinities which compose the divine nature have reference, and to which, in like manner, all that man possesses by derivation and gift from his Maker have some relation, would be evident to any one who should deeply examine the subject: this, also, is pointed out by numerous passages of Scripture. Thus in the account of the origin of the human race, in the first chapter of Genesis, it is observable, that two terms are employed to describe the relation which man bears to God. It is not only said that man was proposed to be created in the *image* of God, but also in his *likeness*; evidently implying, unless we charge the sacred text with unmeaning tautology, that there are two general things in which man was designed to resemble his Maker. "God said, Let us make man in our *image*, after our *likeness*."* What are we to suppose is intended by the divine Word, when it manifestly points to two distinct things in which man was created a resemblance of his Creator? What can be intended, but an allusion to the same truth as philosophy also brings

* Gen. i. 26.



us acquainted with;—that man is formed with distinct faculties, designed for the reception of the two leading attributes which pre-eminently characterize the Divine Nature?

It is generally acknowledged, that the two leading attributes in the nature of the Deity, are Infinite Love and Infinite Wisdom, or, what amounts to the same, Infinite Goodness and Infinite Truth,—for what is Love, essentially, but Benevolence, and what is Benevolence but Goodness?—so, what is Wisdom but the possession and judicious application of Truth? That these are the two attributes which give the essential character to the divine nature, is so clear a truth, that it cannot be necessary to offer any proof of it; otherwise arguments in confirmation of it might easily be drawn, both from the whole field of creation and the whole Word of God. If the Lord had not been essential Love, there never could have been any creation, since, otherwise, there could have been no motive capable of calling his creative energy into action. The Apostle accordingly tells us, in the plainest language, that “God is love*.” and the Lord Jesus Christ, by a most beautiful periphrasis, affirms the same truth, when he says, “Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children

* 1 John iv. 8, 16.

of the Highest; for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil: be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful*:"—than which, there cannot be a more decisive assertion of the unbounded benevolence of the Divine Nature.

But Love *alone*, though the prime mover of all things, is not sufficient for the production of a universe. *By itself*, it can do nothing. It wills, intends, and prompts: but before it can arrive at the ends it proposes, it must seek for means in another principle: and no principle is capable of supplying such means, but Wisdom. Divine Wisdom or Divine Truth, is what is specifically called in Scripture, "the Word," taking that name from the instrument of its enunciation: and of this it is said, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—All things were made by him [or it]; and without him [or it] was not any thing made that was made†:"—plainly teaching, that what is here called "the Word," which is easily seen to be the Divine Wisdom or Truth, is the immediate agent by which Divine Love acts in the production of all things.

* Luke vi. 35, 36.

† John i. 1, 3. I have added the words [or it], because if the Divine Truth be considered as a distinct attribute or essential property of the Being *in* whom it is, it must be considered, in English, as of the neuter gender. The original admits equally of either mode of translation.

It will then, I trust, be readily admitted, that Infinite Love and Wisdom, in union, are the two most essential attributes of the Divine Nature. There are others, indeed, such as Omnipotence and Omnipresence, which, in one respect, are equally essential, since, without them, God would be a limited Being: yet even into these, the former enter, and give them their peculiar quality. Thus the Divine Omnipotence, we may be certain, can never be exerted for any other object, than to give effect to the designs of Divine Love and Wisdom; and thus the Divine Love and Wisdom are, in fact, the essence of the Divine Omnipotence: in other words, Infinite Power is nothing but the capacity of irresistible exertion, inherently belonging to Infinite Love and Wisdom. We should find all the other divine attributes as closely connected with, and equally dependent upon, these two.

Now the first being in the scale of the visible creation,—the most exalted of the visible works of the Creator, is man: and he is such, because he was created in the image and likeness of God. That he might be capable of being such an image, he was endowed with two faculties designed for the reception of love and wisdom from his Maker. These are known by the names of the will and the understanding; the will being designed for the reception of the Divine Love or

Good, and the understanding for the reception of the Divine Wisdom or Truth. I am aware, that although the ancient metaphysicians universally adopted this most general division of the human faculties, some of the moderns have doubted its correctness, and have been disposed to resolve the whole into intellectual powers alone: none however could deny that man was possessed of passions: and all the passions belong to the general faculty called the will: at least, however some may explain them, it is as the seat of the passions, all of which belong to some species or other of love, that we here speak of the will. I have also been somewhat surprised, on observing that the new philosophic sect who take the name of Phrenologists, though continually at war with the metaphysicians, and rejecting with contempt the idea that all the faculties of the mind are to be resolved into intellect, still disapprove the division into understanding and will; though nothing can be plainer than that all the faculties of which the Phrenologists make the mind to consist, are only specific divisions of these two general ones: thus all those faculties which they designate as "propensities" and "sentiments," and which, they justly affirm, have nothing to do with pure intellect, belong to the province of the will; and those which they designate as "knowing" and "reflecting faculties," as clearly

belong to the province of the understanding. Respecting the latter, there can be no dispute; nor yet, I should think, respecting the former, if it be considered, that all the faculties to which they give the name of propensities and sentiments, may be resolved into some species of love. Now a man assuredly *wills* whatever he *loves*: and thus every species of love that can have an abode in his mind, may with philosophical truth be considered as belonging to a certain general faculty, which is most correctly denominated the Will. The mistake seems to have arisen, from confounding this general faculty, by which we are only *inclined* to certain actions, with the *determination to action*, which is the result of the operations of the will and understanding together; and which takes place, when man, by his understanding, sees a fit opportunity of doing the acts, to which his will perpetually inclines him. Undoubtedly, then, the old general division of the mental powers into understanding and will, so long established by the consent of all the reflecting part of mankind, is destined to resume its authority in the schools of philosophy: because it owed its long reign there, not to the caprice of human fancy, but to its firm foundation in the unalterable nature of things.

Now the will and understanding of man are a certain image, however faint and feeble, of

the Will and Intellect Divine; and the more perfectly so, in proportion as man receives in his will the love and goodness of the Lord, and, in his understanding, the divine wisdom and truth. When man wills what the Lord wills, and when the perceptions and thoughts of his understanding flow in agreement with the divine truth;—thus when he receives the affections of his will, and the perceptions of his understanding, without perversion, from the infinite fountain of all goodness and wisdom in God;—then is he an image and likeness of God indeed. And even when he entirely perverts his noble endowments; when he makes the ruling affections of his will such as are entirely opposite to the divine love and goodness, and when he adopts in his understanding a tissue of false notions quite contrary to the divine wisdom and truth; he still, in the faculties of will and understanding themselves, retains an image, though an inverted one, of his Divine Original: and the relation is farther preserved in this respect, that the will still remains the seat of love, though it is the love of evil, which he accounts his good, and his understanding still continues the seat of his ideas, though these are ideas of error, which he accounts his truth. In the way of opposition, he still bears a relation to his Maker: his faculties of will and understanding, and the subjects of each respectively, still are

to him, what pure love and wisdom are to God: a general image remains, however inverted and distorted.

As then it is evident, that, in the leading features of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual part of the head of the visible creation, man, the Divine Creator has thus first stamped a certain image of Himself; there can be no reasonable doubt that the same is true in regard to all the particulars of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds. The endless varieties of such things that exist, can only be images, either in direct or in inverted order, of the infinite divine perfections that are in God. In Him, all have their essence or inward ground of being: To Him, they all have an immutable Relation: So far as they are in order, they are transcripts of something that is in Him; and even when in disorder, they point to something in Him of which they are the perversion: In all the phænomena, then, of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds which come under our inspection, we might, had we capacities for such discernment, read, as in an image, the divine things to which they owe their first birth.

3. But the images of divine things that are presented to our observation, are not confined to the phænomena of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds: they descend much lower,

and display themselves, though under a totally different form, on all the objects of outward and material nature; first, on the corporeal part of man himself; next, on all the inferior animals; then on the vegetable creation; and lastly, on the inert mass of earth and water which forms the lowest plane of all; not to mention the sublime exhibitions of the same which are presented in the phænomena of the starry heavens. It is not then, merely by a poetical figure that David calls upon all such things to praise the Lord, but in reference to the wisdom concerning him, of which they are the silent teachers: "Praise ye him, sun and moon, praise him all ye stars of light: Praise him, ye heavens of heavens, and ye waters that be above the heavens:—Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapours, stormy wind fulfilling his word; mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl."* And I have little doubt that Paul meant to refer to the same fact when he said, "The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; even his eternal power and Godhead†;" though I do not quote this as a proof, because the words *may* be understood in the merely common and popular sense.

* Ps. cxlviii. 3, 4, 7 to 10. † Rom. i. 20.

(1.) We will again illustrate the subject by an example taken from man. As man has two faculties in his mind which image forth, in an eminent manner, the two greatest essential properties of his Creator; so has he also two organs in his body, which, more remotely, have the same relation: answering, however, more immediately, to the two great faculties of his mind. These two bodily organs are the heart and the lungs. As it is on his will and understanding that the life of his spiritual part depends; so is it on the heart and lungs that the life of his corporeal frame depends. What the will and understanding are to the mind, the heart and lungs are to the body: they answer to them in a lower sphere: they are exact images of them. It is on this account that so frequent mention is made, in Sacred Writ, of the heart and soul. It is well known that the word "soul," in the Scriptures, especially in those of the Old Testament, where it most frequently occurs, does not, as in English, mean the *spirit* which lives after death, but merely the animating principle or life, and this because its primary meaning is *breath*: and of breathing, the lungs are the organ. When the soul then is mentioned in conjunction with the heart, it strictly refers to the breath respired by the lungs; and the combined phrase refers, in the language of analogy, to those faculties

of the mind, of which the heart and lungs are images in the body.

But not only are there two general organs in the body, answering to the two leading faculties of the mind, but the whole body itself is made up of two principal constituent materials; which are, the flesh and blood. These again, then, bear a relation, though still more remote, to the two great constituents of the Divine Nature: it is primarily because there are two of these, that there are two of those: hence also so much mention is made of flesh and blood in the Divine Word, which, we shall eventually find, constantly speaks in terms borrowed from the Relation which we are endeavouring to establish.

As, again, the human body is composed of solids and fluids, or of flesh and blood, it is necessary, for its support, that it be nourished by aliment of both kinds, or by meat and drink. All meats and drinks, then, have the same general relation to the great attributes of Deity, as is borne by the constituent substances of the human body, by its two vital organs, and, in the mind, by the will and understanding: but their specific reference is to the love and wisdom, or goodness and truth, which are imparted by the Divine Author of all good to support man's spiritual life: for the human mind is nourished by the reception of goodness and truth from their

origin in Him, as the body is by its appropriate food and drink: thus natural food and drink are proper images of the spiritual.

The same analogy is continued, even till we come to the most shapeless masses of inanimate matter. Thus the terraqueous globe in general consists, in like manner, of two general parts, which are earth and water. Indeed, it would be difficult to find any thing, through the whole circuit of creation, both in general and in particular, which is not composed of two principal constituent parts. In man, for instance, and all animals, there are two sexes: and not only are they thus, in general, arranged in pairs, but all the parts of each shew an extraordinary tendency to run in pairs also. Thus, in the face, there are two eyes, two ears, two nostrils; in the body, two breasts, two arms and hands, two legs and feet. So likewise the internal organs exhibit the same two-fold bias. There are two great divisions of the brain, so distinct, that anatomists describe them by separate names: the heart is divided into its ventricles and auricles, of each of which, again, there are two: the sanguineous system dependent upon the heart has also its two marked distinctions of arteries and veins. So there are two lobes of the lungs, two kidneys, &c. And the parts which appear as single, nevertheless, in general, consist of two portions, united by a common

covering: and many, whose form does not admit of this, are composed of two halves answering to each other: thus, though the mouth, all together, is a single organ, the teeth on each side form a series of pairs; and even its outward opening is not only formed by two lips, but if these be considered as divided in the middle by a perpendicular line, they each present two parts symmetrically answering to each other: and the same may be observed in the tongue.

Now since this tendency to a twofold arrangement acts so powerfully throughout creation, that we cannot turn our eyes in any direction without seeing it every where presented before them: does not true philosophy lead us to refer the phænomenon to some universally acting cause? and what cause can be adequate to the production of such continually uniform effects, but a marked duality of essential properties in the First Cause of all? Admit, what cannot easily be denied, that Goodness and Truth, in their very essence, are Deity. Itself, and we cannot be surprised to find circumstances pointing to that fact through all the fields of creation; —to behold them exhibited more directly in the moral and spiritual productions of the divine plastic hand, as in the will and understanding of man, and imaged not less truly, though more remotely, in the objects of material and even inanimate nature. And if these leading traits

in all existing things bear a secret Relation to the leading characteristics of the Divine Nature, it would be unphilosophical to doubt that a similar Relation prevails in all other respects whatever. Most true it must be, that the Creator has stamped a certain image of Himself on his creation, both on the whole, and on every, even the minutest part. Although this shines most plainly in man, it must be visible, to the attentive observer, in all the inferior orders of existence. All must be types, of which the archetype is in God.

(2.) But that all the inferior parts of creation present a more remote but not less real image of the Divine Creator, will still more indisputably appear from another consideration. That man himself presents such an image, is unquestionably agreeable to the purest dictates of reason; and to the believers in Revelation, it is placed beyond doubt by the authoritative declarations of Scripture. But if man is an image of God, most evident also, it is, that the lower orders of creation, in their respective degrees, bear the same image; for the most cursory inspection will shew, that they all present, in a certain manner, an image of man. How strong is the tendency to the human form, for example, which is observable among all the subjects of the animal kingdom; and even though more remotely, among all the subjects of the vegeta-

ble kingdom likewise! The animals which differ most in their external shape from man, have, nevertheless, most of the organs which are found in the human body,—especially those which are most essential to life; though all display them under endless varieties. All have heads, bodies, feet: in their heads are eyes, noses, mouths, ears; and in their bodies, hearts, lungs, and the other viscera. As the animal descends in the scale of existence, the resemblance becomes less perfect; yet most of the species retain the principal organs; and where these cease, their place is supplied by something analogous, which performs their office in a manner suited to the animal's nature.

So, again, the similitude between the animal and vegetable kingdoms,—the Mutual Relation which they bear to each other,—is in many respects very conspicuous. They melt into each other by such imperceptible degrees, that there are animals whose sensitive powers are not much greater than those of vegetables, and there are vegetables which exhibit such an approximation to sensation, as renders the propriety of assigning them to the vegetable kingdom almost a matter of doubt. But even those which most decidedly belong to this province of nature, exhibit in a remarkable manner their affinity to the animal kingdom: they display, under another form, some of the most important attri-

butes of the latter. Not only are they, in common with animals, animated by a decided principle of life,—are propagated from parents, grow from an obscure germ to maturity, flourish in vigour, provide for the continuance of their species, decline, and die—sometimes from disease, and sometimes by the mere agency of time; but their life is maintained in an exactly analogous manner. Trees, and indeed all vegetables, circulate sap, which is their blood, through vessels answering to arteries and veins, from their root, which answers to the heart: and they inhale and respire air through pores in their leaves, which perform for them the office of lungs. And the developement of their sexual system, by Linnæus, has brought to light other wonderful analogies. The discoveries of modern science have even gone farther, not only establishing general analogies between all animals and all vegetables taken respectively together, but between particular classes of animals and particular classes of vegetables*; and thus leading to the conclusion, that every individual species in the vegetable kingdom has a species answering to it in the animal kingdom; or, that certain vegetables are, in their kingdom,

* See “Remarks on the Identity of certain general Laws, which have been lately observed to regulate the natural distribution of Insects and Fungi;” by W. S. Mac Leay, Esq. M. A. F. L. S. *Linnæan Transactions*, Vol. xiv. Pt. 1. p. 46.

what certain animals are in theirs, discharging like functions in regard to the whole.

Similar observations may be made in regard to the mineral kingdom. Here, also, extraordinary analogies may be traced, and a tendency to offer an image of the higher orders of creation may be observed; although, owing to the inert nature of the substances of this kingdom, it is not exhibited in so palpable a manner. It is well known, however, how many mineral productions there are, which, when left to assume, without constraint, the forms most agreeable to their nature, seem to extricate themselves from their originally unplastic state, and aspire towards the kingdom immediately above them, emulating so exactly the vegetable shape, that, judging by this test alone, it would be difficult to determine to which province of nature they belong. But look again at the image of the circulation of the blood, and thus of the animal creation, which is exhibited in the globe we inhabit. No one can inspect the map of an extensive country, and the plates representing the venous system of the human body in works on Anatomy; without being struck by the similarity of form between the rivers in the one, and the veins in the other: both rise from innumerable minute origins, wander through an infinity of small channels, which diminish in number and increase in size as they successively coalesce, till they unite in a com-

mon trunk which carries them to their final goal. Nor is this an analogy that is only such to the eye. We have before observed, that the water is to the terraqueous globe what the blood is to the body: so, they both are circulated throughout the whole in an analogous manner, though by very different means. While the heart, by its extraordinary vicissitudes of contraction and expansion, performs this work for the animated frame of man and animals, distributing the blood by the arteries to nourish every part of the body, and recalling it by the veins; the mysterious economy of alternate evaporation and condensation accomplishes the same task for the insensible frame of the world: By this are the waters raised from their great storehouse, the ocean, transported by the clouds, which execute the office of the arterial system, to the parts where their fertilizing agency is required, discharged in showers to irrigate the soil, collected again by the rivers as an immense system of veins, and so carried back to their common reservoir, to be thrown again and again, as long as time shall endure, through the same circulation. Now, to borrow the phraseology of an eminent scientific writer*, there is no proper *affinity* between man and animals, and still less between man and vegetables, minerals, and inert globes of earth.

* Mr. Mac Leay, in the Paper above referred to, and in his work entitled, *Horæ Entomologicæ*.

and water: but who can observe these and a thousand other wonderful coincidences, without being satisfied that a regular and certain *analogy* reigns between them all? Who cannot see, that all the inferior objects that exist present an image of man, or of something that is in man, and thus, remotely and derivatively, an image of God, or of something in him?

(3.) We have now, however, been considering the analogy between the lower objects of the creation and man, chiefly in regard to their physical organization or constitution, and have only pointed to their relation to spiritual and divine things through the analogy observable between the general constitution of the body of man, and that of his mind. But, doubtless, there is a more immediate analogy also: Not only may a relation be traced between the physical powers and forms of man, animals, vegetables, and minerals, which is such that the lower seems constantly to emulate the higher; but between the mind of man, what may be called the moral qualities of animals, and the essential properties of vegetables and minerals, a not less decided analogy may be observed. Thus, all animals universally are guided by certain general appetites and instincts, not dissimilar to those which belong to the inferior part of the human constitution. And not only are the propensities which lead them to provide for their own support by food,

and for the continuation of their species, similar, in a general way, to the same propensities in man, but, in regard to the latter, some of them even recede from the grossness of brutes, and shame the brutal part of the human race, by forming conjugal engagements approaching to the tenderness and purity of married love: whilst, with respect to attachment for their offspring, and the care with which they provide for its welfare, even the most ferocious species emulate the maternal affection of the most exemplary human parent. In other respects, also, there are animals which exhibit feelings so nearly approximating to moral qualities, and instincts which so accurately imitate reason, that some who would be deemed philosophers have denied there to be any essential difference, and have asserted that nothing but speech is wanting to identify their nature with that of man.

In these particulars, then, between man and animals generally, there is evidently a common analogy; and it is equally certain, that there is a similar analogy between every species of animal, in particular, and something that is in man. For while all animals have certain common appetites and instincts in which they agree, they all have particular ones in which they differ. How great is the contrariety of character between the wolf and the lamb, the lion and the ox! Yet how easy is it to see,

that the character of each is thus distinct, because it is formed by some specific affection, taken, as it were, out of the human mind, and made the single governing propensity of the animal, without being modified by the innumerable variety of other affections, with which, in that wonderful aggregate of affections, the human mind, it is combined! That in the human mind are accumulated all the various affections, which, when separated, give a distinct nature to so many species of animals, is evident from the cases sometimes observed, in which one such affection is, in man, so much more powerfully developed than others, as strongly to mark his character. Thus, where pure benevolence and harmlessness pre-eminently reign, how readily do we recognize the moral features of the lamb! where general meekness and unsuspecting honesty, not so devoid of irascibility, prevail, we discover the temper of the ox; where a tendency to rapine and cruelty continually bursts forth, we note the characteristic of the wolf; and in the nature still prone to deeds of destruction, but exalted by courage and pre-eminent power, we trace a resemblance of the lion. Similitudes of this kind are familiar to every observer of nature. Were not their truth generally perceived, poetry would want many of its most striking beauties: and the use in poetry of images borrowed hence,

could excite no sympathies in the mind of the reader, were they not founded in the fixed laws of nature. We see clearly, that, on some animals, in regard to what may be called their moral qualities, is stamped a decided image of certain moral qualities existing in the human mind: and were we fully acquainted with the leading moral quality of every species of animal, we should see that every species of animal derives its proximate origin from that to which it thus answers in the human mind, and bears of it the mark. Hence, also, animals are images, though more remotely, of those principles in the Divine Mind from which every thing that exists in the human mind is a faint transcript: only we must here recollect, what has before been remarked, that there is a relation of opposites, as well as of direct resemblances. Certainly, nothing evil and mischievous can bear a relation or analogy to any thing in the Divine Mind, any otherwise, than as it is the perversion of something intrinsically good. There are many such perversions in the corrupt mind of man; and all things noxious in nature are *directly* images of these, and only *inversely* of the opposite perfections in the Divine Nature.

(4.) But perhaps it may be asked, If the whole Universe, as advanced above, is an outbirth from the Deity; and if every thing so produced has

in Him its divine prototype and ground of being; how came any thing to be created whose relation to Him is merely that of an opposite? It may be answered, Because, though every inferior creature has its divine prototype in God, it has, as is also stated above, its immediate antitype in man: if then man, by the abuse of the freedom of will with which he was endowed, perverted the divine gifts which he had received, and introduced evil into himself, images of such perversion and evil, by the continued action of the Divine Creative Power, would speedily appear in the lower objects of creation. There can be no doubt, as declared in the beginning of Genesis, that all things, as they first came from the Divine Hand, were good: and perhaps it may be questioned, whether any thing that now exists is so purely evil, as not to be capable of being divested of its malignant properties. The letter of Scripture seems to affirm that it may, when it says, in reference to a future glorious state of the Church and its members, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw, like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the

asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den."* If we suppose that by the harmless animals and the infants here mentioned, are typified the good, benevolent, and innocent affections of the human mind, and by the noxious animals, such appetites and propensities; as, when not controlled by the former, are of a destructive nature; and if, by their all dwelling together, we conceive to be meant, the depriving of the latter of their pernicious tendencies by the complete preponderance of the former; we have a spiritual sense which certainly teaches a most important moral lesson, conveyed in language most striking and impressive. To dwell, however, upon this, now, would be to anticipate the argument to which we are to proceed by and by: I here mention the circumstance to shew, that if there is an evident analogy between the noxious animals, in the state in which they at present exist, and the evil propensities and passions of human nature, the Scripture, when pointing to a state in which the lower appetites and propensities of man shall be divested of their injurious nature by the preponderance of the higher sentiments, preserves the analogy between them and the same animals, by describing the latter as laying aside their destructive tendencies. If the present species of animals all existed from the

* Is. xi. 6, 7, 8.

beginning, it is certain that some of them must have been greatly altered when evil established itself in the human mind. As all evil is nothing but the perversion of the lower propensities of our nature, which by creation were good, the animals which were created as representative forms of those affections could not at first have been noxious; but they might begin to be so when those affections in man suffered perversion. Hence it may be true, as the poet sings, that

“ Thus began

Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
 Death introduced, thro' fierce antipathy.
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish: to graze the herb, all, leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him, or, with count'nance grim,
 Glared on him passing.”

And if this was the origin of the noxious nature in beasts, it cannot be doubted, were mankind to return to a state such as is spiritually described in the passage just quoted from the prophet, in which all the lower appetites and propensities were strictly subordinated to the higher, that the words of the prophet would have a literal-fulfilment likewise, and all animals would again become innocuous. But in any case it is certain, that could evil be removed from the moral world, it would cease in the natural world also, and destructive creatures

would no longer exist. If it should be deemed unphilosophical to suppose that those now in being would change their nature, to which their physical organization is so accurately adapted, it is perfectly agreeable to the discoveries of science to conclude, that they would cease to exist altogether; since it is well ascertained, from the organic remains found in the bowels of the earth, that many species, and even whole genera, of animals and plants once common, are now no longer known; and, conversely, that many of those now common were strangers to the primeval ages: thus, having commenced their existence since the beginning of the world, they may relinquish it again before the end. It may then be safely concluded, since nothing noxious can have its direct prototype in God, that all such things either first acquired their noxious nature, or first began to exist, when evil established itself in the human mind; that they are properly the images of the depraved propensities which there have their seat; and that if moral evil could be banished from the world, these expressive images of it would either lose those qualities which make them such, or would disappear altogether.

(5.) But to return from this digression; which however was necessary to meet a seeming difficulty. It surely must be readily admitted, when fairly contemplated, that the analogy

between what may be called, in a qualified sense, the moral qualities of animals and the affections of the human mind, is very obvious and striking; and it cannot be difficult to discover a similar analogy between both of these and the properties of the objects belonging to the vegetable and mineral kingdoms. How closely are the common appetites and instincts, which in animals are subservient to the preservation of the individuals and of the species, emulated in the vegetable creation! In these, as in those, the life of the individuals is sustained by supplies of nourishment from without. They are provided with sets of vessels, which draw from the soil in which they grow, and from the air which surrounds them, those juices and gases which are congenial with their nature; and these they select, while they reject such as would be pernicious, with a discrimination which, though void of all consciousness, answers to, and exactly pictures, under another form, the instinct in regard to these objects so wonderful in animals. So, in the mode by which the continuation of the species is provided for, there is so much that seems to rival the attachments of animals, that Poetry, with one of her usual exaggerations, has attempted to abolish the difference, by selecting as a theme, "the Loves of the Plants*," and Painting has carried on the

* B* Dr. Darwin.

thought, by representing the fabled Deity of the tender passion subduing the vegetable kingdom also to his sway, and levelling his arrows at the susceptible breasts of flowers.† And how exact an analogy of the same universal impulses is displayed through the mineral kingdom also! By how marvellous a power, resembling the animal appetite for food, do many minerals draw from surrounding substances the materials of their accumulation! How completely magical; how similar to the exercise of affection and choice, is the action of chemical affinities! How striking an image of conscious attachment is presented, when, under the influence of the mysterious principle just mentioned, we behold inanimate matters,—substances not possessed even of vegetative life, rush into union, as if actuated by the most ardent mutual affection!

But not to dwell on these common resemblances, which assuredly tend very conclusively to establish the continual Mutual Relation, or Relation of Analogy, between all the various orders of creation; who cannot see a similar analogy between specific moral qualities, the animals in which such qualities are imaged, and the properties of specific vegetables and minerals? Between all the productions of the

† See a print in Dr. Thornton's *Illustrations of Linnæus's Sexual System*.

vegetable kingdom that afford pleasant and wholesome nutriment, for example,—the mild races of animals which are of similar use to man, and the good moral qualities of which these are the pictures, how plainly does this relation exist! and, on the other hand, how close is the analogy between noxious plants, noxious animals, and the malignant moral qualities which these so aptly typify! To descend to particulars would carry us into too wide a field; otherwise, numerous confirmatory instances might easily be pointed out. The substances of the mineral kingdom not affording food to man, their particular relation to the objects of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and finally to moral qualities, cannot so evidently be shewn; but that every specific substance of unorganized nature has also properties peculiar to it, which, though quite different from those of vegetables and animals, and especially from the feelings and sentiments of the human mind, are yet exactly analogous to them; is a truth which a little research would easily establish. But Nature herself, by bringing together the analogous objects of her different kingdoms, often calls upon us to note their mutual relation,—to observe how, in their respective spheres, they answer to each other. Read, for instance, the description of the Great Western Desart of North America, that occupies hundreds of miles,

both in length and breadth, of the territory that lies between the great rivers Mississippi and Missouri and the Rocky Mountains, and which has lately been explored by a mission dispatched for the purpose by the government of the United States.* Of this frightful district it is related, (I quote from the Quarterly Review,) that "In patches where vegetation shews itself, it is mostly confined to tufts of withered grass, prickly pears, and those succulent and saline plants which can derive subsistence out of the most arid, sandy, and sterile soils. Two species of cactus are described as most formidable plants, the *cactus ferox* and the *cactus cylindricus*. The former is stated to reign sole monarch over myriads of acres of these desolate plains, in patches, which neither a horse nor any other animal will venture to pass.—The latter grows singly, and forms a cluster by itself, increasing to such a size, that, seen from a distance, it is frequently mistaken for a bison. The whole plant is so thickly beset with spines that it forbids all approach to it, either by man or beast."† Respecting the animated tenants of the more southern part of this horrid desert, it is stated, that "Clouds of locusts filled the air, uttering shrill and deafening cries; while the

* Detailed in the "Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, &c." by E. James.

† Quarterly Review, No. lvii. p. 16.

Mississippi-hawk, wheeling through their ranks, seemed to enjoy his favourite prey; rattlesnakes of various kinds, and scolopendras of enormous size, were crawling on the naked surface; and immense black, hairy spiders, like the bird catching animal of South America (*mygale avicularia*), watching for prey at the mouth of their subterranean habitations.”* Who can read this frightful account, without being struck by the homogeneity of character, so apparent between the unkindly soil and its pernicious products, both vegetable and animal? Who is not led unconsciously to feel, that there is a decided analogy between the characteristic nature of each and those of its accompaniments? Who does not spontaneously infer, that the barren ground, the horrid thorns, and the venomous reptiles, mutually answer to each other? And who does not see in them all, striking emblems, and even exact images, of the malignant passions, such as prompt to shoot the poisoned darts of calumny, and to stab with unjust reproaches?—of a disposition, such as would pervert even the sunshine and rain of heaven into food for those passions?

But we must not dwell any longer on these illustrations. As we have before plainly seen, that on all things belonging to the moral, intellectual, and spiritual worlds the Divine Creator

* Quarterly Review, lvii. p. 23.

has first stamped a certain image of Himself; so enough may now have been stated to evince, that all objects of outward, and even material nature, bear an image of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual world of the human mind, representing its bad as well as its excellent endowments: and thus we plainly see that on these also the divine image is impressed, though sometimes in an inverted and distorted rather than in a direct and beautiful order. Through all the links of creation, lower things continually answer to higher; and the contemplation of them in this light is indeed calculated to "lead from nature up to nature's God." Whilst, through all their varieties, minerals are seen to answer to vegetables, vegetables to animals, and animals to man; and whilst man is recognized as having been created in the image and likeness of God; we see how the attributes of the highest natures may be viewed, as in a mirror, in the lowest: we discern how close is the tie which binds together the whole universe of being: we behold how things invisible may be read in the things which are seen. The Relation of Analogy thus every where existing, makes the volume of nature an instructive book indeed. In a stricter sense than the poet ever dreamed of, he who thus views the fields of creation

"Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing."

4. Concluding that it must now be pretty evident, that all things in Nature, being, as we have seen, outward productions from inward essences, are natural, sensible, and material *types*, of moral, intellectual, and spiritual *antitypes*, and, finally, of their *prototypes* in God; we draw a step nearer to the important object before us, which is, to shew that a Law or Rule of universal application is hereby afforded for the interpretation of the Word of God. We will here only remark further, that if such an analogy as we have pointed out exists at all, it must be regular and constant; that the mutual relation between natural types and spiritual antitypes must be immutable; if therefore the Scriptures are written in agreement with this analogy or mutual relation, the interpretations drawn from an adequate knowledge of it cannot be irregular or uncertain. The doctrine of spiritual interpretation will thus be freed from the only objection by which it could be reasonably impugned.

III. Seeing then that a Relation of Analogy so decidedly prevails among the various orders of existences in the universe, insomuch that inferior things are, universally, images of superior, and that all material things are types of immaterial; it will follow, that were this Relation well understood, a style of writing might be con-

structed, in which, while none but natural images were used, purely intellectual ideas should be most fully expressed: indeed it will be evident, that even a narrative in appearance the most simple, treating, in its literal expression, merely of the objects of nature, if framed by that Infinite Knowledge to which the proper qualities of natural objects all lie displayed, and which sees infallibly of what spiritual antitypes these are the types, might include lessons of wisdom far beyond all that philosophy ever reached.

1. Now that such a Relation exists, and that such a truly expressive style of writing might be framed by its means, ^{are} ~~is~~ in a great measure, intuitively perceived by all mankind. To be satisfied of this, we need only advert to a few instances which are familiar to us all; which prove, that although the existence of an analogy immutably established by the laws of nature between natural images and spiritual essences, may seem new to us when first we hear it distinctly affirmed, this is only for want of having made it a subject of reflection; whilst we have at the same time, a natural consciousness of it, which gives birth to many of our conclusions, and is the origin of many forms of speech in common use.

(1.) In regard to the conclusions which we draw from it: What is better known, for exam-

ple, to every human being, than that the face is, in a very great degree, an index of the mind, and that it would be most completely such, did not man often endeavour to conceal what is passing within, and thus to give an expression to his countenance which is foreign to the sentiments of his heart? What is more common, when we first see a stranger, than to form an opinion in regard to the dispositions of his mind from certain marks of character which we see written in his face? And though, for the reason just mentioned, we are here liable to be mistaken, this experience does not prevent us from deducing such conclusions altogether, but only from depending on them too much: a person's looks invariably make some impression upon us, and we continually find ourselves apt to draw from them some prejudice or prepossession.

But although we are liable to mistake in the opinion we thus form of the general character, we can scarcely err in deciding what are the affections which at any time reign in a person's mind, when he is under circumstances that affect him very strongly. None but the most accomplished hypocrite can prevent us from discovering what are the feelings which agitate his breast, when they are under any very powerful excitement. Who cannot tell whether a person is angry or pleased, buoyed up by hope or weighed down by despair, melted

by pity or inflamed with rage, merely by observing the lineaments of his countenance? But these discoveries of the interior emotions of the mind from the exterior form of the face, would be utterly impossible, did there not exist a certain relation between things spiritual and things natural,—between the spiritual things which exist in the mind and the natural appearances which the face assumes. It is from this origin alone that the invisible things of the mind become visible in the countenance: the higher flows into the lower, and moulds it in an instant into a form, which, Nature teaches us all, is the image of itself. Yet what two things can be more distinct than the mind and the face? Great disputes have divided the schools respecting the part of the system in which the mind holds her court; but none have dreamed of placing her seat in the face: yet in the face, unquestionably, much of the mind is to be seen; and all who there read her emotions, view a branch of the analogy between things material and immaterial, and testify to the fact, that of this, in many respects, man has an intuitive perception.

(2.) But to state a few of the instances in which this perception is the origin of forms of speech in common use.

What is more common with mankind, than to use such forms of expression as these: “I

see what you mean: what you have observed throws a great *light* on the subject; it must convince all who will take a candid *view* of the question, and *look* at it in all its bearings." And whenever we thus express ourselves, we acknowledge the existence of a fixed relation between natural things and spiritual; otherwise we should never talk of *seeing*, *taking a view*, and *looking at*, which are the actions of a bodily sense, and of *light*, which is a natural object, in reference to the operations of the *mind*: but we speak in this manner, because we are inwardly sensible, that the sight of the bodily eye answers to the sight of the mental eye, which is the perception of the understanding; and that the light of the natural world answers to the light of the moral world, which is truth: thus when we say we *see* that a thing is so, we mean that we *understand* it; and when we add that a *light* is thrown upon a subject, we mean that the *truth* respecting it is rendered evident. Again: What is more common than to speak of a *warm* affection, a *burning* desire; or, when we behold a person eager in any pursuit, to say, that he is *all on fire*? Yet such forms of speech would be quite destitute of meaning, unless there does actually exist a regular relation of analogy between things spiritual and things natural,—between natural heat, which is that of *fire*, and spiritual heat, which is that of *love*:

thus *intensity of love* is what we always mean when we thus speak, metaphorically, of *heat*, and of *fire*; and whenever we thus express ourselves, we betray an involuntary consciousness of the reality of the above relation. Again: How continually do we hear and use such forms of speech as these!—When readily assenting to a request, we frequently say, “I will do it with all my *heart* :” when speaking in commendation of a person whom we esteem, we often say, “He has a good *heart* :” and when we see a man extremely intent upon any object, we say, “His whole *heart* is in it.” But how absurd it would be to use such expressions, if, by the heart, we meant nothing more than the organ by which the blood is impelled through the body! It is certain that when we thus mention the *heart*, we mean the *will* and *affections*: and the reason why we thus speak of one thing instead of another, is, because there is a mutual relation between them; since, as has been shewn above, the heart discharges a function in respect to the body similar to that which the will discharges in respect to the mind: and our exchanging the terms arises from a secret perception of the truth of this analogy. So, in all ages and among all nations, it has been usual to consider the *hand* as an emblem of *power*, and to introduce the name of this important member into various phrases, when we

mean, either to speak simply of power, or to express some kindred sentiment which has the idea of power as its root: thus, how common it is, among politicians, to talk of strengthening the *hands* of government, meaning thereby, so to support the government, that it may have *power* to execute its designs!—and here, again, we refer to the sense we all have, of the fixed relation between things material and moral, natural and spiritual.

These instances are chiefly drawn from the organs of the human body; and whoever is disposed to carry his observation of this class of analogies farther, will find, that we in like manner frequently transfer all the terms, which, in their primary signification, describe the action of the bodily senses, to express certain operations of the mind, of which the senses are appropriate images.

But we by no means take all our helps to expressive speech of this kind from ourselves; we as frequently borrow them from the animal creation, mentioning the names of animals when we mean to express the moral and intellectual qualities to which we perceive they answer. Thus we often call children *lambs*, on account of their *innocence*: and to describe a pure affection between the sexes we take the suitable image of *doves*, calling by that name those whose mutual attachment is distinguished by

its *tenderness* and *constancy*, and by the *innocence* which it seems to breathe. An eminent warrior we call a *lion*, on account of his *prowess*. The *eagle* is taken as an emblem of a *towering intellect*; on account of his mounting to such a height in his aerial excursions, and the steadiness with which he can fix his gaze on the sun; as is a *hawk* of *acute discernment*, for his extraordinary *keenness of sight*. And when we behold a person indulging in flights of a *soaring imagination*, we borrow the appropriate figure of a *winged horse*, invented by the ancients, and say, "He has mounted his Pegasus."

Were we however to turn our attention to a still lower class of analogies, and endeavour to recollect the multitude of terms and phrases, borrowed from the physical properties of various common and inanimate objects, to express the qualities of the faculties, operations, and products of the mind; we should find ourselves in a spacious field indeed. How familiarly do we speak, and how frequently do we hear, of *stabbing* with reproaches, or of using *cutting* words; of *corrosive* thoughts; of *bitter* pangs; both of body and mind; of *sharp* afflictions, and *acute* sufferings, likewise of both kinds; of *lacerated* feelings; of *biting* sarcasms; of *grinding* oppression; of *upright* dealings; of *crooked* policy; of *straight-forward* proceeding; of *melting* tenderness; of *hardened* wickedness; of *soft*

compassion; with a thousand other such combinations! which are all absolutely heterogeneous, if the essentially different nature of the ideas combined be alone regarded, but which, nevertheless, strike no one as absurd, as they would do, if not in some way founded in the very nature of things. They have such a foundation, and therefore they do not offend us: the reason is, because, though heterogeneous in one respect, they are homogeneous in another; though physical properties are applied to moral objects, and are entirely different from the properties of such objects, they answer to them by an exact analogy, and are, in a lower sphere, what the others are in a higher. Of this, all men have a perception; we therefore readily translate the idea of the physical property into that of the moral one; and this, often, so instantaneously, that we do not advert to the physical idea at all; all which would be impossible, did not Nature herself dictate the interpretation, and thus assure us that the language is her own. Men, also, more particularly have recourse to such language, when they most strongly feel what they say; when they speak, as it were, more immediately under the inspiration of Nature, and when their thoughts flow more regularly in agreement with her laws. Then it is that they have a more clear intuition of the analogy that reigns between the various pro-

vinces of her empire, and thus are better enabled to give force to a purely intellectual idea, by calling its counterpart material one to its aid: as the hero, when rising to the defence of his country, fortifies the vital parts of his frame by a clothing of armour fitted over Nature's investment of ribs and flesh, and adds the power of his sword to that of his hand.

(3.) Now, what all see to hold good in some cases, must also be admitted to hold good universally; and thus we shall find that the common perceptions of mankind irresistibly confirm the existence, through all the kingdoms or spheres of being, of that constant analogy, which we have before endeavoured to establish from the very nature of things. If there be a great number of instances in which the Mutual Relation between things moral, intellectual, and spiritual, and things material, sensible, and natural, is so evident, that every human being intuitively perceives it; must we not necessarily conclude, that there are innumerable other instances in which a similar relation exists, although it is not so immediately obvious to our dark apprehensions? Must it not, indeed, be absolutely certain, that such a relation prevails, not only in *many* other instances, but in *all* cases whatsoever? This is a fact that appears to be capable of demonstration. For we know that all things which exist in this natural world,

how much soever they may differ from each other, have, nevertheless, one common nature, and are derived from one common origin: they all are forms compacted of material substances, or are modifications of such forms, and they all have the first cause of their existence in God: If then we see, incontrovertibly, that *some* of the objects which lie obvious to our senses in the natural world, have a Relation of Analogy with certain moral and spiritual things, it follows, by inevitable consequence, that *all the other objects* of this natural world, by virtue of their possessing the same common nature and the same common origin, must also possess the same kind of Relation to certain other moral or spiritual things. In fact, as has in part been shewn above, the causes of all natural objects immediately lie in the world of spiritual existences, so that, in reality, spiritual things are, instrumentally, the producing causes, by derivation from the First Cause, of natural things: and hence the spiritual cause and the natural effect, must, universally, answer to each other.

This is most plainly the case with man's soul and body; in regard to which we will make this further observation. Man's body, we know, cannot exist a moment alone, any otherwise than as a corpse; whereas, according to the Scriptures, and the truest philosophy, his soul

is capable of subsisting in a separate state. It is evident, then, that the soul is the higher subsistence of the two; and it hence becomes certain, that the soul is the immediate producing cause of the body. Even if we suppose, with the materialist, the soul to be nothing but a certain mental life and activity, incapable of existing separately from the body, this will not affect our argument; since it is undeniably true, that it was in order that such mental life and activity might come into existence, that the body is produced. Be the soul what it may, it is certain that the body is formed merely for its sake, and for its use. Now as we have before seen that there is a Relation of Analogy between the face, with certain other organs of the body, and certain faculties of the mind, which is nearly identical with the soul; so also must it be true, that the whole of the body, taken together, answers to the whole of the soul, and every distinct organ or member of the body to some distinct faculty or principle of the soul; and this because it is derived from it, or is formed for its sake, to be its seat and instrument of action in the world of nature.

Now what is true of the human body and soul, is true likewise of all the objects in nature and of certain spiritual principles which are the proximate causes of their existence; these, again, being emanations, as it were, from their

inmost essences in the perfections of Deity. There is a Mutual Relation or Analogy between them. It is evident then, that the instances in which mankind are in the habit of speaking in phrases drawn from this Analogy, are but as a few gems taken from the entrance to an exhaustless mine; for that every object in nature, were its properties as well understood as those of the objects from whence our illustrations have been taken, would furnish other such phrases, and the whole together, varieties unbounded.

Here we find ourselves repeating in other words, (but now as a conclusion from the premises advanced,) the proposition stated above: That, were the Relation of Analogy between the different orders of existences in the Universe well understood, a style of writing might be constructed, in which, while none but natural images were used, purely intellectual ideas should be most fully expressed. Such a style of language, also, would, as in the instances before noticed wherein this kind of interchange is still in use, be incomparably more forcible than that composed of abstract terms, and would, when applied to exalted subjects, embrace an infinity more of meaning, than can possibly be infused into the best selected arrangement of metaphysical expressions. But then, to employ this language with all its power,

we must suppose a perfect knowledge of both sides of the analogies;—not only of the properties and intrinsic nature of all the natural objects whence images are to be taken, but of all the moral, intellectual, and spiritual things to express which the former are to be applied: and this is the wisdom of Omniscience. While then man, from this treasury, can only borrow a few scattered jewels to set off his intellectual dress, the arrangement of them, through all their series, into glorious forms of suns and stars, to adorn a robe of imperial splendour, demands the skill of the Owner and Author of the whole; and they who would catch a glimpse of such a production, must study with devotional feelings and a teachable spirit, together with just ideas of its nature, the Word of God.

2. For it is in language of such construction, that the Holy Word is written throughout; as we hope will clearly appear in the sequel: at present we will only mention a few palpable instances of the occurrence in that book of such forms of speech as we have already noticed.

We have seen above, that the face or countenance of man is an index of his mind, inso-much that the interior emotions and thoughts of his mind are therein expressed: hence, whenever the face is spoken of in the Word of God, the interior affections and ideas or thoughts

of the mind are uniformly to be understood. Thus, mention is very frequently made of the *face* of the Lord; as in the form of blessing the people prescribed to Moses and Aaron: "The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his *face* shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his *countenance* upon thee and give thee peace."* Here, by the face and countenance of the Lord are meant the interior attributes or properties of the Lord, or those which constitute his essence; and these are, generally speaking, divine love and divine wisdom, or divine goodness and divine truth; and by the Lord's making his *face* to shine, and lifting up his *countenance*, upon the objects of his blessing, is signified the communication to them of all the graces, with their accompanying felicities, of which those divine principles are the source. It may also be observed that the attribute of the sun, which is, to shine, is here ascribed to the Lord's face: so we sometimes read, more explicitly, of the Lord's face being as the sun†; and as from the sun flow heat and light to recreate the natural objects on which it shines, so from the Divine Sun flow love and wisdom to bless intelligent creatures. We have seen, also, that the sight of the bodily eye answers to the sight of the mental eye, or the understanding, and that natural light bears an

* Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.

† Matt. xvii. 2, Rev. i. 16.

exact analogy to spiritual light, which is truth: hence it is written, "The people that walked in darkness have *seen* a great *light**;" by which is meant, that they who before were in ignorance, which is spiritual darkness, were brought to a *knowledge* of the *truth*: and hence also it is said, in a passage cited for another purpose in our last Lecture, "Open thou mine *eyes*, that I may *behold* wondrous things out of thy law†;" for it is certain that the interior glories of the law or Word of God are not to be beheld by our bodily eyes, but by our mental,—that is, they are to be *perceived by the understanding*. We have seen, likewise, that natural heat, which is that of *fire*, bears a recognized relation to spiritual heat, which is that of *love*. Hence it is that the abode of the lost hereafter is compared to "a furnace of *fire*‡," and is said to be a place "where the worm dieth not, and the *fire* is not quenched§:" for by the never-dying worm is aptly expressed the perpetual gnawing of corrosive thoughts, and by the unquenched fire the insatiate raging of evil *lusts*. In this instance, fire is mentioned to express love of a wicked and infernal character; but it is frequently used to express such as is heavenly and divine: thus it is said of the Lord Jesus Christ, that "He shall baptize with the

* Isa. ix. 2. † Ps. cxix. 18. ‡ Matt. v. 42.

§ Mark ix. 44, 46, 48. Isa. lxvi. 24.

Holy Spirit and with *fire**;" by which is meant, that he will regenerate his disciples by his Spirit of Truth and his Divine *Love*. We have seen, further, that the *heart* of man is intuitively perceived to bear a relation of analogy to his *will*. Hence it is said in the Holy Word, that "the *heart* of man is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked†;" by which we are taught that the *will* of man is, through sin, of such a quality; whence the Lord says by the prophet, "I will take away the stony *heart* out of their flesh, and give them a *heart* of flesh‡;" by which is signified, that the *will* of evil shall be removed, and the *will* of good implanted, with those who submit themselves to be guided by the Lord: and it is not said that this new heart shall be a heart of *flesh*, merely to contrast the softness of this material with the hardness of stone,—though this affords a poetical figure, likewise founded in a real analogy, and equally beautiful and expressive, —but on account, also, of the less remote analogy, which, as we have seen above, *flesh* itself bears to the principle of *goodness*. Finally we have noticed, how prolific a source of metaphorical phrases has been afforded by the plain analogy between the human *hand* and the principle of *power*: and of applications of this image the Scriptures are full. Thus how often

* Matt. iii. 11. † Jer. xvii. 9. ‡ Ezek. xi. 19.

is it said that the Lord brought the Israelites out of Egypt by “a mighty hand,” or “by a mighty hand and a stretched out arm!”* No one supposes that this was done by the visible putting forth of a *hand* and *arm* from the person of God; but all who believe the history allow, that it was effected by a wonderful exertion of Divine *Omnipotence*. So, when it is said of the Lord Jesus Christ, that “he was received up into heaven, and sat on the *right hand* of God†,” few minds can be so gross as to dare to picture to their imagination two personal divine forms sitting side by side on the throne of heaven; but all must see that the phrase is introduced to teach the same truth respecting the Lord Jesus Christ, as, in another evangelist, he declares respecting himself in plain terms: “*All power* is given unto me in heaven and in earth‡:” *All power* is *omnipotence*: to be received up and sit on the *right hand* of God, evidently, then, can mean nothing else, than the exaltation of that which was so received up, which was the glorified Human Nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the full possession and exercise of Divine *Omnipotence*,—to be the instrument by which, thenceforth, the Divine *Omnipotence* was to be exerted.

* Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, vi. 21, vii. 8, 19, ix. 26, xi. 2, xxvi. 8, xxxiv. 12.

† Mark xvi. 19.

‡ Matt. xxviii. 18.

It would be highly interesting, and would materially help to confirm the important result to which all the facts and examples which we have here noticed tend, could we stop to examine some instances in the Scriptures, similar to those adduced above from common discourse, of the formation of expressive phrases by applying the names of animals, and of the qualities of inanimate objects, to describe mental powers and properties : but we must not anticipate too far the subject of our two next Lectures. The examples above adduced from common speech, and these few from Scripture, must be sufficient to establish the fact which we have had in view in this branch of our argument ;—That were the Relation of Analogy between natural and spiritual existences well understood, a style of writing might be constructed, in which, while none but natural images were used, purely intellectual ideas should be most fully conveyed : and the examples from Scripture in particular, must surely be felt to render highly probable the further conclusion, that this is actually the style in which the Word of God is written. On the application of the Rule of Analogy, we see how clear and beautiful a sense results from passages otherwise extremely mysterious ; and though a general idea of the meaning of such passages as we have now considered, might present itself to almost every reader, we see

that what could otherwise be only an obscure, shadowy, undefined idea, becomes, on the application of the Rule, clear, distinct, and definite. There are, however, multitudes of analogies which have quite dropped out of use in common speech, but which are retained in Scripture; and in the interpretation of such passages, without a knowledge of the principle, nothing could be offered but mere conjecture. This, however, will be seen more clearly in the sequel; what we are here chiefly aiming at is, to establish, beyond question, the universal existence of such a Mutual Relation between things natural, spiritual, and divine, as we have endeavoured to explain. This is testified, we have seen, by every thing that we know respecting all these different orders of being: the conviction comes more closely home to us, when we notice that we intuitively perceive it, and draw from it many of our every-day phrases: and it is further confirmed still, if, while we only look at the Scriptures as a collection of very ancient writings, composed in an idiom generally in use in the early ages of the world, we find them full of forms of speech evidently constructed on the same universal principle. In fact, the doctrine of Analogy, and the Sacred Scriptures, mutually illustrate each other. In the Scriptures, more than any where else, are afforded the means of recovering the knowledge of this Analogy;

and, without arguing in a circle, we shall find in the end, that the doctrine of spiritual Analogy will afford the only key for arriving at a satisfactory interpretation of the Scriptures.

IV. Among those, however, who think that nothing which is new can possibly be true, there may be some who will be unwilling to contemplate those clear proofs of the existence of a Mutual Relation between things natural and spiritual which Nature every where exhibits, unless to the testimony of Nature, confirmed by Reason, be added that of human authority. This then may be produced in abundance, provided great antiquity should not be deemed as objectionable as absolute novelty: for certain it is, that, in the remote ages, the Relation in question was very extensively understood. The passages already quoted from the Scriptures evince, that, when they were written, the Relation of Analogy between natural and spiritual subjects, if not necessarily known to the writers of the books, was present to the Divine Mind by whose inspiration they wrote them; and being thus recognized by him ^{eye} ~~where~~ existence is from everlasting, it has the sanction of an antiquity coeval with the origin of all creation; of which fact we shall find abundantly more confirmations in the sequel. But if there be any who can fear to give themselves up to this evidence;—

who will even distrust the voice of God, added to the dictates of Nature, till it is authenticated by the testimony of man: they need not reject it, in this instance, for the want of such credentials.

1. It is even unnecessary to travel out of the Word of God itself, for testimony of this kind: for if we only take its relations as authentic history, whether dictated by divine inspiration or not, we shall find that some of them give full proof of the fact, that the knowledge of the Relation between things spiritual and natural, whereby they mutually answer to each other, and whereby the natural afford proper images for the expression of the spiritual, was in ancient times widely diffused. We might instance the case of Balaam, a native of Mesopotamia, who thrice directed Balak to build seven altars, and to offer a bullock and a ram on every altar*, when he was desirous to obtain an “enchantment against Jacob, and a divination against Israel†;” and who actually did, in consequence of these emblematic preparations, obtain communications from heaven, though of a contrary nature to those which he and his employer wished for:—circumstances which evince, that there really was a connexion between the communications obtained and the

* Numb. xxiii. 1, 14, 29. † Ver. 23.

ceremonies performed, and which establish the really typical character of the latter, and the knowledge of this possessed by Balaam.

But we have a still more remarkable instance of the preservation of this knowledge, in the account of the events which befel the Philistines after they had taken in battle the ark, which was the most holy symbol in the representative worship of the Jews. The chief circumstances were as follows.*

On capturing the ark, they placed it in the house of their idol Dagon; and the consequence was, that the next morning they found the idol fallen with his face to the ground before it. They however regarded this as an accident, and set the idol up again; when, the following morning, beside finding the idol thrown down afresh, they found his head and both his hands cut off, and lying upon the threshold. And not only did judgments thus fall upon the idol, but upon his infatuated worshippers, who died in great numbers, and those who died not were smitten with emerods: the land, also, was overrun with mice. They then determined to send the ark away, as the only means of obtaining deliverance from the miseries which they suffered; but on consulting their priests and diviners, these said, "If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty, but in any

* See 1 Sam. Chs. v. and vi.

wise return him a trespass offering." Then they said, "What shall be the trespass offering?" The others answered, "Five golden emerods and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines." They also directed them to make a new cart, and to take two milch kine on which there had come no yoke, and tie them to the cart, and bring their calves home from them, and send away the ark: and they said, "See, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast, to Bethshemesh," (which was the nearest Israelitish city,) "then he (the Lord) hath done us this great evil: but if not, ~~that~~^{we} we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us; it was a chance that happened to us." All this was accordingly done: "And the kine," the history relates, "which drew the cart, took the straight way to Bethshemesh, lowing as they went, without turning either to the right hand or to the left:" and when the people of Bethshemesh saw it, they offered up the kine for a burnt offering, cutting to pieces the cart, and making the fire with the wood. Now to what purpose could be all these ceremonies, if something were not specifically and correctly symbolized by every particular related? Without this, what would the whole proceedings amount to, but a piece of idle mummery? That they were not such, is evident from the effect's being such as was expected: the unguided

kine of their own accord, took the way, to Bethshemesh, and the Philistines were relieved from their sufferings. The whole then must have been a series of representative images, founded in the Relation of Analogy which exists by the constitution of nature between natural things and spiritual: and a knowledge of this Relation must have been possessed, to some extent, by the Philistine priests and diviners; otherwise, how could they have directed such rites to be performed, as, though seemingly trifling, had the effect of turning away the plagues with which the people were afflicted? The reason why such effects followed the use of such means, is, because, prior to the alteration made in the state and nature of the church by the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, all worship was carried on by representative rites significant of spiritual and heavenly things, and it was by such worship, founded in that Relation between things spiritual and natural, whereby the latter are images of the former, that, under the Economy which then prevailed, the communication was maintained between heaven and earth, between God and man; and unless this communication be maintained by some means, neither man nor the earth could continue in existence. Ceremonies then, which, under such an Economy, were solemnly performed according to this Relation of Analogy, sometimes pro-

duced natural effects, answering to those spiritual ones which real worship, with its accompanying graces, produces in the mind: as was often the case with the rites prescribed by divine authority to the Israelitish Church; of which we shall give an example or two in a subsequent Lecture.

We will briefly state what appears to be implied by the circumstances of the present history. The ark, under the Israelitish Dispensation, was a symbol of the Divine Presence, which none but the truly good can endure, and they not too near; and which causes the lusts cherished by the wicked more openly to become their tormentors. The Philistines represent those who exalt faith above charity, making the former every thing, and the latter of no account; which was the reason of their continual wars with the Israelites, who represent the true church, or those who cherish faith in union with charity. The idol Dagon is the religion of those who are represented by the Philistines. The emerods with which they were smitten, are symbols of the appetites of the natural man, which, when separated from spiritual affections, as is done by those who do not apply their faith to the purification of their lives, are unclean. The mice, by which the land was devastated, are images of the lust of destroying by false interpretation the spiritual

nourishment which the church derives from the Word of God, as is done by those who separate faith from charity. The emeralds of gold exhibit the natural appetites as purified and made good. The golden mice symbolize the healing of the tendency to false interpretation effected by admitting a regard to goodness; for of this, as we shall see in the next example, gold is an emblem. The cows are types of the natural man, in regard to such good qualities as he possesses. Their lowing by the way expresses the repugnance of the natural man to the process of conversion. And the offering of them up for a burnt offering, typifies that restoration of order which takes place in the mind, when the natural affections are submitted to the Lord. It would detain us too long were we to stay to offer proof of the truth of these explanations: every one may verify them for himself, by trying what sense will be drawn from other passages of Scripture, where the same emblems are used, on giving them the same interpretation; for if the signification thus obtained be every where coherent and satisfactory, the meaning assigned to the symbols must be the true one. But whether our explanation be the true one or not, it will not affect the position for which the history is here cited: It will still be certain, that the ceremonies directed by the Philistine priests and diviners must have been

intended to have some meaning: As the expected events followed, it must be true that the operations they prescribed must have had a real analogy to certain things of a spiritual nature: and of this, they must have possessed a knowledge.

But further. That an acquaintance with the Relation which natural things bear to spiritual was in ancient times widely extended, and that it was not altogether lost sight of among the eastern nations at the period of the commencement of the Christian era, is evident from the account of the wise men of the east, who, under the guidance of a star, came and “presented unto” the infant Saviour “gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”* Without entering into the inquiry respecting the nature of the star that appeared, the spiritual thing represented by it is obvious. Stars, as being luminous bodies, and thus belonging to the general analogy of light, which, we have seen, answers to truth, are apt images of knowledge or information upon spiritual subjects: hence this star, which conducted the wise men to Jesus, was an appropriate type of that knowledge respecting the promised advent of the Lord, which was retained, from ancient tradition, among the eastern people. The gifts which they offered were emblematical of the worship which the truly wise will

* Matt. ii. 11.

ever be foremost in yielding to "Him that was born King of the Jews:"* on which subject we will offer a little explanation.

By the gifts which the wise men presented, is pointed out, what the nature of all divine worship must be, if he who engages in it wishes it to be acceptable to the Lord or beneficial to himself. An offering of gold, on account of the density, ductility, indestructibility, beautiful colour, and other superior qualities of that metal, was seen in ancient times, when the perception of such analogies was more extensive than at present, to be expressive of worship from a principle of pure love or goodness in the will, which is the deepest ground from which we can present an offering to the Lord. It was on account of this signification of gold that so much use was made of it in the representative service of the Jewish tabernacle; most of the holy furniture of which was overlaid or otherwise ornamented with gold, if not made of it entirely: for this use of it was designed to express, that there can be no worship of the Lord, and no religion, unless there be in the heart of the worshipper a principle of sterling goodness,—a love towards the Lord and his neighbour. The second offering was of frankincense, which represents worship from a principle of truth in the understanding; that is,

* Matt. ii. 2.

not from truth merely known and comprehended, for this, nevertheless, may not form the spontaneous sentiment of a man's own mind; but from truth loved, and of course obeyed, as well as comprehended and known. This signification of frankincense may be gathered from its being the chief ingredient in the holy perfume or incense, which was burnt upon the golden altar in the holy place*; and from its being added as a kind of seasoning to the meat-offerings†, and spread upon the shew-bread‡: for the smoke of incense is a striking symbol of the aspirations to the Lord of the heaven-directed mind, and of the thoughts of a heart that continually turns to him. So the offering of myrrh represented worship from a suitable life and conversation: and although this cannot so directly be proved, it is evident from this fact; that whatever is really in the will, and thence in the understanding, never stops there inactive, but descends, on every suitable occasion, into life and action. This is the reason why, in the Scriptures, so many instances occur, as in this passage, of a three-fold arrangement. The particulars so enumerated are sometimes in an ascending series, but more frequently, as here, in a descending one; and then the last in order, as the myrrh is in this instance, denotes the ultimate effect of the union and

* Exod. xxx. 34.

† Lev. ii. 1, 2, 15, 16,

‡ Ch. xxiv. 7.

activity of the prior two. Myrrh, also, was one of the ingredients of the holy oil with which all the persons and vessels employed in the tabernacle-service were to be anointed*: by which oil was signified good of all orders and degrees, beginning from the most common or lowest, represented by the myrrh, which is therefore mentioned in the first place, (the ascending series being that which is here adopted,) and rising to the purest and most exalted, represented by the pure olive oil, which is mentioned the last. That the ointment thus compounded was intended to be a type of love and charity, with their uniting tendency and all their beneficial operations, may be gathered from the manner in which it is mentioned by David: "Behold, how good and pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments."† The introduction here, by the inspired writer, of the "precious ointment," would only make a simile without resemblance, if there were not an analogy between its nature and that of the virtue whose praise he celebrates.

Now it may fairly be inferred, that the wise men would not have "worshipped" "the young child" by these natural emblems, so exactly

* Exod. xxx. 23, 24, 25.

† Ps. cxxxiii. 1, 2.

typifying the spiritual worship due to that Divine Nature which was assuming this mode of manifesting itself to the world, had they not been apprized, to some extent, of the analogy between things natural and things spiritual. Nothing but this could have dictated the performance of acts so significant and appropriate. Without such a guide, they might, certainly, have brought presents, in token of respect: but it must have been by a rare chance indeed that they could have fixed upon articles so exactly symbolic of the sentiments proper to the occasion.

2. But if we were to turn to the writings and other monuments yet extant of profane antiquity, we should find proofs multiplying all round us, to evince, that in very ancient times the knowledge of the Relation between things spiritual and things natural was very much cultivated indeed: in fact, we should see reason to conclude, that the ancients knew of no other way of expressing their conceptions respecting spiritual and heavenly subjects, but by clothing them with images drawn from natural objects. Who, for instance, can doubt, that the fables of their Mythology were all originally framed upon this principle? These fables have been handed down to us with many mutilations, additions, and other deprivations, being now only found

in the writings of authors who did not understand them, and who had received them from traditinary relaters, of whom, likewise, many were ignorant of their meaning, and frequently confounded different things together: yet many of these fables still exhibit marks which evince, that their first authors composed them by the aid of a correct knowledge of the spiritual and moral analogy of natural things, and designed them to convey lessons of interior wisdom. Thus, though some of the heathen deities might be no more than deified men,—persons who, while they lived, had been benefactors to their species; (in which light some of the later ancients, and many of the moderns, have chosen to consider them all;) yet how much more reasonable is the opinion of the wiser ancients, followed likewise by many of the moderns, that the personifications of the Grecian mythology were only designed to represent the distinct attributes of the One Infinite God, and were not intended to be considered as existing in separate personal forms, but had such forms assigned them merely to render the contemplation of the various divine perfections more easy to the human understanding; whilst the regarding of them as so many separate gods, and the worshipping of them as such, were innovations of the ignorant vulgar,—exactly of the same nature as that which has been intro-

duced by some of the moderns, in making a complete separation of the persons of the Christian Trinity. We will endeavour to sketch an idea of some of the leading characters of this mythology, and of the design of a few of its principal fables.

It is a fact which will readily be admitted, that the Divine Being is regarded and worshipped, by all mankind, through the medium of the conceptions which they have formed of him in their own minds, and that none are able to conceive an idea of him that is at all adequate to what he is in Himself, since it is impossible for a finite being to comprehend the Infinite: hence the idea of God cannot be exactly the same in any two minds; and in persons of very dissimilar religious sentiments it must be very different indeed. Now it appears to have been the custom among the ancients, when a very great change took place in men's modes of conceiving of the Deity, to assign to him a different name: the propriety of which practice seems to be recognized in the Scriptures, where we find the Lord saying to Moses, when about to communicate a new revelation different from that which had existed before, "I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of *God Almighty*, but by my name *Jehovah* was I not known to them."* Thus we are

* Exod. vi. 3.

not to conclude that the wiser ancients regarded their supreme god, Jupiter, as a different divine being from the older supreme god, Saturn; but that under those distinct names, to each of which they assigned distinct attributes, they personified the different ideas of the Supreme Being entertained by two very different generations of mankind,—by men of such essentially distinct genius and character as those may well be conceived to have been, who lived before, and who lived after, the Scriptural catastrophe of the flood. And as the latter race of men were descended from the former, and their idea of God sprung out of that which had been conceived by the previous generation,—was, in fact, the offspring of it,—they transferred this idea to the deities themselves, and described Jupiter as the son of Saturn: for which also there was a further reason, to which we shall presently advert.

But the occasion on which Jupiter is fabled to have succeeded to the throne of heaven, was this: a war was waged against Saturn by the first race of giants, called the Titans,—evidently the “Nephilim” of the Scriptures*,—who, it is pretended, would have succeeded in their enterprise, had not Jupiter flown to the assistance of his father, and discomfited the enemy with

* In the original of Gen. vi. 4. The later races of giants are called *Rephaim*.

his thunderbolts; after which, like many other auxiliaries of distressed sovereigns, he seized the reins of government for himself. Now if we conceive Saturn to be a personified idea of the Divine Being more in regard to that pure goodness, which, the poets assure us, prevailed under his dominion among mankind, when

Sine militis usu

Mollia securæ peragebant otia gentes,

and which procured for the *Saturnia regna*, in the language of analogy, the expressive synonyme of “the golden age,” (though the use of that metal was then unknown;—according to the poet, not yet *itum est in viscera terræ*, nor yet *ferro nocentius aurum Prodierat*);—if we regard the Titans as the direful perversions of such a state—the lust of empire and pride of self-exaltation most opposite to inoffensive benevolence;—if we see in Jupiter a personification of the Divine Being more in regard to that other great essential property of Deity, pure Truth, which is the agent in every divine work of judgment and of restoration, and of the manifestation or revelation of which, thunder, often deemed by the vulgar the voice of God, and lightning, the sudden irradiations of which have such an awakening effect, are natural images;—and if we conceive further, what was clearly the fact, that the character of the people who lived after the flood was less affectionate and more intellec-

tual than before,—that sciences, distinct from the intuitive perceptions inherent in the love of exalted goodness, then first began to be cultivated,—thus, that the altered genius of mankind led them to view the Divine Being more in his character of pure but benignant Truth, than of simple unmixed Goodness,—or as a Jupiter rather than a Saturn;—whence, also, with the reign of Jupiter commenced the *silver* age,—silver being, among metals, the symbol of pure, interior truth, as gold is that of pure, exalted goodness:—If, I say, we accept these views, we at least shall have a theory which well agrees with the facts, as established by higher authority, and which affords,—may I be allowed to say?—a beautiful solution of the circumstances of the fable.

Nor does the fiction, that it was the practice of Saturn always to devour his offspring, detract from the character here given him, as the personification of unmixed goodness: for children, in the language of analogy, viewed in relation to their father, are as the perceptions and thoughts of the intellect in relation to the love, affection, or desire, which gives them birth. Every one who reflects on the operations of his own mind, must see, that thought, the object of which is truth, or what is esteemed to be truth, is entirely the offspring of affection. Take away all affection,—reduce the mind to a state of perfect apathy,—and you will imme-

diately cease to think: on the contrary, when any affection is in high excitement, how active are the thoughts! what a tumult of ideas,—what multitudes of reasonings, crowd into the intellect, when violent passions agitate the will! It is in agreement, then, with true philosophy, to regard Truth as the offspring of Goodness, this being essentially Love, to some species of which all the affections belong: whence we see the further reason, alluded to above, for considering Jupiter, who was the personification of the Divine Being in respect more to his essential attribute of Truth than of Goodness, as the son of Saturn, who was the personification of the Divine Being in respect more to his essential attribute of Goodness than of Truth. We are not however to suppose that the people of the *golden age* regarded the Divine Being as Goodness or Love alone, without Truth or Wisdom, nor that the *silver age* regarded him as Truth or Wisdom alone without Goodness or Love: the former worshiped him as Divine Goodness from which proceeds Divine Truth, and the latter as Divine Truth within which is Divine Goodness. Now it was contrary to the peculiar genius of the people of those primeval times, to be willing to contemplate any thing of mere intellect separate from its parent affection: to do so they would have considered as an awful lapse from the perfection of the human charac-

ter: they viewed all truth as inherent in its parent affection, and, though continually produced by it, continually resolving itself into it. In agreement with this sentiment, the preservation of Jupiter and his brothers is fabled to have been effected by the artifice of his mother Rhea—*the earth*,—which is a term used in the language of analogy, for that which, in the language of theology, is called the external man: it is by inclining to the external that intermediate spiritual births are produced by the internal, and it is by the suggestions of the external, or by acceding to its inclinations, that they are viewed as altogether separate. The artifice, too, by which Saturn was deceived by Rhea, was, her giving him a stone to swallow instead of his son;—a monstrous absurdity, if any thing like a literal history be supposed to be intended, but a beautiful combination of the analogies of different orders of existences, if the involved mystery be regarded. For a stone, among inanimate things of the lowest order, belongs to the same general analogies as a son does among the highest: both are types of the objects of intellect; a stone being a symbol of truth in its lowest sphere, when clothed with appearances taken from the world of nature, and a son being a symbol of truth when living in the perceptions of the human mind. Now that, *in this sense*, strange as it may sound, stones

were swallowed by the primeval inhabitants of the world, cannot be doubted, if we believe, as is highly reasonable, first, that there is such a mutual relation between natural things and spiritual, that the latter are reflected by all the objects of creation; secondly, that this analogy was intuitively apprehended by those ancients, so that, to them, every thing in nature conveyed a spiritual idea, and, by them, “the invisible things of God were clearly seen in the things that are made;” and, lastly, that the exalted affection for goodness in which they were principled, beholding in terrestrial objects nothing but images of heavenly ones, eagerly seized the ideas thus presented, and incorporated them with itself. Hence, as they viewed God through the medium of the conceptions of their own minds, so that their Supreme Deity may be considered, as noticed above in the case of the idol Dagon, as the personified abstraction of their leading religious sentiments, they depicted Saturn as the devourer of his children, or of stones in their stead.

And here be it observed, that such a mode of representing spiritual subjects, so long as it was understood, must have been equally delightful and instructive: but in the degenerate times that succeeded;—to speak in their own language,—in the *copper* age, when men regarded only *external goodness*, cultivating merely

natural affections,—and still more in the *iron* age, when they took their character from a merely *external understanding*, and no longer had spiritual, but only *natural conceptions of truth*;—such representations became liable to great abuse. Then, understanding literally this, so understood, flagitious practice of Saturn, and the similar deeds of their other divinities, they changed the whole into a system of abomination and impurity, never dreamed-of by its inventors; and villainy pretended to perpetrate its crimes under the express sanction of the gods.

But to return. We have selected the above fables for illustration, as being fundamental ones, on which the whole of the Greek mythology turns: otherwise, some of the others would perhaps admit of a more familiar explanation. When, for instance, a second race of giants is fabled to have made a second insurrection, and to have heaped mountain upon mountain to scale the walls of heaven (, an occurrence which is described in Scripture by the parallel scheme of building “a tower whose top should reach unto heaven”)*; and when the gods are said, in fear, to have fled for refuge to Egypt, and there to have disguised themselves by taking the forms of various animals, Jupiter assuming the figure of a ram, Juno that of a white cow, and the like;—how aptly may we see described the

* Gen. xi. 4.

desolation, through the prevalence of extravagant lusts and wild phantasies, of all that constitutes real religion, until all true knowledge of the divine nature and attributes is banished, the graces of the truly spiritual man are no more, and nothing of them is left but some good affections (represented by the animals in which the deities lurked,) in the natural man, which in this fable, as in the Scriptures, is typified by Egypt! On this occasion, also, it was oracularly pronounced, that the gods must finally be vanquished, unless they called a mortal to their aid: where again we see a proof, that by their gods they did not strictly understand the Deity as he is in Himself, but as he is received, and as ideas are formed of him, in the human mind: for none could imagine that any insurrection from hell could injure the Deity Himself, though it might abolish the graces of which he is the author from the mind of man. The fable adds, that in compliance with the oracle, the gods availed themselves of the assistance of Hercules, the son of Jupiter by a human mother, by whose help they regained Olympus: in which, I think, the serious Christian must discover, whatever the infidel may think of it, a knowledge among the gentiles of that genuine oracular declaration which said, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Indeed, the whole history of

Hercules and his labours evinces, that they who constructed it, had a knowledge of the Redeemer who was to come, and of the redemption which was to be wrought by the Incarnate God, who, "having spoiled principalities and powers*," and "destroyed him that had the power of death"† was to be made "perfect through sufferings,"‡ "crowned with glory and honour:§" which truths they involved in their customary style of fable, filled with circumstances drawn from the language of spiritual analogy.

Once more. If we were apprized that, in its spiritual reference, that common Scripture-emblem, the *horse*, expresses *the understanding or apprehension of Truth*,—whence four *horses* appeared, in the Revelation, to proceed *out of a book***, and on another was seen riding in heaven He whose "name is called *The Word of God*††,"—we should perceive the reason why *horses* were assigned to *Neptune*, the god of the ocean, or of *the waters*, though they seem so little adapted to that element:—why a chariot and *horses* of fire were attributed to the *sun*, the source of *light*, or to *Phæbus*, the god of *day*:—why the fountain of Hippocrene, in Mount Parnassus, the haunt of the nine *Muses*, or the *sciences*, who were the daughters of Jupiter

* Col. ii. 15. † Heb. ii. 14. ‡ Ver. 10. § Ver. 9.

** Ch. vi. 1, 4, 5, 8. †† Ch. xix. 11, 13.

and *Memory*, was said to have been opened by a blow from the hoof of the winged *horse*, *Pegasus*:—why all the principal heroes and demi-gods were represented to have received their *institution in learning* from the *Centaur*s, an imaginary race compounded of the man and the *horse*; who also were famous for their *skill in medicine*, and instructed in that art the god of medicine, *Æsculapius* himself:—why the *device*, whatever it was, by which the Grecian commanders introduced a body of troops within the walls of *Troy*, was symbolized by a wooden *horse*:—and why, on the founding of *Athens*, that celebrated seat of *science and philosophy*, when *Minerva* and *Neptune* were contending for the honour of giving it a name, *Neptune*, to display his power, is said to have struck the ground with his trident, when there instantly darted forth a *horse*; yet the disputed honour was awarded to *Minerva*, at whose bidding there sprung up an *olive-tree*;—a fable which beautifully represents the superiority of that *wisdom* figured by the goddess, which regards the conduct of life, and leads to the feeling of *benevolence terminating in works of utility*,—of which sentiment the *olive-tree* is the symbol,—over those mere *ACCUMULATIONS OF KNOWLEDGE* typified by the waters of the ocean, and having a personified abstract in *Neptune*; these only enabling their possessor *to dazzle by intellectual*

display, or to *overwhelm by ratiocination*;—of which exercises the *war-horse* is so expressive an emblem.

The brevity to which these explanations have been necessarily confined, may perhaps have been such as to prevent their truth from being fully perceived:—there is also much difficulty in conveying by abstract expressions the exact ideas intended; in which respect, as intimated above, the language of analogy, when once understood, has an immense superiority:—but surely no one can doubt, that these fables were all intended by their authors to have a specific meaning. There is an evident uniformity in their construction. They are all compounded of personified abstractions, and of material images taken from actually existing objects; and it is plain that, by the material images applied, material things are not intended, but that they are used as symbols, according to some regular principle, founded in a similitude observed by the composers between the images employed and certain moral or spiritual things intended to be expressed: And what can this regular principle be, and what the similitude observed, but such a Mutual Relation, or Relation of Analogy, between natural things and spiritual, as renders the former expressive mediums for conveying to the mind ideas of the latter? Altogether, I think it certain, that

no one can examine the fables of the Greek mythology, with a view to this inquiry, without being satisfied, that such an immutable Relation between the different orders of existences does prevail, and that when those fables were composed it must have been well understood.

The same observation may be extended to the Asiatic mythologies, since the affinity between these and the Grecian is well known, and modern researches have even discovered, on the banks of the Ganges, some of the imaginary deities so long since banished from the rest of the world. Since the acquisition, by this country, of such extensive possessions in India, the attention of the learned has been much directed to the sacred books and traditions of that very ancient nation; and here, still more than in the mythological tales of the ancient Greeks, astonishment has been excited by the marvellous character of the relations which compose their records. But little certain knowledge has yet been developed by the illustrious scholars who have endeavoured to open this rich mine of science: the reason is, because they have chiefly sought, in the extraordinary narratives which they have studied, for information on questions of ancient history, geography, and chronology; whereas, when the traditions of the highest antiquity appear to treat of such matters, it is only for the sake of making them the vehicles of information

respecting higher subjects. To decypher such compositions, the science of Analogies will be found to be the master-key. As nothing but this will satisfactorily explain the mythological fables of the Greeks; so likewise must our Orientalists avail themselves of this, before they will be able to unfold the kindred theogonies of the Hindoos; for it evidently was by persons skilled in this science, that these, also, were composed.

Nor is the once famous country of Egypt to be by any means excluded from this enumeration of the ancient cultivators of this study: on the contrary, could all written and traditionary learning be extirpated from the earth, Egypt would still present her imperishable monuments, silently but irrefutably proclaiming, that there, indeed, the Relation of Analogy between the various kingdoms of nature, with their individual objects, and each other; and between all of these, again, and things moral, spiritual, and divine; was once—yea, for ages,—well understood; that there it stamped a character upon all elevated science, and that it regulated there even the first elements of knowledge. What can be more evident than that her celebrated Hieroglyphics, which have so long confounded the skill of the learned, are built on this Analogy, and are expressions of it, and that, if ever they are decyphered, it must be by its means? Who

could inspect that extraordinary exhibition, a year or two since open in London, representing the tomb of an Egyptian king, explored by Mr. Belzoni, and behold the multitude of representations of natural objects, evidently designed to convey a mystical meaning, without feeling satisfied that the arrangement of them must be governed by some Rule, and that it assumed for its basis a known Analogy? Who can escape the same impressions on viewing the Egyptian antiquities in the British Museum? To particularize only one palpable emblem, the meaning of which requires no discussion to establish it: Who can behold those monstrous *fists*, carved out of the *hardest of rocks*, without being convinced that they were designed to symbolize that irresistible *power* that could crush opposers into annihilation? that their meaning is similar to that of the *stone* mentioned in the gospel, of which it is said, that "on whomsoever it shall fall, *it will grind him to powder*?"* So it is evident that in the wonderful scheme of symbolic writing contrived by this singular people, the natural objects depicted were put to convey ideas quite distinct from any thing immediately belonging to the objects themselves: they delineated one thing to express another: they evidently were guided by some Analogy which they saw between the two: and it is much more reasonable

* Matt. xxii. 44.

to conclude that they followed a principle known by them to exist in the nature of things, than that the whole of so complicated a system was merely founded in arbitrary assumption.

From the whole of this branch of our investigation, then, these conclusions appear to be certain: That among all the celebrated nations of antiquity, the knowledge of a Mutual Relation, regarded as real, between the different orders of existences in the universe, once was general: that it formed the peculiar learning of the priests, and was studied by all who aspired to the distinction of erudition.

V. The final conclusion intended to be deduced by the help of what has been advanced in this Lecture, is, that in the Relation of Analogy between things natural and things spiritual, (which we may now, it is hoped, consider as established,) is to be found the Law or Rule according to which the Scriptures are written, and that a knowledge of it will afford the key by which their "dark sayings" must be decyphered. At least, sufficient reason has perhaps been shewn, to make it highly probable that such is the fact, and to entitle the application of the system of interpretation proposed, to a very attentive examination; and this probability, and claim to examination, are greatly strength-

ened, when it is considered, that the early part of the Scriptures was written, whilst this Relation was cultivated among many nations as a science, and the latter part before the knowledge of it was every where quite extinct; which alone affords some presumption, conjointly with the extraordinary character of their style, that they are composed according to it. But to establish this conclusion by a wider induction will be the object of the two next Lectures.

Now as it has, I trust, been solidly evinced, that the Relation of Analogy between the different orders of existences is irreversibly founded in the very nature of things, and may even be considered as one of the most fundamental laws of Nature; and not only so, but that there is a tendency to express ourselves according to it in common speech; this must shield the idea of applying it as a Rule for the interpretation of the Scriptures from the imputation of fancifulness: and as it has, I trust, appeared equally certain, from the latter part of this Lecture, that this Analogy was in ancient times well understood, and that many compositions were then framed by its laws; this must vindicate the principle from the charge of novelty. It is true that this science (, for such it may justly be called,) has been lost sight of

for many ages; that though mankind have continued to behold its phænomena, they have neglected to reflect on their cause: but it is equally true that for a still longer course of ages, prior to this interval of oblivion,—from Adam himself through Noah and his descendants,—it was generally understood. Sciences of a more external kind, having natural things alone for their objects, have since been cultivated in its place: but now, when these seem to have arrived almost at their perfection,—when all the mysteries that Nature conceals in her bosom appear nearly to have been opened to our view; (as to their general branches, we mean,—for new particulars will be discoverable to eternity;) it surely is time to turn our attention to a science which connects natural knowledge with spiritual, and sheds superior light on both. In the first ages, interior wisdom was cultivated, to the neglect of exterior knowledge: in later ages, exterior knowledge has been pursued, to the neglect of interior wisdom: in future ages, doubtless, they will be united. The advantages of this union will be great. As the doctrine of Analogy is cultivated, it will no longer be the reproach, as heretofore, of Science, that she has a tendency to lead her votaries to scepticism in regard to religion: for natural things will then all be viewed as the outbirths of spiritual essences,

and so to be connected by an indissoluble tie with the Great Author of both, the Creator and Preserver of all things. As, at the same time, religion will be cleared of its corruptions, and the Bible, understood by the aid of this science, will no longer be represented as sanctioning doctrines which reason condemns; that enlargement of mind which knowledge produces will cease to become an obstacle in the way of the most cordial faith. The Science of Analogies, by unfolding the interior contents of the Sacred Volume, and explaining, as we shall see in the sequel, all those appearances that seem either trifling or contradictory, will reconcile the jarrings, so long thought irreconcilable, between Reason and Revelation; just as, by shewing the origin and spiritual relation of all objects in nature, it will conciliate knowledge with piety. Every friend, then to Revelation and to Piety,—yea, every admirer of Reason and of Knowledge, is deeply interested in the restoration of this Science; and both should unite to bring on the time, when, as among the ancients, the highest wisdom shall be that which is conversant with spiritual subjects, and the first of sciences that which teaches the Relation between spiritual subjects and the appearances in nature.

LECTURE IV.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS, EVINCING THAT THE SCRIPTURES ARE WRITTEN ACCORDING TO THE LAW OR RULE DEVELOPED IN THE LAST LECTURE.

- I. *Of the Style proper to a Divine Composition. Such a Style afforded by the Relation of Analogy between natural things and spiritual, as explained in the last Lecture.* II. *That if the Scriptures are written by a Plenary Divine Inspiration, they must be composed in this Style.* 1. *That when the Divine Speech, or the Divine Word, which is the same thing as the Divine Truth, emanates from the bosom of Deity into the circumference of creation, or into the world of nature, it there clothes itself with images taken from that world, and that it cannot otherwise be presented to mankind.* 2. *Variety of Phraseology in the different Inspired Penmen consistent with Verbal Inspiration.* 3. *Plenary Inspiration necessarily occasional, and not permanently attendant on certain Persons.* III. *That the Holy Scriptures are the Divine Truth thus brought into a natural*

form; and that therefore their interior meaning can only be understood by an application to them of the Law which governs the Relation between natural objects and spiritual and divine essences. IV. Applicability of the Rule to the Prophecies of the Divine Word. 1. Sentiments of Biblical Critics on the Double Sense of Prophecy. 2. Rule of Analogical Interpretation adopted by Sir Isaac Newton and Bishop Warburton. 3. Defects of their Rule, and the necessity of extending it further. V. Examples of the light which results from the application of the Rule of Analogy between natural things and spiritual to the Prophetic Writings.—Instances selected; 1. Ezekiel's prophecy of a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, (Ezek. xxxix. 17 to 20;) 2. The Lord's prophecy of his Second Coming in the clouds of heaven, (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30;) 3. John's vision of spiritual Babylon, (Rev. xvii. 3 to 6.)



I. THERE cannot, certainly, be a more interesting and momentous exercise proposed to the reflecting mind, than to investigate the nature of that speech or language which God uses, or might be expected to use, in communicating a divinely inspired code of knowledge on heavenly subjects. Nothing can be

more agreeable to reason than to pre-suppose, that the style of language in which God speaks to man, must be very different from that in which men generally speak to each other; and that its beauties and excellences, though necessarily of the most transcendant description, must, nevertheless, be quite different in their kind, from those which adorn the best human compositions. That is a dictate of reason as well as of revelation which declares, that God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways*; and also, that the things most highly esteemed among men,—the wisdom of this world,—may be mere foolishness in the sight of God.† Some have been disgusted with the Scriptures of Divine Truth, and have thought it an argument against their divine origin, because they are not written in the style of the orations of Demosthenes,—or of the philosophical disquisitions of Plato and Aristotle,—or of the legal pandects of Justinian;—because they do not display the tinsel rhetoric of the orator, the artificial subtlety of the dialectician, or the systematic arrangement of the digester of a code of laws, or of a body of divinity. Had the Scriptures, however, been composed in any of these styles, I suspect that they would not have been deemed, even by the same parties, a whit more worthy of reception. We should

* Isa. lv. 8.

† 1 Cor. iii. 19.

then have been told, (and with more reason than accompanies any of the objections made to them as they are,) that they savoured too much of art and contrivance;—that it were unworthy of the Divine Majesty to compete with man the palm of elegance or ornament of style, or to be bound to that kind of order which is necessary to the feebleness of human intellect;—that a divine composition might naturally be expected to disregard these trifles, and to possess a style peculiar to itself. And this would be a just statement of the case. If the thoughts and ways of God differ from ours, it undoubtedly must be, by their infinite superiority. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are *his* ways higher than *our* ways, and *his* thoughts than *our* thoughts.”*

Now it is the chief object of these Lectures to shew, that this is the character of the books called the Holy Scriptures or Word of God; that they are distinguished from all other compositions by the profoundness of their matter, and by the depth of wisdom with which they are inwardly replete; but that the divine style of writing consists in conveying this wisdom with the utmost fulness, and in the most uninterruptedly coherent series, under the veil of a continued chain of natural images,—in an outwardly simple style of language, borrowed

* Isa. lv. 9.

entirely from the appearances that exist in nature. This we have already repeatedly advanced: we have stated, also, that the genuine import of the Holy Scriptures might be clearly ascertained, and the whole seen to be worthy of a Divine Origin, were it generally known that there is a constant Relation established from creation between moral, intellectual, and spiritual essences, and physical, sensible, and material forms; were the Law which governs this Relation distinctly understood; and were it applied to the decyphering of the symbolic language, of which the letter of the Word of God is every where composed. This application then we are to make in this Lecture and our next, and to offer Proofs and Illustrations, to evince, that the Scriptures are written, throughout, according to this Law or Rule.

The nature of this Analogy, and of the Law which governs it, we endeavoured to investigate in our last Lecture: when we found that man is affirmed by the Scriptures, (and reason cannot dissent from the discovery,) to be created in the image and likeness of God:—which, upon the most general interpretation, can mean no less, than that he is provided with faculties and powers for receiving, in a finite degree, those attributes and qualities which exist in their infinite fulness in the divine nature. Thus the high endowments of the human mind, as enjoyed

in their primitive and proper state, without the perversions which evil has introduced, must be derivative resemblances, images, and types, of underived, original, real, archetypes in God. But we have seen, likewise, that all things in the human body are images and types of certain essences and antitypes which exist in the mind; of which man has so clear an intuitive perception, that he often uses, in common discourse, images taken from the organs of his body, to express the affections and other properties of his mind. And we have seen further, that as man is, in a certain manner, an image of God, so all the inferior parts of the creation are, in a certain manner, images of man, and thus are, each in its respective station, lower types of certain antitypes in him. Thus we have found by various examples, (and the evidences of the fact might be multiplied to such an extent, as to render negation extremely difficult,) that all things in nature, being outward productions from inward essences, are natural, sensible, and material types, of moral, intellectual, and spiritual antitypes, and finally of their prototypes in God. We have seen also, that were the relation between natural types and their spiritual antitypes in all cases fully known, a style of writing might be constructed, in which, while none but natural images were used, purely intellectual ideas should be most fully

expressed. That such a style of composition has been constructed,—that numerous traces of it still exist, and that in ancient times it was extensively understood,—are propositions which have also, I trust, been satisfactorily demonstrated.

II. The existence of such a Relation of Analogy being thus, it is hoped, clearly established, with the possibility of a style of writing being constructed by its aid, which would be singularly adapted for giving full expression to spiritual and divine ideas; the question now before us is, Are the Scriptures written in this style? The answer must be in the affirmative, if, on applying this principle to the decyphering of their language, we find that we every where obtain a clear interpretation, consistent with itself, and worthy of a Divine Author. But, in agreement with the plan which we have pursued in our former Lectures, we will first offer some remarks to shew, that if the Scriptures really are the productions of a Divine Author, and thus are written by a plenary divine inspiration, they *must* be composed in this style, and could be composed in no other.

1. In our first Lecture we endeavoured to evince, that a Composition which has in reality God for its author, *must*, as to its contents, be

infinite and divine, exhibiting, in every page, the glories of eternal wisdom: and in our second Lecture we offered arguments to prove, that this must chiefly be treasured in an internal sense distinct from that of the letter,—that a composition which is really the Word of God, as the Scriptures assume to be, *must* contain stores of wisdom in its bosom independently of any thing that appears upon the surface. In our last, whilst we endeavoured to establish the certainty of there being a fixed Relation of Analogy between things natural, spiritual, and divine, we shewed, that the ground of this is, because the whole Universe is actually an Out-birth from the Deity, and thence *must* bear, in all its parts, an immutable Relation to the attributes and essential properties of the Divine Nature. Now, I think, it will, upon a little reflection, appear, that the communication of a Revelation from God to man, *must* follow the same general law as that which regulated the production of the creation; that as, in the works of God, spiritual essences gave birth, in nature, to material objects, so, in the Word of God, spiritual ideas, to become perceptible in the natural world, must invest themselves with natural expressions composed of images taken from that world: and thus, as material and natural things answer to moral, spiritual, and divine ones, so do the literal and natural ex-

pressions of Scripture answer to spiritual and divine ideas. As, again, the objects of nature could not have been produced by the Divine Hand independently of any connexion with spiritual and divine essences; so neither could a composition in natural language be produced by the Divine Mind, except by the intervention of spiritual and divine ideas. And both the works and Word of God having such an origin, must be connected with that origin by a determinate Relation of Analogy; and thus, no Composition really communicated by a Plenary Divine Inspiration, can be written in any style but that which follows the Law of this Relation. We will consider this a little further.

(1.) When the Divine Truth proceeds from God to irradiate the minds of all intelligent created beings, it evidently must proceed according to the same order as that by which all creation itself proceeded from Him. What can the Divine Truth be conceived essentially to be, but a certain spiritual light, which communicates perceptions to the minds of all intelligent creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities, whether they be adapted for the apprehension of much truth or little? just as natural light, to which we have seen it answers by analogy, communicates sensations to the eye, and this also with much variety, according to the structure of the

organ; thus the eagle is recreated by the full blaze of day, whilst the owl is reduced by it to a state of torpor, and can only enjoy its existence in the obscure gloom of night. Neither the spiritual light nor the natural light is inherent in the objects which receive it, but is in both cases imparted from a source extraneous to them. As the natural light is not inherent in the eye, and no sensation of it is present but when it flows into the eye from a luminous body, either immediately or by reflection; so neither is spiritual light inherent in the understanding, and no perception of truth can be enjoyed, but by a communication from the Source of Truth, either immediately or by derivation.

If we admit there to be angels and arch-angels about the throne of God, they doubtless must be purely spiritual beings, all whose perceptions must be of the most purely spiritual and exalted nature; still, even such beings as these must be merely receptive subjects, destitute of the power of possessing wisdom absolutely as their own, without a continual communication from the Only Fountain of Wisdom in God:—for had they such a power, they would actually be Gods themselves:—consequently, their perceptions of wisdom must be the emanation of Divine Truth, which ever flows from God, like spiritual light from a spi-

ritual sun, *as received in their minds*. This is a distinction necessary to be regarded. While it is certain, that no created being, not even the highest and most distinguished, can enjoy a single ray of Truth which is not conveyed to him from its Infinite Fountain, it is equally certain, that the perceptions of truth thus existing in a finite mind, must differ immensely from the Truth itself, as existing in its Infinite Original. It is modified by the limited capacities of the receptive mind, and by its descent into a lower sphere. Its form is no longer the same, though one that answers to it by an exact analogy. The pure Divine Truth has already clothed itself with a veil, though a very transparent one, taken from the angelic nature by which it is received: and if it be made the subject of oral enunciation, the language for expressing it must be borrowed from the ideas of the angels, and from the objects of the angelic world; still, the purely divine ideas will not cease to exist within. So it is with natural light. This exists in its purity only in the sun; and even in the objects which reflect it best it loses much of its brightness; and it assumes a boundless variety of tints of colour and degrees of shade, all borrowed from the bodies on which it falls or through which it shines: yet in all these modifications the light itself exists.

But we know well that the divine creative operations have not been confined to the production of the spiritual and heavenly worlds: natural and material worlds were formed also: and all the objects that exist according to order in the natural worlds, are, as we have already seen, still outbirths from God Himself; deriving their being from the perfections that exist in the divine nature; forming, in the lowest sphere, types of those perfections; and presenting, in fact, a divinely constructed mirror, in which spiritual and divine things may be seen and read. Suppose then a sphere or emanation of Divine Truth to flow forth from God, and not to stop till it reach the lowest base of creation, and there to present itself in natural language; Of what might that language be expected to consist, but of images taken from the objects that appear in nature, and from the common modes of thinking and acting of the beings whom it there found? As Divine Truth, if enunciated in the angelic world, must take its expression from the ideas of the angels and from the objects of their world; so must it, in the natural world, take its expression from the ideas of men, and from the objects of their world; that is, from such ideas as the objects of the natural world would suggest to its inhabitants. We have seen in our second Lecture, that natural language, or language

such as is spoken by the inhabitants of a natural world, can be conceived and uttered nowhere but in the natural world;—just as, according to the Apostle Paul, the language of angels is such as is ineffable to man,—unspeakable by natural organs; and it was this language, not natural speech, which he heard, when he was transported as to his spirit into angelic society: Of course, should the Divine Being give a revelation of his Divine Truth to men on earth, the ideas of pure divine truth could not present themselves in natural language till they had descended into the natural world: and then they would clothe themselves in language drawn from the appearances that exist in the natural world; which they might conveniently do, because all natural objects, answering by an immutable relation to spiritual and divine essences, afford suitable images for giving them expression. Thus, and no otherwise, could a book, written by a Plenary Divine Inspiration, be given to man: if then the Scriptures are such a book, they must be composed in a style of writing constructed in agreement with the Relation of Analogy established by the laws of creation between natural things and spiritual.

(2.) We have seen also, when speaking of this style of writing in our last Lecture, that it is capable of conveying spiritual and divine

ideas with a fullness that no other kind of language could afford. This is a reason why the Word of God would be expressed in the symbolic language which we find it clothed with, and not in the abstract, metaphysical language of philosophers, even had it been possible to give it in the latter style; which it was not. Such abstract, metaphysical language is adapted to the use of men rendered intelligent by the advantages of Revelation, and of men highly illuminated by mediate Revelation; but not of those who are the subjects of immediate Revelation, or who are inspired to write the Word of God itself. Besides, in the times of remote antiquity, this artificial language was entirely unknown; and there was no occasion for it, so long as the more forcible and expressive language of analogy continued to be understood. Revelation regards man as a spiritual being, the destined inhabitant of an eternal world: and its object is, to communicate such knowledge as is necessary to raise man to a capacity of filling, in that eternal world, a station, of happiness and honour: and this knowledge is such as regards the existence and attributes of God, man's immortal destiny, and the means of acquiring the qualifications for enjoying it. The knowledge necessary to man's existence in the natural world,—whatever belongs to that which is called the light of nature,—though also

imparted continually, together with life, from God; and though, as was shewn in our first Lecture, incapable of existing, in any high perfection, separately from the light of Revelation; is, nevertheless, not that which Revelation, in the customary sense of the word, is given to afford. Revelation assumes the other as something already known, and takes its sentiments and expressions as vehicles for the conveyance of its own ideas;—there being a perfect analogy between all that belongs to man as an inhabitant of a natural world, and what belongs to or concerns him as the heir of a spiritual one; of course, between the light of nature and the light of heaven. Thus the analogical language of the Word of God, though it never uses abstract, metaphysical expressions, is not confined to the mention of the irrational and inanimate parts of nature, but embraces all that arises out of man's inclinations and feelings as an animal and naturally rational being, and as a member of civil society; because all this answers, by a decided mutual relation, to that which belongs to his spiritual affections and feelings, as an immortal and spiritually rational being, designed to become a member of angelic society. The Divine Truth then, when descending into the world of nature, clothes itself, in part, with language taken from man's ideas as a naturally rational and social being, and in part, from his ideas as

an animal being, or from the ideas of things necessary to his merely animal existence; the whole being bottomed on the images presented to his thoughts by outward and material nature. Between all these and things purely spiritual and divine, there is a constant Relation of Analogy: and the application of them, by Infinite Wisdom and Knowledge, to the expression of spiritual and divine subjects, forms the truly Divine Style of Writing, and marks the book in which it is found as a truly Divine Composition.

2. An observation of considerable importance is here necessary to be made. The argument urged with the greatest air of triumph by those who deny the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, is, that if the very words were dictated to the writers, the same phraseology and style of language would every where prevail, and we should not, in these respects, find, in the different books, so much variety. All the strength of this argument lies in the supposition, that the words and phrases themselves, if of divine inspiration, must have proceeded immediately, just as we read them, out of the mouth of God: but the view above developed shews that this could not have been the case, and yet that the human penmen had nothing to do with selecting the expressions. The very words of scripture did not,

we have seen, proceed, as we have them in natural language, from the mouth of God himself: but the emanation of Divine Truth from Him clothed itself with natural words in the natural world. Where could it thus clothe itself? Where, in the world of nature, could the Divine Speech find the words required for its natural expression? Where, but in the minds of the human agents, who, as passive instruments under the divine operations, were made the mediums of writing and delivering it to the world? The emanation of Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord, entering into and filling the minds of the writers, so as to take entire possession of all their faculties, clothed itself there with such words as it found their memories stored with: these it adapted to itself, so as to express the divine things intended with the utmost fulness; but it did not infuse new words and phrases, such as the writers had not heard before. And as similar divine things may be expressed in a variety of ways, therefore the Holy Spirit, or emanation of Divine Truth, could find adequate, though varying modes of expression, in the minds of all the different instruments it employed. Besides, though the divine things which various penmen were commissioned to write, had frequently a general similarity, there cannot be any absolute sameness; and it is highly reasonable to suppose, that the

Divine Omniscience selected to compose the several books, particular individuals, whose peculiar acquirements and style of language were precisely those, which were best adapted to give the proper expression to the peculiar divine subjects which they were to be the organs of revealing; and there surely can be no doubt, that these always were persons who from their youth had been especially prepared by the Divine Providence, and directed to such pursuits and acquirements as were best calculated to adapt them for the holy office to which it was intended to call them. Although then every separate penman had, and must have had, according to the view here offered, his own peculiarity of style, this does not prevent his writings from being divinely inspired, even as to the very words; since the Holy Spirit assumed the words in his mind, and thence dictated them to his pen. But whilst each writer had his peculiar style, the truly Divine Style is common to them all. This consists, we have seen, in conveying spiritual ideas by natural images, with undeviating regularity, such as can only be adhered-to by that Omniscience to which the analogies that unite them are perfectly known: and this is done by all the writers of the Divine Word, though living in very distant ages,—though they had no means of settling the plan in concert,—and though many of them, certainly, did not understand

the writings of each other, or even their own. The Divine Spirit which possessed them,—and which possessed them just while they spoke or wrote, and no longer,—was every thing, and they, respectively, were nothing.

3. Another remark of moment, here, also, demands insertion. It is customary with biblical critics, to consider inspiration as something inseparably attached to the persons inspired, so that whatever they might write, from the time of their receiving the endowment to their life's end, would be an inspired composition: and some even appear to consider the exercise of the gift as left entirely to the discretion of the party possessing it. That there is such a species of inspiration as this, we readily admit; and also, that it was possessed by the writers of some of the books contained in the collection called the Bible,—perhaps by them all: but without an inspiration very different from this, imparted either in addition to it or quite independently of it, no composition that can be called, in a strict and proper sense, “the Word of God,” could ever have been written. This, we have seen, must be given by a *plenary* divine inspiration; and such an inspiration, it is evident, instead of being a constant attendant on any one, could last no longer than while he was delivering the message, or was writing the book,

for which it was afforded. It might return to the same person again, as it commonly did to the old prophets, or it might not: and whatever they might say or write during the intervals, could only partake of that inferior inspiration capable of being attached to a person; and not necessarily of this. We have seen that this inferior inspiration is the only one now generally acknowledged to belong to any of the books contained in the Bible: we admit that some of these books may be composed from this kind of inspiration, and thence have no sense beside that of the letter: but we contend that the far greater quantity, both in bulk and number are certainly written by the higher inspiration, and have a spiritual sense throughout.* To construct such writings, or to impart such inspiration, the Divine Speech, or the Divine Word, which is the same thing as the Divine Truth, must have emanated, as a sphere of spiritual light, from the bosom of Deity into the circumference or lowest base of creation, which is the world of nature, and, filling the prepared minds of the human penmen, must there have clothed itself with natural ideas, or with images taken from the natural world, before it could be presented, in natural language, to mankind at large.

This, it is presumed, must at least be allowed

* See Appendix, No. II.

to be a probable and a philosophical view of the nature of divine inspiration: it will also, I am satisfied, be found to explain, better than any other theory, the phænomena with which plenary inspiration must necessarily be attended: and I trust that whoever candidly and deeply examines the subject, will find, that this is absolutely the only way in which a revelation of Divine Truth—or a plenary inspired composition,—can be given, in natural language, from God to man.

III. It will now be readily seen, that if the order above described must necessarily govern every real communication, in the shape of a written revelation, from God to man; if the Divine Truth must thus clothe itself with ideas and images taken from the world of nature, by the instrumentality of human minds, before it could be brought into a natural form, and be presented to the inhabitants of a natural world; and if the Divine Style of writing must thus follow the Law of that Analogy which indissolubly connects natural objects and ideas with such as are spiritual and divine;—then the spiritual and divine wisdom which such a revelation must contain within it, could only be understood, by an application to it of this Law. And if, on an application of this Law to the books called the Holy Scriptures, it shall be

found that they exhibit a coherent series of spiritual and divine instruction, it will then follow, that the Scriptures are such a revelation of Divine Truth presented to man in natural language; that they are indeed the Divine Speech or Divine Word which has emanated from the bosom of Deity into the circumference or lowest sphere of creation.

Some short specimens of the light which results from the application of the Rule above stated to the language of Scripture were given in our last Lecture: but it is intended, in the sequel of this and in the next, to adduce a few sets of examples from each of the various kinds of composition that are found in the Holy Word,—the prophetical, the historical, and the preceptive.

IV.* Mankind in general are more inclined to accept a spiritual signification in the prophecies than in the other parts of the Divine Writings, on account of the mysterious character which they so palpably exhibit; wherefore it will be proper, in the first instance, to shew the Applicability of the Science of Analogies,

* It would be more proper to mark this, and all the Sections which follow to the end of the next Lecture, as Subdivisions under the last General Head; but to avoid the inconvenience of beginning a Lecture with a Subordinate Section, the principal of them are marked as Leading Divisions.

(for by this name, to avoid circuitous modes of expression, it may be expedient to denominate the system we have endeavoured to explain,) as a Rule for interpreting the prophetic parts of Holy Writ.

In our second Lecture, after having offered various arguments to shew, that a Composition which is rightly denominated "the Word of God," must contain, and that the Holy Scriptures profess to contain, treasures of wisdom beyond what is extant on the surface, we adduced some general testimonies from modern writers to the certainty of this fact, and we intimated that we should mention others in the sequel. We will here then notice the sentiments of Biblical Critics on what is called the Double Sense of Prophecy; as we propose to do hereafter on the typical nature of the Scripture History; and we shall find that we still have great names to countenance (if Truth requires countenance,) the views we wish to establish. In the days of man's integrity, doubtless, truth was seen, by intuition, as soon as it was heard: they then had no need to "teach every man his neighbour and every man his brother*;" they could decide at once with an infallible "Yea, yea, or Nay, nay;" and it is unquestionably true, as the Divine Instructor affirms, that "whatsoever is more than these

* Jer. xxxi. 34.

cometh of evil *," or is a consequence of that obscurity of intellect which evil has introduced. But the axioms are few indeed on which we can now thus unhesitatingly pronounce. Beyond the most common principles, we now require reasoning to assist our judgment; and where the subject is new to us, we often fear to yield even to the clearest train of induction, unless it comes recommended to us by the judgment of others. Now when any system that is presented to us is entirely new, or has not before been adopted by any whose authority we respect, it evidently cannot have this direct recommendation: but it may have such an indirect one, as is, perhaps, still stronger. For if we find that others, though they have not hit upon the same principle, have yet evidently felt the want of it;—if they have seen the necessity of admitting some general sentiment of which that proposed is only a more exact modification;—if their ideas, though evidently true in the main, are attended with some deficiency which the principle suggested supplies;—if what in them was vague, unsatisfactory, incoherent, becomes, by the proposed addition, determinate, conclusive, and compact: then have we, in their partial dissent, a stronger recommendation of the correction offered, than could have attended the fullest acquiescence. They start a problem; if

* Matt. v. 37.

the proposed theory affords precisely that which was felt to be wanting to its complete solution, then both support each other. Now this appears to me to be the true state of the case, between the Science of Analogies, as a universal Rule for the interpretation of the Scriptures, and the doctrine of eminent writers respecting the double sense of prophecy, and the typical import of the scripture history. They advance a general principle, which none can deny, without maintaining a system of interpretation, or rather of mangling, truly Procrustean: and the Science of Analogies, though not recurred to by them,—at least not in a form sufficiently extensive and definite, affords the only means of satisfactorily demonstrating their general principle.

I. As some theologians of modern times have attempted to deny any but a literal sense to the Word of God in general, they have also, to preserve consistency, been obliged to deny any more than a single meaning to the prophetic writings; although this denial cannot be maintained without charging the evangelists with gross ignorance, and with mis-application of the prophecies which they have quoted. However, the great violence which must be done to the Scriptures if this be asserted, has hitherto prevented this opinion from becoming very general: and the weight of most of our great autho-

rities, in this country at least, is decidedly in favour of the opinion, that the prophetic writings in general have a double sense. Thus Horne lays it down as a Canon of interpretation, in his *Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures*, that “the same prophecies frequently have a double meaning, and refer to different events, the one near, the other remote; the one temporal, the other spiritual, or perhaps eternal* :” and this rule he supports by very convincing quotations from Dr. Woodhouse, Bishop Horne, ~~Bishop~~ Randolph, the distinguished German critic, Rambach, and the celebrated Latin commentator on Isaiah, Professor Vitringa. As, however, in the first Lecture, I spoke of Bishop Lowth, as being one of those who have assisted to introduce degrading ideas of the inspiration of the Scriptures, I will here avail myself of his testimony in an instance, in which I think he has well employed his elegant pen in vindicating the spiritual nature of the Sacred Writings:—though this drawback adheres to his remarks; that he treats the prophetic gift as something inherent in the prophets themselves, regarding their inspiration as a permanent and personal endowment; which, we have seen above, is incompatible with the idea of plenary inspiration, such as that of the prophets must necessarily have been.

* Vol. II. Pt. II. Ch. vii. Canon 1.

In the notes to his version of Isaiah, Dr. Lowth contends, that the whole of the writings of that prophet, from the 40th chapter to the end of the book, refer, in their ulterior and more important meaning, to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the spiritual kingdom to be established by him; while he maintains, that, in their more immediate sense, they relate to the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. These are his words: "As the subject of his [Isaiah's] subsequent prophecies was to be chiefly of the consolatory kind, he opens them with giving a promise of the restoration of the kingdom [of David], and the return of the people from captivity, by the merciful interposition of God in their favour. But the views of the prophet are not confined to this event: as the restoration of the royal family, and of the tribe of Judah, which would otherwise have soon become undistinguished, and have been irrecoverably lost, was necessary, in the design and order of providence, for the fulfilling of God's promise of establishing a more glorious and an everlasting kingdom, under the Messiah, to be born of the tribe of Judah, and of the family of David; the prophet connects these two events together, and hardly ever treats of the former without throwing in some intimations of the latter; and sometimes is so fully possessed with the glories

of the future more remote kingdom, that he seems to leave the more immediate subject of his commission almost out of the question. Indeed," the Bishop adds, "this evangelical sense of the prophecy is so apparent, and stands forth in so strong a light, that some interpreters cannot see that it has any other; and will not allow the prophecy to have any relation at all to the return from the captivity of Babylon." As, however, Dr. Lowth was of opinion, that, in its primary sense, the prophecy relates to the return from Babylon, he here enters into a view of it in that reference: and he sums up his remarks on the subject thus: "These things considered, I have not the least doubt, that the return of the Jews from Babylon is the *first*, though not the *principal*, thing in the prophet's view. The Redemption from Babylon is clearly foretold; and at the same time is employed as an image to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature." He makes some other strong remarks upon the necessity of admitting the farther signification of the prophecy; and concludes with these words: "If the literal sense of this prophecy, as above explained, cannot be questioned, *much less, surely, can the spiritual*; which I think is allowed on all hands, even by Grotius himself. If both are to be admitted, here is a plain example of the Mystical Allegory, or double sense,

as it is commonly called, of prophecy; *which the sacred writers of the New Testament clearly suppose, and according to which they frequently frame their interpretations of the Old Testament.*"*

Here then the learned Bishop strongly contends for allowing, *in some instances*, the existence in prophecy of the mystical allegory or double sense. Indeed, the fact is so plain to a student of the prophets, that it almost forces itself upon the most sceptical. But I apprehend that every mind not previously aware of the state of opinion on this subject, must be somewhat surprised at the saving clause, "*in some instances*," which I have here introduced, that I might not seem to stretch the authority of the Bishop farther than he intended: and because, as observed in the second Lecture, though most modern writers on Scripture Interpretation admit the necessity of having recourse to a spiritual sense in some instances, few of them accept it in all. Will not, however, every person who comes to the question unbiassed, on finding even the most cautious critics compelled to adopt a spiritual sense *in some instances*, be ready to exclaim, "Why not allow the prophets, and the Scriptures in general, to be written according to a regular system? If there is a double sense in some places, why not in all? It surely would be a far more consistent mode

* Lowth's Isaiah, Notes on Ch. xl.

of interpretation to admit this than otherwise. You then make the Scriptures uniform throughout, and take away that uncertainty which must attend all attempts to explain them, when it is supposed that one part must be understood literally, but that another may be understood spiritually, and we are left to jump, as caprice may dictate, from the letter to the spirit and from the spirit to the letter, without knowing, with any certainty, where we are to abide by the one, or where we are to look for the other."— We shall touch again, in our next Lecture, upon the inconsistencies into which expositors fall, by following so vague and unsettled a mode of interpretation: yet by admitting a spiritual sense in any case whatever, they establish the general principle, which, when extended and rendered uniform, in the manner we propose, completely solves all the phenomena of the case: and thus their maimed and limping system bears testimony to that by which its defects are supplied. Though itself but a misshapen shadow, it proves the existence of the symmetrical reality, by an imperfect apprehension of which it was produced. On this subject we will only add, here, that if it were seen that the prophecies, and indeed the other parts of the Scriptures, every where have a literal sense, in which natural events, connected with the fate of Israel and the surrounding nations;

are referred to, but that all these natural events are themselves types and representations of things of spiritual, yea, of eternal moment; then, at any rate, we should regard the Scriptures as being every where consistent with themselves,—every where written upon one uniform system: and we should only want the knowledge of the Relation which all natural things bear to spiritual, to possess a Rule of certain interpretation.

2. Even an approach to this has been made by that great genius, Sir Isaac Newton; who, though his explanations of prophecy have not been generally accepted, yet laid down a Rule of Analogy, or Mutual Relation, between the things mentioned and the things meant, which succeeding commentators have eagerly adopted. But alas! his rule does not extend far enough; it not pointing out an analogy between natural things and spiritual things, but only between natural things of a lower order and those of a higher: however, as being an approximation to the true rule of interpretation, and thus tending, as far as it goes, to point to the true rule and confirm it, we will state his system as explained by himself. He delivers it in these words: “The figurative language of the Prophets is taken from the analogy between the world natural, and an empire or kingdom considered as

a world politic. Accordingly, the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world politic, consisting of thrones and people, or so much of it as is considered in prophecy: and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens and the things therein signify thrones and dignities, and those who enjoy them; and the earth, with the things thereon, the inferior people; and the lowest parts of the earth, called Hades or Hell, the lowest or most miserable part of them.—Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, are put for the shaking of kingdoms, so as to distract and overthrow them; the creating a new heaven and earth, and the passing of an old one, or the beginning and end of a world, for the rise and ruin of a body politic, signified thereby. The sun, for the whole species and race of kings, in the kingdoms of the world politic; the moon, for the body of the common people, considered as the king's wife; the stars, for subordinate princes and great men; or for bishops and rulers of the people of God, when the sun is Christ:—the setting of the sun, moon, and stars; darkening of the sun, turning the moon into blood, and falling of the stars, for the ceasing of a kingdom.”*

This idea is certainly very striking: accord-

* Observations on Prophecy, Pt. i. ch. 2.

ingly, it is taken up and carried on by Bishop Warburton, in these words: "The old Asiatic style, so highly figurative, seems, by what we find of its remains in the prophetic language of the Sacred Writings, to have been evidently fashioned to the mode of ancient hieroglyphics, both curiologic and tropical.—Of the second kind, which answers to the tropical hieroglyphic, is the calling empires, kings, and nobles, by the names of the heavenly luminaries, the sun, moon, and stars; their temporary disasters, or entire overthrow, by eclipses and extinctions: the destruction of the nobility, by stars falling from the firmament; hostile invasions, by thunder and tempestuous winds; and leaders of armies, conquerors, and founders of empires, by lions, bears, leopards, goats, or high trees. In a word, the prophetic style seems to be a speaking Hieroglyphic."*

Here, certainly, the existence in Scripture of a Style of Writing formed upon the principle of Mutual Relation, by putting some lower thing to stand as the type of a higher to which it is perceived to answer, is clearly recognized, and the necessity of admitting it is strongly enforced. In the theory, then, of these eminent writers, in which, as stated above, they have been generally followed by later expositors, we certainly have an approximation to the

* Div. Legation, Book iv. Sect. 4.

revival of the Science of Analogies: Dr. Warburton also explicitly affirms the opinion advocated in the latter part of our last Lecture,—that this Science, in ancient times, was extensively understood;—so extensively, according to him, as to give a peculiar character to the compositions of the countries where it was chiefly cultivated, the language of which he thence denominates “the old Asiatic Style.”

3. But, is the principle of Analogy, as broached by these authors, to form a key to the interpretation of the “speaking Hieroglyphics” of the prophetic style of writing, sufficiently definite, and sufficiently extended? Will it lead us to the knowledge of that which may properly be called, the *spiritual* sense of Scripture?—any otherwise, that is, than as pointing to the right path which will conduct us to this object;—as suggesting the principle, which, when rectified and carried on, will attain this end. They interpret, we see, one natural thing, as the sun or moon, to mean another natural thing of a different order, as the king or people; and it is evident that the sense thus obtained is but a natural sense, and not a spiritual one, after all. The general truth of the natural interpretation thus established, is, indeed, in many instances, very evident. We have seen that Dr. Lowth affirms that the return of the Jews from Babylon is treat-

ed of by Isaiah, from the fortieth chapter to the end of his prophecies, though in language, even in this application, far from admitting a literal signification: so in the thirteenth chapter, the destruction of Babylon is described in the symbolic terms which form the chief subject of the observations on the prophetic style above adduced from Sir Isaac Newton: "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine*:"—and certain it is that the Babylonian empire was entirely overthrown, and that the Jews were restored by its conqueror to their country. These events, then, were "the *first* though not the *principal* things in the prophet's view." Still it must be most certain, that accounts, though delivered prophetically and in symbolic language, of the revolutions of kingdoms, can never be things intended to occupy a place in the Word of God, any otherwise than as types of things of far greater moment. Accordingly, Bishop Lowth assures us, that "the redemption from Babylon is employed as an image, to shadow out a redemption of an infinitely higher and more important nature:" if so, it is the height of inconsistency to imagine, that any of the numerous other predictions which have natural and temporal catastrophes and de-

* Isaiah, xiii, 10.

liverances as the *first* things in view, have not also such as are spiritual and eternal as the *principal*. Could it then be proved that all the prophecies of Scripture have thus had a fulfilment in external events; and could all their mysterious language be clearly appropriated to corresponding historical circumstances; it would still be true, that the spiritual things described in the ulterior sense of the prophetic language, were typically pictured by such external events;—that a spiritual fulfilment was at the same time primarily regarded, and that of this was given, in the corresponding historical circumstances, a symbolic scenical representation. In agreement, then, with the learned authors to whom we have referred, it is to be assumed as an unquestionable fact, that the language of prophecy is composed of series of analogies and mutual relations: but, in agreement with the character and necessary design of a divinely inspired composition, the analogies and relations properly intended, are not those which may be traced between certain natural things and certain other natural things, but between natural things and spiritual.—The general spiritual objects regarded are, the Lord, the soul of man, his state hereafter, and the church, as the medium of ministering spiritual things to man.

We will here repeat the quotation on the

science of analogies, above adduced from Sir Isaac Newton, so altered as to apply to the analogy between the natural things mentioned in Scripture, and the spiritual things to which they properly answer, instead of the other natural things to which that author referred them.* “The figurative language of the prophets is taken from the analogy between the world natural and *a church or congregation of people* considered as a world *spiritual*. Accordingly the whole world natural, consisting of heaven and earth, signifies the whole world *spiritual*, consisting of *an internal and an external principle, answering to what is called, in individuals, the internal and external man*; and the things in that world signify the analogous things in this. For the heavens and the things therein signify *the internal principles, and all the heavenly graces, constituent of a church,—or, all that belongs to the internal man*; and the earth, with the things thereon, *the outward form and order, profession and practice, of the same,—or, all that belongs to the external man*: and the lowest parts of the earth, called Hades or Hell, *the external man when entirely separated from the internal, so as to be the mere abode of infernal lusts and insane follies, with the state of misery consequent thereupon hereafter;—it also sometimes means a state of temptation, because in this,*

* The alterations are printed in Italics.

man appears to be in, or in danger of, such a condition. Great earthquakes, and the shaking of heaven and earth, are put for the shaking of churches, so as to distract and overthrow them, or at least to occasion a remarkable change in their state: the new heaven and earth, and the passing of an old one, or the beginning and end of a world, for the rise and ruin of a society of men as constituting a church. The sun is put for the first of heavenly graces constituent of a true church, which is love to the Lord and our neighbour; the moon, for that true faith which is the proper consort of such love or charity; the stars, for subordinate particulars of divine knowledge,—or for eminent lights of the church, when the sun is Christ: the setting of the sun, moon, and stars,—darkening of the sun, turning the moon into blood, and falling of the stars,—for the ceasing of a church, or of a society from constituting a church, in consequence of a pure love to the Lord, faith in Him, and a knowledge of spiritual subjects, being no longer left among them, or being perverted into their opposites.”

Now though the dry statement, that such is the spiritual meaning of certain natural emblems*, may not carry the conviction of its truth to every mind; yet I think the significa-

* See the several particulars taken up, and more fully explained, in the Appendix, No. III.

tions here assigned to the great objects of "the world natural" will at once be seen to have more to recommend them, than Sir Isaac's application of them to the objects of "the world politic:" for the analogies we have suggested are founded in the very nature and constitution of things, and do not depend, as do some of his, upon the arbitrary institutions of society. His testimony, however, in favour of the principle, is highly valuable. And as many learned and intelligent writers have thus seen the necessity of resorting to analogies between different orders of existences, to obtain a key for decyphering the "speaking hieroglyphics" of divine prophecy; so, I trust, it must readily be admitted, by all who may think that our former Lecture succeeded in establishing the existence of a real Analogy beteen Natural things and Spiritual, that *this* affords the true Rule for interpreting the language of prophetic inspiration. If, also, the Scriptures are the Word of God, they must be designed to convey, not natural, but spiritual instruction: But the Scriptures, we find, consist in their letter, as is remarkably obvious in the prophets, of continued series of natural images: How then can they convey spiritual instruction, unless there be such a fixed relation between spiritual ideas and natural ones, that the latter will admit of being regularly translated into the former? Admitting these premises, the ap-

plicability of the Science of Spiritual Analogies, as a Rule for the interpretation of prophecy, and as an improvement on the natural analogies proposed by Newton and Warburton, cannot be doubted. And this will convert the material images of the letter, into a mirror resplendent with heavenly glories; as the gross substances composing the disk of the moon reflect to us the light of the sun.

V. Since then we find, altogether, so great a concurrence of circumstances, leading us to expect, first, that a real Revelation from God, in natural language, *must* contain a spiritual sense beyond that of the letter, and *must* be composed according to the law of the Analogy necessarily subsisting between spiritual things and natural; and, secondly; that the books commonly received as the Word of God, *do*, in general, contain such a spiritual sense, and *are* written according to this Law: we proceed to ascertain the fact, in regard to the prophetic writings in particular, by trying, in two or three instances, what sort of sense is obtained by applying the Science of Analogies to their interpretation. We will select an example from each of the three prophetic authorities of the Divine Word;—the Prophets of the Old Testament, the Lord Jesus Christ when on earth, and the Apocalyptic Divine.

1. In the book of Ezekiel we have this very extraordinary prophetic declaration: "And thou, son of man, thus saith the Lord God: Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings, of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus shall ye be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men and with all men of war, saith the Lord God."*

These words form part of a prophecy, occupying the whole of two chapters, against Gog and Magog, who are described as about to invade the land of Israel, there to meet with total destruction: and I have selected them as our first example of the application of the Science of Analogies to the interpretation of the language of prophecy, because they form one of the passages in the prophetic writings that appear most deeply wrapped in mystery, and of which the literal sense is involved in the greatest

* Ezek. xxxix. 17 to 20.

obscurity. The mere sense of the words, is, indeed, sufficiently obvious; but what the events are, in the history of the Jews and other nations, to which the prophecy may be supposed to point; or, in the language of Bishop Lowth, what was “the *first* thing in the prophet’s view” when he delivered it; has never been satisfactorily shewn. In such passages as this, then, the certainty that the Divine Word must contain a spiritual sense, and the need of a key for the decyphering of it, are more peculiarly evident. And as the existence of such passages is calculated to throw much light upon the nature of divine prophecy in general, some remarks upon them may not be out of place.

(1.) Although it appears that prophecy sometimes assumes the form of anticipated history, and receives its first fulfilment in events affecting the fates of different nations, yet in some instances it will be found no otherwise to partake of the nature of anticipated history, than as parable approaches to that of past history; that is, it is similar in form, but is to be understood as pure allegory, in which, though the ideas conveyed by the letter are perfectly distinct, they do not announce any corresponding natural events, but are to be spiritually understood altogether. Another very remarkable instance of this kind of prophecy, in which the spiritual sense alone is intended for fulfilment, occurs in Isaiah, who

opens his sixty-third chapter with a sublime dialogue between the prophet and a glorious Personage who is presented to the rapt eye of the seer; "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." "Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?" "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled on my garments, and I will stain all my raiment: for the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation to me, and my fury it upheld me,"* &c. The impossibility of applying this prediction to any historical events, must be evident to all whose minds are not pre-occupied with a system: but I will here deliver my sentiments in the words of Bishop Lowth. Speaking of this passage, he observes, "It is by many learned interpreters supposed, that Judas Maccabæus and his victories make the subject of it [the above passage]. What claim Judas can have to so

* Ver. 1 to 5.

great an honour, will, I think, be very difficult to make out; or how the attributes of the great Person introduced can possibly suit him. Could Judas call himself the Announcer of Righteousness, mighty to save? Could he talk of the day of vengeance being in his heart, and the year of his redeemed being come? or that his own arm wrought salvation for him? Besides, what were the exploits of Judas in regard to the Idumæans? he overcame them in battle, and slew twenty thousand of them. And John Hyrcanus, his brother Simon's son and successor, who is called in to help out the accomplishment of the prophecy, gave them another defeat some time afterward, and compelled them by force to become proselytes to the Jewish religion.—Are these events adequate to the prophet's lofty prediction?" The weakness of such a supposition is further exposed by our learned author: and then he adds, "I conclude, therefore, that this prophecy has not the least relation to Judas Maccabæus. It may be asked, To whom, and to what event, does it relate? I can only answer, that *I know of no event in history to which, from its importance and circumstances, it can be applied*: unless, perhaps, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish Polity: which in the gospel is called the coming of Christ*, and the days of vengeance. But though this pro-

* But it is not called a coming from *Edom* and *Bozrah*.

phesy must have its accomplishment, there is no necessity for supposing that it has been already accomplished. There are prophecies, which intimate a great slaughter of the enemies of God and his people, which remain to be fulfilled: these, in Ezekiel, ch. xxxviii. and in the Revelation of St. John, ch. xx., are called Gog and Magog. This prophecy of Isaiah may possibly refer to the same or the like event. We need not be at a loss to determine the Person who is here introduced as stained with treading the wine-press, if we consider how St. John, in the Revelation, has applied this image of the prophet. Rev. xix. 13, 15, 16."†

Dr. Lowth here explicitly gives his opinion, that neither Ezekiel's prophecy of Gog and Magog, nor Isaiah's vision of the Lord's coming from Edom, have yet received any outward accomplishment: but he evidently is at a loss to reconcile this conveniently with his system, which led him to suppose, that all the predictions of Scripture must have such an accomplishment; wherefore he suggests, that though this must be the fact, it may be postponed *sine die*. It is evident, however, that if no historical events answering to these two prophetic declarations occurred previously to the gospel era, nor even up to the present times; so great is the change which has taken place in the situation of the

† Lowth's Isaiah, Notes on ch. lxiii.

world and its nations, that no such events can take place hereafter. There are no longer a country of Edom, and its metropolis, Bozrah, from whence an Announcer of Righteousness and Redeemer of his people can come: and though it may be true that the Gog and Magog of the Scriptures, in their literal sense, are the ancient Scythians; yet, should we recognise these again in the modern Tartars; or, with one of the multitude of expositors who applied the dark prophecies of Scripture to the events of the last great war, could we even discover the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel and John in the Autocrat of Russia and his subjects; it would be idle to expect that these will at any period be gathered together in the land of Israel, to be there whelmed in utter destruction; since the land of Israel can never again be put in the situation which the prophecy supposes,—inhabited by Jews returned from the captivity in Babylon. It really then is impossible that these prophecies should ever obtain an external fulfilment: they must have a spiritual one, or none.

Now the embarrassment which such passages occasion to those who hold the common sentiments respecting the design of the prophetic writings, arises hence: that although, with Dr. Lowth, expositors affirm certain outward events to be “the *first*, but not the *principal*, things in

the prophet's view," they at the same time make this subordinate accomplishment more indispensable than the other: for while they look *every where* for an outward reference of prophecy, they only allow it to have a spiritual sense *in some instances*,—in those places, where it is too plain to be overlooked. But if the converse of this idea be the true one; if "the *principal* thing in the prophet's view," (or rather, in the view of the Inspirer of the prophets,) is *the principal thing indeed*; if to impart instruction on spiritual subjects is, in fact, the *only* thing regarded by the Divine Mind in giving a revelation; and if this is equally imparted, by the language of prophecy, when it speaks, in the letter, of natural events, whether such events were ever acted, or intended to be acted, on the outward theatre of the world, or not:—then we have a view of the nature of divine prophecy which can occasion no embarrassment, and we shall not be compelled to torture the facts, to make them agree with the hypothesis.

Although, therefore, as admitted above, the Scriptures have every where a literal sense, in which natural events, connected with the fate of Israel and the surrounding nations, are referred to; it is by no means essential to the truth of prophecy, that the natural events spoken of should actually be performed. In general, it may be so: if any man can prove it to be so

always, we can have no objection ; since, wherever an outward fulfilment takes place, the actual occurrences become, themselves, types of the same spiritual things as are principally referred to in the words of the prophecy. But if the divine origin of prophecy can still be maintained, even where no outward accomplishment of it can be satisfactorily shewn, the authority of Revelation is certainly made more secure. And it is well known, that though many of the predictions of Scripture have had a clear outward fulfilment in some of their leading points, yet this can seldom be distinctly traced through the subordinate particulars : which throws over them so much obscurity, that the Infidel finds a pretence for rejecting the application altogether. Such rejection is certainly unjust. Many Scripture prophecies have had so plain an outward fulfilment in their leading points, that, while these alone are regarded, there is no room for dispute : the conclusion then should be, that the particulars which cannot so well be applied to outward events, are at the same time thrown in, not to invalidate the former, but to lead to the inference, that spiritual things, of far higher moment, are referred to by the whole. For the same purpose, important prophecies, like that before us, occasionally occur, to which, unless we allow them a spiritual sense, we cannot assign any consistent sense at all.

Thus, the whole is arranged with admirable wisdom. Many predictions are given, which have had, in their main points, so striking an outward accomplishment, as is calculated to awaken the attention even of those who will believe nothing which they cannot verify by their outward senses; and upon a closer inspection other parts will be found, calculated to raise the mind to more elevated contemplations, and to satisfy the understanding, that Divine Prophecy has higher objects than to announce the fate of nations, or even than, by such marks of Omniscience, to evince the divine origin of Revelation.

(2.) That the prophecy of Ezekiel before us, of the invasion of the Land of Israel by Gog and his consequent destruction, has no connexion with the affairs of the Israelites or any other nations in particular, thus was not intended to have any outward accomplishment, is evident from the parallel passage in the Revelation, referred to in the extract above given from Bishop Lowth. In Ezekiel, the irruption of Gog is described as taking place, when the people of Israel, having returned from captivity, are enjoying their country in peace;—"It is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them*;"—"Therefore, son of man, prophesy, and say unto Gog, Thus

* Ezek. xxxviii. 8.

saith the Lord God; In that day, when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company and a mighty army; and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land* ;” &c. Very similar are the circumstances referred to in the parallel passage of the Revelation, though they are there described under very different images. An interval of security is promised, and represented as a period in which the martyrs “lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years†;” after which the desperate enemy is to invade ~~Judah~~^{αα} and besiege Jerusalem: “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters [corners] of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth [the land of Israel], and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire‡ came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.”§ Now it is perfectly evident, that the latter of these two predictions is not given as

* Ver. 14, 15, 16. † Rev. xx. 4. ‡ Compare Ezek. xxxviii. 22. and xxxix. 6. § Rev. xx. 7, 8, 9.

detailing occurrences which were to take place according to the letter. Since the church of the Lord, instead of being confined, as under the Jewish dispensation, to the territory of Palestine, is spread over a great portion of the globe, it is impossible for its members to be surrounded by hordes of barbarians collected from "the four corners," or remotest extremities, of the earth, and to be shut up in any "beloved city," in the land of Judea or any where else. The prophecy, doubtless, *must* be fulfilled; but only in its spiritual sense *can* it be fulfilled: of course, the spiritual sense only is that which is intended. And what other conclusion can be drawn respecting the parallel prophecy of Ezekiel, the main circumstances of which are similar, though more particulars are detailed? No outward fulfilment of it took place, between the period in which it was delivered by Ezekiel and that in which the Revelation was given to John; and after this time, no other fulfilment of it was practicable than such as was alone applicable, to the parallel prediction of the New-Testament prophet: if, then, the one was never intended to have any but a spiritual fulfilment, so, neither, was the other. (I deem it needless to notice the attempts that have been made to find a solution of Ezekiel's prediction in the troubles which the Jews experienced from the Macedonian kings of Syria. Gog and Magog, who

inhabited, according to the Revelation, “the four corners” of the earth, and, according to Ezekiel, “the sides of the north*,” both which phrases are evidently designed to express extreme remoteness, cannot possibly be names for Syria, the immediate neighbour of Judæa: nor was any attack upon Judæa by the Antiochi attended with the total destruction of the invading nation. All judicious critics, therefore, with Dr. Lowth, reject such an application of the prophecy, as totally unworthy of its majesty and importance.)

(3.) If then in this prophecy, we are constrained to look for a spiritual interpretation, let us see how this will be developed by the Science of Analogies. The Israelites, as being anciently the people who alone possessed a knowledge of the true God, were, as was shewn in our second Lecture by the testimony of the Apostle Paul, types of the true Church of the Lord, and of its true members, under every dispensation; and the land they inhabited evidently had a similar representation: the land itself represented the church with all that properly belongs to it, in regard especially to the graces by the presence of which the church exists, either in individuals or societies; and its metropolis, Jerusalem, also represented the church, but as to the more interior and immediate abode of it in

* Ch. xxxix. 2. *marginal translation.*

the human mind; whilst the temple with its worship were expressive of the Lord's presence, and communion with him, in the inmost of all. Now if the land of Judæa thus symbolizes the true Church and all the graces which properly constitute it, Analogy must lead us to conclude, that the countries around it represent the exterior relations of the church,—which are such general principles in the mind of man as have a greater or less degree of affinity with those which are constituent of the church,—according as they are nearer to the land of Israel or farther off from it: and those which were most remote of all, must be symbolic of such principles in regard to religion as are most gross and external,—most distant from every thing that belongs to a true internal church. But the application of Analogy to the formation of a system of Spiritual Geography, demands a more exact consideration.

(4.) The mind of man evidently consists of a great number of affectuous and intellectual faculties and tendencies, very distinct from each other. The love of God and our neighbour, for instance, are very different principles from the love of worldly power and worldly possessions; and those intellectual exercises which are conversant with divine and heavenly subjects, no less vary from those which are confined to matters of a corporeal and earthly nature: and it is evi-

dently congenial to our natural feelings and perceptions, to assign to the former of each of these classes of sentiments, a higher and more interior seat in the mind, than to the latter; we acknowledge, in common discourse, the one to be sublime and exalted feelings and contemplations, the other to be such as are low and groveling. Nor will our conceptions on this subject be much altered, whatever may be the theoretical views which we are inclined to entertain of the nature of the mind. If, with one class of metaphysicians, we believe the mind to be one simple principle, the whole of which is concerned in every one of its exercises, though under a distinct modification in each; then we must consider the whole mind, when under the influence of heavenly love and wisdom, to be in a sublime and exalted state, or to be under a modification of that description: or if, with others, we conceive the mind, like the body, to consist of a great variety of organs, each having its proper function; then we must consider those which are the seats of disinterested benevolence and of the perceptions of divine and heavenly subjects, to be placed in an elevated and interior region, and those which are appropriated to grosser tendencies and mean conceptions, to be respectively low and external. Our observations here proceed upon the supposition, that the latter view of the nature of the mind is the

true one; but we have mentioned the other to shew, that, should the opinion that the mind is one simple principle be correct, the views we assume of the higher and lower nature of its various emotions and contemplations would still be applicable to it, and would only require a little alteration in the mode of stating them. However, let us suppose the mind itself to be composed of distinct organs, appropriated to distinct affections and distinct classes of thought: It is true that to immaterial principles we cannot assign any of the relations of space or place; and yet it is certain that we are so sensible of the existence of a determinate analogy between these and the immaterial mind and its properties, as continually to apply to the latter, terms which properly denote the relations of place; thus we talk of a *great* mind and a *little* mind, a *lofty* mind and a *low* mind; of *elevated* desires and of *grovelling* ones, of *high* thoughts and of *creeping* ones; of an *internal* and *deep* conception of things, or of an *external* and *superficial* one; we speak also of *provinces* of mind, and *realms* of thought: and use a multitude of other like phrases.

Suppose then that we possessed a knowledge of the general principles, both voluntary and intellectual, of which the mind consists, and were desirous to present them more distinctly to our view, by describing them by some of



the ideas borrowed from the analogy, which we intuitively perceive to subsist, between the relations of mind and the relations of place: suppose, as mathematicians resort to diagrams to assist their conceptions of the relations of quantity, we even wished to assist our conceptions of the mind by some sensible delineation, and were to conceive the thought of mapping out the various provinces of intellect and affection which we perceive to exist in it:—how should we commence the execution of the plan, but by laying down, in the centre of our scheme, a region, to be considered as representing that part of the mind which is the seat of the most exalted affections and sentiments, being those which have for their objects the topics of true religion, or those which embrace the love and vital knowledge of God? Should we not, around this central region, allot various districts, to represent those parts of the mind, whose functions consist of attachments to subordinate objects and of intellectual exercises of an inferior character? And should we not place in the circumference of our map of that “little world,” or *microcosm*, the mind of man, those faculties, both affectuous and intellectual, which, though still belonging to the mind, have the closest affinity with the body, and partake the least of any thing of a purely spiritual na-

ture,—being such as belong to the province of merely corporeal sensations, and of ideas of such things as either afford no room, or are too grossly apprehended to give occasion, for the exercise of the higher intellectual powers? Such, certainly, would be our mode of proceeding, were we to attempt to draw a map of the mind, by following out the analogy which every one perceives to exist between the relations of mind and the relations of place.

Such a map, then, is ready drawn to our hands by the Spirit of God,—to whom alone the analogies between natural and spiritual things of all kinds are fully known,—in the geography of the Scriptures. In this map, the land of Israel is considered as the central region which is the seat of all the truly spiritual affections and perceptions of the human mind (: and hence was derived the notion of the Jews, that their country constituted the middle of the earth's surface;—an opinion which was true in spiritual though not in physical geography:—and a similar transferring, by them, of ideas which are true in a spiritual sense, to a natural application in which they are false, has given rise to many of that people's absurd, superstitious opinions and practices, the origin of which would be otherwise unaccountable). So, following the law of Analogy, the countries situated around the land of

Canaan, will represent the subordinate mental powers and faculties. We will illustrate this by one or two examples.

The great neighbour of Israel—the type of the spiritual part of the mind,—on one side, was Egypt; which represents what belongs entirely to the natural man, but, specifically, the Science or Knowledge of the natural man, with the faculty for acquiring it: and the powerful state which bordered upon Israel on the other side, was Assyria; which represents the Rational Faculty, and the Reasoning Powers, in general. Now as Science and Reasoning, when separated from all regard to religion, or to true religion, and placed in opposition to it, are two of its most dangerous enemies; therefore we read so much of the troubles which these two nations brought upon the Israelites: but as, nevertheless, they are capable of being rendered extremely serviceable to true religion, and are themselves exalted by being submitted to its influence; therefore we meet with predictions of a state in which this union should be effected. Thus it is said in Isaiah, “In that day there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord*;” words which plainly indicate the complete submission to a divine influence, of the principle, power, or faculty, represented by Egypt, from

* Isaiah xix. 19.

its inmost essence—"the midst"—to its last extremity—"the border thereof." And that this shall be closely connected with the principle, power, or faculty, represented by Assyria, which shall be submitted, with it, to the divine government, is presently taught in these words: "In that day there shall be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria; and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria: and the Egyptians *shall serve* with the Assyrians."* And again, that both shall be united with the principle represented by Israel, is beautifully expressed when it is immediately added, "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the land†:" where *the third* means that which completes and adds perfection,—the number *three*, so generally considered to involve a mystery, denoting that which is complete and perfect; for which reason it is also said, that Israel shall be *a blessing in the midst of the land*; implying, that the principle represented by Israel should become a centre,—a sort of life-giving essence,—to the other two; as is the case with the principle of true religion, when the mind is in its proper order throughout. This also is one of the predictions of Scripture, of which no outward fulfilment, at all adequate to the terms of it, can be pointed out; for to refer it, as is done

* Ver. 23.

† Ver. 24.

by Bishop Newton and others, to the propagation of Judaism in Egypt and Assyria, in consequence of the dispersion and captivities of the Jews in those countries, is merely to trifle with words so august and solemn. And if this prophecy has received no outward fulfilment hitherto, the altered state of the world certainly renders it impossible that it should receive such an accomplishment hereafter. But we shall have a view which well harmonizes with the expressions, and rises out of them by a just analogy, if we understand them spiritually, as pointing to the union, in a glorious state of the church, of the three great orders or degrees of the intellectual powers. In this view, Egypt is the lowest of these powers,—the Science or Knowledge of the natural man,—or such as chiefly arises from the exercise of the faculty which the metaphysicians call simple perception :—Assyria is a higher intellectual power,—that which reflects and reasons,—or the Intelligence which results from the exercise of the faculties of analysis and comparison :—whilst Israel is the supreme intellectual power of all,—the Wisdom which connects all with God, and contemplates, with interior discernment, spiritual and divine subjects, which it applies, causing the lower attainments also to be applied, to the glory of God and the benefit of mankind. And if we consider these three orders of intellectual powers to have

three distinct *provinces* of the mind appropriated to them as their seats, we shall see why they are represented by the three *countries* of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel;—such representation following accurately the Law of that Analogy, which, we have before seen, we all intuitively recognise, between the relations of mind and the relations of place.

To *prove* that such is the signification in the Scriptures of these three countries, would require a consideration of the numerous occasions on which they are mentioned: it would then appear with clearness from the significant attributes and actions ascribed to them respectively: But this would detain us too long, and is also not necessary for our present object, which is merely to shew, that certain faculties or provinces of the mind are meant by the countries mentioned in the Holy Word, without determining that which is specifically intended by each: and this, I trust, must be pretty evident, in regard to the countries of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel, whether the explanations which have been attempted be altogether accepted or not. But I think that not much doubt will remain, even here, with any inquirer, who will take the pains to make an extensive examination of the passages where they are mentioned. Let him understand by Egypt, when spoken of unfavourably, those fallacies and appearances, with which

Science, when not cultivated from pure motives, opposes the doctrines of true religion; (but under the name of Science is here to be understood, not only the knowledge of natural things, but an acquaintance also with the literal sense of the Word of God, from which, when separated from all connexion with its spirit, confirmations, as is well known, may and have been drawn, in favour of the most erroneous religious sentiments, and in opposition to the most evident truths:) so, by Egypt, when not unfavourably mentioned, are to be understood the views of true Science,—natural truths in general, both those drawn from the appearances of nature and those from the literal sense of the Word:—Let our inquirer, also, understand by Assyria, when spoken of with censure, that intellectual principle which appears like intelligence, but is mere adroitness in reasoning, or dexterity in managing a debate, independently of the truth or falshood of the premises assumed;—or, when it is mentioned with approbation, that intelligence which results from the right exercise of the rational faculty:—And let him regard both the principle of Science and the Rational principle, as occupying distinct provinces of the mind, and consider these provinces to be what are specifically meant by the realms of Egypt and Assyria. Whoever does this, will find a coherent and beautiful spiritual sense

arise, in every instance where those countries are mentioned; provided he has some idea of the spiritual reference of the other natural images with which they are accompanied, which will always be found exactly to harmonize with this signification of the countries.*

* I am not sufficiently acquainted with the science, as it is called, of Phrenology, to form any decided opinion of the solidity of its pretensions: Even should its general principles be true, I should apprehend that many mistakes must for a long time be expected to accompany the attempts to follow them out into their various ramifications: But I cannot dismiss the subject before us without observing, that I was lately much struck, on looking into the transactions of the Phrenological Society of Edinburgh, with the extraordinary coincidence of their description of the organs which they consider to be seated in the fore part of the brain, with the idea which I had formed of the signification, in Scripture, of the countries of Egypt, Assyria, and Israel. Their account of the functions of the organ which they denominate "Individuality," and of their "Knowing Faculties" in general, is exactly that which appears to belong to the "land of Egypt," considered as the symbol of a certain province of the mind: their organs of "Comparison" and "Causality," or their "Reflecting Faculties" in general, answer, with equal accuracy, to the Scriptural "land of Assyria;" and their "Veneration" and "Benevolence" as certainly belong to the "land of Israel." I am therefore thorough'y convinced, that, in their accounts of these "organs," they exhibit a correct conception of certain decided faculties or provinces of the mind, whether the parts of the brain in which they suppose these to be located during their connexion with the body, be accurately determined, or capable of being determined, or not. Should, then, future observations confirm

(5.) I have dwelt at some length on this part of our subject, because, perhaps, nothing connected with the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures appears more questionable at first, than the assertion, that all the countries mentioned in the Word of God, designate certain faculties or principles in the human mind; when yet, on the idea being examined, it must be seen, that the analogy which it supposes,—that between the relations of mind and the relations of place,—is one of those, of which we have the clearest intuitive perception, and from which we draw several phrases in common discourse. All the difficulties then that can afterwards arise, in determining what mental faculties are represented by the various countries spoken of in the Scriptures, will be owing to our imperfect knowledge of what the faculties of the mind really are, and what are their distinguishing characteristics, and relative dignity. But these difficulties can only attach to the countries intermediate in their situation between Judæa and their discoveries in the main, only correcting what may at present be erroneous; instead of apprehending from the establishment of their science consequences injurious to the belief of the Scriptures, we may hope to find in it additional means of confirming their plenary inspiration. Assuredly, a strong confirmation of this is afforded, when the same truths are brought to light by Science, as had long before been assumed by Revelation, as the basis of its instructions.

the most remote realms that are mentioned: of these latter, the signification will be obvious. These, then, we have already seen, are those which are called, in the prophecy of Ezekiel before us, and in the corresponding prediction of the Revelation, the land of Gog and Magog, — a region situated in “the corners of the earth,” in “the sides of the north:”—which are emphatic descriptions of extreme remoteness. Apply this description to the mind; and what province of it can be intended, but that which is the most external, and which borders most closely upon the corporeal sensations,—that, whose feelings are the most gross, and whose perceptions the most obscure?—When we say *obscure*, we mean, compared with those which partake of the light of true wisdom: To itself they may appear very lucid: as, doubtless, appears the obscurity of night to the owl, whose organs of vision cannot bear the brightness of day.

Now suppose the degree of intellect hence resulting to exercise itself upon the subject of religion, and, with a general acknowledgment of its reality, to undertake the definition of its nature: What sort of a theological system would be the result? Would it not, while it accepted the most general truths of religion, understand them in the most superficial manner, and, while it adhered to the form, neglect the substance,—

while it was occupied about the body, disregard the soul? We will take two or three examples.

It is a most general truth of religion, that God is to be worshipped: would not Gog, (allow, if you please, this term to stand as the expression, like an algebraic sign, of the principle which we have defined; and let us designate by this name the man whose leading character is formed by that principle:—would not Gog) reduce his worship to mere external observances, regardless of the inward feelings which alone render external worship acceptable to the Divine Nature? It is, again, a still more general truth of religion, that there is a God: would not Gog regard his Deity as a being of like passions with himself; good humoured when pleased, revengeful when offended; a compound of good and bad passions, and capricious in the indulgence of both? If Gog were a Jew, and expected the coming of a Messiah, as the Redeemer of Israel; would he not look for a mighty conqueror, who should deliver the nation from a foreign yoke, and restore in greater splendour than ever the kingdom of David; without admitting the thought of a spiritual redemption by him, or being willing to believe that his kingdom is not of this world? If Gog were a Christian, and believed that the Messiah had come to institute a new religion; would he not be disposed to entertain the idea, that the Saviour

is nothing more than a man, not differing from other men in nature, though appointed to a high office by God? Whether Jew or Christian, would he not, at the idea of a miraculous conception, exclaim, with Mary, before she was fully instructed by the angel, "How shall this be?"*—without crediting the statement of the fact, as she did, and so acquiring an interest in the divinely inspired declaration, "Blessed is she that believed?"† And would he not, with the Jews, on hearing the assertion from the lips of Jesus, "I and my Father are One‡," "take up stones to stone him§;" as far, at least, as that can be done by hard, contradicting speeches,—by contending that such words are not to be understood in a strict and proper sense, or in any sense which will not include in the affirmation all good men? To put a final case: If Gog were a believer in the Scriptures generally, and lived in a philosophic age; would he not reduce the scale of their inspiration to as low a standard as is consistent with any belief that they contain, in any manner, a revelation from God? Would he not regard them, chiefly, as merely human compositions, and confine the subjects of them, as far as possible, to natural occurrences? from which, also, he would gladly exclude any divine interposition, resolving even the miracles, wherever he could find a pretence, into the operation

* Luke i. 34.

† Ver. 45.

‡ John x. 30.

§ Ver. 31.

of natural causes. Thus, would he not adhere, mainly, to "the letter which killeth," and shut out altogether "the spirit which giveth life?" In short, in every thing connected with religious faith and worship, would not Gog chuse that which is low and grovelling, external and superficial, and reject that which is elevated and soaring, internal and profound? Would he not "fill his belly with the husks that the swine do eat*," and, with the swine, "trample the pearls under his feet?"† Nor would any part of this character be incompatible with great attainments in erudition: since it is well known that the finer powers of the mind are not unfrequently buried under the dust of learning; and that there is, in the efforts of literature, *the bathos* as well as *the sublime*. The poet did not go out of nature when he described his king of the dunces as

"*Sinking from thought to thought: a vast profound!*"

Such then being the character of mind represented by Gog and Magog, and such the influence which its preponderance would have upon religion, how easy is it to see that the predictions by Ezekiel and the Revelator, of invasions by them of the land of Israel, must refer to the efforts of such a principle, and of those who are in it, to degrade religion, in faith and worship, into a conformity with the above ideas! Yea,

* Luke xv. 16. † Matt. vii. 6.

is it not also intimated, from the partial and temporary success spoken of as attending the enterprise of the invaders, that, for a time, such ideas of religion would be extremely prevalent, and would be urged with a confidence by which many would be seduced? This is clearly the spiritual sense of the predictions: in this sense, then, have they ever been accomplished?

Most evidently, the prophecy of Ezekiel was accomplished among the Jews about the time of the Lord's appearance in the flesh. In the doctrine and practice of the Pharisees, we behold that complete separation of every thing that is external in religion from all that is internal, and that destruction of the latter by the former, of which Gog, when he appears in the character of an invader of Israel, is the appropriate type. The church among the Jews, was, indeed, always of an external character, consisting chiefly in outward rites of which the true import was not discerned: yet, doubtless, while that church remained unperverted, the internal things of which their rituals were types, were obscurely felt among them, though not clearly perceived: though unknown, they were not denied: but when elaborate systems of doctrines and precepts were invented, as was done by the Pharisees, the object of which was to persuade the people that they became holy by an attention to external observances alone, then was the internal

essence of religion entirely destroyed by its outward appearances, and Gog indeed “came up against Israel, as a cloud, to cover the land.”* Accordingly, we find, that the reproofs which the Lord Jesus Christ addressed to the Jews, chiefly ran upon this separation of the forms of religion from its vital principles, and upon the suffocation by the former of the latter. “He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you, hypocrites; as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.—Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition: for Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother;—but ye say, If a man shall say to his father or his mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift [consecrated to God] by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free; and ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition which ye have delivered: and many such like things ye do.”† So the awful denunciations against the scribes and Pharisees in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, all turn upon the same point,—the destruction of the internal essence of religion by substituting its externals in its place: “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour

* Ezek. xxxviii. 16.

† Mark vii. 6 to 13.

widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers:" "Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor:" "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tythes of mint, and anise, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith:" "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess."* So, all the other marks of the character which we have above defined as that of Gog, as connected with religion, were exemplified in these perverters of religion. Nor did their notion that the Scriptures were replete with mysteries, at all contradict the gross ideas of the Word of God which they who are represented by Gog would entertain. They took this general belief from those who had a traditionary knowledge of the fact: but the mysteries they pretended to find in the law, were of any but a spiritual nature: they consisted of the most idle puerilities, all calculated to flatter their own pride; such as, instead of *fulfilling the law*, in the sense which, in our second Lecture, we shewed to belong to that phrase,—that is, filling it with heavenly

* Ver. 14, 16, 23, 25.

ideas relating to the love of God and man,—emptied it of every thing of such a character, and made even the most express injunctions of its letter compatible with habits the most selfish and profane.

If then Gog, or Gog and Magog, represent a character and state of mind of the most gross and external description; if the invasion by them of the land of Israel typifies the introduction of persuasions originating in such a state of mind into every thing connected with religion, till the church is entirely overrun, and all its doctrines, with all its worship, acquire an external character, entirely separated from, and in opposition to, the internal qualities without which they are nothing; and if the Lord Jesus Christ declares that such was the state of the church among the Jews when he was on earth:—then had the prophecy of Ezekiel upon the subject at that time received its fulfilment. But the instruction which it conveys is not thereby rendered obsolete, as would be the case if it related to merely natural events, and had been fulfilled by an invasion of hostile armies: but it will for ever continue to teach mankind, what is the proper character of the gross conceptions of the natural man, when not rectified by the influence of the spiritual; and what are the deplorable consequences, when man yields to the suggestions of the most external part of his

mental constitution alone, and draws thence his conclusions on the subject of religion. Of this, in the case of individuals, there is danger at all times. We all must be sensible, that there is in our constitution the principle of which Gog and Magog are the symbols,—a principle by which we first become conscious of impressions that come from without, and which, if not submitted to the controul of an enlightened intellectual faculty, might even lead to the persuasion that nothing is real but sense and nature; it would therefore be well if we would profit by the warning which this prophecy affords, and take care how we suffer such a principle to lift itself out of its place. There is in it a tendency to usurpation. Sense is ever disposed to exalt herself above Reason, and falsely to arrogate her name: and then Religion is either banished altogether, or compelled to assume a disguise that hides her beauty, and destroys her benefits. In the last extreme, atheism is the result.

But if the prophecy by Ezekiel of the invasion of Gog and Magog received its general fulfilment in the state of the Jewish Church at the time of the Lord's appearing in the world, we see that the parallel prediction of John must refer to a different event in the spiritual history of mankind, and cannot, as Bishop Lowth supposes, mean exactly the same: which supposition degrades, besides, the Divine Word, with

the imputation of repetition and tautology. The general signification of Gog and Magog, and of their invasion of the land of the saints, must be, indeed, the same as before; but two distinct irruptions of the principle are certainly intended: if then the first of them took place in the last perversion of the Israelitish dispensation, when are we to look for the second? Are corruptions of this deplorable kind, ever to overtake the profession of Christianity? Alarming as is the thought, it seems impossible to doubt that this is pointed-to in the prediction of the Revelation. If we admit the communication to proceed from the Divine Prescience, we must expect such an event. Again will men look at religion under the influence of the most external province of the mind: again will they separate the conclusions which this suggests, from the more enlightened sentiments which would be dictated by the internal man: and the consequence again will be, that, while some will glory in the avowal of the most audacious infidelity, extended even to the self-worship of atheism, a greater number, not venturing to deny religion altogether, will lower down its duties and its doctrines to an agreement with the suggestions of the lowest part of their nature; that, deeming the vividness with which they conceive their sentiments to be a certain mark of their truth, (though it is only a consequence of the proximity of the province of

the mind in which such persons think, to the senses of the body,) and shutting out the admission of any light from above, even till they doubt the reality of every thing of a spiritual nature, they will rush eagerly to battle against those who affirm that reality, strong in the conceit that their arguments are invincible. But when will this deplorable visitation take place? Have any symptoms of its commencement yet appeared? These are questions of deep concernment to every christian; but to attempt their solution would carry us too far. The consideration of them must be left to those who feel sufficiently interested in the subject to pursue it farther: and the way to decide them will be, to reflect maturely on the nature of the principle of which Gog and Magog are types, and of its natural influence, when made the arbiter of religious sentiment; and then to examine what marks of this influence are discernible in the opinions and controversies which make a noise in the Christian world, and which divide the minds of men on the subject of religion.

(6.) We have pursued to some extent the ideas suggested by the prophecies respecting Gog and Magog, because, as observed above respecting all such prophecies as do not admit of an outward accomplishment, they are so well adapted to lead to a just conception of the nature of the Prophetic Word in general; and because

these predictions, in particular, eminently tend to illustrate that great portion of the Prophetic Word, which seems to treat, in its letter, of particular countries and nations. If some of the predictions of this kind are such as never could have been intended to receive a literal fulfilment; it is evident that they must contain a spiritual sense, and that, when they were given, a spiritual fulfilment was the only one contemplated by their Divine Author: and if the Scriptures are written upon a uniform and orderly plan,—as they must be, if they are inspired by a God of order,—then must a spiritual fulfilment of divine prophecy have been that which was chiefly intended, in every part of it; although some parts of it were such as admitted, and received, a general outward accomplishment likewise. If there are any parts of it, which, though they all contain a double sense, were not designed to have a double fulfilment;—in which sense, be it asked, is their fulfilment naturally to be looked for,—in that which is primary, or in that which is secondary? If the spiritual accomplishment, “though not the *first*, [as to time], was the *principal*, thing in the *prophet’s* view;” and yet the prediction was of such a nature, that, whatever the *prophet* might have understood by it, it only admitted of a fulfilment in one sense;—which must have been the fulfilment regarded by the *Inspirer of the prophet*?

The question admits of but one answer. And it is equally evident, that if the prophecies have a spiritual sense *any where*, and this is the *principal* sense, they must have it *every where*. But the literal sense being thus a mere vehicle for the conveyance of the spiritual, may either be outwardly fulfilled or not, as the plans of Providence may render expedient. To communicate the spiritual sense, the literal sense is indispensable: but to the spiritual fulfilment, the literal fulfilment is entirely unnecessary. When, also, an outward accomplishment of prophecy, affecting the affairs of nations, takes place, it is never, as was noticed above, so exact, as not to leave room for much variety of opinion regarding the application of many particulars of the prediction; thus pointing to a spiritual fulfilment, as that to which alone the terms of the prophecy can be unobjectionably applied.

But these prophecies respecting Gog and Magog, are eminently calculated to illustrate the nature of that great portion of the Prophetic Word, which seems to treat, in its letter, of particular countries and nations. Gog and Magog, according to the literal idea, evidently denote very remote countries and nations: the prophecies relating to them are such as never have been outwardly accomplished, and never can be: and if so, then a spiritual fulfilment must alone have been intended. But how are we to disco-

ver the nature of this spiritual fulfilment? All ideas respecting it must be merely conjectural and arbitrary, unless we have a certain Rule to guide our conclusions: and what principle in the nature of things can be discovered, capable of affording such a Rule, but the Analogy immutably established between natural things and spiritual, whereby they mutually answer to each other? An obvious analogy, we have seen, exists, between the relations of Mind and the relations of Place: each has its provinces: and it is not at all difficult to conceive, how the one may be represented by the other. We have seen also, that whatever may be the difficulty of determining what provinces or characters of mind are implied by some of the countries and nations mentioned in the Scriptures, this does not extend to the signification of Gog and Magog. These, as the countries and nations most remote from the land of Israel, must denote the most external province and character that can belong to the human mind. This, then, may be assumed as certain. But if it is evident that a certain province or character of mind is meant by Gog and Magog, it cannot be doubted, that some certain province or character of mind is equally symbolized by every other country and nation mentioned in the sacred pages. If we admit the premises, the conclusion is unavoidable; unless we would treat the Word of

God as a chaos of confusion,—a mass of isolated discordances, in which no conclusion can be drawn from one fact to another, let the parallelism between them be ever so complete.

(7.) Now if it be true that the invasion of Israel by Gog, is a prophetic description of the state of religion among the Jews at the time of the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, it will not seem strange to infer, that the extraordinary passage quoted at the beginning of this section, in which the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field are invited to a great feast or sacrifice prepared for them by the Lord, refers to the abundant mercies consequent upon the Lord's coming in the flesh, and dispensed to all who were willing to accept them; and which were calculated to nourish, and restore to its right order, every faculty and power of the human mind. By his coming, the Lord put an end to the Israelitish dispensation, which at best was of a very external character, only "having a shadow of good things to come*;" and, in its stead, "brought life and immortality to light through the gospel†:" "for the law was given by Moses; but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."‡ The spiritual graces which he came to dispense, are frequently compared by him to food and drink, on account of the analogy noticed in our last Lecture between natural food and spi-

* Heb. x. 1.

† 2 Tim. i. 10.

‡ John i. 17.

ritual. When the prodigal returned repentant, his father killed for him the fatted calf.* And when the Lord proposes the parable of “a certain man who made a great supper†;” or of a dinner given by a certain king on account of the marriage of his son, and who says on the occasion, “My oxen and my fatlings are killed‡;” he evidently describes the heavenly gifts which were offered to man, for the nourishment of his soul, in consequence of his coming into the world. (It is needless to say, that the guests who were invited, and who refused to come, were the Jews, who possessed the invitations of the Lord in his Word; and that they who were brought in from the highways and hedges, without previous invitation, were the Gentiles, to whom the true God was previously unknown.) If then the Lord Jesus Christ himself, thus describes the blessings presented to man by his gospel under the appropriate emblem of a feast; how natural is the conclusion, that the same blessings are indicated by Ezekiel, in the stronger figures belonging to the prophetic style, when, in the conclusion of his prophecy respecting Gog, which refers to the state of the Jewish church at the time of the Lord’s advent, he speaks of a great feast prepared for the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field! Let us then briefly notice, how the particulars of this general

* Luke xv. 23.

† Ch. xiv. 16.

‡ Matt. xxii. 4.

explanation may be developed by the Science of Analogies.

We have seen in our last Lecture, that the human mind is composed, in general, of two great faculties, called the will and the understanding; and that the will is the seat of every thing belonging to love or affection, and the understanding of every thing belonging to perception and thought: so that the will may in fact be considered as a congeries of innumerable affections, and the understanding as a congeries of innumerable thoughts. Now the Holy Scriptures, being dictated by Him "who knoweth our frame*," continually regard man as composed of these two general principles, and address him in reference to them both. Thus nothing is more common in Scripture than to speak of "the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field:" the reason is, because there is an analogy between the winged part of the animal creation, and the intellectual powers of the mind; and between the part of the animal creation constituted by the *mammalia*, and the affectuous powers of the mind. That beasts in general are apt symbols of the affections, is very evident, and was in some measure shewn in our last Lecture: and birds in general, not less aptly, are types of the thoughts; as will appear to him who contemplates their peculiar properties; such

* Ps. ciii. 14.

as their capacity of soaring in the air, and the remarkable manner in which they are affected by the *light*, being rendered lively by its presence, dull by its partial absence, and going to sleep on the approach of darkness, even when the darkness comes on at an unusual time,— as when it has been caused by an eclipse not long after sunrise. When therefore the Lord says to the prophet, in the passage we are considering, “ Speak unto every feathered fowl, [or, to the fowl of every wing,] and to every beast of the field;”—it is not the fowls and beasts who are addressed, (for who could suppose that Jehovah would literally address these? less absurd would be the story of St. Anthony’s sermon to the fishes :) but it is man in general who is appealed to, considered as to the general faculties of his mental constitution,—as to all the powers of his mind which are capable of being benefited by divine gifts. As, also, there is an immense variety in the human race, every man being distinguished from others, not less by his peculiar mode of thinking and feeling than by the peculiar lineaments of his countenance; and as, in some, the understanding is more active than the affections, and, in others, the affections are more active than the intellect: therefore those whose peculiar character belongs to the former description, under any possible modification of it, are addressed as the *birds of every wing*, and

those whose character belongs to the latter description, with the same variety, are included in the address to *every beast of the field*.

Now as the human mind in the aggregate consists of two general faculties, which are the will and the understanding; so are there two general divine gifts by which these are to be nourished; which are, goodness and truth. These then are what are meant, when, on the birds and beasts being commanded to assemble themselves together to a great sacrifice which should be sacrificed for them by the Lord, it is said, "that ye may eat flesh and drink blood"; there being, as noticed in our last Lecture, an exact analogy between flesh and blood, as the chief constituents of animal bodies, and goodness and truth, or love and wisdom, these being, in their origin, the prime essentials of the Divine Nature. But as the mind of man, both as to will and intellect, consists of faculties of various orders and degrees; so also are there various orders and degrees of the goodness and truth imparted for their nourishment; and nothing can be conceived, which becomes an object of feeling and perception, which does not refer, in some way, to the general principle of goodness, or to the general principle of truth. The various orders and degrees, then, of goodness and truth, which would be bestowed in abundance, under the dispensation of the gospel, for the spiritual nou-

ishment of man, and for his edification in all heavenly graces, are represented by the various kinds of beings whose flesh and blood should be presented for food, as related in the following verses. "Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan." The mighty, here, are they who prevail in spiritual combats, which are such as are carried on internally against the corruptions of the heart and mind; or, more abstractedly, they are those principles of heavenly confidence which give power in those combats; and to eat the flesh of the mighty, is to enjoy the good which is procured by victory in such conflicts. The princes of the earth are the leading and primary truths of the church, on which the subordinate ones depend; and to drink their blood is to have these fixed in the mind. Rams and lambs are emblems of such good affections as belong to the internal man, relating, chiefly, to love to God and our neighbour; and goats and bullocks are corresponding principles in the external man: the bullocks are said to be fatlings of Bashan, to express the excellence of the animals, and, by analogy, of the principle which they represent. To imply the profusion with which these blessings should be imparted, it is added, "And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till

ye be drunken, of my sacrifice, which I have sacrificed for you :” fat is here mentioned instead of flesh, as being a symbol of goodness still more genuine and excellent. The conclusion of the promise is the most extraordinary part of all: “ Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God.” If there be any, who are so disposed to adhere to the literal sense of the prophecy, as to conclude that “ Gog and all his multitude” really mean an immense invading army, and to infer that the convocation of the fowls and beasts to “ eat flesh and drink blood,” is a figurative mode of describing the excess of the slaughter, by adverting to the numbers of birds and beasts which would be drawn together by the scent of the carcasses ; and who can bring themselves to think it not unworthy of “ the Lord Jehovah” to make such an address to mere animals of prey ; these words must destroy the illusion : for though some animals of prey would eagerly devour dead horses, they would not devour the chariots which they drew ; and yet, according to the terms of the prediction, the chariots, also, are to form part of the feast. Thus it is, that, throughout the Scriptures, expressions are frequently thrown in, which cannot at all be applied to the subjects which appear to be treated of in the letter ; as if Divine Wisdom introduced them

on purpose to prevent the attention from resting in the letter, and to awaken it to the spirit which dwells within. All the expressions used in Scripture relating to ways and to journeys, and to the methods by which man assists his progress in his journeys, refer to the exercise of the thoughts. In meditation, every one is conscious of something passing in his mind, analogous to locomotion. On account of the use of the horse in assisting man in his progress from place to place, he was regarded in ancient times, as noticed in our last Lecture, as a symbol of man's understanding, or apprehension, of truth, or of what he regards as truth; and to ride on horseback, in the symbolic style of writing, was understood to mean, to acquire intelligence, or to communicate instruction, by the exercise of the faculty. Nearly related in signification to the horse, *on* which a man rides, must be a chariot, drawn by horses, *in* which he rides: thus, as the one expresses, in the language of analogy, the understanding or apprehension of truth, so does the other the doctrine of truth, or those sentiments respecting truth which the mind assumes as certain, and employs to assist its further progress. Now as birds and beasts may feed on horses, so is the human mind nurtured in spiritual graces by the right understanding of truth: and though no bird or beast can feed on chariots, yet may the human mind be fed with the doctrine of

truth: and this is what is meant when the Lord says by the prophet, "Ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots." "Mighty men, and all men of war," are added, to express such firm convictions of the truth, grounded in love, in regard to divine subjects, as give a man power over the corruptions of his own heart and mind, as well as over all suggestions in favour of evil and error that may come from without, and which enable him, in every trial, to come off a conqueror.

Now, though it would require a very extensive discussion, fully to prove that the several particulars of this remarkable prophecy bear *the exact signification* which we have offered; yet that they must bear *some such signification*, is, I think, abundantly evident. The spiritual analogy of some of the principal symbols, is obvious: that of the others will also appear on reflection: and if the ground, in analogy, of the signification assigned to any of the natural images, should not be discerned by every one, yet every one who will carefully examine the other passages in the Word of God where they are mentioned, may ascertain that they always bear some such meaning. It would require a work on a different plan from that of these Lectures, fully to demonstrate, by the Science of Analogies, and by the manner in which natural images are used in the Scriptures, the meaning of each specific symbol:

all that we undertake to prove, is, that the general principle exists; that there is in reality a definite analogy between natural things and spiritual, whereby the former answer to, and form expressive symbols of, the latter; and that this analogy is observed in the Holy Word. In applying the general rule to particular cases, we shall be satisfied if our interpretations are accepted as probable. In the more important and more general analogies, we hope that this probability will be found very strong: in subordinate and respectively unimportant particulars, a lower degree of probability will be sufficient for our purpose. A multitude of probabilities is admitted to constitute a moral certainty: and if it shall appear, in numerous instances, that the spiritual signification which we assign to various natural symbols is probably the true one, every impartial mind will allow it to be morally certain, that *some* spiritual signification does belong to those symbols. Thus the general principle will be established, whether our explanations of particulars be all concurred in, or not.

In the passage at present before us, it is impossible to conceive of Jehovah himself as calling the birds and beasts to a sacrifice prepared for them by him, that they might eat flesh and drink blood, without revolting from the ideas suggested by the letter, and concluding instinctively, that matters very different, and more

worthy of Infinite Love and Wisdom, and of the active interference of Deity, must be veiled beneath the expressions. To regard them as merely forming an emphatic mode of describing a great slaughter by one of its consequences, is still to impute unworthy sentiments to the Divine Being. If the prophets are to be considered merely as poets, and it should be deemed allowable for the poet Ezekiel thus to exult over the destruction of the enemies of his country; it would be in the highest degree profane for him to introduce on the occasion the most sacred of the names of God, and to deliver his invitation to birds and beasts to feed on his slaughtered foes, in the name of "the Lord Jehovah." But if, as has already been shewn, no invasion by natural enemies can have been intended by any part of the prophecy, then no devouring of their carcasses can be referred to by the invitation to the birds and beasts. Besides, the total destruction of "Gog and all his multitude" is more explicitly detailed in the former part of the chapter: they are not only described as being all dead, but, likewise, as being all buried*: after which to invite the birds and beasts to eat their flesh and drink their blood, would look like an after-thought indeed, not easily compatible with the previous statements. Every thing then leads us to regard this part of the prophecy,

* Ver. 11 to 15.

as well as the rest, as a prophetic allegory, designed to have a purely spiritual accomplishment, and no other.

But perhaps it may be objected, " Admitting something of a spiritual nature to be intended by this invitation to the fowls of every wing and to every beast of the field, still it does not appear how their eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Gog and his army, who evidently are the enemies of the church, or injurious principles in regard to religion, can represent the imparting to men of heavenly gifts and graces." But it is to be observed, that the idea of Gog and his army is dismissed with their burial, already recorded, and they are not mentioned any more. According to the literal sense, indeed, it must be inferred to be their flesh and blood that the fowls and beasts are to eat and drink; but this is not affirmed. The feast is merely represented as consequent upon the destruction of Gog: and thus it suggests the important truth, explicitly affirmed in many parts of Scripture, that all increase of good is in consequence of, and in proportion to, the removal of evil. Both cannot exist together, either in the church at large or in the mind of man: the one must be put away, to make room for the other to enter. The removal then of the evils that destroyed and perverted all true religion, is described by the destruction of Gog and his multitude: the recep-

tion of the good which can then be imparted, is meant by the feast given in consequence to the fowls and beasts. That the flesh and blood which they should eat and drink are not considered as belonging to Gog and his army, or to any thing that has a bad signification, is evident from their being called the flesh and blood "of rams, of lambs, of goats, and of bullocks." Goats and bullocks, indeed, as denoting principles which belong to the external man, which may either be in right order or the contrary, are sometimes mentioned in a bad sense, as well as in a good one: but rams and lambs, as denoting principles which belong to the internal man,—the apostle's inward man which delights in the law of God*,—are not subject to this ambiguity of interpretation: they are invariably used as symbols of the purest affections that can adorn the human mind.

Altogether, then, whether the explanation which has been offered be seen, in all the particulars, to be true or not; I trust that the general meaning assigned to the whole will be admitted to be highly probable:—that the flesh and blood of the various orders of beings mentioned, as forming a sacrifice or feast prepared by Jehovah for the birds of every wing and every beast of the field, are the goodness and truth of various orders and degrees, offered by the Lord to all

* Rom. vii. 22.

who had any capacities for receiving them, when, at his coming into the world, he put an end to the perversion of religion then prevalent among the Jews, in consequence of their looking at divine things under the influence of the most external part of their nature: or, more briefly. That this prophetic feast denotes the profusion of heavenly gifts, resulting from the introduction of the spiritual and pure dispensation of the Gospel, in lieu of the carnal and corrupted dispensation of the Law.

2. The next prophecy that we select for consideration, is that of the Lord Jesus Christ, comprised in the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of Matthew; more particularly that part of it which is contained in these words: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."*

(1.) As the passage which we have considered from Ezekiel affords a remarkable instance of that species of divine prediction which admits of no

* Ch. xxiv. 29, 30.

outward fulfilment; so does this whole discourse of the Lord Jesus Christ supply a remarkable instance of that species of prophecy which does admit of such a fulfilment, it being, in fact, of all the predictions of Holy Writ, the most distinguished for the great exactness with which many of its announcements have been palpably accomplished. It has been justly observed, of that part of it which extends from the beginning to the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-fourth chapter, that many of the particulars which it states, so precisely describe the calamities which befel the Jewish nation at and prior to the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, that it more resembles a history than a prophecy: and as, nevertheless, it is certain that the prediction was delivered, and the account of it published, before those calamities occurred, an irresistible argument thence arises for the divine inspiration of prophecy, and for the truth of the Christian religion, which has been ably handled by many of the Christian apologists.

Nevertheless, clearly as some parts of this prophecy have coincided with historical events, it is impossible to adapt it all to circumstances of that kind. A great part of it certainly admits of none but a spiritual fulfilment: hence, as the whole of it flows in an uninterrupted and most closely connected series, it seems undeniable that a spiritual fulfilment is that which is chiefly

designed throughout, and that, in the words of Bishop Lowth so often cited, the destruction of Jerusalem, though “the *first*, was not the *principal* thing in the [Divine] Prophet’s view.” Still it is certain, that part of the prophecy had an external accomplishment in the events attending the destruction of Jerusalem: we here then have a striking exemplification of the principle advanced above,—“that the spiritual things described in the ulterior sense of the prophetic language, were typically pictured by such external events;—that a spiritual fulfilment was at the same time primarily regarded, and that of this was given, in the corresponding historical circumstances, a symbolic scenical representation.”* On no other principle can those particulars of the prophecy which may be applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, be taken as part of the same series as the other particulars, which do not admit of such an application. And the argument for the divine inspiration of prophecy, and for the truth of the Christian religion, arising from the outward fulfilment, is hereby carried much farther; since, while we obtain a solution, by the Science of Analogies, of those parts of the prophecy which are inexplicable on the principle of literal interpretation, we obtain, at the same time, for the passages in which a literal interpretation is admissible, a meaning

* P. 257.

more worthy of a Divine Author, than could be afforded by the most exact description of the future fates of nations;—a meaning which, while it rests upon the letter as its basis, rises and points towards heaven. Let us see how this will appear from a general view of the whole prophecy; exhibiting, first, the inconsistencies of the common interpretations.

(2.) It is related, in the first verse, that “Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him to shew him the buildings of the temple;” and it is added, in the second verse, that “Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another which shall not be thrown down.” First, then, let it be admitted, that these words apply, in their immediate reference, to the temple at Jerusalem and its destruction, which, as is known from the history of Josephus, was as total as is here implied. Let, also, the detailed prediction that follows, through the whole of this and the next chapters, be understood of the events connected with the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, as far as they can possibly be adapted to those occurrences. It is allowed, however, on all hands, that the whole cannot be so adapted: let then the place be pointed out where the new subject commences. But let this be done in such a manner, as to be consistent with the fact, that

a space of not much less than two thousand years at the least, was to intervene, between the accomplishment of the latter part of the prophecy and that of the former: for the first part of it is considered to have been fully accomplished about A. D. 70; and the remainder not to be accomplished yet: it is also to be recollected, that no events belonging to this intervening period are supposed to be treated of in the prophecy, but that, in whatever place the transition is made, it skips at once from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the world. Of course, with these premises assumed, every reader will expect to perceive some well defined mark of so great an *hiatus*. How will this expectation be answered? So far from discovering any thing like it, no person can read the two chapters, and draw his inference from their contents alone, without concluding, that the events announced are to follow each other in succession, unbroken by any wide interruption whatever. Accordingly, though commentators are now generally agreed that the *hiatus* must exist, they are by no means unanimous in fixing its situation.

As before observed, the circumstances foretold as far as the twenty-eighth verse of the twenty-fourth chapter, may, by having recourse, here and there, to *figure*, be applied to the calamities which befel the Jewish nation: what follows, respecting the coming of the Son of man in the

clouds of heaven, and his sending his angels with a great sound of a trumpet to gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other, does not, with equal convenience, admit this application: wherefore many eminent writers consider the prophecies relating to the Jews to terminate with the twenty-eighth verse, and all that follows to belong to the greater events commonly designated as the second coming of the Lord, and the general judgment on the world. Unfortunately, however, let both parts of the chapter denote what they may, they are connected together by the binding word "immediately:"—"Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened," &c.—"and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven." Extreme violence, therefore, is done to the words, by those who thrust in, between the tribulation previously described, and this *immediate* appearing of the Son of man, an interval of two thousand years! On this account, other eminent writers understand the appearing of the Son of man, and all the rest of the chapter, to be merely added in amplification of the previous subject; affirming, however, that "Jesus Christ intended that his disciples should consider the judgment he was going to inflict on the Jewish nation, as a *forerunner and emblem* of that universal judgment he is to exercise at the last day;" where-

fore, they add, "he gives in the twenty-fifth chapter a description of the last judgment*:" for which reasons, they place the grand *hiatus* between the two chapters. But, unhappily, a particle, the nature of which is to draw things into such close connexion as admits of nothing being interposed between them, here also occurs. 'The Divine Prophet concludes the twenty-fourth chapter with describing the reward which the faithful servant, and the punishment which the unfaithful, shall receive at his coming: and he commences the twenty-fifth chapter thus: "*Then* shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins." Who cannot see that the parable of the ten virgins, "five of whom were wise, and five were foolish," is a continuation and further illustration of the subject introduced by the parable of the faithful and wicked servant;—that both relate to the same series of events, and leave no room for supposing an interval of two thousand years between the one and the other? And even if the subjects were not so obviously connected, what propriety would there be in passing from one event to another so distant, by such a copulative as *then*,—a word that always denotes either identity of time, or immediate succession?

A third modification of the same general plan of interpretation has therefore been proposed by

* Beausobre and L'Enfant's Note on Matt. xxv. 1.

Dr. Doddridge. He adheres to the system of the *hiatus*, but he seems to have felt more strongly than some, the difficulties with which it is attended: wherefore, in hopes to avoid them, he steers a middle course between the two theories already noticed. Let us see, then, what degree of probability he has been able to give to the scheme.

He paraphrases the twenty-ninth and thirtieth verses thus: "*Immediately after the affliction of those days which I have now been describing, the sun shall as it were be darkened, and the moon shall not seem to give her usual light; and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens, all the mighty machines and strong movements above, shall be shaken and broken to pieces; that is, according to the sublimity of that prophetic language to which you have been accustomed, the whole civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the nation shall not only be shocked, but totally dissolved. And then shall there evidently appear such a remarkable hand of providence in avenging my quarrel upon this sinful people, that it shall be like the sign of the Son of man in heaven at the last day; and all the tribes of the land shall then mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming as it were in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory; for that celestial army which shall appear in the air marshalled round the city, shall be a sure token*



THE SCRIPTURES ASSERTED, &c.

to them that the angels of God, and the great Lord of those heavenly hosts, are set as it were in array against them." Upon this paraphrase I shall only observe, that if the fiery appearances in the sky mentioned by Josephus, and which seem to have been similar to those observed during the civil wars in England, and at various other places and times, are really alluded-to in the prophecy, it must be in the former part of it. Where Matthew merely says, that there should be "famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places*;" Luke amplifies thus: "And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences: and *fearful sights and great wonders shall there be from heaven.*"† This will agree with Josephus: for that historian describes the celestial phenomena as having been seen *before* the siege and capture of Jerusalem, and as *portending* those events‡; wherefore it is violating the facts to represent these as being what are foretold as the appearing of the Son of man and his coming in the clouds of heaven, "*after* the tribulation of those days:" beside being a mean application of a most majestic prediction. However, we have only introduced this popular writer's paraphrase, for the sake of his note upon it. On the words, *Immediately after the tribulation of*

* Ch. xxiv. 7.

† Ch. xxi. 11.

‡ Jewish War, B. vi. Ch. 5, § 3.

those days, he remarks thus: "Archbishop Tillotson, and Brennius, with many other learned interpreters, imagine, that our Lord here makes the *transition* from the *destruction of Jerusalem*, which had been the subject of his discourse thus far, to the *general judgment*: but I think, as it would be very harsh to suppose all the sufferings of the Jewish nation, in all ages, to be called the *tribulation of those days*;" [what occasion, by the by, for supposing the sufferings of the Jewish nation *in all ages* to be treated of at all?] "so it would, on the other hand, be equally so to say, that the *general judgment*, which probably will not commence till at least a *thousand years* after their restoration, will happen *immediately* after their sufferings; nor can I find any one instance in which εὐθὺς [*immediately*] is used in such a strange latitude. What is said below (in Matt. xxiv. 34, Mark xiii. 30, and Luke xxi. 32,) seems also an insuperable objection against such an interpretation. I am obliged therefore to explain this section as in the paraphrase; though I acknowledge many of the *figures* used may with more literal propriety be applied to the *last day*, to which there may be a remote though not an immediate reference." Moved by these considerations, this worthy divine, though he sees some difficulties in the way, determines to apply the prophecy, thus far, to the destruction of Je

rusalem. But when he comes to the thirty-sixth verse, though the series continues to flow without the least sign of interruption, he paraphrases the words, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only," in reference to the "final sentence" of all mankind; and adds this note: "I cannot agree with Dr. Clarke in referring *this verse* to the *destruction of Jerusalem*, the particular *day* of which was not a matter of great importance; and as for the *season* of it, I see not how it could properly be said to be entirely unknown, after such an express declaration that it should be in *that generation*.—It seems therefore much fitter, with Dr. Whitby (after Grotius,) to explain it of the *last day*, when *heaven and earth shall pass away*." Well then, the Doctor has now taken the leap. The simple connective "but" has carried him over an interval, of not less, according to his computation, than three thousand years. No sooner however has he taken this leap, than he deems it necessary to jump back again. He seems to apply the very next verses to the subject just dismissed: but in a note on the fortieth and forty-first verses, "Then shall two be in the field," &c. he explicitly says, that though these words "may *allusively* be accommodated to the *day of judgment*, yet he doubts not they originally refer to the *destruction of Jerusalem*, to which alone they

are properly applicable." He now, however, determines to fly for the last time across the gulf: so, he adds, "I humbly conceive that the grand *transition*, about which commentators are so much divided, and so generally mistaken, is made precisely after these *two verses*." Let the reader then examine whether he can here find the marks of "the grand transition," so conspicuous to Dr. Doddridge: or whether he will not rather find that the discourse proceeds in the same unbroken series, making no transition but from the announcement of awful facts, to the deducing from them of weighty admonitions. Thus Dr. Doddridge's well-meant attempt to relieve the *hiatus scheme* of its difficulties, only issues in a demonstration that the difficulties are insuperable.

Now what unprejudiced mind can resolve to maintain an hypothesis thus incumbered? When it is so evident that the whole prophecy is so connected, that the events really contemplated by its Divine Author must flow in uninterrupted succession; who can perseveringly determine to break that succession, by supposing a chasm in it, of two, three, or, perhaps, ten thousand years? How much more natural and easy a solution of the whole is obtained, when a series of occurrences relating to the spiritual state of man, is regarded as the principal subject in the mind of the Divine Speaker; when the whole prophecy

is considered as describing the vicissitudes of religion in the world, and the states of mankind in regard to religion, from the time when the predictions were uttered till the completion of all prophecy; and when the circumstances attending the destruction of Jerusalem, and of the Jews as a nation, so far as they are referred to in the external sense of the words, are viewed as types of that part of the series which extends to the consummation of "the mystery of iniquity*," and which is antecedent to the "bringing in of everlasting righteousness!" †

If it should here be asked, Why was not the sequel of the prophecy also given in terms that would have admitted of an accommodation to historical events? it may be answered, Because this was impossible, consistently with the plans of Providence, and the state of mankind, to which the plans of Providence are always adapted. If the consummation of "the mystery of iniquity" might be appropriately prefigured by the destruction of Jerusalem, the "bringing in of everlasting righteousness" must, if the same style of prophecy were continued, be imaged by the restoration and eternal prosperity of Jerusalem: but as such restoration was inconsistent with the plans of Providence, to have seemed to predict it in connexion with announcements actually referring in their lowest sense to historical events,

* 2 Thess. ii. 7.

† Dan. ix. 24.

would have led to unfounded expectations. Although, then, in the spiritual sense, the whole of the prophecy flows on in one unbroken series, and the events, as they regard the spiritual state of mankind, proceed in uninterrupted succession, that part of them which did not admit of being typically acted on the external theatre of human affairs, is described by images of a totally different character from the former. In the Revelation, however, all the symbols of which are such as do not admit of a literal interpretation, the concluding imagery forms a proper sequel to that used in the former part of the prophecy before us ; for while the Lord Jesus Christ describes the corruptions of his religion under the type of the calamities ending in the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apocalyptic divine depicts its perfect restoration, by the symbol of a " new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven."*

This divine book, the Revelation of John, furnishes, also, other decisive evidence, that no part of the prophecies that proceeded from the immediate lips of the Lord Jesus Christ terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem ; but that the circumstances connected with that event are merely noticed, as symbolizing events of far higher importance. The Revelation was not written, as is admitted by most of the critics, till at least twenty years after Jerusalem had been

* Rev. xxi. 2.

overthrown; and yet, in that book, many of the same prophetic symbols are employed, in describing the latter fortunes of the Christian Church, as are used by the Lord Jesus Christ in the prophecy under consideration. We there read of “the temple of God, and the altar;” of “the court which is without the temple,” and “the holy city;” as being then to be trodden under foot by the gentiles*, just as if the overturning of Jerusalem by the Romans was yet to be performed. We read also of the sun becoming black, and the moon being turned into blood, and the stars of heaven falling to the earth†, just as in the passage already cited from Matthew. It is likewise said of the Lord Jesus Christ, as in the Gospels, “Behold, he cometh with clouds!”‡ and again, John says, “I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man.”§ And at the conclusion of the book we read, “He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly, Amen:” to which the church answers, “Even so, come Lord Jesus.” || Not to mention numerous other coincidences. All which plainly evince, that when the same things are stated in this prophecy of Jesus Christ, they had a spiritual meaning, and did not receive a final fulfilment in the destruction of Jerusalem.

* Ch. xi. 1, 2. † Ch. vi. 12, 13. ‡ Ch. i. 7. § Ch. xiv. 14.

|| Ch. xxii. 20.

The inference from all this is too obvious not to have been seen by some intelligent writers: and we shall not, I apprehend, much err, if we conclude this branch of our inquiry in the words of the candid and learned Jortin: "The destruction of Jerusalem, and that *second* coming of the Son of man to take vengeance on his foes, may perhaps pre-figure the destruction of Antichristian tyranny, and the manifestation of Christ, that is, of his power and spirit; and then may commence a better and happier era, and such a renovation, as may be called "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."*"

(3.) What then must be the specific nature of that "renovation," which this intelligent author saw must be signified by the coming of the Son of man, in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory? and what light do the terms of the prediction afford, respecting the means by which it is to be brought about?

We need not stop to explain the words by which this prediction is introduced: "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:" for these have been sufficiently ex-

* Jortin's Remarks on Ecclesiastical History, vol. i. p. 151, Ed. 1805.

plained in the remarks we made above, when noticing Sir Isaac Newton's manner of interpreting these phrases.* But the circumstances, that he who is to come is called *the Son of man*, and that the mode of his coming is announced to be *in the clouds of heaven*; are so remarkable, and so significant, as to demand a particular consideration.

(4.) Whatever may be meant by the Lord's prophecies respecting his second advent, and whatever the time at which it was to take place; it is now generally acknowledged, that a personal coming in the ethereal clouds cannot be intended. We have seen how Dr. Doddridge, with some of the other writers who apply this part of the prophecy to the destruction of Jerusalem, understands it: and we have noticed what violence is done to the facts of history by such an application. The time and manner of the meteoric appearance mentioned by Josephus, to which they refer this prediction, were the following. After relating some remarkable circumstances which occurred at the feast of unleavened bread, not only prior to the destruction of the city, but "*before the Jews' rebellion, and before those commotions that preceded the war;*" that author states, that "*a few days after that feast,—before sun-setting, chariots and troops of soldiers*

* P. 258, 259.

in their armour were seen running about among the clouds, and surrounding of cities.”* Now, whether this was the same sort of electric phenomenon as has been frequently seen elsewhere, and has suggested to many observers the idea of armed men combating in the clouds; or whether, as some wish to understand it, it was a real miracle; having taken place several years *before* the capture of Jerusalem, it cannot, as noticed above, have been what was meant by the sign of the Son of man in heaven, which was not to appear till *after* that event: and to apply so weighty a prediction to such an occurrence, is really little better than trifling with the prophecies of Scripture, and again making the Word of God of none effect. Other writers therefore are of opinion, that these words, with much of what follows, have no specific meaning at all, but are only intended to denounce divine judgments in general.† However it is most certain, as every person of plain common sense will conclude, that the words of Infinite Wisdom,—the declarations of Omniscience,—are not thus to be emptied of their meaning, and treated as if

* Jewish War, B. vi. ch. 5, § 3. (Whiston's translation.)

† “*Then shall the sign, &c.* Then shall the supreme power and authority of the Messiah so conspicuously appear, that all the nations of the earth shall acknowledge him in this dreadful judgment.” Beausobre and L'Enfant's Note.

they were idle bombast of human composition,—to be put almost on a level with the

“—words

Spoke by an idiot; full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.”

It is degrading enough to divinely inspired writers, such as were the prophets of the Old Testament, to judge of their effusions by the rules of ordinary poetry, (as is done even by critics who profess to esteem them most highly,) and to suppose that the expressive symbols with which they every where abound, are introduced like the artificial figures of uninspired authors,—merely to elevate the subject in a general manner, but without any specific and appropriated meaning: but to imagine that *he who spake as never man spake**,—*all whose words are spirit and are life†*,—should not be above the tinsel arts of rhetoric, or should be capable of using a single expression without a specific meaning, and *that* a meaning worthy of a speaker who was the Truth Itself; is indeed to form derogatory notions of his sacred character, and of the nature of divine language: it is plucking down heavenly wisdom from above the stars, to seat her in the dust. Most assuredly, every syllable that ever proceeded from the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, or that was dictated to inspired writers by his spirit, must have had a specific,

* John vii. 46. † Ch. vi. 63.

determinate, divine meaning. Thus, when he informs us of so important a fact as that the Son of man will come again in the clouds of heaven, he must intend to apprise us of some distinct, definite, great event: and every word of the prediction must have a distinct, definite, spiritual signification.

It is remarkable, that all the passages in which the second coming of the Lord is foretold, speak of it as an appearing of him in heaven or the sky, and, generally, in the clouds: It is remarkable also, that, whenever his second coming is treated of, it is always called the coming of the Son of man; or, if other words are used, they are such as bear, spiritually, the same meaning. The peculiar applicability of this phrase to this event, is exemplified in an extraordinary manner in the answer of Jesus Christ to the adjuration of the high-priest: "The high-priest said unto him, I adjure thee, by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Son of God." He answered in the form of assent customary in the language in which he spoke, "Thou hast said:" but immediately proceeding to announce his second coming, he drops the title which he had just claimed of Son of God, and takes instead of it that of Son of man; saying, "Nevertheless I say unto you, that hereafter ye shall see *the Son of man* sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds

of heaven.”* There is in fact but one regular prophetic announcement of the second coming of the Lord, in which the Divine Being who is to come is not, in so many words, stated to be the *Son of man*, and in which the mode of his coming is not affirmed to be in the *clouds of heaven*: and in that one passage, as we shall see presently such other words are used, as, mean, in their genuine sense, precisely the same things.†

We proceed then, first, to investigate the meaning of the Lord's title of the Son of man. We will begin with examining the manner in which it is used in Scripture; and having first discovered its signification in practice, we will state the grounds of it in Analogy.

(5.) A very remarkable circumstance connected with the use of the phrase, “Son of man,” in application to the Lord Jesus Christ, is this; that, except in a passage of Daniel and two in the Revelation, it is never applied to him except by his own mouth: and in those instances is not addressed *to* him, but is used *of* him, by prophets speaking under inspiration

* Matt. xxvi. 63, 64. See also Dan. vii. 13, 14; Matt. xxiv. 30, 31; Mark xiii. 26; Luke xxi. 27; Rev. i. 7, compared with ver. 14; Ch. xiv. 14.

† We do not here include the notices of this event contained in the Apostolic Epistles, those notices only being applications of the prophecies delivered by Jesus Christ in person, not original predictions.

from him. The phrases "Son of God," and "Son of man," occur, in reference to him, with nearly equal frequency, and are each mentioned about eighty times. The title "Son of God," though sometimes used by himself, is much oftener applied to him by others; whereas the title "Son of man" is never given to him, except in the above three instances, by any but himself. The reason, no doubt, is, because the phrase, "Son of man," in common apprehension, bears a different meaning from that which it carries when used by the Lord Jesus Christ in reference to himself;—because, if applied to him with the ideas men in general attach to it, it would be unsuitable and derogatory: and therefore, though there are some who prefer to speak of the divine Saviour by his title of Son of man, meaning by it just what the words in their ordinary acceptation convey, Paul and the other apostles, who knew that in this acceptation they are wholly inapplicable to their glorified Lord, never presumed to speak of him by that epithet.*

It is commonly supposed, that the Lord calls himself the Son of man in reference to his birth of a human mother: but in this sense it would

* I have read some remarks of the same purport as the above in some eminent writer: I think in Dr. Paley, and in his ~~Sermons~~ ^{Discourses}: but on looking for the passage, to make a reference, as this was going to the press I could not find it.

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Dr - II, ch. IV. § III

be entirely unsuited to him after his resurrection; because, while he never was the Son of man in respect to what men in general receive from their fathers, his person, as most divines acknowledge, underwent such a change at his resurrection, that he could no longer be considered, with any propriety, as the son of Mary. It is remarkable also, that even while he was in the world, though he continually adverted to his relationship to his divine Father, he never acknowledged any to his human mother: she never was called his mother by his own mouth: on some occasions he even refused to own her in that character: and although, in his childhood, it is said of her and Joseph, that he "was subject unto them;" this arose from the necessity of the case, and because he was willing in all things to observe the laws of order and "to fulfil all righteousness;" yet even then he expressly disallowed her claims to parental authority.* So also he corrected the gross conceptions of the Jews respecting the Messiah, as being the Son of David, in a manner which plainly shewed, that, as to his person, he owned no affinity with that prince, but only with that representative character which David is generally admitted to have borne: for, after quoting the passage of the Psalms, in which David says, "The Lord said unto my lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I

* See John ii. 4. Matt. xii. 46 to 49. Luke ii. 49.

make thine enemies thy footstool," he says, "If David, in spirit, [or by the spirit,—by inspiration,] call him Lord, how is he then his son?"* This question the Jews were unable to answer: no more can *they* answer it, who believe that Jesus Christ is called, in a merely literal sense, the Son of man. If he owns no proper relationship with David as a man, most certainly he can own none with any other human being. As it is only in a representative sense that he is the Son of David, so is it only in a representative sense that he is the Son of man. It is not, however, here intended to investigate, generally, what is the true character and nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, or to establish any doctrine upon that subject; but only to endeavour to ascertain what is the scriptural sense of the title "Son of man:" and if any doubt should yet remain whether it is taken by the Lord in reference to his birth of a human mother, the following declaration, which affirms the *omnipresence* of the divine principle so named, should remove all uncertainty: Jesus said, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but *he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.*"† Now certainly, if we understand by "the Son of man" that personal form which the Lord took from Mary, *this* was not previously in heaven, and, of course did not "come down from hea-

* Matt. xxii. 41 to 46.

† John iii. 13.

ven;" nor was *this Son of man*, when speaking these words, *in heaven*. The phrase "Son of man," must then mean some divine principle which is not controlled by the limitations of space, but is capable of being, at the same moment of time, *in heaven*, and *upon earth*.

What then is there, among the peculiar characters of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which this description is appropriate? His most peculiar character is, that he is **THE WORD**: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—And the Word was made flesh."* What is the Divine Word, but the Divine Truth? and Jesus Christ declares that he is "**THE TRUTH**."† He is also the Word of the Father; and, addressing the Father, he says, "thy Word is Truth."‡ Suppose, then, it should be in reference to his character as the Word, or the Truth, that Jesus Christ calls himself the Son of man. Let us assume this to be the case; and let us see how this idea will agree with the occasions on which he designates himself by this title.

For it is to be observed, that the Divine Being assumes, in the Scriptures, a great variety of names and titles; and it cannot be imagined, if the Scriptures are really dictated by Infinite Wisdom, that these are applied in

* John i. 1, 14. † Ch. xiv. 6. ‡ Ch. xvii. 17.

an irregular, capricious manner. In the Old Testament the Lord takes the names of Jehovah, the Lord, God, the Lord Jehovih or Lord God, Jehovah Sabaoth or Lord of Hosts, the Holy One of Israel, the Mighty One of Jacob, the Almighty, and several others: In the New Testament we find applied to him the names of Jesus, Christ, the Lord, God, the Son of God, the Son of man, the Prophet, the Lamb, &c. There can be no doubt that there is some distinction of meaning in them all; as also, that that name is always employed which best suits the specific occasion. And we will venture to affirm that it would be found, on an examination of the Gospels, that when the divine power of the Lord Jesus Christ, his divinity, his unity with the Father, faith in him, and life from him, are the subjects treated-of, he calls himself "the Son," and "the Son of God;" but that where the subjects of discourse are his passion, judgment, and, in general, redemption, salvation, and reformation, as also his second coming, he always calls himself the Son of man. Now if he applies this title to himself in reference to his character of the Divine Truth, or Word, we shall easily see the reason why he employs it on these occasions. We will adduce a few instances by way of illustration.

Several examples might be given of the Lord's

using this name when his passion is treated-of; as in this passage: Jesus said to the disciples, "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and *the Son of man* shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles; and they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again."*

Were it not for the distinct meaning of the phrase, "Son of man," would not Jesus, who begins the speech in the first person, "we go up to Jerusalem," have continued it in the same person, and have said, "I shall be delivered to the chief-priests," &c.? The reason why he changed the person, and said "*the Son of man* shall be delivered," &c.; was, because He suffered the Jews to treat his natural body in a manner answering to that in which they had spiritually treated his Word; and because the sufferings to which he submitted, represented, by an exact analogy, the manner in which the Jews had perverted the Word, or the Divine Truth contained in it, and had deprived it, as to themselves, of all life, having "made it of none effect by their traditions." We see then a good reason why, when foretelling his passion, he called himself *the Son of man*, if this title belongs to him in his character as *the Word*.

* Mark x. 33, 34.

The same reason will account for his always calling himself *the Son of man* when *judgment* is treated of. Thus he says, in the sequel of the prophecy before us, “When *the Son of man* shall come in his glory,—then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats*:” where judgment is evidently the subject, and the Judge is called the Son of man. The reason is explicitly stated in the following passage: “The Father *judgeth* no man, but hath committed all *judgment* to the Son†;”—“and,” as is added, a little below, “hath given him authority to execute *judgment* also:”—Why?—“because he is *the Son of man*‡:” —a reason which would be no reason at all, were it not that this title designates the Lord as to his character of Divine Truth, or the Word, which, all know, is what must judge every one: Accordingly, the Lord says on the same subject, “If any man hear my words and believe not, *I* judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world: he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: *the word* that I have spoken, the same *shall judge him* in the last day.”§ This proof seems demonstrative. We are repeatedly

* Matt. xxv. 31, 32: see also Ch. xix. 28.

† John v. 22. ‡ Ver. 27. § John xii. 47, 48.

assured that the world will be judged by *the Son of man*: yet Jesus declares that he does not come to judge in person, but that *his word* is what judges: consequently, when he takes the title of *Son of man*, it must be in reference to his character as the *Divine Truth* or *Word*.

We have also stated, that, for the same reason, the Lord is called the Son of man when redemption, salvation, and reformation, are the subjects of discourse. Thus we read, “The *Son man* came to give his life a *ransom* [or *redemption*] for many*.” “The *Son of man* came to seek and to *save* that which was lost†:” “He that *soweth good seed* is the *Son of man*‡:” with many similar statements. Now as the Lord effects these works in and for man by means of his Truth or Word; and as the title, “Son of man,” means the Lord as to the Truth or the Word; therefore he assumes this title when treating of these his divine operations. Admitting this idea, in all the instances which have been adduced, and in every other that can be found, the use of the title, “Son of man,” is singularly beautiful and appropriate: upon any other supposition, it is impossible to account for its selection, in preference to any other of the Lord’s divine names.

The instances then in which the Lord speaks of himself as the Son of man, appear amply to

* Luke ix. 56. † Ch. xix. 10. ‡ Matt. xiii. 37.

evince, that he always assumes this name in reference to his character as the Divine Truth or Word: but a passage remains to be mentioned which alone is sufficient to make it certain. We have seen above, that he who is to come again, is constantly, one instance alone excepted, called the Son of man: that instance is in the nineteenth chapter of the Revelation, where the second coming of the Lord is described in these words: "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness doth he judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns: and he had a name written which no man knew but he himself: and he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood. And his name is called *the Word of God.*"* Here is an open declaration, that it is in his character as *the Word of God*, that the Lord is to make his second advent: but in every other instance it is said that he is to come as *the Son of man*: the inference is unavoidable, that, in Scripture-language, *the Son of man* means *the Word of God*.

* Ver. 11, 12, 13. Observe how this statement, that the Word of God was seen in heaven riding on a white horse, corroborates the signification of horses, and of riding on them, as given above, p. 307. If a horse denotes the understanding of truth, and to ride on a horse to communicate instruction, we see a beautiful reason why the Word of God personified was seen in that action.

(6.) The meaning of the phrase, "Son of man," is now, it is hoped, pretty clearly established by its use in Scripture: it is necessary however to add a word respecting its ground in Analogy.

It was briefly shewn in our last Lecture, that the natural relation between a son and his father exactly answers to that which exists between the thoughts of the understanding and the affections of the will. Reduce a man, if that were possible, to a state of entire apathy, so that he should not be animated by any affection or desire whatever; and his torpor would be so complete, that he would not be conscious of a single thought; he would, in fact, be deprived of the power of thinking. Wherever thought is in exercise, affection is in exercise; and the former is in all cases generated by the latter. No one, indeed, while life remains, can be so deprived of affection of every kind, and for every object, as to become void of thought altogether: yet most people experience seasons in which their thoughts are less active than at others; and if they examine the state of their affections at such times, they will invariably find them to be listless and unexcited: "on the contrary," as observed above†, "when any affection is in high excitement, how active are the thoughts! What a tumult of ideas; what multitudes of

reasonings, crowd into the intellect, when violent passions agitate the will." These are facts which every one must have observed; and they afford a proof which is demonstrative, that thought is the offspring of affection.

But what is the object of all man's affections, but goodness? not indeed, in all cases, goodness which is really such, but what he chooses to consider as such. Evil is too often substituted for goodness in man's affections: but then, it is never evil, *as evil*, which he makes the object of his attachment; but evil appearing to him as good: whatever he loves, he loves for the sake of something in it which he finds delightful to him, and which he deems a good. Good then, either really or mistakenly such, is always the object of man's love or affections. In like manner, truth, or something that may be referred to truth, is always the material of his thoughts. His opinions may be false; but they are true to him; and he dwells on and maintains them as truth. A man's thoughts, likewise, or the opinions which in his heart he accounts to be true, always take a character from his affections, and from the objects which he accounts to be good. Whatever he loves, he also loves to think of. If it is an object in prospect, his thoughts run upon the means of obtaining it; if in possession, his thoughts dwell upon the satisfaction which he finds in it. There are, then, various considerations which

may convince us, that there is the same relation between Good and Truth, as there is between Affection and Thought: the one may be considered as an outbirth, which discovers the existence and the quality of the other: and as Thought is manifestly the offspring of Affection, so is Truth the progeny of Good. In the language then of analogy, Truth would be called the son, and Good the father.

According to this view, it will easily be seen, why "the Word" mentioned in the Scriptures, which we have already seen is another name for "the Truth," is called, in the language of Analogy, "the Son of God;" and thus it will also be seen, that the phrase, "the Son of God," decyphered by the laws of Analogy, means "the Divine Truth." This explanation will not resolve "the Son of God" into a mere attribute, and nothing more, if all that is said on the subject in the Scriptures be taken into consideration; nor, indeed, if reason alone be consulted. For though we can form an idea of Truth, or of Divine Truth, abstractedly, as a property or attribute, yet we readily perceive that a mere property or attribute is nothing, separate from a personal being whose property or attribute it is. The Son of God, then, of the Scriptures, is the Divine Truth personified; as is evident from its being a name peculiarly given to "the Word made flesh," and never used till the Word

was made flesh, otherwise than in reference to that event.

But although it must easily be seen, that, in the language of Analogy, the Divine Truth may be properly called the Son of God; it may not so immediately be discovered, why, as stated above, the Divine Truth is also called the Son of man. Here then it is necessary to observe, that though the Divine Truth is described by both these names, they respectively refer to it under a different form; so that the appearance of the Divine Truth which is designated by the title "Son of man," is lower and more external than that which is designated by the title "Son of God," which is respectively higher and more internal. The one is the pure Divine Truth as proceeding from the bosom of Divine Love, and not yet intelligible to created beings, but in its first preparation for becoming so: the other is the Divine Truth under an accommodated form, adapted to the capacities of apprehension and reception in finite and human creatures. This will account for its being called the Son of man. In no state whatever does the Divine Truth proceed from man: man can never be the author of it: yet it is on account of man that it is presented in the form of which we are here speaking: and being so accommodated for his sake, and by bringing it within the sphere of the human intellect as that exists both in this

world and in the worlds beyond the grave, it is agreeable to analogy to denominate it, thus manifested, the Son of man.

The Son of God, then, in the symbolic language of Analogy and of the Scriptures, is the pure Divine Truth itself; the Son of man is the same Divine Truth so modified as to be accommodated to human reception. Both titles, beside this abstract meaning, also refer to the Divine Truth personified in the form of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

* It will corroborate what is advanced above, here to observe, how naturally the idiom of the language in which the Scriptures of the Old Testament are written, coincides, frequently, with the language of Analogy. In the language of analogy, we have seen that the term *Son* denotes a relationship different from that of natural generation; and in the Hebrew idiom it is often applied to things which are not literally connected by any such relationship. Thus in the original of Job v. 7, *sparks* are called "the sons of the burning coal;" an *arrow*, again, is "the son of the bow," [ch. xli. 28,] or *arrows* are "the sons of the quiver," [Lam. iii. 13,] So, a *fruitful hill* is "a horn the son of oil" [Isa. v. 1,] a *valiant man* is "the son of strength," [1 Sam. xiv. 52,] and a *person in danger of dying*,—fitted for it, as it were, by circumstances,—is "a son of death." [1 Sam. xxvi. 16, 2 Sam. xii. 5,] Gussetius (in his *Comment. Ling. Heb. sub voce בנה*) reckons ten classes of the figurative application, in the Old Testament, of the term *son*; and as the New Testament, though written in Greek, follows, in its language, the Hebrew idiom, he shews that all these uses of the word have their parallels in the writings of the Evangelists and Apostles. If then a spark is termed "the son of the coal," and an arrow

(7.) If then the title Son of man, in the language of Scripture, founded in that of Analogy, is appropriated to the Lord in his character as the Word; it is easy to see that the "renovation" of pure Christianity which is in general indicated by the predictions respecting the second coming of the Lord as the Son of man, must be brought about by a renewed and more extensive discovery of the divine truth of his Word. But how does this agree with the announcement, that "they should see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory?" What can those clouds be, in which the Son of man, or the Lord as to his Divine Truth, will make his advent?

It will go a good way towards putting our "the son of the bow," or of "the quiver" as *proceeding* thence; most properly is the Divine Truth, as *proceeding* from the Divine Essence, or Divine Good, denominated "the Son of God"—"the Only-begotten of the Father;" and if a person in the prospect of certain or imminent death, is called "a son of death," because *fitted for it*, and as it were *appointed to it*, as the phrase is sometimes rendered in the English version; [Ps. lxxix. 11. cii. 20;] most properly is the Divine Truth named "the Son of man," when *adapted to human apprehension*.

Another instance, connected with the present subject, of the agreement of the Hebrew tongue with the language of Analogy, may also be worth remarking; it is, that as, in the language of Analogy, the term *father* has reference to the principle of *love* or *good*, or to *will* in general; so the word by which it is expressed in Hebrew, is derived from a root which signifies to *will* or *desire*.

conceptions in a right train upon this question, to notice, (what seems generally to have been much overlooked,) that the circumstance of the Lord's having an abode in the clouds, is by no means discovered for the first time in the predictions relating to his second coming. All that is at all new in this respect, in these predictions, is, that the Lord will then be seen *coming* in the clouds; which is never stated in reference to his first coming in the flesh: but that he at all times shelters his glory in the clouds, or has his residence behind or within them, and uses them as a vehicle, was known in the time of David, and of Moses. The latter says, "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency upon the *sky**;" where the word translated *the sky*, is one which in many other places is rendered *the clouds*. But the book of Psalms abounds, more than any other book of the Holy Word, with magnificent descriptions of the Lord, and of the modes of his appearance; and there we find him continually spoken of as attended with clouds. We will here only notice one sublime passage, which alone is sufficient to instruct us in the meaning of this important symbol.

The hundred-and-fourth Psalm commences thus: "Bless the Lord, O my soul! O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed

* Deut. xxxiii. 26.

with honour and majesty : who coverest thyself with light as with a garment ; who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain : who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters ; who maketh *the clouds* his chariot ; who walketh upon the wings of the wind." Whoever will consult, with this, the other passages in which clouds are mentioned in the same book*, must be satisfied, that some spiritual thing of which clouds are the proper emblems is continually ascribed in the Holy Word to Jehovah, as a regular appendage of his ineffable majesty, and must be convinced, that though they are called the *clouds of heaven* and the *clouds of the sky*, the vapoury clouds that surround the earth, and the visible heavens or sky in which they float, are not the things really intended.

It is first to be observed, as a general remark, that the phænomena of nature, when adverted to in the Word of God, are not regarded in the manner in which they are understood by philosophers, when this differs from their appearance to the senses, but are always spoken of in the popular way in which they strike an ordinary observer : for the design of Scripture is, not to give lessons in natural philosophy, but of spiritual wisdom, only using the images taken from nature for that purpose. Thus the Scrip-

* See particularly Ps. xviii. 10, 11, xxxvi. 5, lxviii. 32, 33, 34, xcvi. 1, 2, cviii. 3, 4.

tures, when they allude to the motion of the sun, always seem to assume it to be real, speaking of it as rejoicing to run its course, and the like; without saying any thing of the real fact, so different from the appearance, that it is not the sun which moves, but the earth. Thus again the truth of philosophy informs us, that the clouds do not so properly belong to the heavens or sky, as to the earth, being nothing but a collection of watery particles exhaled from the earth and sea, and forming a sort of hollow sphere at a small distance from the terraqueous globe: whereas, to the eye alone, they appear as the lowest basis of the ethereal regions,—as a sort of floor spread under the starry heavens. So do the starry heavens themselves appear to be very different from what they are ascertained to be by science, wearing the appearance of a blue arch of some positive substance, with the heavenly bodies, as they are called, stuck on it: whereas the heavenly bodies are known to be other suns and worlds suspended by some inconceivable power in the immensity of space; whilst the blueness of the seeming vault of the sky is merely the consequence of our looking into a dark void through the denser atmosphere which surrounds the earth, and which is illuminated with the light of the sun or moon. Now it is according to these appearances, that the heavens and ethereal regions, from the

highest part of them, which appears studded with stars, to the lowest which is bounded by clouds, are considered in the Holy Word; and this for the sake of the exactly suitable emblems which they thus afford for the conveyance of instruction in divine subjects. With this sort of picture, then, of the visible heavens in our thoughts, let us see how the Science of Analogies will help us to understand the passage we have quoted from the Psalms.

“O Lord my God, thou art very great, thou art clothed with honour and majesty.” Here we have a description of the Lord, as he is in himself, and in the first emanation of his divine energies, as they proceed to impart spiritual life to his creatures. When he is said to be “very great,” the reference is to his infinity, his unfathomable greatness, his inconceivable love, as it exists in himself, beyond the remotest comprehension of any finite creature: and when it is said, “thou art clothed with honour and majesty,” the reference is to the first putting forth of his divine excellencies of love and wisdom, in a sphere of intense ardour without him, and forming as it were “a sun of righteousness with healing in its rays,”—that beneficent fountain of life to all creatures, of which it is said in the gospel, that the Lord “maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good.” This is considered, in reference to the images drawn from the visible heavens,

presently made use of, as beyond any thing that the eye can reach,—as exceeding the highest limits of the firmament. Then it follows, “Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment;” which is an image taken from the lucidity that fills the visible heavens, and which might naturally be regarded as the first covering of that still higher region, supposed to be the seat of God’s immediate presence. As he no where in nature presents himself to the sight, a mind acknowledging his existence, yet drawing its ideas from the appearances of the heavens uncorrected by science, would readily conceive the immediate abode of Deity to be above all that the eye can reach, and concealed from its view by the lucid mantle of the starry heaven. We well know, however, that this cannot be the case. We know that the starry heaven is in fact below us as well as above us, so that all height therein is merely relative to the situation of our globe at any given moment; wherefore it is in vain to think, by soaring in imagination beyond the limits of the visible heavens, to find the immediate throne of God. Consequently, the light which we behold in the firmament is not the garment with which the Lord covereth himself: yet it is here spoken of as if it were: and why? because it is the proper symbol and representative of something which really is so. We have noticed, in our last Lecture, what the spiritual thing is of which light

is the appropriate emblem. It is indeed so obvious, that every one sees it at the first glance: and common language retains the use of the symbol, as an elegant way of designating the thing, to which it answers in spiritual analogy. What is more usual than to talk of *the light of truth* and the *darkness of ignorance*,—to speak of writings or sentiments as containing *light* in them, or the contrary, when we mean that they are irradiated or otherwise with the beams of truth? The light then with which the Lord covereth himself as with a garment, is the Divine Truth proceeding from, and investing, his Divine Good,—containing also the Divine Good, which is spiritual heat, in its bosom, and thus recreating with its rays all the angelic hosts.

We pass over a few words, the explanation of which is not essential to the inquiry before us, to notice those which say of the Lord, that “he maketh the clouds his chariot.” The clouds, as observed above, are usually considered in Scripture merely as the lowest base of the visible heavens, and as forming a covering or shade to the resplendent light that glows above them: hence, as the light signifies the divine Truth in all the glory of its essentially divine and spiritual nature, the clouds signify the Divine Truth in comparative obscurity, or when shaded over by appearances suited to, and, in some respects, taken from, the ideas of the merely natural man.

Here the truth of natural philosophy will help to illustrate the subject. Although the clouds appear to belong to the heavens, they in reality are composed of exhalations from the earth: yet they are always irradiated, more or less, by light from the ethereal regions, which they transmit to the earth. Thus they aptly represent the Divine Truth that proceeds from the Lord, when enveloped in a covering of natural images and natural ideas, taken from the perceptions of man in a natural state of existence. As light, which is previously mentioned, represents, and is the appropriate symbol of, the Divine Truth as it is perceived in heaven, and by illuminated spiritual minds, so the clouds represent, and are the equally appropriate images of, the Divine Truth as it exists on earth, conveyed in natural language, and clothed with ideas and images taken from the world of nature. Thus they exactly typify the Holy Word, as we possess it, written in a book; that is, they represent and signify the Word in its literal sense, in which it is Divine Truth in its shade, or in its lowest or ultimate form, adapted and modified to the conceptions of man considered even as a natural and carnal being; but within which, or in its spiritual sense, is Divine Truth in its clearness and glory, adapted to illuminate with heavenly wisdom the most refined intellect of man consider-

ed as a spiritual being, and of pure spirits themselves.

But to point out more distinctly what we mean when we speak of Divine Truth in its clearness and Divine Truth in its shade; or between Divine Truth as represented by the light of the firmament and Divine Truth as imaged by the clouds of heaven; it may be expedient to give an example. Every sentence of the Divine Word will afford us one; though the difference between these two kinds of Divine Truth will appear more striking in some examples than in others. Let us take the prophecy which we are considering: "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Here, all the expressions made use of, are images taken from the world of nature: such are the terms, Son of man, clouds, power, and glory. It is obvious that the sense which results from the mere combination of the words, or the literal sense, cannot be that intended by the Divine Speaker; still, if the words were spoken by the Lord himself, they must be Divine Truth: of course they must be Divine Truth in its lowest form, or in its shade, in which the genuine meaning is veiled over in such a manner as not immediately to be seen, although it nevertheless is actually contained within them. The genuine

meaning is, that the Lord, who is the Divine Truth itself, will discover himself, or impart a just knowledge concerning himself and the things of his kingdom, by opening the literal sense of the Holy Word, and disclosing its spiritual contents. This, then, is that Divine Truth contained in these words, which is represented by the emblem of light or glory; but the words themselves, and the literal sense of them, are the clouds by which the light is shaded and veiled over,—the “covering upon the glory.”*

To draw a general remark from this example, it may be observed, that it illustrates the manner in which the Holy Word is written throughout; only there is a great variety in the density of the veil which the cloud of the literal expression throws over the glory of its spiritual contents. In nature there are clouds of very different kinds, varying from a degree of density that almost excludes entirely the light of heaven, to a thinness which presents scarcely any impediment to the illuminating rays: and just such is the varying character of the letter of the Scriptures, considered as a covering to the genuine Divine Truth contained within. In many passages, as in that before us, the cloud of the letter is so thick, that nothing more of the genuine truth shines through than this;—that some extraordinary divine interference will at some period take place: but of the

* Isa. iv. 5.

nature of this interference, the letter alone gives us no information. In some parts of the Divine Word, the clouds of the letter are thicker still; as is the case in all those passages from which, if taken alone, sentiments really contrary to the genuine truth might be deduced: such are the passages which seem to ascribe malignant feelings to the Divine Being, and which represent him as changing his mind, or as being in any way subject to human infirmities. But in other parts the clouds of which the letter is composed are of so thin a texture, that the light of the genuine truth within is translucent through it; as is the case in the law of the decalogue, and in many of the Lord's precepts in the Gospel. In fact, all that is absolutely necessary to salvation, is, in various parts of the Word, plainly revealed; and all such passages, though forming part of what the Scripture calls clouds, are, nevertheless, bright and transparent clouds, such as suffer the rays of heavenly light freely to pass through them. Still, clear and bright though the clouds of the letter in many places are, they do not cease to be clouds, and are not that undiluted light with which the Lord covers his immediate majesty as with a garment. Though a great portion of the literal sense of the Word of God presents us with genuine truth, yet every part of it contains stores of light still more resplendent within. Every part of the letter is a

cloud, though often a beautiful and bright cloud; and every part of it contains a more brilliant glory in its bosom.

Surely it were much to be wished, that mankind in general could be brought to view the Scriptures in this exalting light! How entirely would the mists of infidelity be dispersed before it! How completely would the whole of Sacred Writ be seen to be in harmony with the purest attributes of God, and with the highest reason of man! And, surely, it is easy to see, that there may exist a distinction, in the Scriptures, between Divine Truth in its clearness and Divine Truth in its shade, and that the former is contained in their truly spiritual meaning, and the latter in their literal sense; and also, how aptly they are represented by the light of the firmament, or the glory which is always spoken of as surrounding the Divine Presence, and the clouds which veil it! Surely, the prophecy before us clearly proves the existence of this distinction, and of these senses. When, indeed, we first hear it advanced, that clouds, in Holy Writ, when mentioned in respect to the Lord, signify Divine Truth clothed with natural ideas and images, or the Divine Word in its literal sense, the assertion may seem arbitrary and foreign to the subject: yet how natural does it appear on reflection! If, as is undeniable, the light of the firmament is an appropriate symbol of Divine Truth in its

purity ; if it thus is seen that there is between pure light and pure truth a certain and unalterable analogy or mutual relation, so that to mention the one when we mean the other is a highly expressive form of speaking, grounded in the very nature and constitution of things ; then, when the relation between the light of the firmament and the clouds is examined, it will be found to be exactly similar to that between pure spiritual truth, seen in its unclouded, abstract nature, and the same truth veiled over with symbolic language, or invested with a covering of images taken from the world of nature and the ideas of man in his natural state of existence ; or between the interior contents of the Holy Word and its literal form : and thus it will be seen, that to speak of clouds when thereby is meant the literal sense of the Holy Word, is a mode of expression which is also founded in the very nature and immutable relations of things.

(8.) The meaning then of this prophecy, and the means by which the "renovation," which Dr. Jortin saw must be intended by it, will be brought about, may now, it is hoped, be sufficiently evident. If it be true that by the clouds are signified Divine Truth in its lowest or ultimate form, which is the same thing as the Word in its literal sense, it follows, that when the Lord informs us that his second coming will be in the clouds, we are to understand, that it will be

effected by an opening of the true meaning of the Holy Word: on which account, in the passage which we have noticed from the Psalms, the clouds are called the Lord's chariot; a chariot signifying doctrine or instruction, and it being by means of the letter of his Word, and never without it, that the Lord communicates instruction to man. And when we are apprised, that the Lord always takes the title of Son of man in reference to his character as Divine Truth, and as Divine Truth adapted to enlighten human minds, we see with what peculiar propriety it is that he announces his coming, in this character, *in the clouds*, and *with power and great glory*; these phrases denoting, that within, and out of, the letter of the Holy Word, the efficacy and light of pure Divine Truth will be made apparent.*

3. The last example which we are to offer of the applicability of the Science of Analogies to the interpretation of the prophetic part of the Word of God, is to be taken from the writings of the Apocalyptic Divine; and we have selected his vision of spiritual Babylon; the relation of which, after mentioning that an angel came to shew him the vision, he commences thus: "So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilder-

* See the signification of *clouds*, when mentioned in Scripture, further illustrated in the Appendix, No. IV:

ness. And I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls; having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”* The description is continued through the whole of this and of the following chapter.

As soon as men began freely to examine the Scriptures, at the time of the Reformation, the palpable manner in which the Roman Catholic Religion is portrayed under the emblem of this woman, struck every mind; and from that time to this it has been generally admitted by Protestants, that the Harlot of Babylon is the Roman Catholic Church. The application is undoubtedly just: yet the deep reason of the various symbols employed, has not, perhaps, been generally seen. For instance: Why is she called, not Rome, but Babylon? Should it be answered, Because Babylon was the greatest enemy and destroyer of the church of God under the Mosaic dispensation: the question will recur, Why, under a dispensation of an entirely representa-

* Rev. xvii. 3 to 6.

tive character, was the king of Babylon made the instrument of destroying the metropolis of Judæa and the temple of God? Doubtless it must have been, because a representative character attaches also to Babylon, whenever it is named in the Holy Word: and if modern Rome is spiritually called Babylon, it must be, because the representative character of the Scripture Babylon has become the real one of the Roman Catholic Church.

(1.) When the situation of the places mentioned in the Holy Word, does not alone, as in the case of the land of Gog, indicate what principle they symbolize, it is necessary to note the chief circumstances predicated respecting them; which will generally point to the truth.

Among the various motives to action by which mankind are governed, there is none which exercises a wider influence than the love of power. This is little attended to among ordinary individuals, because cases do not often occur for its exercise in a very extended form; and the innumerable instances in which it displays itself in little matters, escape attention from the very circumstance of their frequency. Yet almost every family will furnish us with instances of persons who are desirous to domineer over those around them: and that the principle is deeply rooted in human nature, in its present state, is evinced by its spontaneous developement in the minds of the

young. One cannot become domesticated in a seminary for youth, without seeing it strongly displayed: even the greatest care on the part of the master can seldom prevent the exercise of cruel tyranny on the part of the stronger children over the weaker. But when we turn our view from private scenes to public, the monster stalks before us in the most gigantic form. How many conquerors, miscalled heroes, figure in the pages of history, who have spent their lives in the endeavour to aggrandize their power by the subjugation of the surrounding nations! and how many sovereigns, whom the vicinity of more powerful states has prevented from signalizing themselves by foreign conquests, have gratified their lust of dominion by striving to render their authority in their own kingdoms more absolute, setting their own will above the laws, and disposing at pleasure of the property and lives of their subjects! In short, the lust of dominion in private and in public, with the cruelty and oppression with which it is associated, is the source of the greatest evils which afflict mankind: even the lust of gold,—the *auri sacra fames*,—so celebrated for the mischiefs of which it is the origin, is, in comparison, a gentle demon. The lust of dominion, soften it as we may by the milder names of ambition and the love of power, is the most direful evil which can reign in the human heart: and it cannot be doubted, that, when en-

couraged there, and made the ruling motive of the life, it must finally sink its victim to the lowest gulf which yawns in the kingdom of darkness to swallow up the wicked of mankind.

But if the lust of dominion in general is of so direful a character, what must we think of it when it seeks to accomplish its ends by hypocritical pretences? If to endeavour to subjugate others to its own caprice by the arms of the flesh, is a crime of so deep a die; what does it become when it employs, in the same design, the artillery of heaven? If to desire to rule over all the kingdoms of the world, is so corrupt a lust; what words can express its atrocity, when it seats itself on the pinnacle of the temple, and arrogates such a sovereignty as belongs to God alone? This, it must be admitted, is the worst form which the lust of dominion can ever assume. And this most dreadful form of this most pernicious lust, is what is specifically represented by Babylon in the Holy Word: as will appear by noticing what is generally predicated of it in the passages where it is mentioned.

The place which the Greeks called Babylon was by the Hebrews called Babel. The first occasion on which it is mentioned in Scripture, is, when its first building is related. It is said to have been built by Nimrod; and its representation may in some degree be gathered from the character given of its founder, of whom it is

said, that "he began to be a *mighty one* in the earth," and that "he was a *mighty hunter* before the Lord*;" by which is generally understood, that he was a hunter whose game was men,—a conqueror whose pursuit was power. Next we have an account of the erection of the tower of Babel: and the purpose of the builders is so stated, as to leave no doubt of the symbolic meaning of the place they built: for they said, "Go to, let us build us a city, and a tower whose top may *reach unto heaven*, and let us *make us a name*."† Whatever might be the nature of the historical fact here referred to, it is plain that the terms in which it is related must be intended to convey a spiritual meaning: for it is impossible to suppose that any persons could think it practicable literally to build up to heaven: under this mode of expression, then, is intimated the desire of some who lived at that time, to found a dominion that should arrogate authority over the souls of men as well as ^{their} bodies.

But there is no passage which exhibits more plainly than is done in a prophecy of Isaiah, the meaning of Babylon, as denoting the lust of ruling over both the bodies and souls of men, by perverting the doctrines of the church, and inventing fictions and imposing them as such doctrines, so as to establish, by their means, an unlimited

* Gen. x. 8, 9. † Ch. xi. 4.

dominion. The prophet exclaims, "How art thou fallen *from heaven*, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground which didst weaken the nations? For thou saidst within thy heart, I will *ascend into heaven*, I will *exalt my throne above the stars of God*, I will also sit upon the mount of the congregation in the sides of the north, I will *ascend above the heights of the clouds*, I will be *like the Most High*."* It is from this passage that the prince of the devils has acquired the name of Lucifer: yet whoever will attentively read the whole chapter, must see clearly, that this name is not given to any individual evil spirit, but that the pride of dominion, represented by the city of Babylon, is what is thus named and described. For when the subject is opened, it is said to the true church, "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of *Babylon*†;" and towards the conclusion it is said, "I will rise up against them saith the Lord, and cut off from *Babylon* the name and remnant, son and nephew, saith the Lord‡," &c. Thus it is plain, that Lucifer is a personification of the kind of lust of domination represented by Babylon: and that this is the lust of obtaining dominion by using spiritual things as instruments for that purpose, and of arrogating authority over the souls of men as well as their bodies, is evident from Lucifer's being de-

* Isa. xiv. 12, 13, 14. † Ver. 4. ‡ Ver. 22.

described as saying, "I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will be like the Most High."*

We will pass on to Daniel, who, writing his prophecies at the place itself, whither he had been carried captive, treats largely of Babylon, and consequently of that species of the lust of dominion of which Babylon was a type. Nebuchadnezzar relates a dream, in which he says, "I saw, and behold a tree in the midst of the earth, and *the height thereof was great*. The tree grew and was strong, and the *height thereof reached unto heaven*, and the sight thereof to the end of all the earth."† In the interpretation of

* It should also be observed, that the words in our translation, "the mount of the congregation," are better given by Bishop Lowth, "the mount of the divine presence:" for the original term translated "congregation," though it is expressive of *meeting together*, does not, in this use, merely mean the assembling together of the people, but the meeting together of God and man. The tabernacle, and afterwards the temple, were called the tabernacle and temple, not, as in our version, *of the congregation*, but *of meeting together*, because in them the divine presence was manifested, and God was considered to meet with man: and the same title was thence transferred to mount Zion, on which the temple stood. When therefore Lucifer declares his purpose of establishing himself on *the mount of meeting together*, the meaning is, that he, as representing the principle which we have described, would interpose himself between God and man, to become the self-constituted organ of dispensing the divine behests to mankind.

† Dan. iv. 10, 11.

this dream, Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar, “The tree which thou sawest, whose *height reached unto heaven*, and the sight thereof to all the earth,—it is thou, O king, that art grown and become strong: for thy greatness is grown and reacheth unto heaven, and thy dominion unto the ends of the earth.”* Nebuchadnezzar, as being the king of Babylon, bears the same typical representation as Babylon itself: and here we find the circumstance of *reaching to heaven*, so often mentioned when Babylon is treated-of, again introduced; because it is a phrase expressive of the claiming of dominion over the souls of men; whilst the *reaching to the ends of the earth* as plainly implies the pretension to universal dominion over their bodies. The blind presumption which accompanies such pretensions, is represented by Belshazzar’s impious feast, which was interrupted by the hand writing on the wall; on which occasion it is related, that “they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king and his princes, his wives and his concubines, drank in them; they drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone†:” by which was represented the profanation of which those are guilty who are principled in that love of domination of which Babylon and her kings were

* Ver. 20, 22.

† Chap. v. 3, 4.

types, in consequence of their assuming the appearance of sanctity, and making all the holy doctrines and rites of the church minister to the gratification of their insane lust. The same assumption of authority in sacred affairs was represented by the command of Nebuchadnezzar, that all people, nations, and languages, should fall down and worship the golden image that he had set up, under pain of being cast into a burning fiery furnace*: and the pretensions to a power absolutely divine are appropriately expressed by the decree of Darius, when he had obtained possession of Babylon, "that whosoever, for the space of thirty days, should ask a petition of God or man, save of the king only, should be cast into the the den of lions."†

Many other testimonies to the character of Babylon might be adduced; but these will surely be sufficient to evince, that the lust of dominion, when it seeks to obtain its end by prostituting to its purpose the doctrines and all the sanctities of religion, is what is signified by Babylon, or to represent which, Babylon, as a suitable type, is employed in the Divine Word. To ascertain, then, whether Babylon, in the Apocalypse, bears any allusion to the Romish Church, it is only necessary to ask, Has the Romish Church aimed at such dominion, and by such means? The answer is to be read in every page of the history

* Chap. iii. 4, 5, 6.

† Ch. vi. 7.

of Europe, during the ages that preceded the Reformation of Luther.*

* History will discover to us the practice of the Romish Church; the principles from which the practice proceeded are well brought together in a recent popular work: take the following as a specimen: "According to the Canons, the Pope was as far above all kings, as the sun is greater than the moon. He was King of kings, and Lord of lords, though he subscribed himself the Servant of servants. His power it was which was intended, when it was said to the Prophet Jeremiah, 'Behold, I have this day set thee over nations and kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.' It was an incomprehensible and infinite power, because 'great is the Lord, and great is his power, and of his greatness there is no end.' The immediate and sole rule of the whole world belonged to him, by natural, moral, and divine right; all authority depending upon him. As supreme King, he might impose taxes upon all Christians; and the Popes declared it was to be held as a point necessary to salvation, that every human creature is subject to the Roman Pontiff. That he might lawfully depose kings, was averred to be so certain a doctrine, that it could only be denied by madmen, or through the instigation of the Devil; it was more pernicious and intolerable to deny it, than to err concerning the Sacraments.—All nations and kingdoms were under the Pope's jurisdiction, for to him God had delivered over the power and dominion in heaven and earth.—The Spouse of the Church [as he was called] was Vice-God: men were commanded to bow at his name, as at the name of Christ; the proudest sovereigns waited upon him like menials, led his horse by the bridle, and held his stirrup while he alighted: and there were ambassadors, who prostrated themselves before him, saying, O thou, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us!

"The advocates of the Papal power proclaimed,—that all

Thus we see that the true reason, why Babylon, in the Revelation, is mentioned as a symbol of the pontifical decrees ought for ever to be observed by all men, like the Word of God, to be received as if they came from the mouth of St. Peter himself, and held like canonical Scripture.—Even this monstrous proposition has been advanced, that although the Catholic Faith teaches all virtue to be good, and all vice evil; nevertheless, if the Pope, through error, should enjoin vices to be committed, and prohibit virtues, the Church would be bound to believe that vices were good and virtues evil, and would sin in conscience were it to believe otherwise. He could change the nature of things, and make injustice justice. Nor was it possible that he should be amenable to any secular power, for he had been called God by Constantine, and God was not to be judged by man: under God, the salvation of the faithful depended on him; and the commentators even gave him the blasphemous appellation of our Lord God the Pope! It was disputed in the schools,—whether he did not, as God, participate both natures with Christ; and whether he was not more merciful than Christ, inasmuch as he delivered souls from the pains of purgatory, whereas we did not read that this had ever been done by our Saviour. Lastly, it was affirmed that he might do things unlawful, and thus could do more than God!”

Nor were the inferior clergy left without a handsome participation in this plenitude of power. It having been determined that the sacramental bread was changed, when consecrated, into the real body of the Lord; it was held that “the Priest, when he performed this stupendous function of his ministry, had before his eyes, and held in his hands, the Maker of heaven and earth; and the inference which they deduced from so blasphemous an assumption was, that the Clergy were not to be subject to any secular authority, seeing they could create God their creator! Let it not be supposed,” says our author, “that the statement is in the

corrupt Romish Church, is, because the governing powers of that church have been inflamed with the lust of universal dominion over both the souls and bodies of men, and have profaned the most holy things by making them subservient to that object; and because of this principle, whether existing in the Romish Church or in any other, Babylon, in the Scriptures, is constantly the symbol.

(2.) We have examined at some length the signification of Babylon, this affording a key to the whole prediction. The circumstances predicated of this personification of Babylon, in the verses quoted above, will be found, when explained, to be in perfect harmony with the signification of the woman herself; and as the slightest part exaggerated; it is delivered faithfully in their own words." *Southey's "Book of the Church," Vol. i. ch. 10.*

As a further sample of the manner in which the Romish hierarchy, in the days of their prosperity, profaned the Scriptures by applying them to support their extravagant pretensions, take the following extract of a letter from *Saint Thomas Becket* to the Pope: "It is by forbearance on our side that the powers of the world grow insolent, and kings become tyrants, so as to believe, that no rights, no privileges, are to be left to the Church, unless at their pleasure. But blessed is he who taketh and dasheth their little ones against the stones! For if Judah does not, according to the command of the law, root out the Canaanite, he will grow up against him, to be perpetually his enemy and his scourge. *Ibid. Vol. I. ch. 8.*

analogical reasons of their signification are for the most part pretty obvious, they need not detain us long.

The appearance of the harlot was extremely splendid: she was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and decked with precious stones and pearls, and held in her hand a golden cup. It is generally supposed, that these things are mentioned, to describe the magnificence and splendour of the Roman Catholic worship, and the super-royal grandeur of the Papal Court; and, in their literal sense, the words will very well bear this application. But this is not the *spiritual* meaning of the terms; which properly imply, that that church assumes, externally, an appearance as if she were the true bride of the Divine Bridegroom, decorated with all the spiritual elegancies which ought to distinguish the true church, whilst, internally regarded, the opposite of this is her state. Garments are always mentioned in reference to the truths possessed by the wearer; as may appear from the passage of the Psalms noticed above, in which *light*, the proper emblem of the purest *truth*, is ascribed to the Lord as *his garment*. The colours and other ornaments of the garments, express the quality of the truth, of which the wearer enjoys, or boasts, the possession. Red colours bear an acknowledged analogy to fire and warmth, which as plainly

answer, by a spiritual analogy to the principle of love: hence the purple in which this woman was arrayed, being an extremely deep and intense red*, represented the appearance which the Popish religion assumes, of possessing, from the truths of the Word, the highest order of good, being that which in the Scriptures is denominated the love of the Lord; and the scarlet, which is a bright red mixed with flame-colour, and reflecting a great deal of light, represented the appearance of possessing, from the same source, the highest order of truth, being that which proceeds from, and leads to, love to the Lord. By gold is here specifically meant that species of good which the Scriptures call love towards the neighbour: and by precious stones and pearls, on account of the sparkling light which they emit, are signified specific points of knowledge on heavenly subjects. By the golden cup in the woman's hand, this being a vessel for containing *liquids*, is signified the doctrine of that religion, which is "the wine of her fornication," with which "the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk †:" it is said to be a *golden* cup, to intimate that her doctrine is made outwardly to appear as if it were founded in goodness: but by its being said to be "full of abominations and filthiness," is signified, that

* This was the colour called purple in the Scriptures.

† Verse 2.

such appearance is merely assumed to ensnare the well-disposed, whilst in reality every good and every truth in that religion are adulterated and profaned.*

But John saw the true character of the Romish Religion revealed in the name written on the woman's forehead: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The name is called "Mystery," because it discloses that which the Babylonians wish to conceal. When we are apprised that by Babylon is signified the lust of ruling over all mankind, and even over heaven itself, we need not wonder that it is called "Babylon *the great*;" for none think themselves so great as those who are under the influence of this self-magnifying appetite. And this will explain, as we shall see presently, why Babylon personified is called "the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." It is generally admitted that the spiritual signification of adultery, is idolatry: for it is mentioned in Scripture in a variety of places where the natural crime cannot be meant. Thus Jehovah says by the prophet, "And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery, I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah

* For a sample of the abominations and filthiness with which the cup of Popish doctrine is full, see the Note above, p. 371.

feared not, but went and played the harlot also :” and in the verse following it is said, that she “ committed adultery with stones and with stocks.”* Here, Israel and Judah are regarded as the wives of the Lord; consequently, the adultery with which they are reproached, is their infidelity to him, which, by the clearest analogy, is the adultery of the Church: stones and stocks are mentioned, for idols made of stone and idols made of wood; and to commit adultery with these, is to turn from the worship of the Lord to the worship of idols. And has not Rome been guilty of this sin? How many idols has she literally set up, to share with the Lord the worship of her disciples, or to draw them entirely away from him, who is the true husband of the Church!

It is necessary, however, to observe, that it is possible to be spiritually a harlot, and yet not to offer outward worship to any but the true God: for this is also done by those who pervert the genuine truths of the Divine Word, applying them in such a manner as to favour any sentiment which is not true and good; especially when they are so misapplied as to seem to confirm any doctrine that has nothing for its end but the gratification of selfish and corrupt inclinations. The proper partner of truth is goodness, and the proper partner of goodness is truth; but

* Jer. iii. 8, 9.

when an unnatural union is effected between truth and evil, or good and a false persuasion, it is adulterated and defiled. And this is perpetually done by spiritual Babylon. For as Babylon represents the love of domineering over others by means of the spiritualities of the church; and as the genuine doctrines and truths of the church are diametrically opposite to such a lust; they cannot be applied to promote its purposes, till they are quite wrested from their genuine import, and utterly perverted: and so to pervert them is to adulterate and profane them, thus, to apply them to the purposes of spiritual adultery. And as the lust of dominion, signified by Babylon, is perpetually doing this; therefore is she called, with the strictest propriety, "the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."*

But the Babylonian harlot is described as guilty of another vice: she is said to be drunken, and that too with a more maddening beverage than wine; for she was "drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the

* Some examples of the adulteration, by Babylon, of the truths of Scripture, by applying them to support her blasphemous pretensions, occur in the Note above, p. 371. It is also well known what a superstructure of imposture she has erected upon the text relating to the giving of the keys to Peter, combined with that in which Jesus Christ says, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth."

martyrs of Jesus." To be drunken, is a phrase sometimes used in the Scriptures, as in Ezekiel's address to the fowls and beasts, merely to express abundance; but when, as is more common, intoxication is implied, its meaning will appear from observing the spiritual analogy of that state. As man, by natural ebriety, sinks from a rational being to a merely animal one, and yet generally thinks himself, at such times, more rational than those whose intellects are undisturbed; so the man who is spiritually intoxicated, though he may retain the faculty of natural rationality, is deprived of intelligence in spiritual subjects, and is, in regard to these, in a manner insane; yet he, also, commonly exults in his madness, and thinks himself wiser than others. Ebriety, then, in Sacred Writ, denotes insanity with respect to spiritual subjects, and an exulting profession of false sentiments for true ones. But why is the Woman's intoxication ascribed to her drinking the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus? This is commonly supposed to refer to the barbarous persecutions and cruel murders which have stained the hands of the Romish hierarchy: but though the literal sense is here also very applicable, something beyond this is implied by the expressions. It is to be remembered, that the word "martyr" is Greek, and means *a witness*; as the word "saint" is from the Latin, and means *a holy one*. The

holy ones of Scripture, are those whose lives are purified and made holy, by their reception, in affection, of the genuine truths of the Word; and, abstractedly they are those truths themselves: and the witnesses of Jesus are those who, by the same means, are enabled to bear the testimony which their name implies; and, abstractedly, they are those truths of the Word which point to the Lord and unfold his true character. To shed the blood, then, of the saints or holy ones, is to destroy, by false interpretations, those truths of the Divine Word which lead immediately to holiness of life; and to shed the blood of the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus, is to destroy, by the same means, those truths which lead to the correct and saving knowledge of the Lord. This has been done in abundance by the perverse expositions of the Romish Church; and in proportion as she has done it, and has drunk the blood thus shed,—that is, has imbibed, not the pure truth of the Word, but the most wilful violations of it, which is the signification of blood when shed unlawfully,—her spiritual intoxication has increased; till she has boasted herself infallible, and has exulted in the persuasion that her proud pretensions would be admitted for ever; till she has said in her heart, “I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.”*

* Chap. xviii. 7.

In all the particulars, then, of the description of the harlot of Babylon, we find an exact delineation of the corruptions which take place, when the lust of dominion intrudes itself into the church, and applies all the sanctities of religion to its own aggrandizement: and because this has been the case, to a most deplorable extent, in the Church of Rome, her portrait is, in this description, so readily to be discerned.

These specimens are what it was deemed necessary to offer, to evince the applicability of the Science of Analogies, as a Rule of interpretation, to that part of the Word of God which is delivered in the style of prophecy. As before remarked, the brevity which it has been necessary to consult, has rendered it impossible to give the full proof which might be desired of the meaning of every symbol which we have had to consider; yet enough has perhaps been advanced, to shew that the truth of every interpretation which has been offered is at least highly probable, and to render it morally certain, that the system of Analogy between natural things and spiritual, affords the true and only key for the decyphering of the language of the prophetic Scriptures. The principles laid down at the beginning of this Lecture, on the character which must necessarily belong to the Divine Style of Writing, must be borne in mind. If,

as stated above, in a written revelation from God, the Divine Truth must clothe itself with ideas and images taken from the world of nature before it could be presented to man; and if the Divine Style of Writing must thus follow the Law of that Analogy which indissolubly connects natural objects and ideas with such as are spiritual and divine;—it will follow, that the spiritual and divine wisdom which such a revelation must contain within it, could only be understood by a right application to it of this Law. And if on an application of this Law to the books called the Holy Scriptures, it should be found that they exhibit a coherent series of spiritual and divine instruction; it will follow further, that the Scriptures are such a revelation of Divine Truth presented to man in natural language; that they are the Divine Speech, or Divine Word, which has emanated from the bosom of Deity into this lowest sphere of creation. In regard to the prophetic parts of the sacred code, it is hoped, that their title to this character has now, in some measure, been evinced; and if so, the claims of the Holy Scriptures to Plenary Divine Inspiration, will, so far, have been established.

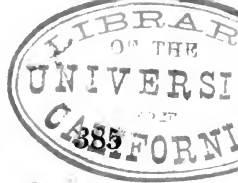
LECTURE V.

PROOFS AND ILLUSTRATIONS CONTINUED.

- I. *Applicability of the Law which governs the Relation between natural objects and spiritual and divine essences,—or of the Science of Analogies,—as a Rule for the interpretation of the Historical Parts of the Divine Word.*
1. *Sentiments of Biblical Critics, and admissions of Expositors, on the typical nature of the Scripture History.*
2. *Necessity of making the system uniform.*
- II. *Just Ideas of the nature and uses of the Israelitish Dispensation necessary to the right apprehension of the Israelitish History.*
- III. *Examples of the light which results from the application of the Rule of Analogy between natural things and spiritual to the Scripture Histories: Instances selected; 1. The miraculous capture of Jericho; (Josh. vi.) 2. Jephthah and his vow; (Judges xi.) 3. The combat of David and Goliath; (1 Sam. xvii.) 4. The circumstances attending the Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.*
- IV. *Examples of the light which results from the*

application of the Rule to the Ceremonial Precepts of the Divine Word: Instances selected; 1. The Sacrifices in general: 2. The prohibition of various kinds of meats: (Lev. xi.) 3. The Law of the Nazarite: (Numb. vi.) 4. Baptism and the Lord's Supper; which were instituted under the Christian Dispensation as an Epitome of the whole Ceremonial Law.

HAVING, in our last Lecture, endeavoured to shew what the truly Divine Style of Writing must necessarily be, and to evince that the Law of that Analogy which connects natural objects and ideas with such as are spiritual and divine, must afford the Rule for its interpretation; we inferred, that if the books which claim to be the Word of God can be decyphered by the application to them of this Rule, so as to yield, in every part, a coherent sense, worthy of a Divine Author; this will prove that they are composed in the Divine Style of Writing, and that they must have been given by a Plenary Divine Inspiration. The theorem which we meant to propose may perhaps be more distinctly stated thus: A Divine Composition must be written in a peculiar Divine Style: The Divine Style must follow the Law of that Analogy, which, as was before proved, connects natural objects and ideas with



THE SCRIPTURES ASSERTED, &c.

such as are spiritual and divine; being that by which the outward universe was first brought into existence, and by which it is still kept in connexion with its Divine Source, and thus is preserved: Every writing which is composed with undeviating regularity according to the Law of this Analogy, is composed in the truly Divine Style: Consequently, every such writing is a Divine Composition. 'This then must be true of the books commonly named the Word of God, if, on applying to their interpretation the Law of Analogy, they are found to be written according to it.

This inference will not be weakened by the fact, that other compositions may have been framed, by persons well acquainted with the Analogy of which we are speaking, in which the same Law, to a great extent, has been observed: for the knowledge of analogies in un-inspired writers can never be so complete, as to govern the selection of every expression; whereas, in the divine afflatus of real inspiration, every expression, to the minutest particle,—to every jot and tittle*,—would flow in agreement with this Law: and this is the case in the books of the Divine Word. Uninspired writers might frame compositions, which, in their leading points, should contain a spiritual sense; but not such as should carry a spiritual sense in one un-

* Matt. v. 18.

broken series throughout. But even supposing it possible for science to emulate the productions of inspiration with such exactness, that no difference could be discerned between them; this would not tend to invalidate the claims of the books which are called the Word of God; since, whatever such science might be capable of effecting, there is no reason for supposing that the writers of those books possessed it. Moses, indeed, who was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, might have some knowledge of it: but it could be shewn, that though it continued to be studied among some of the eastern nations, it was not known to the Jews, who were always a gross and ignorant people. Even if the prophets knew any thing of the science, it is certain that their writings were not artificially composed by it; they being evidently unpremeditated, spontaneous effusions, not the laboured productions of study. But it is perfectly clear, that when the books of the New Testament were written, no remains of the science were extant among the Jews; and as the style of writing composed of analogies appears in all its vigour in the latest of those books, the Revelation of John, it evidently is there the purely divine style of writing, which nothing but inspiration could have imparted to the writer. Our inference, then, remains unimpeachable; that if, on an application to the books which claim to be the

Word of God, of the Rule of interpretation afforded by the Analogy between natural things and spiritual, we every were obtain a coherent sense worthy of a Divine Author, those books had a Divine Author, and are written by a Plenary Divine Inspiration.

I. In our last Lecture, we endeavoured to give some idea of the mode of applying the rule of spiritual Analogy to the decyphering of the prophetic parts of the Scriptures. As introductory to this, we first confirmed, by the testimony of authors in high esteem, the general fact; that the prophecies of Scripture do include a meaning beyond that which appears immediately on the surface,—that they contain a double sense, the one applying to things natural and temporal, the other to things spiritual and eternal. We have seen, indeed, that the fact is so evident,—that it so openly forces itself upon the notice of a serious student of the prophetic writers,—as to be admitted by many who are by no means disposed to estimate too highly the character of the Word of God. We have even found, that learned men have laid down a Rule for the interpretation of the prophetic writings, which proceeds upon the same principle as that which, we are endeavouring to prove, is the true Rule for the interpretation of the whole of the sacred Scriptures. The Rule which they have adopted is that of Analogy

or Mutual Relation; only their analogies, being between certain natural things and certain other natural things, thus between things not sufficiently separate in their nature, are in some respects arbitrary and uncertain; whereas the analogies which we would point out, being between outward forms and inward essences,—between things essentially different, and yet so connected that the lower absolutely draw their origin from the higher,—are fixed and certain; they are founded in the unalterable relations of things, and are as immutable as the laws of nature; of which, indeed, they constitute a part.

Having seen that the Prophetic Writings may be consistently interpreted by the application of this rule, and are thus proved to be written by a plenary inspiration; we are now to proceed to try its applicability to the historical parts of the Scriptures.

1. The prophetic Scriptures form a species of Divine Writing, in which the mind more readily expects to meet with mysteries beyond what the letter exhibits. Laying out of the consideration its divine origin, we should not so naturally look for such mysteries in the plain language of history, of which a still greater portion of the Word of God consists: and yet in many parts even of the plainest of these histories, a further reference to things of a spiritual nature

is so obviously presented, that unless the mind be fortified against the admission of it by previous confirmations, it can hardly fail to see it as soon as it is pointed out. Accordingly, I find that the typical or symbolic character of many of the actions recorded, and of the persons mentioned, in the historical parts of the Word of God, is acknowledged by nearly all who receive the Scriptures as containing, in any degree, a divine Revelation. As we have before stated the sentiments of Biblical Critics on the double sense of Divine Prophecy, we will here deliver their views of the typical nature of Scripture History.

(1.) We will begin with those parts of Scripture History which record divine miracles; there being a general tendency in the Commentators, to admit, in the miracles, a typical representation.

In regard to these, the Rev. Mr. Horne, whose work, as being the most recent, I have repeatedly quoted, lays this down as one of the rules of Scripture interpretation: "Although the design of miracles is to mark the divine interposition, yet when perusing the miracles recorded in the Sacred Writings, we are not to lose sight of the moral and spiritual instruction concealed under them; and especially under the miracles performed by our Saviour."* This he confirms

* Introduction to the Scriptures, Vol. ii. Pt. ii. Ch. iv. § ii.

by this remark of the Rev. W. Jones. "All his [our Saviour's] miracles were undoubtedly so many testimonies that he was sent from God: but they were much more than this; for they were all of such a kind, and attended with such circumstances, as give us an insight into the spiritual state of man, and the great work of his salvation." This is a very important fact, and worthy of the most careful attention: it also leads to very important conclusions; since, by establishing the symbolic character of some of the historical transactions recorded in the Word of God, it naturally leads us to expect to find the same character in others; at least, if the miracles of the New Testament are clearly seen to be fraught with spiritual instruction, it will be very difficult to deny those of the Old to be equally replete with divine wisdom. We will therefore state a summary view of the purport of some of the miracles of Jesus Christ as offered by Dr. Jortin,—a writer whom we have had occasion to quote before, and who holds a high station among the sober and learned divines of the Church of England.

This author considers the spiritual import of the miracles as strengthening the argument which they afford for the truth of Christianity: thus, after having made on them, in reference to this argument, several remarks, he says, "To these I shall add *some proofs* which are more remote from

common observation, and which perhaps have not been sufficiently considered.—The miracles of Christ were prophecies at the same time : they were such miracles as in a particular manner suited his character : they were significant emblems of his designs, and figures aptly representing the benefits to be conferred by him upon mankind ; and they had in them, if we may so speak, a spiritual sense. So much may be urged in behalf of this interpretation of them, as shall probably secure it from being ranked among those fanciful expositions which are generally slighted by wise men.” Proceeding, then, to state his view of the Saviour’s miracles, he says, “ He cast out evil spirits, who were permitted to exert themselves at that time, and to possess many persons : by this he shewed that he came to destroy the empire of Satan, and seemed to foretell, that wherever his doctrines should prevail, idolatry and vice should be put to flight. —He gave sight to the blind—a miracle well suiting him who brought immortality to light, and taught truth to an ignorant world. *Lucem caliganti reddidit mundo*, applied by Q. Curtius to a Roman emperor, can be strictly applied to Christ, and to him alone. No prophet ever did this miracle before him, as none ever made the religious discoveries which he made. Our Saviour himself leads us to this observation, and sets his miracle in the same view, saying upon

that occasion, ' I am the light of the world : I am come into this world, that they which see not, might see.' He cured the deaf, and the dumb, and the lame, and the infirm, and cleansed the lepers, and healed all manner of sicknesses, to shew at the same time that he was the physician of souls, which have their diseases corresponding in some manner to those of the body, and are deaf and dumb, and impotent, and paralytic, and leprous, in a spiritual sense. He fed the hungry multitudes by a miracle ; which aptly represented his heavenly doctrine, and the gospel preached to the poor, and which he himself so explains, saying, ' I am the living bread which came down from heaven : if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever.' The fig-tree, which, with all its fair appearance was destitute of fruit, and died away at his rebuke, was plainly a figure of the Pharisaical religion, which was only outside shew ; and of the rejection and fall of the Jewish nation.—He raised the dead, — a miracle peculiarly suiting him, who at the last day should call forth all mankind to appear before him ; and therefore, when he raised Lazarus, he uttered those majestic words : ' I am the resurrection and the life : He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.' He performed some miracles upon persons that were not of his own nation, and it was so ordered by Divine Providence, that these persons,

as the Centurion, the Syro-phœnician woman, and the Samaritan leper, should shew a greater degree of faith and of gratitude than the Jews to whom the same favours were granted. This was an indication, that the gospel would be more readily received by the gentiles than by the Jews.”*—So, the two states of the Gadarene demoniac, while under the influence of Satanic possession, and when restored to his right mind, are explained by Mr. Jones†, as respectively representing the two states of man, first, while living in a course of sinful practice; and, secondly, when ‘renewed in the spirit of his mind;’ listening to the precepts of the gospel, and walking in holiness and righteousness.

Now surely it must be allowed, that the analogies here pointed out, though not always precisely such as a systematic study of spiritual analogies would dictate, are yet so plain and unquestionable, as to satisfy every one that the miracles wrought by Jesus Christ were not merely intended for the transient benefit of a few persons, in a single country, at a certain moment in the history of the world,—nor yet merely to stand recorded as instances of the divine power of Him who wrought them; but to exhibit lessons of perpetual instruction to weak

* Jortin's *Remarks*, &c. Vol. i. p. 255 to 261; (Ed. 1805,) where other examples are given.

† Cited by Horne, as above.

and erring man,—to lead him to reflect on his infirmities and deficiencies; and to point out where he may be relieved under them, by guiding him to the Omnipotent Physician of souls, the mighty Dispenser of spiritual nourishment.

(2.) But that the historical parts of the Word of God contain a reference to spiritual and divine subjects in other instances, as well as when delivering the account of miracles, is also universally acknowledged. Thus it is generally conceded, that the Scriptures of the Old Testament abound with *types* of things brought to light in the New. Of these, the writers on Scripture interpretation say there are three sorts; viz. legal types, prophetical types, and historical types: and the latter are thus described by Horne* from the works of Huet and Macknight: “Historical types are the characters, actions, and fortunes, of some eminent persons recorded in the Old Testament, so ordered by Divine Providence as to be exact prefigurations of the characters, actions, and fortunes of future persons who should arise under the Gospel dispensation. In some instances, the persons whose characters and actions prefigured future events, were declared by Jehovah himself to be typical, long before the events which they prefigured came to pass. But in other instances, many persons

* I do not here concern myself with the distinction which this author makes between a *type* and a *symbol*.

really typical were not known to be such, until after the things which they typified had actually happened,—they are consequently ascertained to be such by expositors and interpreters of the Scriptures, by fair probabilities agreeable to the analogy of faith. The most remarkable typical persons and things mentioned in the Old Testament,” he adds, “are Adam, Abel, Noah, Melchizedec, Isaac, the ram sacrificed by Abraham, Joseph, the pillar of fire, the manna, the rock in the desert whence water flowed, the scape goat, the brazen serpent, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Sampson, Samuel, David, Solomon, Jonah, and Zerubabel.” And he concludes with saying, “It would swell this chapter into a commentary upon very numerous passages of Scripture, were we to attempt to shew how clearly these characters, &c. correspond with their great antitype, the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

To this we will add the following remarks, on “the correspondences of types and antitypes,” from that very eminent author, Dr. Clarke: “*The analogies between the paschal lamb, and the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world; between the Egyptian bondage, and the tyranny of sin; between the baptism of the Israelites in the sea, and in the cloud, and the baptism of Christians: between the passage through the wilderness, and through*

* Vol. ii. Pt. ii. Ch. viii. § ii. 3.

the present world; *between* Jesus [Joshua] bringing the people into the promised land, *and* Jesus Christ being the Captain of salvation to believers; *between* the sabbath of rest promised to the people of God in the earthly Canaan, *and* the eternal rest promised in the heavenly Canaan; *between* the liberty granted from the time of the death of the high priest, to him that had fled into a city of refuge, *and* the redemption purchased by the death of Christ; *between* the high priest entering into the holy place every year with the blood of others, *and* Christ's once entering with his own blood into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for us: *these, I say, and innumerable other analogies, between* the shadows of things to come, of good things to come, *the shadows of heavenly things, the figures for the time then present, patterns of things in the heavens, and the heavenly things themselves, cannot, without the force of strong prejudice, be conceived to have happened by mere chance, without any foresight and design. There are no such analogies, much less such series of analogies, found in the books of mere enthusiastic writers living in such remote ages from each other. It is much more credible, and reasonable, to suppose, what St. Paul affirms, that these things were our examples; and that, in the uniform course of God's government of the world, all these things happened to them of old for examples, and that they are*

written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come: *And hence arises that aptness of similitude, in the application of several legal performances to the morality of the gospel, that it can hardly be supposed not to have been originally intended.*"*

It is to be observed, that Clarke and Jortin adduce *their* analogies, as affording strong evidence of the divine inspiration of the Word of God: if such is their tendency, when regarded as the result of arbitrary appointment rather than as the effects of a regular and universal Law; how strong indeed does their evidence become, when it is seen that the latter is their true character, and that this Law governs not only the analogies noticed by these writers, but every part of the Sacred Scriptures!—that, in fact, the Scriptures consist of analogies throughout, and such as do not depend for their meaning on simple appointment, or for their interpretation upon conjecture, but are inherent in the nature of things, and will abide the scrutiny of scientific investigation!

2. These large admissions and strong assertions on the subject of types, by the most esteemed writers on Scripture interpretation, are amply sufficient for the purpose for which we have quoted them:—they prove that the fact is in many

* Clarke's *Evid. of Nat. and Rev. Relig.* apud Jortin, Vol. i. p. 151.

instances unquestionable.* It is true that modern critics take great pains to limit and circumscribe their admissions on this subject. Some of them tell us, that although those things and persons mentioned in the Old Testament, whose typical character is expressly pointed out in the New, must have it allowed them, yet we are not to look for symbols in those things and persons, whose signification the New-Testament writers have not explained. The late Bishop of Calcutta, for instance, whose observations on the spiritual sense of Scripture we cited in our ~~first~~ ^{second} Lecture, while he contends for its necessity, restricts it thus: "Against the doctrine of a twofold explanation, what is to be urged? I know of no objection worthy of regard, unless it be said, that the door will thus be opened to the caprice of mystics and enthusiasts. But it is not for unauthorized applications that I contend; *it is only for those which have been made by Christ or his apostles.*"† But who does not see the futility of such a limitation? The New Testament must have been made a much larger volume than it is, were it designed to unfold every particular spiritual reference, contained in every particular part of the Old Testament, where a meaning beyond the letter is to be allowed.

* Ad propositum satis est, etiam in hoc sapientes vestros in aliquem modum nobiscum consonare. *Min. Felix.*

† Middleton on the Greek Article, p. 587.

Had not the argument of the Epistle to the Galatians led the apostle to mention the allegorical character of the history of Hagar and Sarah,—the introduction of which is purely incidental, and may almost be called accidental,—many critics would have decried the deducing of such a meaning from such a circumstance as an instance of unfounded presumption. So, Melchizedec is now one of the persons in the Old Testament, whose typical character is most cordially admitted: but had not the argument of the Epistle to the Hebrews incidentally led the writer to mention it, we must have concluded, upon these principles, that it did not exist. Indeed all the notices in the New Testament of the types in the Old, are introduced in the same incidental manner; and they are clearly mentioned, not to inform us, that although those persons and things had a typical reference, this does not apply to any others; but to instruct us, that such is the character of the Old Testament history in general. There cannot be a plainer inference than this: that if some persons and things mentioned in the Old Testament have a symbolic signification, so have others: and if it was not intended that we should make such an inference, what an unpardonable omission was it in the Apostles and Evangelists, when they cite passages from the Old Testament as having a spiritual signification, not to have guarded their quotations as

our modern critics would do!—not to have said to the reader, “Observe, this circumstance has a spiritual signification; but no others are to be interpreted upon the same principle, but such as we have expressly explained!” They, however, have not thus taken away the key of knowledge; on the contrary, by explaining the nature of the Holy Word in a few passages, they have given a key to the discovery of the whole. What they have explicitly unfolded, must be intended as a sample of the rest. *Ex pede Herculem*. If the Divine Word contains a divine meaning in one passage, undoubtedly it contains a similar meaning in every other. Suppose a man were presented with a casket of jewels, a few of them being also laid upon the lid as a sample: but suppose that, instead of opening the casket in search of more, he should affirm that it was not made to open at all, but was merely a solid log of wood, only to be admired for the singular workmanship of the outside: should we not wonder at his rusticity, and his unconsciousness of the treasure he possessed? Yet just such is the conduct of those, who, after seeing a few of the jewels of wisdom contained in the Divine Word brought to light by the Apostles, deny the letter to inclose any more.

But while we regard such conduct as highly inconsistent, we do not mean to censure too severely those who have adopted it. They have

done it to avoid what might prove a worse evil. The reason why mankind have become so unwilling to admit the typical and representative character of the historical parts of the Word of God, is precisely the same as that which has made them so reluctant to allow universally the double sense of prophecy;—the want of a Rule of interpretation sufficiently clear and decided to be applicable to the whole; and a laudable fear, without such a Rule, of indulging in uncertain conjecture. I trust however that the Rule which we have before laid down, arising out of the certain Relation existing in the nature of things between objects natural and spiritual, will be found equally capable of an application to this part of the subject. If so, all reasonable objection to the universally typical character of the Scripture history, will be removed. Bishop Middleton, we have seen, admits, that the opening of the door to capricious fancies, forms the only objection worthy of regard to the doctrine of a two-fold explanation; remove then this danger, and such minds as his would surely hail with joy a system, which relieves them from the necessity of treating the Word of God itself as a capriciously framed production.

But perhaps it will be said, Suppose we admit there to be a Relation of Analogy between all the productions of nature and certain moral,

intellectual, or spiritual essences; how will this prove that all the persons, cities, nations, and countries, with all the actions of men, and other contingent events, mentioned in the history of the Bible, are equally symbolic of moral and spiritual things? We answer, This was the result of a divine appointment, and overruling providence; still having for its basis the natural relation between things natural and spiritual, which includes, as was shewn in our last Lecture, an analogy between the relations of mind and the relations of place. Thus, for the sake of giving a code of divine wisdom more completely than could otherwise have been effected, a certain people was selected to *represent* a true church: the country they inhabited was made to assume a similar representation; and on all the surrounding countries, as briefly stated in our last, a representation was also induced of the principles connected with the former, more nearly or more remotely, and either in the way of subordination or of opposition. Who, for instance, does not see, that Egypt is a type of the natural state of man, and Canaan of his spiritual state, and that the forty-years' travels and troubles of the children of Israel in the wilderness, represent the temptations and trials by which man passes from the one state to the other? These types are so plain, that they have been recognized in all ages: but if the his-

tory of the Israelites, in this part of it, is symbolic, as it so certainly is, why may we not conclude all the other parts of it to be symbolic also? It is the denial of this truth, and not the assertion of it, that tends most to introduce uncertainty and capricious interpretation. As noticed in our last, it is the jumping at random from the spiritual sense to the literal, and from passages where commentators admit that types are presented to others where this is denied, without any sufficient guide to direct our judgment in the choice of either, that makes the interpretation of Scripture vague and unsatisfactory. To treat the Word of God as so irregular and inconsistent a production, most strongly tends, in fact, to bring its divine inspiration into doubt. A book that is of divine inspiration must be uniform throughout. If it has a spiritual signification in one place, it must in all. And most assuredly, whether we possess it or not, some universal Rule of interpretation must exist, which would make it every where harmonious.*

* We will here add an example of the inconsistency which must pervade the writings of Biblical Critics, whilst, on the question of spiritual or of merely literal interpretation, they halt between two opinions, reasoning at one time in favour of the former sentiment and at another in favour of the latter, and endeavouring to combine the two systems into one, by portioning out the Sacred Code between them. We have repeatedly cited Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures, as esteeming it a very valuable work, and because the learned

II. As a knowledge of the true nature of the Scripture history is of so great importance to the Author gives many strong testimonies in favour of the spiritual sense of the Divine Word: yet, led by the authority of some modern critics of high name, this intelligent writer repeatedly exhibits, on this subject, extreme vacillation, and sometimes so limits his admissions, and so counteracts his most decided assertions, as to make them almost nugatory. The following passage, for instance, would certainly lead the reader to conclude, that he ought, throughout the Scriptures without exception, to look for a spiritual sense: "Since we learn from the New Testament, that some histories, which in themselves convey no peculiar meaning, must be interpreted allegorically or mystically, (as Gal. iv. 22—24,) and that persons and things are there evidently types and emblems of the Christian dispensation, and its divine founder, as in Matt. xii. 40, John iii. 14, 15, 1 Cor. x. 4, and Heb. vii. 2, 3; it is plain that the mystical sense ought to be followed in the histories and prophecies of the Old Testament, and especially in such passages as are referred to by the inspired writers of the New Testament; who having given us the key by which to unlock the mystical sense of Scripture, we not only may, but ought, *cautiously* and *diligently* to make use of it. Where the inspired writers themselves direct us to such an interpretation, when otherwise we might not perceive its necessity, then we have an *absolute authority* for the exposition, which supersedes our own conjectures, and we are not only safe in abiding by that authority, but should be unwarranted in rejecting it."* Here he delivers his own sentiments; and though he particularly mentions the passages which have been explained in a sense different from that of the letter by the writers of the New Testament, he does not exclude any others. By and by, however, he introduces, from

* Vol. ii. Pt. ii. Ch. i. § v.

right understanding of the Word of God, we will here make upon it a few general observations. Beausobre, this limitation: "No mystical or typical sense ought to be put upon a plain passage of Scripture, the meaning of which is obvious and natural; unless it be evident from some other part of Scripture that the place is to be understood in a double sense."* But what a remarkable specimen of zig-zag observation, first running in one direction and then in another, have we in the following sentences! In favour of the reality and the superiority of the spiritual sense, he gives this excellent remark; "The literal sense, it has been well observed, is undoubtedly first in point of *nature*, as well as in order of signification; and consequently, when investigating the meaning of any passage, this must be ascertained before we proceed to search out its mystical import: but the true and genuine mystical or spiritual sense excels the literal in *dignity*, the latter being only the medium of conveying the former, which is more evidently designed by the Holy Spirit." Yet it seems that this sense so superior in *dignity*, and for the conveyance of which the letter is composed, is to withdraw upon occasion and leave its conveyance empty; for "Though the true spiritual sense of the text is undoubtedly to be most highly esteemed, it by no means follows that we are to look for it in every passage of Scripture!" We are not too easily to be satisfied with the mere shell, neither; for the sentence adds, "it is not, however, to be inferred that spiritual interpretations are to be rejected, although they should not be clearly expressed." But, after all, "the spiritual meaning of a passage is *there only* to be sought, where it is evident, from *certain* criteria, that such meaning was designed by the Holy Spirit."† These *certain* criteria are afterwards restricted within limits sufficiently narrow: but, assuredly, no criterion can be more certain, that a

* Vol. ii. Ch. viii. § iii. 9.

† Ib. Ch. vi.

tions, before we proceed to illustrate, by examples, the applicability of the Rule afforded by the science of analogies to its interpretation.

writing contains a spiritual sense, than, that it was actually dictated by the Holy Spirit, and proceeded from Him, all whose words are spirit and are life! Our author concludes his chapter "On the spiritual Interpretation of Scripture," with a specimen of similar vacillation: each sentence conveys an apprehension, that in the previous sentence he had gone too far: they are a series of checks and counterchecks: and he strikes the balance so exactly, that his remarks each way are equipoised, and nothing positive remains. He says, "In the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, there are two extremes to be avoided, viz. on the one hand, that we do not restrict such interpretation within too narrow limits; and, on the other hand, that we do not seek for mystical meanings in every passage, to the exclusion of its literal and common sense, when that sense is sufficiently clear and intelligible." It is to be remembered, that he had before admitted the literal sense to be "sufficiently clear and intelligible,"—so much so, that "we might not perceive the necessity" of a spiritual interpretation,—in many of the passages "where the inspired writers themselves direct us to such an interpretation." However, having now, at the expence of consistency with himself and with them, thus settled the two extremes, he dwells through two or three sentences upon the latter of them, and represents "the evils of spiritualizing the sacred writings too much" as so formidable, that the reader is in danger of forgetting the rule first laid down, that we are "not to restrict such interpretation within too narrow limits." Checking himself, therefore, he says, "In these strictures, the author trusts he should not be charged with improperly censuring that fair and sober accommodation of the historical and parabolical parts to present times and circumstances, or to the elucidation of either the doctrines or

To view this subject in its proper light, we ought to have just ideas of the nature of the

precepts of Christianity, which is sanctioned by the Word of God:—such an accommodation is perfectly allowable, and may be highly useful; and in some cases it is absolutely necessary.” But now he again fears that he has gone too far; so, checking himself again, he adds, “Let every truly pious man, however, be aware of the danger of extending this principle beyond its natural and obvious application,” &c.—It is thus that writers endeavour to hide their inconsistencies behind loose general terms. In a proper sense, certainly, the “natural and obvious application” of the principle of spiritual interpretation, is, to every part of the Word of God. If the Scriptures contain a spiritual sense at all, to assign this to some places and not to others is in the highest degree *unnatural*: and this capricious application of it is so far from being the *obvious* one, that it is contrary to what every person would expect, who considers the undeviating regularity which distinguishes all the works of God. Such a person, being previously assured that the Scriptures are the Word of God, on being told that they contain in some parts both a spiritual and a literal sense, and in others a literal sense alone, would think the assertion just as reasonable, as to be told, that some portions of the human race are constituted both of souls and bodies, and others of bodies only.

We have not made the above remarks from any inclination to depreciate Mr. Horne’s valuable “Introduction;” but merely to exemplify the difficulties and inconsistencies which are unavoidable, when the Word of God is regarded as not being a uniform work, but is supposed to be itself affected with the monstrous inconsistency, of being written upon one principle in one sentence, and upon a contrary one in the next. The blemishes we have noticed, do not belong, personally, to Mr. Horne, but to his system; and in them he

dispensation under which the Israelites lived. Of this Paul gives us plain intimations when he says, "that the law was our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ*;" and when he also says, of the festivals of the Mosaic ritual, that they were "a shadow of things to come, but the body is all†;" and, further, that "the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of those things, can never, with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect‡:" declarations which shew, that the Mosaic dispensation was merely an intermediate arrangement of the Divine Economy, established to form a necessary link in the great chain of the divine operations for

only follows other writers. Indeed, we think, upon this subject, that his own views are generally superior to those of the authorities whom he quotes; for some of the best of his remarks in favour of spiritual interpretation, are his own, whilst those which he introduces against it are adopted by him from others. The two or three puling sentences which we have last animadverted upon, are taken by him from *the Christian Observer*. Altogether, what he has said in favour of spiritual interpretation, having a strong base in reason and Scripture, cannot be overturned; what he has advanced against its universality, being loaded with a weight of inconsistency, has, of itself, a tendency to fall: and from a comparison of the whole the Biblical Student must, we should expect, be led to wish for a Rule of interpretation, which would vindicate the spiritual nature of the Word of God throughout, and exhibit it as an harmonious and coherent system.

* Gal. iii. 24.

† Col. ii. 17.

‡ Heb. x. 1.

the salvation of men, and to fill up the interval between the period when the pure internal worship and knowledge of divine things, which existed with the posterity of Adam and of Noah, were lost, and that in which they should be restored by the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. We thus, also, are instructed, that the rites, records, and prophecies, given to that church, were not so much given for their private advantage, as with a view to the permanent advantage of all nations under a future dispensation, in which should be imparted the knowledge and enjoyment,—the real substance and body,—of those divine things, which, among the Jews, were only symbolized and represented.

1. Whatever may be thought of that arrangement of the Divine Economy in the government of the world, by which the inconsiderable nation of the Israelites, occupying a country of inconsiderable extent, was selected from all others, and invested with privileges as the chosen people of God; and whatever reasons the sceptical mind may find for refusing to recognise them in that character; there yet are circumstances attending their history, which, upon any other hypothesis than that which admits their pretensions, it would be impossible to explain. The chief of these circumstances is the singular fact, that this nation, though by

no means so distinguished by attainments in arts, sciences, and literature, as some of those by which it was surrounded, alone maintained, through many hundred years, the great truth of the unity of God, and alone worshipped him as an Infinite Spirit, to attempt the representation of whom by sculpture or painting, is to be guilty of profanation; while even the most polished of the other nations of the globe were sunk in the grossest polytheism and the most senseless idolatry. That this superiority of the Jews above all other people, in their ideas of the most sublime of all subjects, arose from any superiority of intellect of their own, is a position which no admirer of classical antiquity will admit: nor, indeed, can it with any shadow of truth be asserted; since their own history abundantly evinces, that, of themselves, they were as prone to polytheism and idolatry as their neighbours. This was true of them from the highest in rank to the lowest,—from the priest and king to the meanest of the populace. Aaron, the brother of Moses and the first high priest, made a golden calf for the people to worship within a month or two after their deliverance from Egypt, and after witnessing those extraordinary displays of the power of Jehovah, in the execution of which he had himself been made a principal instrument; and Solomon, who had erected the temple of Jerusalem, even “his

heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared to him twice*," and he built places of worship for the idols of his foreign wives, at which he worshipped himself: whilst the bulk of the nation was so addicted to idolatrous practices, that they seldom entirely discontinued them; from the death of Joshua, presently after which "they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashteroth†," to the Babylonian captivity, which overtook them "because of their wickedness which they committed to provoke the Lord to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods."‡ These facts sufficiently evince what was the bent of that people's mind: it is evident then, that had not a succession of prophets arisen, who continually called them from the worship of idols to that of the one true God, this nation would have been as deeply immersed in ignorance respecting the nature and unity of the Divine Being, as the most stupid and superstitious of their neighbours. And whence did the prophets obtain their pure and elevated sentiments? Arising among a people as prone to the worship of stocks and stones as all those around them, and in the midst of nations, who, though in some respects more enlightened, never produced such witnesses to the one true God; whence could the prophets have received the testimony which they bore, but from Him to

* 1 Kings xi. 9.

† Judges ii. 13.

‡ Jer. xliv. 3.

whose truth they testified? Under all the circumstances of the case, the existence of the knowledge of the one true God, and the denial of all other gods, whether co-equal or subordinate, with the rejection of image-worship, in the religion of the Jews, are facts which admit of no rational explanation but that which the writers of the Jewish Scriptures advance:—that they were immediately taught them by the true God himself. The argument is an unanswerable one: it has been ably handled by many of the Christian advocates; and in their hands I leave it; the simple mention of it being all that is requisite to our present purpose.

But though the infidel can never satisfactorily account, on his principles, for the great fact just mentioned, he can raise difficulties from other sources, which some may find embarrassing. He objects, If the Jews were really chosen of God in preference to all other people, how comes it to pass that they were not better than all other people? And if God thought proper to reveal himself to man, how came he to shut up the knowledge thus revealed in a corner, and confine it so long to one of the most inconsiderable nations of the earth? It is remarkable that the circumstances thus made the ground of objection, are explicitly avowed, as if to anticipate the objections, in the writings of Moses: "Understand," he exclaims to the people, "that the Lord thy God giveth

thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiff-necked people.”* “The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people.”† These facts being so, it has been concluded, by all who are disposed to interpret them in a liberal manner, not that the Jews were not selected at all,—there being other considerations which so strongly prove the affirmative,—but that they were not selected for any private benefit intended to them above others, but to promote the designs of Divine Benevolence towards mankind at large, and thus for the eventual benefit of the whole human race. This also has been urged by many Christian writers. “Shall we dare,” it is well asked by Bishop Watson, “to accuse God of injustice, for not having distributed the gifts of nature in the same degree to all kinds of animals, when it is probable that this very inequality of distribution may be the means of producing the greatest sum total of happiness to the whole system? In exactly the same manner,” he adds, “may we reason concerning the acts of God’s especial providence. If we consider any one act, such as that of appointing the Jews to be his peculiar people, as unconnected with every other, it may appear to be a partial display of his goodness; it may excite

* Deut. ix. 6.

† Ch. vii. 7.

doubts concerning the wisdom or benignity of the Divine Nature. But if we connect the history of the Jews with that of other nations, from the most remote antiquity to the present time, we shall discover that they were not chosen so much for their own benefit or on account of their own merit, as for the general benefit of mankind.”*

Certainly, this is the reasonable conclusion; that the selection of the Jews as a peculiar people, or to form for a while the visible professing church, was a necessary link in the great chain of those divine operations, which have for their object to promote, in the greatest possible degree, the general welfare of the human race. And what if the very circumstances of their being “a stiff-necked people,” and “the fewest of all people,” were those which rendered them fitter than any other nation to fill the station to which they were appointed, and thus were the cause of their being selected for it? Paradoxical as this may sound, I apprehend it is the truth. A dispensation like that which Moses was the instrument of founding, was necessary, before the higher dispensation of the Christian Religion could be imparted: None could be the proper subjects of such a dispensation, but a people of an external but very peculiar character, little receptive of the interiors of religion, (which is the spiritual meaning of the epithet “stiff-

* Apol. for the Bible, Let. 4.

necked,") but capable, beyond those who look more at essentials, of attending to the minutiae of ceremonial worship, and of being impressed with a sense of sanctity during the performance of such worship: And none could be the actors in a ceremonial worship which was only to be performed in one place in the whole country, and at which place the whole male population was required to be present three times in a year, but a people few in number, and inhabiting a country of small extent. Thus the very qualities of being stiff-necked and few in number, were those which rendered the Jewish people fit to be subjects, in that peculiar era of the world, of such a dispensation as alone could be given at that era.

2. Assuming then that the Jews "were not chosen so much for their own benefit, as for the general benefit of mankind;" how did their selection conduce to this great end? I would answer, In two ways: first, in forming a church, which, as just stated, was necessary as a preparation for the Christian church, the establishment of which, and its exaltation to a more glorious state than has hitherto been seen, have always been intended by Divine Providence, as the means of imparting the greatest possible benefits to mankind: and, secondly, as furnishing the means by which the Holy Word might

be written in the form in which we now possess it; being that which is best adapted to render permanent the blessings of divine revelation, to make them the most extensive, and to secure them from perversion. We will remark upon the utility of the calling of the Israelites, for the accomplishment of both these objects.

(1.) It is evident to all who have reflected a moment on the subject, that the Divine Operations ever proceed by regular gradations and by orderly succession: they never jump to the end in view at once, but always act by a series of means terminating in the intended result: and where the actions of intelligent creatures intervene, it even appears that the Divine Providence so accommodates itself to their nature, as to allow them to act, to a certain extent, in contravention to its designs, permitting its own plans to be modified by them, yet so overruling the whole, as eventually to accomplish its own purposes, though, apparently, by a different course from that which would have been pursued, had not the intractability of self-willed creatures stood in the way. Thus, since much evil exists, which we are certain the Divine Being does not *will*, it cannot be said with truth, that “whatever is, is *right*”: yet, as we may be sure that no more evil is *permitted* than cannot be restrained without depriving man of his free-agency, and destroying him as a human being altogether; and as the

whole is so overruled as to be productive in the end of the greatest possible degree of good; we may say with the utmost confidence, that whatever is, is *best*.

That the divine operations proceed by regular gradations and in orderly succession, is evident from every production of nature. Look, for instance, at the origin and growth of a tree. A seed falls to the ground: its parts being at once softened by moisture and opened by warmth, it shoots in one direction a root into the earth and in the other a stem into the air, which successively increasing in height and thickness, and putting forth branches and leaves, till it has attained its proper maturity in a certain number of years, the tree at length bears its fruit, and yields again new seeds: and never is it perfected without passing through these stages. Look again at man, and consider him only as destined to fill a station in human society. He is born an infant: the faculties of his mind and body open by degrees, and more perfectly as they are assisted by culture: at length, in about twenty years, his frame acquires its perfect form and stature, and his rational powers also are fully developed: and then, and not before, he is capable of filling his place among his fellows in society. Now, though this is the end designed by his Creator from his birth, he never springs up a full grown man at once, nor are any of the steps of the pro-

cess necessary to his becoming such ever dispensed with. His growing up an adult human being and a rational creature, is, however, in the design of his Creator, only a lower end, subordinate to that of his becoming a subject of eternal happiness: but to this his own concurrence is necessary; wherefore here the Divine Creator allows his own operations and designs to be modified by the determinations and actions of his creature.

Now if in individual cases,—in the individual inhabitants of the world, and even in its inanimate productions,—the operations of the Divine Hand,—the dispensations of the Divine Providence,—so clearly follow a regular order and proceed by successive steps; unquestionably the case must be the same in regard to the human race in general, considered as a whole, and viewed in its progress from the beginning of creation to the latest evolutions of time. There can be no doubt that a similar order is observed in the Divine Economy as it regards the whole, as we see is observed in regard to each individual of each successive generation; and if we are not equally sensible of it, the reason must be, because our observation takes in so small a part of the chain; because we are only intimately acquainted with man as he is in the generation, and in the country, in which we live; and because the knowledge which we possess of former

times from history is extremely general and extremely partial, and does not reach, in an authentic form, except in the Scripture records which are very brief, to any very remote antiquity: it, moreover, is seldom studied by us for the light it may afford in regard to the history, not of political events, but of human nature. It is indeed a proverbial remark, that human nature is the same in all times and in all places. As to the general characteristics of human nature, no doubt this is true: but that its general characteristics appear under an endless diversity of modifications, is a truth equally certain. We see how great these diversities are, among the inhabitants of different countries and climates, the subjects of different governments, and the disciples of various forms of religion, even when, in time, they are all contemporaries: how numerous then must the diversities become, when remoteness of ages is also allowed its operation! The inhabitants of New Zealand are not more antipodes to the inhabitants of the British metropolis in physical than in moral geography: and it is probable, that neither the one nor the other can form an idea approximating to the truth respecting the character of the primeval inhabitants of the globe. But all these varieties must, unquestionably, be arranged by the Divine Operator in some certain order, such as is most conducive to the well being of the whole; more

especially the successive varieties, or the changes in the state of mankind during successive generations: and where the perverse self-will of man interferes, so to speak, with the divine designs, so as to prevent them from being accomplished in the most direct manner, still, doubtless, it is overruled so as to be subservient to them in the end. The divine designs are ever kept in view, and will finally take effect, although the operations of the Divine Providence to this purpose receive some modification from the intractability of the subjects on which it has to act. But even where they are resisted most, still a regularity of progression will be maintained. The course of a fever is as regular as the planetary motions: and whatever changes the self-will of man may occasion in his own state; and however Divine Wisdom may in consequence modify the operations of its Providence; still we cannot doubt that the whole is so arranged as to flow in most regular order, and that the revolutions of the human mind, occurring in successive ages, are guided in as certain a course as the revolutions of the solar system.

Such seem to be the views which reason would suggest respecting the order observed in all the proceedings of the Divine Economy and Providence; and the testimony of Scripture is to the same effect: it always represents the divine operations as regarding the fitness of times and states, and as never precipitating events till the suitable

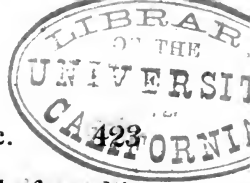
season has arrived; and also, as allowing the determinations of mankind to modify its arrangements. Thus, when the possession of Canaan is promised to Abraham, the state of the inhabitants at the time is assigned as a reason for deferring the fulfilment of the promise till the fourth generation; "for," says the Divine Speaker, "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full."* So, that most important of all events, the coming of the Lord in the flesh, is constantly referred to "the fulness of the time†:" and it would be ridiculous to suppose that the time thus spoken of is determined by any fore-ordained number of days and years, independently of the state into which it was foreseen that mankind would, in such a period, have come. As for the modifications which the arrangements for the bringing into effect the ultimate divine purposes,—not those purposes themselves,—receive from human determinations and actions; or the manner in which the Divine Providence adapts its proceedings to contingencies which man is allowed to determine; the Scriptures are full of examples: we will mention but one: Jesus Christ says "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings:

* Gen. xv. 16. † Gal. iv. 4, Eph. i. 10, Mark i. 15.

and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”*

Now it is evident from many passages in the New Testament, that the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the consequent raising up of a church that should look to him for salvation, was the purpose of God, even before the creation of the world. Paul declares that he was commissioned to preach “to the intent that now might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord†:” and Peter, speaking of Jesus Christ, says, “Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you.”‡ And it is evident that the passages in which Paul and Peter speak of the election and predestination of those to whom they write, do not allude to any divine decree passed from eternity in favour of them as individuals, but to an eternal purpose to raise up a church of believers in the Word Incarnate; and that all who sincerely enter the church thus eternally predestined and elected, are themselves called the predestinate and elect. Whatever may be the true mystery of “God manifest in the flesh,” certain it is that it was looked to from eternity as the only means of permanently effecting the union of God with his creatures, on which depends

* Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. † Eph. iii. 10, 11. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 20.



their salvation. But it, nevertheless, before this could take place so as to be productive of its full effect, it was necessary that certain preparations should intervene, and even, as it would appear, that the human mind should be allowed to descend into the lowest state into which it could fall without degenerating from the human into the merely animal nature: then it will be seen that such a dispensation as that given to the Jews was required to fill up the last and darkest portion of the intermediate time. Doubtless the dispensation of divine benefits under which the primitive inhabitants of the world lived, even after sin had entered, was of a higher and more interior nature than any that could be given afterwards: but this became so entirely corrupted, that an end was put to the church which lived under it by the flood. The proper time and and suitable state being not yet arrived for the coming of the Second Adam, a new dispensation, evidently of a different nature from the former, and not of so interior a character, that being no longer suited to the more external state into which man had descended, was given to Noah and his posterity. Mankind continuing still to fall lower and lower, this dispensation also suffered perversion, and from its ruins arose all the idolatries of the eastern world. Still the time and state had not arrived for the appearance of the Great Restorer: wherefore, mankind being

disposed to rest in the mere externals of religious worship, with little regard to its essence in the heart and mind, a dispensation was given, in which the rituals of worship, being prescribed by divine wisdom, and agreeably to the laws of that analogy between natural things and spiritual by which divine essences descend into material forms, were effective of a communication between God and man, sufficiently to keep mankind in a salvable state, till "the fulness of time" should have arrived for the appearance of God in the flesh.

Thus it appears that the human mind passed through a series of successive changes, descending still lower and lower, or becoming continually of a more gross and external character, but still proceeding with the utmost regularity, from the creation of man to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ: and it appears also, that the economy of Divine Providence, adapting itself to man's various states, by affording new dispensations of the divine will as the previous ones became perverted, continued to furnish to man, in every state, the means of salvation. It is also easy to conceive, that, in the course of these progressions, a state might occur, which was suited for the establishment of such a dispensation as was given to the Jews, and for no other: in which case, it was worthy of the Divine Being to give such a dispensation.

But is it objected, that, allowing that a period may have occurred in the history of the human mind in which no other dispensation of divine things than such as was communicated to the Israelites would have been suited to the state of mankind, this does not account for its being confined to one small nation? that still it was unjust to deprive the rest of the world of its benefits? It may be answered, that probably other nations enjoyed advantages in consequence of this arrangement, which they could not have enjoyed, had not the Jews filled the station which they actually did in the Divine Economy, constituting, for a time, the visible church of God upon the earth. This may sound like a paradox, yet perhaps it will not be difficult to shew that it is true.

All that we know of the Divine Economy leads to the conclusion, that the existence of a church on earth in which the true God is known, and of persons in that church by whom the true God is worshipped in sincerity, are necessary to the well-being, perhaps to the continuance in existence, of the whole human race. Whoever believes, as every reasonable creature must believe, God to be the sole fountain of life, will easily see that if all communication could be cut off between him and his creatures, the latter must immediately fall into annihilation. All must likewise see, that the communication between God

and his creatures must be more direct, and the life of which he is the source must be received in greater fulness, when just ideas are entertained of him, and when, with corresponding affections of the heart, the mind is turned towards him its proper centre: may it not then be considered as highly probable, that they who possess this just knowledge of him, and thus receive in its highest degree the life which flows from him, form channels by which an adequate measure of it is conveyed to others? that they afford a chief connecting link by which the Creator is united to his creation? This, at least, is conformable to the order we see observed in other things. Look at the human frame: We see in it two principal organs,—the heart and the lungs,—upon the action of which the life of the whole depends: They do not constitute the whole of the body; but the whole of the body lives by its connexion, in all its parts, with them: Thus they are the *media*, by which life, originally from the Source of Life, actuates the corporeal members. But the more immediate living principle in the body is the brain; this being the organ of the soul, which lives in a sphere nearer to the Deity. Though the action of the heart and lungs are necessary to the life of the other parts of the body, their action could not continue a moment if all the nerves were separated which connect them with the brain:

from this they receive the life, which they dispense through the body. It is true that the brain also communicates immediately with all the other parts of the body, which thence derive all their powers of motion and sensation: yet they only can receive these from the brain so long as they remain also in communication with the heart, separated from which they wither and perish. Now may we not say, that what the brain is to the human frame, God is to the whole human race? He communicates with the soul of every individual on the globe, as the brain communicates with every member and fibre in the body; but may it not be necessary, in order to man's reception, at least, of *spiritual* life from this communication, that there be some among the mass who should be to the rest what the heart and lungs are to the other members? Who can these be, but those who have a genuine knowledge of God from revelation, and who are thence capable of being animated by the purest affections, directed by the highest intelligence? May it not then be reasonably presumed, that the existence of a church in the world, favoured with the light of revelation, is necessary to the well-being of the whole human race? And this the Lord Jesus Christ evidently inculcates, when he says to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth," and "Ye are the light of the world."*

* Matt. v. 13, 14.

But although it is necessary to the welfare of mankind that God should have a church on the earth in which he is known by revelation; and although it is a high privilege to belong to it; it may not be necessary that all mankind should be admitted to that privilege, any more than it is necessary that the body should be all heart. If a church exists any where, all mankind are benefited through it in a secret manner: a union is thus maintained between the world and its Maker, of which all the human race enjoy the advantages: but it may not be necessary that they should all be stationed in the direct channel of communication. It does indeed appear to be predicted in Scripture, that a time shall come in which the knowledge of God by means of his Word will become general throughout the earth: yet it cannot be expected that its influence will ever become every where the same: there will always be a centre in which its truths will be more clearly understood, and the life to which they lead more eminently cultivated; and this centre will be as a heart to the rest. Future ages are no doubt destined to behold a great amelioration of the human race: but none suppose that the highest point at present attained is to remain immovable till all mankind have arrived at it: the amelioration then will be effected by a proportionate elevation of the whole. The portion of mankind who are the

subjects of that true civilization, with its accompaniments, moral and scientific, which is the result of religion derived immediately from revelation, may be compared to a pyramid, of which those which are in the highest light constitute the apex: now the sphere of human improvement derived from this source may go on extending, till it has reached the darkest corners of the earth: but it will always retain its pyramidal form; and the wider the base, the higher will be the summit. But if such is to be the state of the human race when "the eternal purpose" of God shall have had its full effect, and under a dispensation which brings real advantages to all who become its subjects, very different must have been the case during the times which "God winked at*," or when the human race at large was in its lowest state of decline, and under a dispensation which conferred little superiority on those to whom it was given. A church in which God was known by revelation, to form in a manner the heart of the world, was then also necessary: but it was not necessary, to its acting in that capacity, that its members should be numerous. To carry on the simile: in the human frame, a strong action of the heart is indispensable to high health and superior vigour, and perhaps the general powers are all exalted by the increase of its energy, so long as the energy of the brain keeps pace with

* Acts xvii. 30.

and controls it; but a very weak and languid action is sufficient to the mere continuance of life: applied to the moral frame of the world, the former state is that which the Divine Benevolence aims eventually at producing; the latter was all that, at the time when the Jewish Church existed, the state of mankind admitted. If it is true, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, that the Lord's disciples, or the members of his Church, are "the salt of the earth," it also appears to be true, from the same authority, that even the existence of a small quantity of this salt is sufficient for the preservation of the mass: thus, could ten real servants of the Lord have been found in Sodom, it would have been preserved: and, to reverse the mode of statement, the destruction of the kingdom of Israel would have taken place in the days of Elijah, had not seven thousand still been left who had not bowed their knees to Baal.*

It seems then a just conclusion, that so long as a church is maintained on earth in which the true God is known by revelation, the gentiles also partake of the benefit, and are kept in a salvable state; and that this benefit results, whether the persons immediately constituting the Church be many or few. Thus this benefit was secured, even by the establishment of the Church in one nation, and that so small a nation as was constituted by the Israelites. And if, as

* Gen. xviii. 32, 1 Kings xix. 17, 18.

may rationally be inferred, the state of mankind at that time was such as did not admit of a higher dispensation than one which consisted chiefly in representative rites; it may easily be conceived, that the advantage of being its subjects was so slight, that no injustice was done to those who were not admitted to the privilege.

(2.) But if it appears, from the views just developed, that the calling of the Israelites was a measure of Divine Goodness, designed more for the general benefit of mankind than for their own private advantage; still more will this be seen when their selection is regarded as furnishing the means by which the Holy Word might be written in the form in which we now possess it; being that which is best adapted to render permanent the blessings of divine revelation, to make them most extensive, and to secure them from perversion. In this point of view we are also to consider it.

It was shewn in our last Lecture, that a Revelation from God to man,—a communication of Divine Wisdom in a form adapted to human apprehension,—must be produced by a sphere or emanation of Divine Truth flowing forth from God, passing through the angelic and spiritual into the material world, and there presenting itself in natural language; and that its language must consist of images taken from the objects that appear in nature, and from the common

modes of thinking and acting of the beings whom there it found.* We have seen also, that there not only is a perfect analogy between all the lower parts and inferior objects of nature, and certain moral, intellectual, and divine essences; but, likewise, between all that belongs to man as an inhabitant of a natural world, and what belongs to or concerns him as the heir of a spiritual one: and hence we have observed, that the analogical language of the Word of God is not confined to the mention of the irrational and inanimate parts of nature, but admits all that arises out of man's inclinations and feelings as an animal and naturally rational being, and as a member of civil society; because all this answers, by a decided mutual relation, to that which belongs to his spiritual affections and feelings, as an immortal and spiritually rational being, designed to become a member of angelic society.† If this be true, (and surely no plausible objection can be raised against it!) it follows that a Revelation from God, following the laws of the Analogy between natural things and spiritual, cannot be given, which does not treat much, in its letter, of human beings and of human actions. If all the objects of nature answer by regular analogy to spiritual things, most of all must man, the principal being in nature, and his actions as a member of civil society. Of man, then, and

* P. 233.

† P. 236.

his actions, a composition really given by divine inspiration must extensively treat in its letter. But of what persons and actions could it thus treat? Evidently, they must either be purely allegorical ones,—that is, such persons as never really existed, and such actions as never were actually performed,—or they must be representative ones,—real persons invested by divine appointment with a representative character, and whose actions (such of them at least as the sacred history records) were so overruled as to bear a representative signification. Probably, either mode might serve adequately to convey the divine and spiritual things which divine revelation is designed to communicate: but it is easy to see that this would be accomplished much more fully by the latter method than by the former. If the Bible-history had been a pure allegory throughout, destitute of a foundation in actual occurrences, it would long ago have been rejected as a mere fable. Men who had a knowledge of the science of Analogies, as was the case in times of very remote antiquity, might have been equally benefited by a revelation in the style of pure allegory as by one in the garb of true but representative history; and accordingly, to compose such allegories was, in those distant ages, a customary mode, perhaps the only one, of imparting instruction: but when the key for the decyphering of such

compositions was lost ; when the human mind had become of so gross a character as scarcely to regard any thing as real beyond the objects of sense ; had no divine revelation been extant but a purely allegorical one, it would soon have been entirely neglected and have fallen into oblivion. The spiritual sense being unknown and the literal sense perceived to be unreal, the whole would have been deemed unworthy of attention. To obviate this mischief, means were provided by Divine Providence, for uniting the advantages of pure allegory with those of true history. In the darkest night of human degeneracy, when man was incapable of any direct perception of heavenly things, and wholly immersed in the carnal part of his nature, Divine Goodness, by selecting a nation which was more entirely of this character than any other,—“ a stiff necked people,”—to *represent* those things which they were incapable of interiorly perceiving and feeling, brought divine subjects into their most extreme and lowest natural form. By causing the Holy Word to be written at this time, and to treat in its literal sense of the transactions of this people, its Divine Author gave to the revelation of divine things a fixity of character, of which it could not otherwise have been made susceptible : he laid for it a foundation in the lowest possible base, as the means of rendering it the most securely permanent. He thus conjoined even nature in its extreme cir-

cumference and uttermost boundary with himself, and provided the means of extending divine instruction to the most debased of mankind. A revelation thus circumstanced acquired external evidence in addition to the internal. The Jews are to this day witnesses to us of the truth of the leading facts of the Scripture-history, and of the belief of their ancestors, that it was given by inspiration. Thus, even though the deep wisdom which the Divine Word inwardly contains has been unknown, it has generally been received as of divine origin: it has been revered as holy; and hence the important truths which are in many places extant in the letter have been pressed with authority upon the mind and heart. It doubtless, also, is true, that whilst even the bare historical circumstances are read with an acknowledgment of the divine origin of the record, the mind is disposed to a holy frame, which is a plane for the insemination of spiritual graces; as the performance of the representative worship of the Jews had a similar effect on the well-disposed among that people.

This then was the main object of the calling of the individual nation of the Israelites, and of making them the subjects and depositaries of divine communications. This singular people was in fact selected, to exhibit, in a sensible manner, for the instruction of all the generations of men, that may ever exist on this globe, the conse-

quences with which both the obedience and disobedience of the divine laws are necessarily attended; and at the same time to picture, with the utmost exactness, all the changes of state that the church at large, or its individual epitome, man, can ever experience. That people in particular was selected for this purpose, not because they were themselves at all more the objects of divine favour than any other nation, but because their genius and temper were such, that they were more capable than any other people of being made the mediums of *representing*, under external symbols and natural occurrences, all the things and subjects which Divine Wisdom desires to reveal to man.

The disposition of the Jews to multiply ceremonial observances beyond what was required of them, and to substitute these for the morals enjoined by the law of God, is noticed in the gospel: "The Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not: and many other things there be which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables.—Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do."*

* Mark vii. 3, 4, 8.

So, whoever has looked into the works which describe the manners and customs of the Jews, or into the writings of the Rabbins, must have been struck with the tendency to minute observances, even regarding things the most indifferent and insignificant, which they every where exhibit: he must also have been surprised at the subtlety with which they discover, even in "the weightier matters of the law," some fancied precept for some outward observance, and the dexterity with which they substitute the latter for the former.* It is evident, also, that they have partaken of this character ever since they were a people, and that this gave occasion to some of the rites with which the dispensation, of which they were the subjects, was loaded. "I spake not unto your fathers," says the Lord by the prophet, "nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices; but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people, and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you: But they hearkened not †," &c. So, in reference to their conduct in the wilderness, the Lord says by another prophet, "Because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, and

* For full proof of this assertion, and for some remarkable illustrations of the Jewish character, see Appendix, No. V.

† Jer. vii. 22, 23 24.

had polluted my sabbaths, and their eyes were after their father's idols:"—which words clearly imply that they did not regard the interior things of religion, but were idolaters at heart; "wherefore," it is added, "I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live*;" referring to the ceremonial observances, which have no sanctifying efficacy of themselves, being representative types, only, of holy things, but not identical with them.

Now this disposition of that people to neglect essentials and to cleave to formalities, if it disqualified them from constituting an interior church themselves, eminently adapted them to be made the representatives of such a church, and to have their affairs overruled, so as to be subservient to such representation. Nor is there any room to object, that such control was incompatible with their free agency and moral responsibility, when this their gross temper and superficial disposition is regarded. The actions of the Jews would no doubt have been of the same general character as they were, had they not been subjected to such a controlling influence as we are supposing; for they were, in fact, very similar to those of other half-civilized nations and tribes: and how easy must it be to the Divine Providence, working as it were upon the general tendencies of men of this description, as upon ma-

* Ezek. xx. 24, 25.

terials prepared to its hands, to give such a direction to the specific actions resulting from those tendencies, as was necessary to induce on them the form which its purposes required! Under any circumstances, the persons mentioned in the Bible as doing good or bad actions, would have done good and bad actions: the exact form, only, of the actions, being the result of the circumstances in which they were placed. It is common with philosophical minds to amuse themselves with thinking, how certain individuals would have acted under certain circumstances: but few suppose that different circumstances would have changed their character altogether, though they would have differently modified its developements. There is then no difficulty in conceiving how the Divine Providence could overrule the actions of a small nation, such as we are describing, but more particularly of certain individuals in it, so as to render them exactly representative of the subjects which form the proper matter of a divine revelation, without affecting their inward states of mind as free and accountable agents. All that was necessary to adapt the people for being thus acted on, was, the negative quality of not being themselves inwardly principled in the divine and spiritual things which they were made the mediums of representing; for then it would have been impossible to separate their representative from their

proper character, and none could have sustained a holy representation without being holy himself: and as in forming his proper character man is left to his own freedom, it would thus have been impossible that a series of representative persons could have been provided. But this was easy with a people disposed to rest entirely in externals: with such, the external could be so separated from the internal, that the vilest persons might be made to represent the most holy things: and so entirely were the Israelites of this character, that even the great truth, that man lives after death, was not to them openly revealed, and the rewards of obedience and punishments of disobedience proposed to them were all such as were to be experienced in this life only.* To have, in our actions, a view to the life hereafter, opens and spiritualizes the mind; to have no view but to the life here, closes and materializes it: the nature of the Jewish mind, then, may easily be estimated, by the nature of the motives proposed to them, which, we may be sure, were the highest that they were able to appreciate: and external motives, though not such as will introduce into the mind heavenly graces, are best adapted to induce such conduct as will represent them.

Such then is the character of the whole of the Israelitish history, as recorded in the Scriptures. From one end to the other, it is representative

* For summaries of the whole, see Lev. xxvi. & Deut. xxviii.

and typical of spiritual things; the affairs of that people having been constantly overruled by Divine Providence for this purpose. Their history may in fact be considered as a grand divine drama, the first scene of which commences with the calling of Abraham, and the last concludes with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. All their patriarchs and kings, priests and prophets, and indeed the whole people, were the actors in this wonderful drama; and the characters represented were the Lord Jesus Christ, as to all that he performed and suffered for the redemption of mankind, and all the states through which he passed to union with the Father;—his Church in all the steps of her progress from carnal to celestial; and the individual member of the church through all the stages of his corresponding advancement: and every thing which creates opposition is at the same time shewn,—the obstacles to be overcome, and the lapses to be dreaded, as well as the blessings to be obtained.

This certainly is a view of the design of the selection of the Israelites as a peculiar people, which fully exonerates the Father of the universe from the charge of partiality towards one family of his creatures over the rest, and truly shews that they were not chosen for their own sakes, but that, as was promised to Abraham, through them all the families of the earth might be

blessed; a promise which indeed refers, primarily, to the birth of the Word Incarnate among that nation, but which is also applicable to the gift of the written Word communicated by their means. This view of the subject furnishes, in addition, a complete answer to the objection which demands, "If the Jews were really chosen of God, in preference to all other people, how comes it to pass that they were not better than all other people?" since, if they were not chosen to form a real internal church, composed of heavenly-minded worshippers of God, but only to *represent* a church of such worshippers, then individual sanctity was not particularly to be looked for among them, and their private characters had no more necessary connexion with the things represented by them, than has the private character of an actor on the stage with that of the prince or hero whom he personifies. In short, every objection which can be raised against the calling of the Israelites, and against the divine inspiration of their history, is entirely removed by this view of the subject, as will be further seen in our next Lecture: and perhaps I may be allowed to express my own convictions by saying, that certain I am, that whoever will candidly study the Jewish character and history, both as recorded in the Scriptures and as presented in the writings of their Rabbins, will find ample reason to conclude that this view is the true one. The Mosaic dis-

pensation was given, as the Apostle affirms, “because of transgressions* ;”—because such was the gross character of that people, and, indeed, such was the state of the whole of mankind in those ages, before the work of redemption was accomplished, that a dispensation in which spiritual things were openly revealed could not have been received, or would have been immediately profaned : and it was given, as is declared in the same place, “till the seed should come to whom the promise was made ;” that is, as had been explained before, to fill up the intermediate period till the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was to found a spiritual dispensation. And not merely a transient, but a permanent benefit was conferred on mankind by these means. The dispensation given to the Israelites was full of “patterns (or types) of things in the heavens†,” which are replete with the sublimest instruction when their antitypes are understood : and the very history of the people who were the subjects of this representative dispensation became representative too, depicting to the enlightened observer every thing that can be experienced in the spiritual life. This also the Apostle teaches : “All these things happened unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come” ‡ We have seen before, that all who accept the

* Gal. iii. 19.

† Heb. ix. 23.

‡ 1 Cor. x. 11.

Scriptures at all, are constrained to allow a great number of their historical relations to have a typical, representative, and spiritual meaning: we have seen also, that if we allow the Word of God to have a spiritual sense in some parts, we must, to make it consistent with itself, allow the same in all: and the view now presented shews how this may be the case in the divine narrations, consistently with the reality of the historical events, agreeably with the attributes belonging both to the nature of God and the nature of man, and in accordance with the laws of that Analogy which must always govern the connexion between natural things and spiritual, between the world and its Maker, and between the literal expression and divine import of every composition which has God for its Author.

III. Having presented these views of the true nature of the Scripture history, we are now to offer a few examples of the applicability of the Science of Analogies to its interpretation.

I. The first instance which we select is that of the miraculous capture of Jericho, on the entrance of the Israelites into the promised land.

(I.) Among the objections which have been raised against the Scriptures as containing a revelation from God, and against the idea that the Jews were, in any manner, the elect people of

God, none has been more insisted upon than that drawn from the extermination by them of the Canaanites, executed, as it would appear, by the express command of God. This has been held up to execration, by the Deists, in the strongest terms, as a measure of the most enormous cruelty and most indefensible injustice: it was a measure, they affirm, which a God deserving of reverence could never authorize, and a people entitled to esteem could never execute. But great as is the clamour which has been raised against this part of the Bible-history, there is no part of it which has been defended by the Christian advocates with more powerful arguments: their success, indeed, in most respects, has here been quite triumphant. As they have shewn, if vice ever deserves punishment, then most justly was punishment inflicted on the Canaanites. If the infliction of punishment can ever be a measure of mercy, then was mercy displayed in the extirpation of that race: for if the contagion of vice is more deadly in its results than the contagion of disease; and if, to arrest the latter, it is a beneficent act to interdict all communication between an infected city and the surrounding country, though the consequence may be the death of most of its inhabitants; then was it an act of goodness, on the part of the Supreme Disposer, entirely to cut off a nation which set examples of the most flagitious criminality to all around, and all whose posterity

(surely we may allow Divine Omniscience to know this!) would only have grown up to add inhabitants to the kingdom of darkness. Supposing, too, that any who were less criminal suffered; it is to be recollected, that, if man is immortal, the death of the body is by no means the greatest calamity which can befall him: it is even reasonable to believe, what the Scriptures intimate, that death is often a kind dispensation; that, among the wicked, they are sometimes removed “in whom there is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel*,” and that “the righteous is taken away from the evil to come.”† It were as reasonable then to blaspheme the Divine Power which suffered Herculaneum to be overflowed with burning lava, Lisbon to be swallowed up by an earthquake, and the Caribs and other nations of the West Indies to be exterminated by the Spaniards; and which permits thousands of persons to be annually destroyed in Barbary and Turkey by the plague, and a third part, or more, of the human race to perish in infancy; as to revile the Divine Word in which is recorded the destruction of the Canaanites by the sword of the children of Israel. Christian advocates admit, and have convincingly shewn, that there is here an analogy between the Word of God and his works: and if we would deny the God of Scripture for sanctioning the

* 1 Kings xiv. 13.

† Isa. lvii. 1.

extirpation of a most abandoned nation, (who, however, were by no means completely extirpated, after all,) we must deny the God of nature for permitting such multitudes, not only of the wicked but of the good, to perish by war and murder, by shipwreck and famine, by the convulsions of nature and the visitations of disease.

But though it is perfectly easy to vindicate the Divine Justice in the destruction of the Canaanites, whether effected by the sword or by any other means, some difficulty, certainly, still attends the transaction, while the nation to which the execution of it was committed is supposed to have been a nation of saints. The extirpation of the wicked, when their wickedness has arrived at its summit, may be a measure of necessity: but I apprehend that men whose minds are imbued with real religion,—whose hearts are modelled by the spirit which says, “Love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you* ;” would revolt from a task of unrelenting slaughter. How much better, then, are the difficulties of this transaction solved, by the view of the character of the Jewish nation, and of the design of their election, which has been given above!

So again, though the *justice* of the measure of extirpating the Canaanites is easily vindicated,

* Matt. v. 44.

yet some difficulty still attaches to it while it is regarded as flowing from the *pure will* of God, and the executioners are supposed to have been the peculiar objects of his favour. The true character of the objects of divine favour, and that of their God, are brought openly to light in the Gospel; and there, if we learn that the disciples of pure religion are “to love their enemies, to bless them that curse them, to do good to them that hate them, and to pray for them who despitefully use and persecute them;” we learn also, that they are to do this, “that they may be the children of their Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.”* The testimony of the Old Testament, when it describes the divine character as it is in itself, not, as is frequently the case, as it appears to the apprehension of gross and wicked minds, is to the same effect: “As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked †;” “He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men.”‡ Accordingly, it is never supposed that the pains of the wicked in hell will be inflicted by angels of light, but by spirits of darkness: certainly, nothing that requires spirits of darkness for its actors, however indispensable in the Divine Economy, can be positively agreeable to the Fountain of Good: of course, neither

* Matt. v. 45.

† Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

‡ Lam. iii. 33.

could the Israelites, when destroying wicked nations, and thus doing the work of the spirits of darkness, be absolutely the objects of divine approbation. All suffering, even when inflicted as the punishment of evil, must then be of divine permission, not directly of divine will. What the Divine Being wills in it, must be, the preservation of the good, and restraint upon the perpetration of evil: and as these objects cannot be accomplished without the infliction of punishment upon the wicked, this is permitted, as a matter of necessity, though not of itself pleasing to the Divine Nature. This view, founded upon the plainest Scripture-authority, is surely as liberal as any can desire, except those who would confound all distinctions of right and wrong, and would rather have happiness attached as a reward to evil than to good.

But is it asked, How can these ideas be reconciled with the commands so positively laid upon the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites, and enforced by threats of punishment on themselves if they omitted it? The view which has been given above, of the manner in which the Divine Truth, emanating from the bosom of Deity, presents itself in the world of nature, solves the enigma, and clears the subject from all remaining difficulty. Divine Truth, we have seen, clothes itself in the world, not only with images taken from exterior nature, but with the ideas proper to

the mind of man as an inhabitant of the natural world; frequently, indeed, with ideas which only belong to him in the merest state of nature. Hence the necessity of distinguishing between those parts of the letter of the Divine Word, which are expressed according to appearances only, and those parts in which the genuine truth is exhibited, as noticed in our second Lecture*: and it will always appear to man in a mere state of nature, and who judges by his senses without elevating his rational faculty into a less fallacious light, that all suffering, as well as all good, flows from the immediate will of God. Hence in the letter of the Word of God, which in many parts is expressed according to the ideas of such persons, some things will seem to be of command that are only of permission. In the spiritual sense, which is in a sphere above the letter, resides the genuine truth: but when this descends into the lower sphere in which are the thoughts of man in his natural state, it there puts on an appearance different from its proper one, and assumes a conformity with his state and ideas. Thus, in the literal sense of the Word, many things are said, and even some practices are permitted, in which the ideas of Divine Truth, and the laws of Divine Order, are accommodated to the gross state of apprehension in which the Jews were, among whom, and by whom as in-

* P. 115, 116.

struments, the Word of the Old Testament was written. This is not an unauthorized assertion, but is expressly taught by the Lord Jesus Christ. When, in answer to the inquiry by the Pharisees, whether it is lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause, he had laid down the divine law respecting the indissoluble nature of the marriage union, they, in reference to Deut. xxiv. 1, said to him, “Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement and to put her away?”—to which he answered, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.”* He had delivered the same doctrine on a former occasion, and had illustrated it, not only by the case of divorce, but of several other things, permitted, and, apparently, commanded, in the Mosaic law. Thus, in reference to Lev. xix. 12, and Deut. xxiii. 23, he says, “Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: but I say unto you, Swear not at all,” &c.† So, in regard to the law of retaliation, laid down in Lev. xxiv. 19, 20, he says, “Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth: but I say unto you, That ye resist not evil‡,” &c. Hence, and from other examples, it is evident, that there are enactments in the Mo-

* Matt. xix. 7, 8. † Ch. v. 33, 34. ‡ Ver. 38, 39.

saic code, which, in their external form, are not of divine will, but only of divine permission, notwithstanding their being delivered in the form of commands. Divine Truth adapted itself to "the hardness of men's hearts," and to the grossness of their ideas, in regard to many things, which "from the beginning were not so,"—which, if they followed the order designed by the Creator when he founded the creation, would be quite otherwise. Of this nature, certainly, is the liberty which nations arrogate of engaging in mortal conflict. *We* are permitted at the present day, and the Jews were apparently commanded, to slaughter others in war: but this also "from the beginning was not so:" it was one of the concessions made to the Jews "because of the hardness of their hearts," and which we claim a right to act upon to a certain extent, because of the hardness of ours.

None of these things, however, are enjoined upon mankind, even in appearance, under the spiritual dispensation of the gospel; nor would they have been enjoined upon the Jews, and recorded in the Word of God, had they been the subjects of any but a representative dispensation. Such ordinances were prescribed to them, because, though not holy or even good in themselves, they were exactly symbolic of things truly spiritual and divine. Thus, had not that nation been selected to represent the subjects

connected with man's welfare as a spiritual being and an heir of eternity, we should never have heard of their exterminating the Canaanites by divine command: they might probably have done so in the general course of events, and as other conquerors have frequently subjugated, and in great part destroyed, other nations: but we should never have been told that they acted by divine authority. Every thing that takes place in human affairs, being under the control of Divine Providence, may, so far, be said to be done by divine authority: here, however, we are certain, that much is done which is not of the divine will, though nothing can occur without the divine permission. That guidance of Providence, then, which in general is tacit and secret, was, in the case of the Israelites, open and avowed, only because their affairs were so directed as to be made symbolic of heavenly things. Thus they were not only tacitly led to execute the judgments upon the Canaanites, as the northern nations were led to overrun and destroy the corrupt Roman Empire, and as the Turks were led to destroy the equally corrupt empire of the Greeks, but a direction to that effect was given them by divine authority, because it was seen by Infinite Wisdom, that the whole might be so overruled as to be representative of spiritual things of the greatest importance. But, as observed above, the act of destroying can never in itself be



pleasing to the God of love, nor can the actors be the peculiar objects of his favour: when therefore the Israelites are charged to do such things, and are promised blessings (*temporal* blessings, observe,) in consequence, it is solely because they here, as every where else, are carrying on the business of the grand drama of which they were the appointed performers. It was the things represented, not those executed, which were the objects really regarded with approbation by the Lord. The external acts obtained for the Jews a transient abode in the earthly Canaan; but such of them as received an inheritance in the heavenly Canaan obtained it by very different means. This is only to be acquired by the things represented: and every Christian must do in reality what the extermination of the Canaanites outwardly symbolized, before he can be established in that heavenly kingdom, of which a land flowing with milk and honey is, by analogy, an expressive representative.

Although then, in the main, the extermination of the Canaanites has been successfully justified by many Christian advocates, yet a higher view of the subject than has usually been taken is necessary to remove all the difficulties of the case: but all remaining difficulties are most completely removed, when the true character of the Israelitish nation, and of the code of Divine

Truth of which they were the subjects, is distinctly apprehended; when it is seen that that nation was selected to *represent*, only, the states which belong to the spiritual life, without being principled in that life themselves; and that every circumstance of their history has a representative application.

(2.) To this account of the command given to the Israelites to destroy the Canaanites, we will add a general statement of its spiritual signification. By a most obvious analogy, natural foes are expressive symbols of spiritual ones; and spiritual foes are not only the unseen powers of darkness, but the tendencies to evil and error which lurk in the corrupt heart of man,—all the vile lusts and deceptive persuasions which he is prone to indulge and cherish. It is against these that the Lord Jesus Christ warns us, when he says, “A man’s foes shall be those of his own household*.” for these words do not merely refer to the collisions of opinion, and the animosities on that account, which might be expected to arise in families upon the promulgation of the gospel; but to the discoveries it would make of the corruptions of the human heart, and to the conflict of feelings which man would experience, in consequence, within his own breast. That the Israelitish people

* Matt. x. 36.

were types of the true members of the church, and of the principles which make men such, has been generally acknowledged, and cannot be denied after the statement of the Apostle, quoted in our second Lecture.* The same sentiment is also recognized on various occasions by the Lord Jesus Christ; as when he calls Nathanael, on account of his guileless sincerity, “an Israelite indeed.”† Such being the signification of the Jews or Israelites, it follows, that that of their enemies must be the contrary,—that they must represent all that is opposite to, and destructive of, the sacred principles which constitute man a member of the church; and that is, all evil and all religious error. This then must be the general signification of the Canaanites: they must denote the corrupt tendencies and sentiments which occupy the mind of man, before it is new modelled by the principles of true religion; and the command to extirpate them must be meant to affirm the necessity of removing the former before the latter can be established in security. This analogy is so plain, that its general features have been seen by many of the expositors; though, for want of a regular key of interpretation, they usually err when they descend to particulars: it has even been rendered popular through the medium of poetry; as in the

* P. 81.

† John i. 47.

following lines. Taking Joshua as a type of the Saviour, the poet, after speaking of being brought to "Canaan's bounds," proceeds thus:

" I see an open door of hope ;

Legions of sins in vain oppose :

Bold, I, with thee, my head, march up,

And triumph o'er a world of *foes*.—

Lo! the tall *sons of Anak* rise!

Who can the sons *Anak* meet?

Captain! to thee I lift mine eyes,

And lo! they fall beneath my feet.

Passion, and *appetite*, and *pride*,

(*Pride*, my old, dreadful, tyrant *foe*.)

I see cast down on every side ;

And, conquering, I to conquer go."

Who can avoid being struck with the truth of the analogy thus pointed out, and who can help being affected with its beauty? And is not the utility of it equally evident? Every one who knows any thing of that wonderful labyrinth, the human heart, must be aware, that the work of removing its native waywardness and substituting in its place steady principles of virtue, which is the work that divines call regeneration, must include a great variety of particulars, and must be attended with an immense multitude of indescribable emotions ;—indescribable, that is, in any other language than that of analogy. What other style of composition could be invented, which should intelligibly delineate the innumera-

ble fluctuations and vicissitudes of state, which, in the progress of such an operation, must be experienced? The best devised arrangement of abstract terms that could be framed for the purpose, would only appear a confused jumble of endless repetitions. But construct an allegory to describe it: represent it under a series of historical circumstances occurring to a variety of persons all invested with a typical character; and we easily see that the object may be accomplished. That Infinite Wisdom which is "acquainted with all our ways*," and which "knoweth the secrets of the heart†;" that Omnipotent God who alone can "take the stony heart out of our flesh and give us a heart of flesh‡," and who alone knoweth all the mysteries of our spiritual as well as of our natural creation§; he has described the work in the divinely inspired account of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt and their establishment in Canaan: and by actually leading that people through a series of adventures exactly representative of the stages through which man is led to salvation, he has given to the pliability of allegory the solidity of historical fact. With the mere circumstances of the war, then, between the Canaanites and the Israelites, we have nothing to do: nothing is here proposed for our imitation: but the true

* Ps. cxxxix. 3. † Ps. xliv. 21. ‡ Ezek. xi. 19.

§ Ps. cxxxix. 14, 15, 16.

moral of the history is instructive indeed; and we ought to be eternally grateful that it has been written for our benefit.

(3.) With this idea of the war of the Israelites against the former inhabitants of Canaan, we shall easily form a general conception of the import of the miraculous capture of Jericho. The following are the principal circumstances of the event, as related in the sixth chapter of Joshua: "The Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thy hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city, once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times; and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the rams' horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up, every man straight before him."* This is the command of the Lord to Joshua, who repeats it, a little more particularly, to the priests and people. Care was also taken that all the people, except the priests who blew the trumpets, should march in silence for the first six

* Ver. 2 to 5.

days: for "Joshua had commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise with your voice, neither shall any word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout: then shall ye shout."* The procession thus moved round the city, once each day, for the first six days. "And it came to pass, on the seventh day, that they rose early about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city seven times: only on that day, compassed they it seven times. And it came to pass, on the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout! for the Lord hath given you the city. And the city shall be accursed, even it and all that are therein, to the Lord: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that are with her in the house, because she received the messengers that we sent. And ye, in any wise keep yourselves from the accursed thing, lest ye make yourselves accursed when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, and trouble it. But all the silver and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord. So the people shouted when the priests blew with the trumpets. And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall of the city fell down

* Ver. 10.

flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him : and they took the city.”*

Surely every one who believes that this miracle was really performed, must feel that subjects of universal application must be represented under its various circumstances ; that, grand and magnificent as the literal facts are, yet, if no other end was designed to be accomplished by it than the capture of Jericho and the destruction of its inhabitants, it never would have been performed by an exertion of Divine Power, nor recorded in the Word of Divine Wisdom. The crimes of nations render it necessary that they should be visited by the scourge of war in our days as well as in the days of Joshua, of which the world has of late years had sad experience : but though the hand of Providence is still often strikingly manifested in the surprising turns and seeming accidents by which the event of battles or sieges, embracing the fate of empires, is frequently decided, yet no results are obtained without the action of causes which have at least something like a direct tendency to produce them. When therefore, in the case before us, we see such great effects produced by means apparently so totally inadequate, we may be satisfied that the whole must have some interior signification, and that it must have been in consequence of their answer-

* Ver. 15 to 20.

ing to spiritual things by analogy, that the natural events took place. Had, also, nothing been intended but to exhibit a signal proof of Divine Power, the city might as well have been destroyed by raining upon it fire and brimstone from heaven, as is related of Sodom: but then the occurrence would not have told the particular lesson designed, of which all the accompanying circumstances were essential parts.

Among all the emblems employed in the representative worship of the Israelitish church, the ark was the most holy and exalted. Several other great miracles are recorded to have been wrought by its presence, one of which was noticed in our third Lecture: and the reason that such power attended it was, because it was the symbol of the Divine Presence, and thus of the Lord himself, as dwelling in his church, and in the inmost centre of the soul of every true member of the church universal. How can the Lord's presence be thus effected with finite creatures, but by a sphere or emanation proceeding from himself, analogous to the sphere of heat and light proceeding from the sun of nature, by which the sun is rendered virtually present, and produces effects, in the earth? We have seen in our last Lecture*, that it must be by a sphere or emanation of Divine Truth, proceeding forth as spiritual light, that perceptions are communicated

* P. 230, &c.

to the minds of intelligent creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: and we have seen also, that it must have been by such a proceeding sphere of Divine Truth, that the Word of God, if any composition deserving that title exists, must have been given. The Word of God, in its letter, is, in reality, the sphere of Divine Truth thus proceeding from God fixed and terminated in language taken from the objects of nature; and it is, also, the great medium by which the Presence of God is effected in the world. The Divine Presence, then, thus produced, is what was represented by the ark: and to impart to it this representation, there were deposited in it the two tables of stone on which were written, by the finger of God, as is said, or by a miraculous divine operation, the commandments promulgated from Mount Sinai; these being the first-fruits of the written Word; and not only the first-fruits, but the substance of the whole. The tables were two, because they prescribed man's duty to God and his duty to his neighbour: these were condensed into the two precepts, to love the Lord above all things and our neighbour as ourselves: and the Lord Jesus Christ declares, that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* There evidently then is reason in Analogy for the ark's being taken as a symbol of the Divine Presence with

* Matt. xxii. 40.

man by the Divine Truth proceeding from himself: and that to convey this representation was the express design with which the ark was constructed, is evident from the instructions given to Moses on the occasion. Jehovah said to him, "In the ark shalt thou put the testimony [the two tables of the law] that I shall give thee. And there I will meet thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."* That the ark was intended to be a representative of the Divine Presence, is clearly expressed in the words "*there I will meet thee:*" and that it was intended to be a representative of the Lord's presence in and by his Divine Truth, is equally clear from its being added, "and I will *commune* with thee—of all things which I will *give thee in commandment* unto the children of Israel;" for it can only be by his Divine Truth that the Lord communicates his will to man. It is hoped then that the signification of the ark of the testimony, as the symbol of the Divine Presence, and, specifically, of the Divine Truth, must be sufficiently evident; as also, that this was its meaning by appointment, and that there was a ground for that appointment in Analogy.

Jericho was situated just at the entrance to

* Ex. xxv. 21, 22.

the land of Canaan: and as the land of Canaan represented the church, Jericho, in a good sense, would represent the first state experienced on full admission into it, and, indeed, the principle by which such admission is effected; which is, instruction in doctrinal truths, accompanied with obedience of life. But while the land of Canaan was occupied by idolatrous nations, every place in it had a signification opposite to its genuine one: and, in this sense, Jericho represented the disposition to resist instruction, by opposing to it such sentiments as the corrupt tendencies of the human heart incline the understanding to invent in their excuse. The city itself, then, was the type of such doctrinal sentiments as resist or profane the pure doctrines of the Church; and its wall signifies such false persuasions and confirmations by fallacious arguments as defend such false doctrine, and prevent those who hold it from discerning the evidence of truth. Every one must see the analogy between the arguments by which a man defends his sentiments, and prevents an adversary from depriving him of them, and the wall that defends a city. As all such persuasions originate in depraved lusts and appetites, however they may be glossed over; and as, in the time of judgment, the arguments with which they are excused will not serve to defend them; therefore the city was burnt with fire*,

* Ver. 24.

and its wall fell down : for fire, as was shewn in our third Lecture, is the proper symbol of love, either good or evil, but always, when considered as to its destroying property, of evil love or lust ; and the falling down of the wall expresses privation of all protection. The marching round the city, denotes the exploration of the quality of the principle represented by it ; and the action upon it of the sphere of Divine Truth from the Lord was represented by the carrying round of the ark, and the sounding of the trumpets before it by the priests. The sounding of trumpets, in the representative dispensation of the Jews, was a symbol, by an obvious analogy, of the revelation, manifestation, communication, or bringing down, of the Divine Truth, from a higher region towards a lower : the priests were representatives of whatever in man truly worships the Lord, which is all that belongs to the true love of his name, and which, of course, is the medium by which divine communications are received from him : the shouting of the people expresses consent and confirmation on the part of the inferior faculties. The reason why the priests were seven in number, and why they went round the city seven days, and seven times on the seventh day, is, because that number signifies what is supremely holy, full, and complete.

Such, according to the sense resulting from the application of the Rule of Analogies, are the

general subjects contained in this miracle: but perhaps this will be more clearly seen, if we make a brief application of it to a state to be experienced in individual regeneration.

We have before had occasion to notice the doctrine of the Apostle Paul respecting the inward and outward, or internal and external man. These he treats as two distinct regions of the mental constitution; and he speaks of the necessity of man's becoming "spiritually minded" as to both. But he describes a state in which the inward man is opened, and replenished with "the things of the Spirit," while the outer man, which he sometimes calls "the flesh," still "lusteth against the spirit:" thus, placing himself in the situation of such a person, he says, "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."* Now this state seems to be that which is represented by the Israelites, when they had arrived at the entrance of Canaan. The law of God is revealed to the spiritual Israelite in the wilderness, and is there made "the law of his mind." He there also learns to bring his outward conduct into conformity to it: for it is not to be supposed that, when the Apostle speaks of the man "who delights in the law of God after

* Rom. vii. 22, 23.

the inward man," as "seeing another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind;" and when he had before said, speaking in this character, "what I would, that I do not, but what I hate, that I do*;" he meant to sanction the shocking casuistry of those who pretend, that immoral conduct is compatible with inward holiness. Doubtless, even the Jews were capable of, and many of them practised, good outward moral conduct, in obedience to their law. But the Apostle is not here speaking of actions, but of inclinations: for he opens the subject with saying, "I had not known *lust*, except the law had said, Thou shalt not *covet*: but sin, taking occasion by the commandment wrought in me all manner of *concupiscence* †:" he does not say, as he would have done, had he been speaking of actions, that it wrought in him adultery, or theft, or the like. The law in the members, then, is this concupiscence,—the evil inclinations that are seated in the external man. Nor can it be supposed, when he says that he had not known these but for the law, that he means to affirm that the law was the *cause* of their existence: what he means is, that the law *made him sensible* of their existence. But he that delights in the law of God after the inward man, though he may also have brought his outward conduct into conformity with it, will not be fully established in the

* Ver 15.

† Ver. 7, 8.

Lord's kingdom, nor experience the enjoyments which attend it, till the law in the members no longer wars against the law of his mind, but there is one law for them both, and both find delight in similar things: wherefore the Apostle exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?"*—meaning by the body, not the natural body, but the external man, which is to the internal as the body to the soul, and whose affections being opposite to those of the internal, which is actuated by the spirit of life, it is called "a body of death." This deliverance is capable of being effected under the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, or by the Lord Jesus Christ; as the same authority affirms when he adds, "I thank God: through Jesus Christ our Lord†;" words which mean, in his elliptical mode of expression, "I thank God, *it is done* through Jesus Christ our Lord." He therefore subjoins immediately, "The law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death."‡

This great work then, of the deliverance of man from "the body of death," or from "the law of sin and death," or from the concupiscences of the external man lusting against the spirit, is what is described, in the spiritual sense, by the extirpation of the Canaanites by the Israelites, under the conduct of Joshua, who is an acknow-

* Ver. 24.

† Ver. 25.

‡ Ch. viii. 2.

ledged type of the Lord Jesus Christ : and since in spiritual as in natural conflicts much depends upon a decisive first blow, to represent this, the capture of Jericho, and its complete destruction, were effected by so grand a miracle. In this individual application, the ark will represent the presence of the Lord, by his Divine Truth, in the inmost of the mind,—an abode for him having been formed there by the application of the commandments of the Divine Word to the regulation of the life, and by elevating them to the supreme seat in the affections, to reign with absolute sway ; by making, in short, the divine law, “ the law of the mind.” When this is effected, and this ark is carried round, or its influence directed upon, the spiritual Jericho,—“ the law in the members,”—no defence can stand before it. Care however must be taken that the action of this battery be directed in the manner prescribed : the ark must be carried round the city seven days, the priests must go before, blowing the trumpets, and on the seventh day, and not before, all the people must shout. The Christian will often discover an evil propensity in his heart, and wish it away, yet find it give him repeated cause to blush and lament for his weakness. The reason is, because the affections side with it too strongly ; because, though, from a view of its corrupt nature presented by the understanding, he fancies he wishes

it away, the wish does not really amount to a will; at least, it falls short of that ardent desire, accompanied by a sense of its intolerable hatefulness, which must be felt, before it will yield either to his wishes or his prayers,—before the influences of the holy ark can be directed upon it with sufficient power to effect its downfall. This was indicated by the direction, that the priests should go before the ark, blowing the trumpets: for, as noticed before, by the priests was represented that inward principle of love from which the Lord is worshipped; and their blowing the trumpets is the manifestation of Divine Truth, or, what amounts to the same, the communication of an influx from the Lord by his Divine Truth within us, when called down by love to Him, and the strongest desire for the removal of every thing from the bosom which is opposed to that love. But even this is not all that is required. Love may be strong in the internal man; and yet there may be obstacles in the way of its descent to encounter the evils below. All the lower principles which own the influence of the internal must concur also; and when this is the case, nothing can resist it any longer. This concurrence is represented by all the people's shouting a great shout at the command of Joshua; upon which “the wall of the city fell down flat, and they went up, every man straight before him, and they took the city.” The rea-

son why the people were commanded not to shout sooner, was, because until Divine Truth, inspired by love, descends in an orderly manner through the interiors to the exteriors; and until the desire is increased to that holy intensity, and all the energies are called forth with that sacred fulness, which the frequent repetition of the number seven involves; effort on the part of the exteriors—the mere shouting of the people—would be unavailing: as, on the other hand, Divine Truth inspired with desire in the interiors is without power, till a corresponding state is produced in the exteriors: but when both concur, it is irresistible.

These then are a portion of the truths conveyed by this beautiful part of the Word of God, when the literal sense is unlocked, by the key afforded by the fixed relation between natural things and spiritual. The analogies might easily be made more conspicuous; but, as observed on former occasions, this would extend our discussions to a greater length than most might be disposed to accompany us: and if some leading ones are seen distinctly, this is sufficient to establish the principle. Whether the doctrine thus developed, though the same as is taught by the Apostle, will be acceptable, may perhaps be doubted: it certainly exhibits the Christian warfare in a more serious light than some may be willing to view it: but in a

matter of such deep importance the true question to be asked is, not What do we wish? but What is the truth? How much of the states here described will be perceptible to the experience of the advanced Christian, we do not undertake to say: doubtless, in the work of new-creating his heart and mind, much must be transacted by the Divine Hand in secret: but that the work is real, and will be conspicuous in its effects, is declared by the Lord Jesus Christ, when he says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh nor whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the spirit."* But if we know not what the Lord doth with us now, we shall know hereafter†: it will form a great subject of our meditations in the life hereafter: and we ought to esteem it a high privilege, if, by obtaining the true key to the interpretation of the Scriptures, we can be instructed in some of its mysteries here. What the Apostle has stated in general terms, in the passages noticed above, is in this part of the Scriptures described as to all its particulars: and whether we have appetites for the wisdom which may hence be learned, or not, we certainly must allow that it is a species of wisdom worthy of God to communicate, and which, if really couched under the natural images afforded by the Israelitish

* John iii. 8.

† Chap. xiii. 7.

history, renders the affairs of that people worthy to have been directed by God, and to have been written by his inspiration.

We will only add further on this subject, respecting the miracle itself, that the views which have been offered above give a rational account both of the reason why, and the means by which, it was performed. It certainly would never have taken place, had not the descendants of Israel been appointed to act the part on the theatre of the world which has been already described; that is, to represent, in an external form, bearing no resemblance to the things represented, and yet answering to them by an exact analogy, such things and states as belong to heaven and the church, and to the progress of man in the spiritual life. But under such a dispensation, whenever means were employed corresponding to the spiritual operations of which they were the types, suitable effects invariably followed: for, though sometimes exhibiting themselves under the form of extraordinary miracles, these effects were in reality the necessary consequences of the means employed, flowing from them according to the order of the relation between spiritual things and natural, and being in fact as natural as any of the ordinary operations of nature. The simple means used for the capture of Jericho,—the carrying about of the ark, the sounding of the trumpets by the priests, and

the shouting of the people,—being prescribed by a Wisdom which knew how exactly they answered to certain spiritual operations, by which spiritual foes are dissipated and their refuges destroyed, were followed by natural effects, bearing a precise analogy to these spiritual ones; and the presence of a sphere of Divine Power was produced by them, against which a triple wall of brass would have afforded no better protection to the city than its wall of stone.

2. The next circumstance in the historical relations of the Holy Word to which we are to direct our attention, is the history of Jephthah and his rash vow, as it is commonly called, as related in the 11th ch. of the book of Judges; the principal circumstances of which are the following.

The neighbouring people of the Ammonites had overrun the land of Gilead, or the part of the Israelitish country which lay beyond Jordan, and had passed over Jordan also, to invade the land of Canaan itself; so that the nation was reduced to a state of great distress. Jephthah, on being elected to the command, in the first instance, endeavoured to bring the Ammonites to reason by treaty: but his overtures being rejected, “Then (it is said,) the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed

over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hands ; then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering."* However rash this vow might be, the piety of it, according to the genius of those times, and of the Mosaic dispensation, seems to have been acceptable : for he completely defeated the Ammonites, so that they " were subdued before the children of Israel." And the sacred narrative proceeds, " Jephthah came to Mizpeh, unto his house : and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances ; and she was his only child. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter ! thou hast brought me very low ; thou art one of them that trouble me ; for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back."† With the spirit of a Spartan heroine, she replied, " My Father ! if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth ; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon."‡ She requested however a respite of

* Ver. 30, 31.

† Ver. 33, 34, 35.

‡ Ver. 36.

two months; to be spent in a solemn mourning for being cut off from the world in her unmarried state; for, according to the ideas of those times, the circumstance of leaving no issue was deemed a far greater evil than death itself. The narrative concludes thus: "And it came to pass, at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father: who did with her according to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite, four days in the year."*

There is no passage of the Holy Word, which has been the subject of more controversy and discussion than this. Infidel writers, assuming it to be the fact that Jephthah's daughter was offered as a burnt sacrifice, have thought that they have found in it a fair occasion for railing against the volume in which it is narrated, and for denying the divine origin of either the Jewish or the Christian religion, as containing, among the documents on which they rest, a story so revolting to humanity. Expositors of Scripture, also, have been greatly embarrassed with the narrative, and have been divided into two great parties, the one maintaining that the fair victim of what they both regard as a rash vow, was actually put to death; the other, that she was only devoted to a life of pious celibacy. Both,

* Ver. 39, 40.

however, have conclusively shewn, that there is here no room for the scoffs of the infidel, let the fact of her having been put to death, or otherwise, have been as it might: since, if such an execution was perpetrated, it was not done in agreement with the divine precepts, but in flagrant violation of them*, and only proved that this Judge of Israel was extremely ignorant of the Mosaic law; and if he only devoted her to the service of the tabernacle, he still displayed a want of knowledge of the Levitical code, in supposing that he “could not go back” from his vow; there being an express provision that such vows might be commuted.† But whatever of error there might have been in the transaction, upon the supposition that the sacrifice took place, there would be much in it, even then, that demands admiration. If we understand it thus, what pure patriotism, what generous filial love, is expressed in the young woman’s answer, when the fatal tidings are communicated to her! It is happiness enough for her, that her country is rescued from its oppressors, and that her father is the instrument of its deliverance; she said, therefore, “My Father! if thou hast opened thy mouth to the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for

* Lev. xviii. 21, Ch. xx. 2 to 5. Deut. xii. 29, 30, 31.

† Lev. xxvii. 1 to 8.

thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon.”* If she believed, when she uttered these words, that she was to be put to death, certainly, neither Greece nor Rome, with all their Leonidæ and Decii, can furnish an instance of sublimer self-devotion than this of Jephthah’s daughter. Had it occurred among those boasting people, instead of the plain unvarnished tale of the sacred historian, we should have had it pressed on our admiration with all the pomp of eloquence. Nor would the steady resolution, and deep paternal feeling, of Jephthah, have passed unpraised. In fact it cannot be doubted, had but he and his daughter been heathens, that the very persons who now find in the transaction nothing but a pretence for vilifying the Scriptures, would then have extolled the whole as exhibiting the finest examples of the most noble constancy, the most disinterested virtue. Even the mistaken views from which it could be supposed that such a vow, or such a fulfilment of it, could be acceptable to the Supreme Being; would have been spoken of as meriting our pity, not our contempt: and the immoveable regard to principle, which in the father proceeded, and in the daughter submitted, to so deplorable a catastrophe, would have been thought to atone for any error of judgment in forming that principle, and to exalt those who

* Judges xi. 36.

were capable of it to the highest rank among the worthies who have shed a lustre on the human race.

But though the praise of disinterested heroism cannot be withheld either from the father or the daughter, upon the supposition that she was actually sacrificed, yet Christians in general have thought that the honour of religion was compromised in the transaction, because Jephthah was an instrument raised up by Providence for the deliverance of Israel, and was divinely favoured as a commander and judge; and because no intimation is given in the history that the vow was considered to be illegal, or was attended with any divine disapprobation. But if the honour of religion depended on the blamelessness of the characters distinguished in the Israelitish history, it would be very difficult to maintain it indeed; as there is scarcely one of them whose conduct might be proposed, without reserve, for the imitation of the Christian. To the best of them, as remarked above, on the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, many things were permitted, "because of the hardness of their hearts," which "in the beginning were not so," and which are therefore prohibited to the member of the true church. Every thing then proves the necessity of regarding the Jews as constituting, according to the view already offered, not a true internal church, but an external representative one, or rather as exhibit-

ing the representation or type of one ; in which case, sanctity and intelligence of private character are by no means implied to attend on the persons who sustained even the most holy and exalted representations. They were placed in those situations for the benefit of others more than for their own ; that, through all generations, instruction of a divine and spiritual nature should be presented to mankind, in the most permanent as well as striking form in which it could be imparted. Thus considered, it matters not to us, beyond the interest which the story is calculated to excite, whether Jephthah's daughter was actually sacrificed, or whether she was merely made a nun ; any more than it does whether Agamemnon's daughter was actually sacrificed, or whether, as some authors affirm, she was, at the critical moment, conveyed away by Diana, to be a priestess in her temple, and a white hind miraculously substituted in her place. With this view, it matters not to us, whether Jephthah was the man of enlightened piety which he is described by some writers, or the ignorant barbarian assumed by others. His conduct, at the worst, was not below that of the most illustrious characters of the most polished nations of his age : it was such as naturally sprung out of the habits and modes of thinking of the times : but it was so overruled by Divine Providence, as to the express form of it, and so related in the

Divine Word, as to be representative of a highly important fact and state in the Christian warfare, and to teach a momentous spiritual truth. And this is all that we have to do with it, considered as one of the narratives of Divine Revelation.

(1.) It is not then my intention to attempt to decide the much disputed question, whether Jephthah's daughter was really put to death or not. My own opinion certainly is, that she was not: but I am led to form this opinion, more from a spiritual consideration which will appear in the sequel, than from any elucidation of the literal history which I have met with; for after all the pains that have been taken by the learned to make the literal history itself point to this conclusion, I still think that the most unforced inference from the language of the original, and from the history in general, is, that the sacrifice took place.* But, it will then be asked, why is this? Why is the history couched in such terms as would seem to imply that the dreadful rite was performed, when a statement of the contrary, if that was the fact, would be so agreeable to the feelings of every one who peruses the narrative, and would have obviated the objections which are thence urged, against its holy nature? Perhaps the only satisfactory answer which can be given is, Because the subjects treated of in the spiritual sense could not have been so fully re-

* See this fully proved in the Appendix, No. VI.

presented, had not such an appearance been permitted in the letter.

And if both these facts are true, viz. that Jephthah's daughter was not put to death, and yet that the literal narrative, without positively affirming it, seems to point to that inference; it may be remarked, by the way, that we have here such an example of the manner in which the historical relations of the Scriptures are composed, as may tend to clear up some other difficulties in the literal accounts. For this will shew, that fully to convey the spiritual sense is the sole object regarded in the construction of the narrative. The circumstances recorded with this design are true; but perhaps they do not immediately exhibit the whole truth, as regards the mere history; other circumstances, without the knowledge of which the historical relation seems confused and imperfect, being omitted, because the mention of them would have been incompatible with the spiritual lesson intended. This, I am satisfied, is the true cause of the elliptical style so often observable in the sacred writers, and which renders it frequently so difficult to arrive at certainty respecting positive facts. Just so much is recorded as conveys the true spiritual sense, and no more: and Divine Wisdom, which only regards things eternal, deems it of no moment whatever, though an impression be thus left of transient events, different

from the true one. Man's salvation and his advancement to eternity in spiritual wisdom, are the sole objects intended to be promoted by the gift of the Holy Word : but these no more depend upon his knowing with certainty whether Jephthah's daughter was put to death or not, than upon his knowing with certainty whether Mary Queen of Scots was privy to the death of Darnley or not. Both inquiries have exercised the pens of many profound and elegant scholars, because man, as living in time, takes an interest in temporal events : but He who is Eternal, and whose communications to man are addressed to him as an heir of eternity, regards his notions on both subjects as matters indifferent, and no more deems it important that the facts of the one history should be certainly known, than of the other.

But when we say, that, notwithstanding the fact was otherwise, yet it is suffered to appear in the letter as if Jephthah's daughter was actually sacrificed, because otherwise the subjects treated of in the spiritual sense could not have been fully expressed : the elucidation may perhaps be thought to render the matter still more obscure. It may be asked, If human sacrifices were, in fact, the greatest abominations that could be offered to insult the Majesty of heaven, and were strictly prohibited in the divine law on that account, how can it be necessary that an appearance of the performance of one should occur in

this history ; especially when it evidently is not related to represent any thing profane and unholy, but the contrary? It may be answered, For the same reason as it was necessary for Abraham to believe that it was required of him by the Lord to sacrifice his only son, Isaac ; and to act under the influence of this belief so far, as to “ stretch forth his hand, and take the knife to slay his son.”* In the case of Abraham, also, the actual deed was prevented ; but the preparations proceeded far enough to shew, that the offering up of a child as a sacrifice, taken only in one point of view, has a holy signification ; though, taken in another, it is in the highest degree profane. The same may be concluded with probability from this circumstance, that, by the Levitical law, the first-born of every thing was considered as belonging to the Lord : “ The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the first-born ; whatsoever openeth the womb, among the children of Israel, both of man and beast : it is mine.”† This is the first instance where this law is delivered : and here the offspring of man and beast are put on the same footing ; and the only idea proposed is, the entire surrender of them, however they were to be afterwards disposed of, to the Lord. Now the first-born of clean beasts were to be offered in sacrifice, without any alternative‡ : and for the

* Gen. xxii. 10.

† Ex. xiii. 1, 2.

‡ Numb. xviii. 17.

first-born of unclean beasts, a clean one was to be substituted and sacrificed also; as a lamb or kid for an ass.* But because no animal was considered as an equivalent for the first-born of man, he was to be redeemed by the payment of a price †: beside which, also, the whole tribe of Levi was taken in lieu of all the first-born of Israel ‡: but as the actual putting of them to death would have been horrible in itself, and would have borne the profane signification which we have intimated, they were consecrated to the Lord in a different way, and dedicated to the sacred service of the tabernacle; which, however, was considered as a figurative sacrifice, and a death to the world. This is evident from its being instituted in reference to the death of all the first-born of Egypt; “All the first-born are mine: for on the day that I smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt I hallowed unto me all the first-born in Israel, both man and beast: mine they shall be: I am the Lord.”§ The death of the first-born of Egypt, both of men and cattle, was evidently representative of the spiritual death, as to all the leading sentiments and affections of their minds, of those who would oppress and destroy the true church of God, or the sacred principles which compose it; or a death to every thing holy and heavenly, true and good;

* Ver. 15. Ex. xiii. 13.

‡ Ch. iii. 12.

† Numb. xviii. 16.

§ Ver. 13.

and the consecration to God of all the first-born of Israel, both of man and beast, must certainly be intended to represent something exactly the opposite of the former; an entire devotion to the Lord of all the leading sentiments and affections of the mind, and a death to every thing selfish and earthly. Therefore, all the first-born of beasts were actually offered in sacrifice: and if the offering in sacrifice of the first-born of man could, to use the appropriate distinction made by Bishop Warburton, form merely a *significative* and not at the same time a *moral* action, it would have been commanded too, as the most complete mode of exhibiting the representation intended: but as it would have been a moral action likewise, and would, in this respect, have been most flagitious, consecration to the service of the tabernacle was appointed in its stead.

(2.) Here then we shall have a key to that otherwise inexplicable mystery, the practice of human sacrifices.

Every one must be apt, on the first thought, to wonder how so horrible a superstition, so repugnant to some of the strongest feelings of human nature, as the sacrificing of human victims, and especially of children by their parents, could ever have been tolerated among mankind for a moment; much more, how it could have been so extensively and constantly practised among the various,—indeed, as it would appear, among *all*

the nations of antiquity, as history assures us was the fact.* Even the most polished nations of those times, the Greeks and Romans, were not untainted with it; and we are assured that it was practised to an enormous extent in this now favoured island of Britain. It is evident from numerous passages of Scripture, that the custom was particularly prevalent among the original inhabitants of Canaan and the surrounding countries, especially in the worship of

— Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parent's tears;
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol.

What could have been the reason that a mode of worship, which had every principle of natural feeling and common sense alike opposed to it, could ever obtain so extensive a reception? Only, I apprehend, because, regarded in one point of view, or taken simply as a *significant* action, it was seen to carry a holy representation. Hence it got into use, in disregard to its character in the other point of view, considered as a *moral* action; which ought never to be laid out of sight, and in which it was in the highest degree atrocious; and from which, when actually perpetrated, it became, in its signification also, in

* See Bryant's Dissertation on the Human Sacrifices of the Ancients; or Magee on Atonement and Sacrifice, Vol. 1, No. V.

the highest degree profane. The practice then would appear to have had the same origin as many other of the most detestable practices that have ever prevailed among mankind,—the perversion of something intrinsically good : and it illustrates the old and very true maxim,—The best things, when corrupted, become the worst.

But to exhibit this in its proper light, it is necessary to say something of the origin of sacrificial worship in general; though this will anticipate what we proposed to offer presently on that subject.

(3.) If there be indeed a Mutual Relation and Analogy, not of a merely arbitrary and conjectural kind, but fixed and invariable, between spiritual things and natural; we certainly must see in it a more clear and satisfactory origin of the practice, anciently quite universal, of the worship by sacrifices and burnt-offerings, than can be afforded by any other principle: and that worship itself, otherwise so unaccountable, affords, in its turn, a strongly conclusive argument for the reality of that Analogy, and for the fact endeavoured to be established above, that in ancient times the relations of this Analogy were extensively understood. A satisfactory theory of the origin of sacrificial rites is among the great *desiderata* of modern religious science: and surely it must be agreeable to the intelligent and candid mind, to view so curious a subject in a light which invites the understanding and gratifies it,—in a manner of

which *light* may be justly predicated ; rather than to acquiesce in regarding the whole as involved in darkness, and to take refuge in the blind persuasion which some authors of great name would recommend :—that sacrificial worship must have originated from God, because it is too irrational ever to have been invented by man!* Perhaps both parts of this proposition might be successfully controverted, and it might be shewn, first, that sacrifices were not, strictly speaking, first instituted by God ; and, secondly, that when men adopted them they took for their guide a certain law of nature. The former sentiment has been strongly advocated by the celebrated Maimonides, among the Jews, and by the learned Spencer, and others, among Christians ; and if they had been aware that there is a regular analogy between spiritual things and natural, I doubt not that they would also have incontrovertibly established the latter, and not have fallen into the errors which at present disfigure their systems. To enter into all the inquiries necessary to this investigation, would require a work by itself : this, probably, if life and health be spared me, I may hereafter attempt : a mere sketch, chiefly proposed hypothetically, is all that can be offered here.

We will first see what is the Scriptural idea of the Sacrifices under the Mosaic law.

* See Abp. Magee's Dissertation *On the Natural Unreasonableness of the Sacrificial Rite* : being No. lv. in his work *On Atonement*.

The prevailing opinion upon this subject is, that they were instituted by divine appointment to prefigure the death or sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that this was their only design. Most certainly it is true, that He is “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world*:” and that all the sacrifices, yea, all the rituals, of the Mosaic law, yea, the whole Word of God, have a specific reference to him: but it is no less true that they have a reference to us likewise. Because “Christ our passover is sacrificed for us†,” are we not to “purge out the old leaven, that we may be a new lump,” and to “keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity, and truth?”‡ In other words, are we not to offer a spiritual sacrifice ourselves? None but an Antinomian will answer in the negative. We are not only to look to Jesus Christ, but to follow him§: we cannot do this without offering the spiritual worship of the heart and mind: and the Scriptures plainly teach, that, as regards us, this spiritual worship is what the sacrificial worship represented. If sacrifices were designed to be significative of nothing besides the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, why were so many kinds of them prescribed? Why were so numerous ceremonies directed to be observed in

* John i. 29.

† 1 Cor. v. 7.

‡ Ver. 7. 8.

§ Matt. iv. 19, xvi. 24, xix. 21. John xiv. 26, &c.

the offering of each? And especially, why were certain quantities of flour and oil, either crude or prepared in various ways in the form of cakes, to be burnt upon the altar?* Why were the first fruits of the harvests to be presented?* These made as necessary a part of the Levitical offerings as the sacrifices of animals: evidently, then, the sacrifices of animals must also have represented spiritual things of the same general nature, though with a variety as to their species, as the offerings of cakes and fruits; and as these cannot represent the death of the Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, neither can the others be *confined* to that signification. The truth then is, that, applied to the case of man, all the numerous sacrifices and offerings of the Levitical code, represented the true worship of the Lord arising from all the affections and sentiments of a heavenly nature that can be inseminated by God into the human heart and mind; and the offering of them upon his altar was expressive of the heartfelt acknowledgement, that they all are from the Lord, and to be ascribed to him alone; in which acknowledgement and ascription all true worship essentially consists.

Many declarations, giving this idea of the design of sacrifices, are to be found both in the Old and New Testaments. David, in the depth of his humiliation for his crimes, when, if at any

* Lev. ii. &c.

time, the mind would be disposed to fly to external sacrifices, if either in themselves, or as representing the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, they possessed any efficacy, exclaims, "Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offerings: the *sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise**:" evidently instructing us what the sacrifices of God, suited to sincere penitence, really are, and, of course, what the Levitical sacrifices represented: namely, a state of the thoughts and affections in which man acknowledges, in deep humility, his own unworthiness. Accordingly, Jehovah says by the prophet, in a passage which is repeatedly quoted by the Lord in the gospel, "I desired *mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings†*:" where it is evident, since sacrifices were nevertheless established under the Mosaic dispensation, that the Divine Reprover means us to understand, that outward sacrifices, separate from the dispositions of heart and mind intended to be represented by them, cannot be accepted; and that the heavenly graces for which sacrifices were used as symbols, are mercy or love, and the knowledge of God or a living faith in him. Similar is the doctrine of the Apostles. Paul says to the Romans: "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present

* Ps. li. 16, 17.

† Hos. vi. 6. Matt. ix. 13, xii. 7.

your bodies *a living sacrifice*, holy and acceptable unto God; which is your reasonable service*:" where it is evident that by *a living sacrifice* he means *a pure life and conversation*; and he calls it a *reasonable service*, to contrast it with the carnal service of sacrifices, and to intimate that the latter was an image of the former. So he says to the Hebrews: "By him let us offer the *sacrifice of praise* to God continually, that is, the *fruit of your lips*, giving thanks to his name: but *to do good* and *to communicate* forget not, for with such *sacrifices* God is well pleased."† Here *praise* and *doing good*, the service of the lips and of the actions, are described as *sacrifices*: evidently shewing, that the sacrifices of God are the free-will offerings of adoration and love, proceeding from heavenly affections and manifested by beneficent deeds. How plain is the inference, that the offerings of the Levitical law must be meant to *represent* such offerings of the heart and mind,—the pure worship of the Lord, flowing from affections of love and charity, offered to him as their only source and author!

As then the outward sacrifices were nothing without the spiritual ones of which they were types; nor, indeed, with them, to those whose minds were sufficiently elevated to form just ideas of spiritual worship without the help of the carnal figures, as appears from the example

* Ch. xii. 1.

† Ch. xiii. 15, 16.

of David just quoted; these latter were not given to the Israelites of the Divine Will and Appointment, but permitted them on account of the hardness of their hearts; as is evident from the passage just adduced from Hosea, and more decidedly from those cited above from Jeremiah and Ezekiel.* It has indeed been proved by many learned men, that the sacrifices directed in the Levitical law, with many other of the

* Pp. 437, 438. "I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them, in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices: but this thing I commanded them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people; and walk ye in the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you." (Jer. vii. 22, 23.) "Because they had not executed my judgments, &c.—Wherefore I gave them also statutes that were not good, and judgments whereby they should not live." (Ez. xx. 25.) These words are evidently contrasted with ver. 11. "I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them." The statutes and judgments in or by which a man should live (for the particle in the original is the same which, in ver. 25, our translators have rendered *by*), and which are said to have been delivered to the Israelites upon their coming out of Egypt, are clearly the law of the decalogue: and the statutes not good, and judgments by which they should not live, and which are said to have been given them for their rebellions in the wilderness, are as clearly the law of ceremonies. See this fact proved to the completest demonstration, and the paltering attempts of Shuckford to evade it most entirely overthrown, in Warburton's Div. Leg. B. iv. Sec. 6.

customs introduced into that law, were not institutions given for the first time by Moses, but such as had long before been observed among the eastern nations*: all that was done by Moses respecting them was, to limit the animals which might be offered in sacrifice to certain species, and to prescribe exactly the place, occasions, and manner of offering them. Now how may this previous and general use of sacrificial worship be reasonably supposed to have originated? how so reasonably, as in a knowledge of that fixed analogy between natural things and spiritual, which we have before shewn was extensively possessed in the early ages of the world? The people of those times well knew of what affections and sentiments, or of what modes of thinking and feeling, the various animals are the proper emblems and representative forms: they knew, also, that all genuine worship of the Lord essentially consists in an elevation to him of all the affections and perceptions of the heart and mind: and they knew that to sacrifice the corresponding animals upon an altar dedicated to the Lord would be a significant action, powerfully expressive of such pure worship. But, it may be asked, could the joining of the significative action to the spiritual worship of the heart and lips render the latter any more acceptable to the

* See Warburton *ubi supra*; and Michaelis's *Comm. Law of Moses*, Art. 3, 189, &c.

Lord than it would be without it? This cannot well be supposed: and we may be sure that while men remained in that state of elevated intelligence which saw clearly the spiritual things to which natural objects answer by analogy, they would not think it necessary, nor even allowable, to add the representative rite to the spiritual reality. Previously to the time of Noah, at least, if it be true that the slaughter of animals, even for food, was unknown, a rite which required it would surely be deemed unlawful. They knew that, as a *significative action*, it might be expressive of pure worship: but they knew also, that the only real part even of representative worship must be the offering to the Lord of the inward states of mind which the animals represented, and that in the slaughter of the animals themselves there was nothing pleasing to the Lord, but rather the contrary, as it was attended with suffering, which, even when inflicted on an animal, is abhorrent from the will of Infinite Goodness. So thinks Archbishop Magee; and doubtless he here thinks right, though he draws from the fact the opposite conclusion*: and, though

* Speaking of Abel, he affirms it to be little likely "that he would have resorted to that *species* of action, which, in the eye of reason must have appeared displeasing to God, the slaughter of an unoffending animal." *On Atonement, &c.* Disc. ii. Hence, taking it for granted, that when Abel "brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof,

he perhaps did not think so correctly, he yet expresses as certain a truth, when he affirms that the language of the first men "cannot be supposed so defective, in those terms that related to the worship of God, as to have rendered it necessary to call in the aid of actions to express the sentiment of gratitude or sorrow."* But the very reason why it was not so defective, was, because it followed the laws of the analogy between spiritual things and natural: whatever idea of a spiritual or divine subject they had conceived in their minds, they did not seek for abstract metaphysical terms to express it, but painted it to the life in terms borrowed from natural objects, of the spiritual relations of which they had an intuitive perception. It is related of Adam, that the Lord brought unto him every beast of the field and every fowl of the air "to see what he would call them; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof†:" who can suppose that the mere fact of giving verbal names to animals is all that

(Gen. iv. 4.) he slew them as a burnt-sacrifice, (though the text does not say so,) the learned Archbishop infers, that he was led by an express revelation to do an act, against which his own reason and moral sense revolted. But the true nature of Abel's offering may be gathered from what is advanced above, and will further appear from a view which we have to offer in the next Lecture.

* Ibid.

† Gen. ii. 19.

is here intended? Doubtless, they are right who infer, that when Adam gave *names* to all living objects he had an intuitive perception of their *nature*, in all its relations: or rather, his knowledge of their nature is the thing described in the language of analogy, by the significative action of pronouncing their names. Whilst then, in any considerable degree, the undefiled worship of the Lord was preserved, and the intuitive wisdom of Adam remained, among his posterity, when they conversed of or described such worship, they would borrow images from the significant actions which they saw would represent it, and would speak of it as of offering, as sacrifices and burnt offerings, animals and the fruits of the earth: and this they would do, owing to the peculiar genius of all who lived before the coming of the Lord, when a more powerful illumination of the human mind was afforded, because such symbolic language would give them stronger and fuller ideas of the subject than could be afforded by any other medium. But, with them, it went no further, as may be concluded from a reference to this custom which we find in the prophet Hosea, who, as if on purpose to explain this ancient style of expression, uses it thus: "So will we render the *calves* of our *lips*."* With *these* offerings, then, in the times of which we were speaking, mankind were content. They

* Hos. xiv. 2.

offered to the Lord the *affections of the heart*, represented by the *calves* and other animals used in sacrifices, in their *prayers* and *praises*, called by the prophet the *lips*: but without slaughtering the animals themselves: and they described their worship in the same terms as would be employed in speaking of an animal sacrifice.

It is easy to see, however, that, in darker ages, this style of speech and writing would lead to the abuse of offering animal sacrifices themselves: in the same manner as the formation of hieroglyphic sculptures, to present to the mind, through the intervention of natural images, spiritual and divine ideas, led to a far more flagrant abuse, the absurdities of image-worship. When a generation of grosser minds arose,—of men who were more immersed in sensual and carnal objects and regards, and who thence had not such clear perceptions of the hidden meaning of phrases drawn from the Science of Analogies, and of a purely spiritual worship, they began to think it necessary actually to put the animals to death; much as the Roman Catholic, to strengthen his conceptions, when engaged in devotion, of his redemption by the Lord Jesus Christ, thinks it necessary to have a crucifix before his eyes. And as they who thus introduced the carnal part of the worship, by the help of it retained some idea, or some obscure

feeling, of what was spiritually represented, the use of actual sacrifices was permitted, by Divine Providence, as necessary to keep this alive.

Here then, surely, we have a very probable reason, why sacrifices were permitted, and in appearance enjoined, to the children of Israel. Properly speaking, as we have already seen, they were not enjoined them, since their ancestors were in the custom of using them long before; and the continuance of the practice was permitted to the Israelites, because they “rebelled against the Lord in the wilderness* ;” or, in the language of Jesus Christ, “because of the hardness of their hearts.” And the moral reason why, under certain regulations, they were permitted to the Jews, was, because, though their true spiritual reference was not known to that carnal people, they yet were affected by them with a sense of holiness, and kept in some kind of worship, of which, without such helps, they would have been incapable; at least, if not allowed to worship Jehovah with sacrifices, they would have worshipped with sacrifices Baal and Moloch. But the ultimate reason for the institution of sacrifices among the Israelites, was the same as that of their call and selection as a peculiar people; that, from the descriptions and precepts relating to this representative worship recorded in the Divine Word, future generations,

* ~~Exod.~~ xx. 13.

Ezek.

under a dispensation of higher light, without returning to the use of the significative actions, might learn, by a knowledge of their meaning, how to offer to the Lord a purely spiritual worship; a worship that should consist in the consecration to Him, at all times, of all the faculties of the heart and mind, and in the ascription of this to him, at stated periods, in prayers and praises, in their public assemblies.

(3.) We now, I trust, shall have found a clew, that will unravel the mystery of the extensive prevalence, in former ages, of the practice of human sacrifices. For from what has been offered it will appear, that there may be forms of speaking and writing respecting sacred subjects, and of describing them by *imagined* significative actions, which would be exceedingly criminal if reduced into practice. We find that, considered as a *moral* action, the slaughter even of animals cannot enter with strict propriety, or any otherwise than by permission, into the worship of the Lord; although, viewed merely as a *significative* action, it affords images highly expressive for *representing* his genuine worship. So it is, in a much higher degree, when the subject of the sacrifice is considered to be a son or a daughter. If the animals allowed to be sacrificed were representative of certain principles in the mind of the offerer dedicated by him to the Lord; his own children must be re-

presentative of principles in his mind connected with him still more closely,—more nearly allied to, and indeed identical with, the governing motives of all his conduct. They must be significative of the proper affections of his own will, the proper conceptions of his own understanding ; and these, unless surrendered and consecrated to the Lord, would have self alone for their object ; and this, again, if suffered to reign, would poison every virtue. For this reason, under the representative dispensation of the Jews, all the first-born, without exception, were declared to be holy to the Lord : and if the sacrificing of them could be merely a *significative* and not at the same time a *moral* action, this would, in the fullest manner, convey the important spiritual doctrine. On this account it was that Abraham, the proper type of the most devoted of the faithful, was tried as to his willingness to offer Isaac : he was permitted, as noticed above, to go far enough towards the completion of the sacrifice fully to shew its holy import as a significant action, though he was stopped in time to exclude its enormity as a moral one : and the reason assigned by Jehovah for the blessing afterwards pronounced upon him, was, “ Because thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son.”* Thus

* Gen. xxii. 16. Much erudition and genius have been exercised to prove, that the sacrifice of Isaac was designed as a representation of that of the Lord Jesus Christ. I

it is evident, that, in the language of Analogy, to speak of sacrificing children to the Lord only acknowledge it to have been so: indeed, its applicability to that great fact appears too obvious to be overlooked by any one. But, taking the representation under this relation, what part does Abraham sustain in it? Is he a type of "the Father" of the New Testament, as Isaac is of "the Son"? This is a conclusion, which, according to the common mode of understanding the transaction, seems impossible to be avoided. Even Warburton is constrained to admit it: though he considers the whole to be specially intended to instruct Abraham in the mystery of the Redemption, he cannot help representing the patriarch as standing in a relation of analogy to the Father: thus he says, that "God to instruct him (in the best manner humanity is capable of receiving instruction) in the infinite extent of divine goodness to mankind, 'who spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all,' [Rom. viii. 32.] let Abraham feel, by experience, what it was to lose a beloved son." [D. Leg. B. vi. Sec. 5.] But how monstrous is such an idea! The relation begins with informing us, (ver. 1,) that "God did tempt Abraham:" if then Abraham represents the Father of Jesus Christ;—who is the being here denominated God? And was the Father himself tempted in the death of Jesus Christ? and by Himself? And is it of himself that he here says, "By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because *thou* hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore;" &c. [ver. 16, 17.] Evidently, in this view of the matter, there is an utter want of parallelism between the type and the antitype, and the whole is replete with inconsistencies. But consider Abraham himself as the principal type of the Lord Jesus Christ in the transaction; and admit that in typical language different persons may be mentioned to represent, not different beings,

means to devote to him the nearest and inmost affections of the heart. As a significant action,

but different principles in the same being, whether in God or in man; and all difficulties vanish. Abraham is the only agent: it is he who surrenders and is about to sacrifice Isaac, who is quite passive; and he acts in the affair by the command of God: thus the circumstances of the whole become exactly parallel to those of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, as stated in his own words. He says of himself, "*I lay down my life for the sheep.—No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again: this commandment have I received of my Father.*" [John x. 15, 18.] Abraham then represents that principle in the Lord Jesus Christ which says, "I lay down my life of myself:" Isaac is the life laid down,—the life of the human nature: and "God" is "the Father,"—the Divine Essence Itself,—whose love was the moving cause of man's redemption. The life which Jesus Christ says he has "power to take again," is also the life of his human nature glorified at his resurrection, which is represented by the restoration of Isaac to Abraham, as it were "from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure." [Heb. xi. 19.] Thus the whole becomes consistent, even to the blessing pronounced upon Abraham for his obedience; which refers to the salvation of man in consequence of the assumption by the Lord of the human nature, his laying down of the life of it, and his taking of it again in a glorified state, and *thence* imparting the gifts of the spirit: [John vii. 39.] his *seed* who should be multiplied are the church of his faithful followers; or those, to whom he thus "gave power to become the *sons* of God, even they that believe on his name." [John i. 12.]

But the reference of this type, in its highest application, to the Lord Jesus Christ, does not exclude it from having a

and when suffered to go no farther than to words or signs, the sacrifice of children was clearly representative of something pre-eminently holy. The reason is, because, in this point of view, the children are not regarded as possessing any thing, not even life, as their own, but are considered as if they were the absolute property of their parents;—merely as something most dear to them, and which they are to dedicate to the Lord as an acknowledgment that all good is from him, and of right is to be ascribed to him. No doubt then, among the ancients, who were acquainted with the relation that natural things bear to spiritual, and whose ordinary language was, to a great degree at least, formed upon that relation, whence they used to speak of sacrifices in their conversation

secondary reference to his faithful disciples. As observed in the text above, we are required *to follow him*: we are to drink of the same cup, and to be baptized with the same baptism; as he said to James and John: “Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of, and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:” [Mark x. 39:] whence the Apostle declares, “We are buried with him by baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” [Rom. vi. 4.] It is doubtless, then, true, that Abraham is a type of the most faithful of the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ as well as of himself; and in this reference the sacrifice of Isaac must bear the meaning stated in the text above.

and writings which they never thought of performing according to the letter, the sacrifice of children would often be mentioned: and hence arose the abuse: for their ignorant and corrupt descendants at length proceeded to the act. This must necessarily be in the highest degree profane: because here the moral nature of the action interferes, and totally changes the character of the significative. For although, in one point of view, children may be considered merely in their relation to their parents, and thus as their property; yet are they also human beings themselves, having a life distinct from that of their parents, and being, or at least in preparation for becoming, independent moral agents: hence to kill them is murder of the worst kind: and hence the *act* of sacrificing them, instead of representing the hallowing of the inmost affections to the Lord, represents the direct contrary,—the privation of all spiritual life in the affections with which the man is most closely identified, and, in fact, the substitution in the heart of the love of evil for the love of good; which is equivalent to the worship of demons instead of God.

It surely cannot be difficult to see, that all this is grounded, not in any fanciful, but in a most certain and determinate analogy. A few words will now suffice, to apply these principles to the *apparent* sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter.

(4.) It has been shewn in our last Lecture,

that the people or nations who occupied the countries surrounding the land of Canaan, are all representative of moral and intellectual principles, more or less connected with, or opposed to, those which constitute the church in the human mind; and, less abstractedly, of those classes of persons who make such principles their predominant and influencing motives. One of these nations was that of the Ammonites: and it would be both a curious and interesting inquiry, to endeavour to ascertain, of what specific principle, and class of persons, connected with the church, they were the representatives; but to render the inquiry satisfactory, it would demand more space than we can now spare; and it is not necessary to the immediate object before us. Suffice it to say, that it is a principle, as appears from the chapter of Judges detailing the history of Jephthah and his daughter, which not only infests the church, represented by the Ammonites overrunning the land, but claims a legitimate right to it*; and which, though clearly confuted from the Word of God†, does not recede from its pretensions.‡ But, what throws more light upon Jephthah's vow, it is a principle, the abstract idea of which is typified by the fancied deity who was particularly worshipped by the sacrifice of children,—the horrid Moloch:

* Ver. 13.

† Ver. 15 to 27.

‡ Ver. 28.

“ Him the Ammonite
Worshipped in Rabbah and her wat'ry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon.”

Thus Moloch is emphatically called in Scripture, “ the abomination of the children of Ammon.”* It is true that in Jephthah's remonstrance, Chemosh is mentioned as their God †; who was properly the idol of the Moabites ‡: but the Moabites and the Ammonites are often considered as one people: and Chemosh, also, was worshipped by the sacrifice of children; as is evident from the conduct of his proper votary, the king of Moab, who “ took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall.”§ Now the occasion upon which Jephthah uttered his vow, was, when he was about to engage in mortal conflict with this nation of sacrificers of their children. Consider this conflict as representative of that which takes place in the mind, when any evil attachment that has taken deep root there is to be ejected. Every one must be aware that no evil can be successfully combated but from the opposite good, from a desire for it, and an inward attachment to it: who then does not see, that when the evil to be removed is that of which the Ammonites were types, and which was appro-

* 1 Kings xi. 7. † Jud. xi. 24. ‡ 1 Kings xi. 7. Num. xxi. 29.

§ 2 Kings iii. 27.

priately represented by the *actual* sacrifice of their sons and daughters to Moloch or Chemosh, the significant action most proper to represent the opposite good would be, an *apparent* sacrifice of a son or daughter to Jehovah?

This then appears to be the true design of this extraordinary transaction: only one or two more of its circumstances need be noticed. No evil, as has just been intimated, can ever be entirely removed, till the mind is made completely willing to relinquish it: and this willingness manifests the presence of an opposite good; and is such, in fact, itself. It is, however, seldom produced but in a state of deep inward trial: this, therefore, is appropriately represented by the anxiety respecting the issue of the battle which engrossed the feelings of Jephthah when he made his vow, and which he describes by the strong figure of "putting his life in his hands*:" and his vow as strongly breathes the willingness itself. And that resolutions of relinquishment and of dedication, made in a season of trial, are not to be receded from when it is over, is signified by Jephthah's perseverance in performing, "when he returned in peace from the children of Ammon," that which he had vowed in the hour of jeopardy.

When, however, we speak of Jephthah's perseverance in performing his vow, we mean, his perseverance such as it appears upon the face of

* Ch. xii. 3.

the narration: but that this extended to the actual sacrificing of his daughter, cannot, I think, be supposed. Here, as before observed, the moral character of the action would interfere, and would, beside being so horrible in itself, entirely vitiate the significative. Upon the supposition, however, that she *was* sacrificed, (the fault of which, we have before seen, would lie entirely in the ignorance of the parties,) as all mention of the actual perpetration of the deed is avoided, the signification of the transaction, as it stands in the record, would not be altered. But, no doubt, the execution was prevented,—probably in one of the ways which the commentators have supposed: but as, in the history, the merely significative action is all that is intended for consideration; therefore the narrative is so constructed as to lead to the conclusion that the sacrifice took place.

And surely the reason which we have alleged for the narrative's bearing such a construction, must be seen to be amply sufficient. That the only instance in the Israelitish history which presents the appearance of the sacrifice of a child having been vowed or performed by a leader favoured of God, should occur where the object of it was to obtain divine aid against a nation of sacrificers of their children, must have struck all who ever remarked it, as a very extraordinary co-incidence: how can it be accounted

for, but by the analogy which we have endeavoured to point out, on the one hand, between the real sacrifice of a child to an idol and the devotion of the nearest affections of the mind to the love of evil, and, on the other, between the apparent sacrifice of a child to God and the devotion of the inmost affections to the love of good; whence the one constitutes the proper opposite, and depicts the proper antidote, of the other? Thus the narrative becomes eminently illustrative of the true character of the Israelitish history; it strongly confirms the fact, that that history is of a representative character throughout; and it exhibits the necessity of calling in the Science of Analogies for its elucidation, and for clearing up the difficulties with which the letter, regarded by itself, often appears perplexed.

We have dwelt at considerable length upon the import, when decyphered by the Science of Analogies, of the capture of Jericho and of Jephthah's vow, because they afforded opportunities of illustrating some important truths of a general nature, which tend to throw considerable light upon the whole of the subject under inquiry: but, to prevent this work from extending too far beyond the moderate dimensions which it seems advisable to observe, we must confine our explanation of the examples still to

be offered nearly within the limits of a simple statement.

3. The combat between David and Goliath, related in 1 Samuel, ch. xvii. bears so many marks of its representative character on the face of the narrative, that many expositors have felt that something was intended by it beyond a mere relation of historical facts.

The victory obtained by a youth, represented as a mere child, with a sling and a pebble from the brook, over a professed champion above nine feet in stature and armed at all points, has generally been considered as symbolizing, in a very expressive manner, the superiority of divine dependance over self-confidence; and undoubtedly this is the general meaning of the history. The Philistines, we have stated in a former Lecture*, represent, in the Word, those who profess to belong to the church, and who have an extensive knowledge of sacred subjects, but yet give themselves no concern about bringing knowledge into practice, about uniting their faith with charity; and who even proceed so far as to affirm, that salvation depends upon faith alone. In all ages, and in all churches, there have been professors of this description, and we know that there is a large body of them at the present day, some of whom even go to the

* Page 195.

extent of affirming, that they who embrace the gospel are freed from the necessity of observing the law. Now, as to apply the knowledge of salvation by Jesus Christ to so impure a heresy as this, is deeply to defile it, therefore the Philistines are often called in Scripture, by way of reproach, *the uncircumcised*, That term denoting those who are in all the uncleanness of the unpurified lusts of the natural man. That epithet is, indeed, in a great measure appropriated to them: Thus David says, in the history before us, “ Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God? ”* The wars, then, between the Philistines and the Israelites, were symbolic of the contests for supremacy in the church between this doctrine, and that of faith in union with charity. Giants, when mentioned in Scripture, always denote those who are in strong persuasion of their superior power and intelligence, and who are deeply grounded in pride and self-conceit; as is generally the case with those who are in the persuasion that they are the peculiar favourites of heaven, accepted on account of their faith, but whose natural lusts are at the same time unsubdued; — especially those who never reflect upon sin in themselves, and conceive that the justification which they have received makes it

* Ver. 26. See also ver. 36; and Jud. xiv. 3, xv. 18; 1 Sam. xiv. 6, xxxi. 4; 2 Sam. i. 20.

impossible for them to commit any;—or, in other words, that whatever they may commit does not appear in the sight of God. The armour wherein the Philistine trusted, affords a suitable image of the false reasonings, and perversions of truth, by which such persons confirm themselves in their erroneous persuasions. David, on the contrary, is generally allowed to represent, in the highest sense, the Lord Jesus Christ, as to that principle in his nature whereby, when in the world, he combated against and subdued the infernal powers which held man in bondage; and hence, derivatively, he represents the faithful member of the church, who engages in spiritual conflicts in an humble dependance on the Lord alone. The smooth stones from the brook, are the pure truths of the Divine Word, applied, with the proper power, to detect the fallacies by which they who cherish faith without charity support their cause: and the stone smote the enemy in his *forehead*, to denote, that the very first and leading principle of the system of doctrine which makes every thing to depend upon faith,—the sentiment which forms *the head* of all the rest,—is discovered at once to be erroneous, when contrasted with any of the plain declarations of Scripture which express the sentiment, “Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”*

* Luke vi. 46.

I am fully satisfied that most of these interpretations could be proved, with a weight of evidence which it would be difficult to resist, to be founded in the immutable Relation of Analogy which subsists by creation between all natural objects and certain spiritual counterparts; and that all of them might be demonstrated, by a sufficiently extensive collation of other passages of Scripture, to be those which, in the Divine Word, every where belong to these symbols: but, for the reason stated above, we leave them, thus nakedly propounded, for the lovers of truth to examine for themselves.

4. The same remark will be applicable to the explanation which we here will offer on some of the circumstances attending the Crucifixion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is usual to regard the circumstances of insult and cruelty which marked the manner in which Jesus laid down his life, as affording strong marks of that depravity and corruption of the human heart, which could excite any who called themselves men, especially any who believed themselves to be the elect people of God, to act with such savage malice towards a being, who, even if not acknowledged to be God incarnate, must be venerated by every impartial mind as the most unoffending, most amiable, most beneficent, most perfect of men. But this view of

the subject, though just, does not go far enough. Not only were all the circumstances, generally, expressive of this deep depravity, but every thing that is recorded, even to the most minute, has a distinct spiritual signification.

All Christians admit, that the Lord Jesus Christ is “the Word of God*,” which is the same thing as the Divine Truth itself; whence we read that “the Word was made flesh.”† It was also shewn in our last Lecture, that whenever Jesus himself speaks of his approaching passion, he speaks of it as being to be suffered by “the Son of man;” because “the Son of man” is a title always applied to him in reference to his character as the Divine Truth or Word.‡ He suffered then in his character of the Word; and hence, by all the indignities to which he submitted, was represented the manner in which the Word was treated by the Jewish Church in its state of utter debasement: and, in fact, the manner in which the Word is treated in every Church, when it has departed from every thing which gives to a church its title to the name. The Lord was betrayed by Judas§, because Judas represents the very lowest principle in the constitution of fallen human nature—that of mere selfishness,—that which is identified as man’s proper own, considered as exclusive of every thing that he receives from God: and as this

* Rev. xix. 13. † John i. 14. ‡ P. 339. § Matt. xxvi. 47.

principle reigned with the Jewish nation, who were at that time the depositaries of the Word, of them, also, Judas was a type. The chief priests and elders, being the leading characters of the Jewish church, may be viewed as personifying its ruling sentiments in regard to charity and faith; and these being contrary to the love of God and to all genuine faith, and thus such as reject and destroy the truth of the Word, it was by the chief priests and elders that the Son of man was apprehended and first condemned*; and his being afterwards condemned by Pilate, who was a gentile, at their accusation and instigation†, shews how the Word is rejected by those who do not profess to belong to the church, but merely to follow the law of nature, because they receive their ideas of it from the misrepresentations of those who call themselves the church, and whom they regard as the proper judges of such a subject‡: as, also, they whose minds are not pre-occupied with the false doctrines of a corrupt church see many things by the light of nature which are in agreement with the truth of the Word; and as they, likewise, are always loud in their professions of regard for the truth abstractedly; therefore Pilate had such strong misgivings on the occasion. The Lord's being scourged and smitten on the

* Matt. xxvi. 47, 66.

† Ch. xxvii. 12, 23.

‡ John xviii. 35.

head with a reed*, were exact figures of the treatment which the Word receives from those who reject it: and as a crown is an emblem of wisdom, and thorns of pernicious false sentiments, his being crowned with thorns† expressively symbolized the manner in which the wisdom of the Word is falsified and perverted. The dividing of his outer garments into four parts among the soldiers‡ was indicative of the complete dissipation of the truths of the letter of the Word; but the preserving of his vesture or inner garment entire, represented that its spiritual sense could not be thus injured, being sheltered from common observation; and their casting lots for it, afforded an apt image of the conjecture and debate of which the spiritual sense, or, what is the same thing, the truth itself, becomes the subject, when all right understanding of the Word is lost. Without some such meaning, is it reasonable to suppose that such, in themselves, trivial circumstances, would have been recorded? and not only so, but that they should long before have been expressly foretold§? Their crucifying him fully expressed that the church had profaned and destroyed the whole of the Word. Their offering him vinegar to drink mingled with gall||, exhibited, by an apt symbol, that all their ideas of truth were false, all the truths they possessed being falsified from the influence of

* Matt. xxvii. 26, 30. † Ver. 29. ‡ John xix. 23, 24.

§ Ps. xxii. 18.

|| Matt. xxvii. 34.

their depraved lusts; truth falsified bearing the same relation to genuine truth as vinegar does to wine, and its mixture with gall implying defilement from grievous evils; wherefore he would not drink it: but afterwards, when, on occasion of his saying "I thirst," they gave him simple vinegar, the sponge containing it being put upon hyssop, he received it*; because this represented such erroneous sentiments as are grounded, not in evil and the intentional perversion of truth, but in ignorance, such as prevailed among the gentiles, who afterwards were taken to form the church instead of the Jews:—*hyssop*, and other bitter herbs, were symbolic of *purification*: the Lord's *thirst* is his ardent *desire* for the salvation of mankind, through their reception of his life-giving Word.

This explanation is applied to the treatment of the Lord and his Word by the Jewish Church: but the circumstances will equally suit the manner in which he is treated by mankind individually, whose selfish nature thus treats the Lord and his Word at all times. Indeed, as the Jewish Church, which was entirely a representative one, represents, in its state of integrity, the true church of the Lord, both generally, and as formed in the heart of the individual who professes to belong to it; so in its state of perversion it was symbolic of the mere selfish nature of man; and its treatment of the Lord depicts the

* John xix. 28, 29, 30.

manner in which man regards the Lord, and the divine truths of his Word, when he views them under the influence of his selfish nature alone.

Now whether or not, without further explanation, the circumstances we have noticed may be seen to bear the exact signification which has been offered, is probably doubtful; yet that they certainly carry some signification, and are recorded to intimate some spiritual instruction, is surely obvious upon the face of them. To me, at least, after the most impartial examination that I am able to give the subject, it appears so evident, that, without the slightest wish to think harshly of those who entertain the opposite opinion, I can only impute the existence of an opposite opinion to the want of a sufficiently careful and candid examination. To deny the spiritual import of this part of the Word of God after serious consideration, appears to me to demand, not merely a large share of the negative principle of incredulity, but of a positive principle of credulity; of a principle that can believe any inconsistency, provided it be requisite to support one species of consistency;—that which assumes, prior to the examination of evidence, that nothing spiritual can be contained in the Scriptures, and which is determined to maintain this assumption, let the presumptions to the contrary become ever so numerous and conclusive. Even Pilate could

listen, with respect, to the Lord's avowal, that he was a king whose kingdom was not of this world; and to his declaration, that "every one that is of the truth heareth *his* voice*:" and surely every thing that is recorded, by the pen of inspiration, of the actions or treatment of such a king, must relate to him as the king of this spiritual kingdom, and must either treat, directly, of the kingdom which is not of this world, or of the manner in which it is received among men. In such persons as Pilate is a type of, it might not be inconsistent to refuse to listen to such a plea: but when those who profess to be the true subjects of "the King of the Jews" would confine the circumstances of his history to this world only, do they not allow the supremacy of the worldly principle rather than of the heavenly one, and partake of the spirit which exclaimed, "We have no king but Cæsar?"† As is observed in another part of this work‡; if the Lord Jesus Christ had really a divine nature within him, then not only must all his words, but all his actions too, have flowed according to the order in which divine and spiritual things descend into natural, and thus must have been expressions of spiritual and divine ideas: nor could any thing be done to him, or suffered by him, without being brought within the same order: and thus, in every thing recorded

* John xviii. 36, 37.

† Ch. xix. 15.

‡ App. No. II.

of him, weighty instruction must be included, though conveyed by actions instead of words. To admit that the record of these transactions is the Word of God, is to affirm a truth; but to insist that it is to be understood according to the letter alone, is (, may I be pardoned for the assertion?) to falsify that truth: assuredly, it is turning the *wine* into *vinegar*: but whether the vinegar thus produced be that mingled with gall, or that corrected with hyssop, depends upon the inward disposition of the parties preparing it, and their means of information.

IV. Nearly related to those parts of the Word of God which, in their form, are strictly historical, are those which detail the rituals of the Ceremonial Law: and that these were intended to shadow out spiritual realities, is so obvious a truth, that it has generally been received among Christians as unquestionable:—unquestionable it certainly is, by all who believe that the Apostle Paul had any knowledge of the subject, since his declarations respecting it are too positive to be by any means evaded. Indeed, an enlarged consideration of this part of our subject, where proof would be so easy, would perhaps, more directly than any thing else, afford certain evidence of the spiritual nature of the Word of God. But it seems scarcely necessary to go into the demonstration of a fact, which every Chris-

tian is obliged to believe by the authoritative documents of his faith; and which even the Deist must admit to be the only rational account of the origin of ceremonial worship. Certain it is, that, in the early ages of the world, ceremonial worship was practised, if not by all, by the most enlightened and polished nations: and can any maintain such a paradox as to affirm, that this general consent of the most intelligent of mankind in the use of such worship, had no origin but chance? Is it not far more reasonable to believe, that it had some reasonable foundation? And what so reasonable as to conclude, that because the primeval inhabitants of the globe had an intuitive perception of the relation of Analogy existing from creation between spiritual objects and natural, men at length began to assist their conceptions of the former by appropriate applications of the latter?

I. That such was the origin, in particular, of the use of Sacrifices in worship, must, we should apprehend, at least appear highly probable, from the remarks which we have advanced upon the subject in our consideration of Jephthah's vow, where we anticipated most of what we think necessary to offer respecting it.* It is perfectly evident, from various parts of Scripture,

* Page 489—500. See also the remarks on the signification of animals at p. 158, &c. and 302, &c.

that the sacrifices offered upon the altar, as also the shew-bread set out upon the table in the sanctuary, were considered, strange as it may appear to our ideas, as food offered to the Divine Majesty. Indeed, whatever was put upon the altar, whether consisting of flesh or flour, is frequently called, in one word, *bread*; according to the known use of the Hebrew language, which often uses the term *bread* for *food in general*. Hence it is expressly said of the priests, that they offered, and also themselves partook of, *the bread of God*.* So the parts of the lamb or goat for the peace-offering which were consumed upon the altar, are explicitly called by our translators, “*the food of the offering made by fire unto the Lord* ;” and “*the food of the offering made by fire for a sweet savour* † :” and the idea of the agreeable scent of roasted food, is applied to the whole burnt-offerings, whether of bullocks, sheep, or doves, each of which is called “*an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour, unto the Lord* ‡ :” as also are the offerings of flour, baked or unbaked.§ The same ideas are used by Jehovah himself, when, reproaching by the prophet the Israelites for their “*abominations*,” he says, “*Ye have brought strangers, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in my sanctuary to pollute it, even my house, when ye*

* Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17, 21, 22 ; Ch. xxii. 25. † Ch. iii. 11, 16.

‡ Ch. i. 9, 13, 17.

§ Ch. ii. 2, 9.

offer *my bread, the fat and the blood**:" and by another prophet, still more particularly, the same Divine Speaker says, "Ye offer polluted *bread* upon *mine altar*; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, *The table* of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for *sacrifice*, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, is it not evil?—But ye have profaned it, in that ye say, *The table* of the Lord is polluted, and the fruit thereof, even *his meat*, is contemptible."† It is impossible for any fact to be more explicitly stated: *the altar* is considered, by God himself, as *his table*, and *the things offered* upon it as *his meat*. For what purpose then was *meat* thus presented to him? The natural idea evidently is, to satisfy the divine hunger. But is the divine hunger such as can feed upon the things burnt upon the altar themselves? He himself declares plainly, that if he were subject to *such* hunger, he would not be dependent upon man for satisfying it: "If I were *hungry*, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof: Will I eat the flesh of bulls, or drink the blood of goats?"‡ What else then is man to present, which Deity can appetite? Himself, continuing the same earnest address, informs us: "*Offer* unto God *thanksgiving*, and pay thy *vows* unto the Most High; and *call upon me* in the day of

* Ezek. xliv. 7.

† Matt. i. 7, 8, 12.

‡ Ps. l. 12, 13.

trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.”* How evident then is it, that the flesh of bulls and the blood of goats, with the other elements of sacrificial worship, are the symbols of the worship of thanksgiving, vows, and invocation; which, again, are only sincere as they proceed from love, charity, and faith; and thus that, properly, the things presented upon the altar were natural images, answering, by a just analogy, to all the spiritual graces, by and from which an acceptable worship can be offered to the Most High! What then can the divine *hunger* be, which requires to be fed with such food as this? What, but, like *the thirst* of Jesus Christ, as noticed above, the ardent *desire* with which *Divine Love* yearns for man’s salvation, and which is satisfied in proportion as man receives from God the graces which bring salvation; for the obtaining of which the spiritual worship of God is an indispensable medium; and of the possession of which, such worship as gratefully ascribes them all to him, is both a consequence and a sign? The spiritual idea of hunger is plainly intimated, when the Lord says, “Blessed are they that *hunger and thirst* after *righteousness*.”† By a clear analogy, as natural hunger is an appetite for food, and natural thirst an appetite for drink, so spiritual hunger is a desire for good, and spiritual thirst a desire for truth;

* Ver. 14, 15.

† Matt. v. 6.

and divine hunger and thirst can be no other than the Lord's desire, that the goodness and truth of which he is the Author might find an abode in the heart and mind of man, and be returned him again in the ascriptions of genuine worship.

2. Nearly related to the worship of the Lord by the sacrifice of animals, and to the precepts respecting the species of animals which might be employed in such worship, is the law delivered in Leviticus xi. and Deut. xiv. relating to the species of animals which might or might not be used as articles of food. If, as seems so evident, all living creatures are forms expressive of particular affections and modes of thinking that live in the human breast; and if the nourishment of the body answers by an exact analogy to the nourishment of the mind; it cannot be extraordinary, that, under a representative dispensation, precise directions should be given upon this subject. By this law then, in general, is taught, how careful man should be respecting what sort of affections he appropriates in his will, and what sort of sentiments he adopts in his understanding: and the rules laid down for distinguishing the unclean creatures from the clean, delineate the criteria for discriminating between evil affections and good ones, mischievous sentiments and beneficial. As, however, this would

open to us a very extensive field of investigation, this slight notice of it must suffice.

3. But under the Israelitish dispensation there were other ceremonial observances, beside those which related either to the bread of God or to the food of man. One of the most remarkable of these was the vow of the Nazarite, the law of which is prescribed in Num. vi. The chief regulations of it were, that the subject of the vow, during its continuance, was to drink no wine, “and eat nothing that is made of the vine-tree, from the kernels even to the husk;” and no razor was to come upon his head. At the termination of the period for which he was set apart, the length of which is not defined, he was to offer a burnt-offering, a sin-offering, a peace-offering, a meat-offering, and a drink-offering; and he was then to shave his head, and put the hair in the fire under the sacrifice of the peace-offering: after which he was at liberty to drink wine. Both Samson and Samuel were Nazarites for life, by appointment and dedication before they were born*; and from the growth of his hair in this consecrated state, the former derived his great strength.† Surely, then, the Scriptures must mean us to infer, that the Nazariteship was representative of a state eminently holy; and what that state is, the circumstances, con-

* Jud. xiii. 5, 7. 1 Sam. i. 11.

† Jud. xvi. 17.

sidered as speaking the language of Analogy, very clearly designate.

There are in the Scriptures numerous intimations respecting two sorts of characters belonging to the church,—those who act more under the influence of good or love, and those who act more under the influence of truth or faith. The former apply the commandments of the Word immediately to life and practice, without thinking or reasoning upon them; and they hence acquire an intuitive perception of truth, which the Lord refers to when he says, “Let your communication be Yea, yea, Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil* :” the latter take too much pleasure in the “whatsoever is more than these,” to be satisfied with so short a road to wisdom: they love the exercise of thought and reasoning: they scarcely regard truth itself as valuable, but as it is the object of these faculties: they have, however, an ardent love of truth; but their love of goodness is rather a regard to what they see to be the dictates of truth. Now of truth, and of the good which is the result of a love of truth, the vine and its productions are, in the Word, eminent types; as are the olive and its products of the higher love of good. That they who would obtain the proper love of good, should aim at it at once, and not amuse themselves too far with the lower

* Matt. v. 37.

love of truth, is then what is meant by the prohibition to the Nazarites of the use of wine or the other products of the vine: it is, in fact, the same precept as is delivered by Jesus Christ in plainer terms, when he says, "Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay." Nevertheless, though they do not make truth their study, they enjoy, by virtue of their love of good, an intuitive knowledge of all truth; according to that other divine saying, "If any man will do [*willeth to do*] his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God."* They have, on every occasion, a perception of the truth or falsehood of every suggestion presented to them; and in the combats of temptation they apply their Yea, yea, or Nay, nay, with a power, which they who are in evil and error, and all the tempting forces, are unable to resist. Of this power of the true Nazarite, the extraordinary strength of Samson was a symbol. And as the greatest power of truth lies in its lowest manifestation—or *the strength* of Jehovah is in *the clouds*†; and as the hair, being the extreme part of the bodily frame, denotes the extreme part of the mental constitution,—the ultimate of all,—the immediate seat of the senses and corporeal appetites; and as when divine goodness and truth possess these they possess the whole man,—and they do possess even these with those who are principled

* John vii. 17.

† See App. No. IV.

in the proper love of good ;—therefore the Nazarites were commanded not to cut their hair ; and Samson declared that in his hair his great strength resided. As they who have persevered the full period in the kind of life which this vow symbolizes, become regenerate through all their mind, and every principle of their constitution at length spontaneously rises in the worship of the Lord ; this was represented by the Nazarite's offering, when the days of his separation were fulfilled, sacrifices of all the kinds directed by the Levitical law. His then consuming his hair in the fire of the altar, was expressive of the complete renewal of the very ultimate principle of his constitution, of which the hair is the type, so that there remains no longer any thing of self in it, but the whole is dedicated to the Lord. And his being at liberty afterwards to drink wine, signifies, that all the recreation and delight that truth can afford are then free to him also ; as to him *who seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all inferior things are given in addition.**

These are very holy and interior subjects ; and, for that very reason, it is to be expected that they will only excite the scorn of those, (should any of that character give them a moment's notice,) who regard nothing but what their corporeal senses dictate. We are warned by

* Matt. vi. 33. The same subject is illustrated by the obedience of the Rechabites : Jer. xxxv.

divine authority of the consequences of presenting the holy things of celestial good to dogs, and the pure pearls of spiritual truth to swine. Probably, also, to many of better dispositions, but who raise their views with reluctance above the precincts of nature, such matters will appear too remote from ordinary apprehension to deserve much attention; they will regard them, as the rustic regards the nebulæ in the galaxy of heaven,—as films not more important than those formed by the exhalations of the marsh; whilst by the votary of true science they are contemplated with delight mixed with awe, and are regarded, not merely as suns, but as systems of suns, dispensing the beams of light and life to numberless unseen worlds. The truth of the doctrine deduced from this mysterious ceremony, whether it be seen to be taught by the ceremony or not, may, however, be readily appreciated. Assuredly, every breast that has ever glowed with one touch of pure, disinterested affection,—which has ever been warmed with one feeling of which the high name of *goodness* may justly be predicated,—must have felt how, when placed in contrast, the coruscations of the brightest intellect, the most exalted views of truth, admirable and excellent as these, also, nevertheless are, sink into shade. He will naturally then expect, that of a fact so important, some decided intimations would be given in a book which is really

the Word of God; and if he knows that the Word of God must necessarily be written by the aid of natural images; and is aware, also, that the Jewish nation was selected for the purpose of representing heavenly things by symbolic actions; he will expect to find the subject somewhere shadowed out among the rituals of their law. When thus prepared, if possessed, in addition, of some acquaintance with the language of Analogies, he will easily recognise a beautiful representation of it in the Law of the Nazarite.

4. Finally, we are to notice the ceremonial observances which are retained among Christians: and that some are retained, by divine appointment, under the spiritual dispensation of the gospel, is an argument, surely, that spiritual things are included in them; and, by consequence, that spiritual things were represented in the ceremonies of the Jewish Church, of which they are a remnant and epitome.

There are two things to which all the divine commandments relate, and to which they may be reduced: to the same two things all the ordinances of the Levitical law necessarily had reference: and these are, purification from the evil and false tendencies of man's selfish nature, and the appropriation and practice, in their stead, of the principles and sentiments of goodness and truth. Such, accordingly, are the order and sub-

stance of the summaries of religion occasionally given in the Divine Word: "*Depart from evil, and do good**:" "*Cease to do evil; learn to do well.*"† These two things then, in a general way, are pointed at in the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper: and thus in them is concentrated the substance of all the rituals of the Mosaic dispensation, and of all the precepts of the Word of God. On how numerous occasions washings were prescribed under the Levitical law, is well known to all who have examined it: almost every ceremony, was to be accompanied with washing: of all these different ablutions then the ordinance of baptism was appointed as an epitome. On how many occasions, also, sacrifices were to be offered, and how various were the kinds of them, are equally well known: instead then of "the flesh of bulls and the blood of goats," and of all the other sacrifices, are now substituted, as the substance of them all, the flesh and blood of the Son of man; and as the former were all called, in one word, *the bread of God*, and were accompanied with libations of wine; so of these, now, bread and wine are taken as the symbols.

Now the foundation of these institutions in the universal principle, that spiritual things may be adequately represented by natural images, there being, from the order of creation, a fixed

* Ps. xxxiv. 14.

† Isa. i. 16, 17.

Relation of Analogy between the one and the other, is, one would think, too obvious to be denied; and the meaning of them, when deciphered by that principle, is, one might apprehend, too clear to be disputed. Between the washing of the person from its impurities, and the purification of the spirit from its defilements, the analogy is seen at once: and the water, which is the medium of effecting the one, is the appropriate symbol of the truth, which is the agent in accomplishing the other. For how is man ever led to desist from the evil and error of his ways, but by listening to the commands and exhortations of Divine Truth? Of Divine Truth, regarded, not as to its power of enlightening the mind, but of purifying it, water is, assuredly, a most manifest image; as it also is, when regarded as the element of drinking, of Divine Truth viewed as contributing to spiritual nourishment. Baptism then was instituted, not, as some have strangely supposed, as conferring regeneration, but as a sign of it. It is submitted to as a pledge, that the party undergoing it engages to yield his mind and life to the purifying discipline of the truth; and no doubt it is accompanied with a divine influence, conferring on him, more fully, the ability of acting in conformity with his engagement.

But perhaps there is no instance in which the power of the Science of Analogies in explaining

the sacred mysteries of the Word of God is more conspicuous, than in the ordinance of the Lord's supper. This is a subject which has involved the Christian world in endless disputes. One party maintains that the bread and wine, when consecrated, do actually become, by a real transubstantiation, the body and blood of the Lord: and if we confine ourselves to the literal sense of the Lord's words on instituting the rite,—“This is my body;—This is my blood*,”—we shall be forced to confess that this view is correct. The other party maintains, that, notwithstanding the Lord's words literally affirm it, the doctrine of transubstantiation cannot be true, because it supposes an impossibility: and if we consult the suggestions of reason, we must allow that this is undeniable. But when we are apprised that the Lord, for the expression of spiritual and divine ideas, constantly employed natural images answering to them by an exact analogy, the difference is reconciled at once. Flesh and blood, being the two chief elements of man's corporeal frame, must denote, when predicated of a Divine Person, the two first Essentials of the Divine Nature, which are, love and wisdom, or goodness and truth. Bread and wine, as the main articles by which the body is nourished, must have the same signification. We learn then, that by receiving the bread and wine in the Holy Supper,

* Mark xiv. 22, 24.

are represented the reception and appropriation in the mind of love and wisdom communicated by the Lord; which have the same effect in nourishing and preserving our souls as the bread and wine have in nourishing and preserving our bodies. And doubtless the rite itself was instituted, because, in properly corresponding externals, internals are present with greater power than without them; and thus to the sincere communicant who ascribes all good to the Lord as its Author, he himself, with his divine graces of love and wisdom, is then more near than at other times, imparting that heavenly nourishment on which depends the life of his soul.

But let this be as it may: whether or not any heavenly influences are present at the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; it seems impossible to doubt that such graces as we have described are intended to be *represented* by those ordinances: In them, therefore, we assuredly have conclusive evidence, that the Word of God is written according to the laws of that Analogy which so clearly connects together the objects of spirit and of nature,—the intellectual and moral with the physical and material world—and that this Analogy affords the Rule by which the genuine import of the Word of God may be decyphered.

Here then we conclude our Proofs and Illus-

trations of the applicability of the Science of Analogies as a Rule for the interpretation of the Word of God: and though I am aware that the instances selected have not been elucidated with half the strength and clearness which the principle admits; yet amid all the defects of the advocate, it can hardly, I trust, be denied, that from most of the examples such a degree of light has been elicited, as to render it morally certain that the principle is correct.

But to draw from these elucidations the conclusion which they are intended to support, we must still remember the principles laid down at the beginning of the fourth Lecture, on the character which must necessarily belong to the Divine Style of Writing. “ If, as there stated, in a written revelation from God, the Divine Truth *must* clothe itself with ideas and images taken from the world of nature before it could be presented to man; and if the Divine Style of Writing *must* thus follow the Law of that Analogy, which, as was shewn in the third Lecture, indissolubly connects natural objects and ideas with such as are spiritual and divine;—it will follow, that the spiritual and divine wisdom which such a-revelation *must* contain within it, *could* only be understood by a right application of this Law. And if on an application of this Law to the books called the Holy Scriptures, it should be found that they exhibit a coherent

series of spiritual and divine instruction ; it will follow, further, that the Scriptures *are* such a revelation of Divine Truth presented to man in natural language; that they *are* the Divine Speech, or Divine Word, which has emanated from the bosom of Deity, and presents itself under this form in this lowest sphere of creation." We have now tried the applicability of the Rule to all the species of composition which the Sacred Writings contain,—the prophetic, the historical, and the preceptive (, taking our examples of the last from the precepts relating to ceremonial rites): we have found that, when decyphered by the proposed key, a coherent series of spiritual and divine instruction every where appears : we have a right then to infer, that the Scriptures actually are composed in the truly Divine Style of Writing, and that nothing below the Plenary Divine Inspiration was adequate to their production.

V. Before I conclude this Lecture, I will add an argument which occurred to my own mind many years ago, and which to me carried irresistible conviction.

I. It may be simply propounded thus : It is impossible for a false, yet regular rule for the interpretation of the Scriptures, to draw from them a coherent sense in every passage to which it should be applied : But the Doctrine of Analogies is thus universally applicable : Necessarily,

then, the Scriptures are written throughout according to that Doctrine, and this affords the true Rule for their interpretation.

And it may be illustrated thus: Suppose a book were found, written in the English tongue, but in characters grown obsolete by antiquity. The mode of decyphering it, of course, would be, by ascertaining what letters of the present alphabet answer to those in which the book was written. It is evident that if, in attempting to assign the corresponding letters, we fixed upon wrong ones, though we might appear to make out a word here and there, the sense of the series of words would be as much hidden as ever. Suppose, for instance, I assume the letter which is indeed a *G* to be an *M*, the *O* to be an *A*, and the *D* an *N*; and instead of *God* were to read *man*, wherever that combination of letters occurred: although I should thus have got a single word, which, for aught that appeared in that instance alone, might be the true one, yet perhaps I might not find another case in which my misconstrued alphabet would make any word whatever; and certainly I should never find two or three words, so made out, that would read together in a coherent series. Until, then, the really corresponding letters were discovered; all would be doubt and conjecture: we might dispute whether the book were written in the English or in any other language: and probably many would contend,

that it was not intended to have any series of meaning at all ; just as is now generally affirmed with respect to the spiritual sense of the Scriptures. If, on the contrary, on applying any system of interpretation to the supposed mysterious book, it should be found to decypher, not one or two words only, but the whole ;—if the whole might be read in order, definite words and a coherent sense being found in every part ; the truth of the proposed system of interpretation would be incontestable ; there could be no doubt that the unknown characters really answered to the common ones which the proposed system substituted for them. Now this case, I venture to affirm, is exactly parallel to that of our proposed interpretation of the Word of God by the Rule drawn from the Doctrine of Analogies. If the signification assigned from this Doctrine to any term used in Scripture were not the true one,—did not give the properly corresponding idea,—though a colourable interpretation of one or two passages might perhaps be offered, yet the application of the same sense to the same term wherever else it occurred would yield nothing but a chaos of confusion. But when we find that the contrary is the case with the system we have proposed ; when it is seen, that this explains one passage as readily as another, and the whole as completely as a part ; when the sense assigned by it to any individual term is

found to afford a luminous meaning in every instance where that term occurs* ; the conclusion is irresistible, that the system is correct. On this ground we rest the claim of the Doctrine of Analogies to be received as the true key for the interpretation of Holy Writ ; assured that in this will be found the true alphabet for decyphering the Divine Style of writing. Let us take this for our guide, and begin with the books of Moses ; and we fear not to say ; Behold, their mysteries unfold. Let us proceed through the Prophets ; and nothing so recondite will present itself, as will not, on the right application of this key, expand full to the view. Let us continue our researches through the Gospels and Apocalypse, and still we shall find that this Doctrine affords the universal talisman, by which the veil of the letter is every where laid open, and the wonders of God's law,—all that man can comprehend of the wisdom of Omniscience,—are revealed.

The two conclusions then, of our proposition above, hence result :

First, That the Doctrine of Analogies, being thus applicable to the decyphering of the natural images composing the letter of the Divine Word from one end of it to the other, affords the true rule for its interpretation.

Secondly : That the Divine Word, being thus

* See this exemplified, with respect to the term *clouds*, in the fourth Lecture, p. 348, &c. and Appendix No. IV.

universally capable of being interpreted by the Doctrine of Analogies, must have been intentionally written according to it.

2. Let us extend this argument by the following supplement: How can it be accounted for, that writings composed by a great number of different authors, who were scattered over a period of sixteen hundred years, and were thus without any possibility of settling a plan in concert, should be written throughout by a uniform principle of so remarkable a kind;—especially when it is certain, that at least the greater number of the penmen were quite unconscious that their productions were governed by this principle, and were entirely unacquainted with the spiritual contents, which, by virtue of this law of their construction, their writings contained?

From this circumstance, alone, then, we surely are again intitled to infer, that the style in which the Scriptures are composed, following every where the Law of Analogy, is the truly Divine Style of Writing; and that nothing short of Plenary Divine Inspiration could be adequate to the production of Compositions so extraordinary. Truly, therefore, are they denominated, "THE WORD OF GOD."

LECTURE VI.

THE WHOLE FABRIC OF INFIDEL OBJECTIONS SHEWN
TO BE WITHOUT FOUNDATION.

I. *General View of the System and Arguments of the preceding Lectures: Important additional Testimony.* II. *The four classes of Infidel Objections stated in the first Lecture resumed, and examined by the view which has been developed of the nature of the Holy Word, and of the means of decyphering its true signification.* 1. *Imputed Inconsistencies with Reason and Science considered: Style of Writing in the first part of the book of Genesis.* 2. *Imputed Contradictions considered: Why four Gospels were written.* 3. *Imputed Violations of Morality considered: David not a pattern, but a type.* 4. *Imputed Insignificance considered. General Reply confirmed;—That all such Objections arise from taking a merely superficial view of the Sacred Scriptures, and from an utter Ignorance of their true Nature.* III. *Address to Christians, on the Necessity of taking higher ground in their Controversy with Deists.* IV. *Address to Deists, on the internal causes of Scepticism.* Conclusion.

It has been the object of our preceding Lectures to shew, that the Holy Scriptures are written according to the laws of the Analogy or Mutual Relation established by creation between things natural and spiritual; that they thus contain a spiritual sense distinct from the literal expression, which they could not convey, in an orderly series, unless they were divinely inspired throughout; that there is ample evidence that they *are* thus written, and of course that they *are* divinely inspired; and thus that they are, what they profess to be, the Word of God.

I. The line of argument by which we arrive at this conclusion has consisted of four stages, which, now that we are about to close the whole discussion, we will state in one view.

1. We have seen, in the first place, in our first Lecture, that a Revelation which is indeed from God, must contain, in every part of it, the treasures of infinite Wisdom: but we have seen also, that this wisdom does not every where appear in the Scriptures on the face of the letter;—so far from it, that infidels have deduced from the appearances of the letter, and in ignorance of their containing any thing further, various plausible arguments for denying them to have proceeded from any superior intelligence. But the fair inference from those appearances is, not that they are *not* divinely inspired, but that, *if they are*, they must contain that superior wisdom

which is the criterion of inspiration, in an interior sense distinct from the literal expression. This the deistical objections appear to me decidedly to prove;—that if the Scriptures actually do not contain any thing beyond what appears on the surface, they are not the Word of God: but they by no means prove the negation which they aim at,—that they are not the Word of God:—they only prove, that, to be such, they must contain more than appears on the surface,—that they must include a spiritual sense within the letter, in which all difficulties vanish, and the wisdom every way worthy of God opens to the view.

So far, then, the objections of Deists may clearly be retorted against themselves. We may say to them, “After all your industry in seeking for difficulties in the letter of Scripture; and admitting the difficulties you have brought forward to be ever so great, so long as the literal expression alone is attended to; you have not produced any thing that can convince a reflecting mind that the Scriptures are not the Word of God; you only elevate our conceptions to higher views respecting what the Word of God must really be. We find in the Scriptures numerous intimations, leading us to look for something beyond the letter: the difficulties you have started are calculated to turn attention the same way: Let us then examine the Scriptures in

this new and more exalted point of view ; in which, if you will accompany us, you will probably see reason to change your opinion, and to acknowledge that your objections to the inspiration of the Scriptures have all proceeded upon a very partial and entirely inadequate view of the case.”

2. This being precisely the situation in which the Christian advocate is placed by the Deistical objector, we proceeded, in the second branch of our argument, contained in our second Lecture, to examine the question thus opened for consideration. Here then we gave proofs, from rational and philosophical considerations, that a composition which is really the Word of God, must not only be generally replete with divine wisdom, but must contain the chief stores of such wisdom in its interior recesses,—in a spiritual sense included within the letter;—just as, in all the works of God, and especially in his noblest work, man, are contained innumerable forms and wonderful organs, both corporeal and mental, within the outward form which alone is visible to the eye. This branch of the argument then stands thus: “A composition which has God for its Author, must contain within it stores of hidden wisdom, beyond that which appears on the surface: On the supposition, then, that the Scriptures are the Word of God, they actually must be replete with such hidden wisdom.” And thus the same conclusion is pressed

upon us by considerations grounded in the very nature of things, which we before found was pointed out to us by the infidel objections.

It is true that this argument does not prove, that the Scriptures positively *are* the Word of God, but only, what their nature must be *if* they are : But as they likewise affirm the same of themselves, and had that affirmation believed, without reserve, in the days of primitive and pure Christianity, (both which points are also proved in our second Lecture,) a full coincidence is established between what a divine revelation must be, and what the Scriptures pretend to be ; and thus is raised a strong presumption, that this, on due examination, is what they will actually be found to be. Before then the Deist rejects them on account of some things which offend him in the letter, it behoves him to be very certain, that the literal sense is all that is intended : and if he is assured that a further meaning is intended, (and I wish my voice or pen could carry this assurance to every one that ever saw a Bible, whether Deist or Christian!) then ought he, as a candid inquirer, to pause a while, and examine the evidence upon which this statement rests : and sure I am, that whoever would candidly do this, and would take the pains to understand it, must be convinced of its truth, and must learn to prize the Scriptures as his highest treasure,—as containing indeed the pure Word of God.

3. But to determine this point with certainty, it is necessary that we should be acquainted with the Law or Rule by which every divine composition must be composed, and by which of course it alone can be decyphered: wherefore, as the third branch of our argument, we proceeded to shew, in our third Lecture, that there must be, from the very nature of creation, an unalterable relation between natural things and spiritual, insomuch that all things in nature, being outward productions from inward essences, must be natural, sensible, and material types, of moral, intellectual, and spiritual antetypes, and finally of their prototypes in God. I then availed myself of several testimonies in favour of this great principle: but I will here mention one which was not before the public at the time of the delivery of my former Lecture, but which is so striking and beautiful, that I am sure every lover of truth will be glad to be put in possession of it now. It is contained in an address delivered by the Rev. W. Kirby, M.A., F.R. and L.S., the Chairman of the Zoological Club of the Linnæan Society, at a late meeting of that body. He offers his views of the existence of fixed analogies among the various orders of being; of the importance of the recognition of the principle to the higher interests of Science; and of its applicability to the construction of a highly signi-

ficant language; in these terms: "When we are engaged in the study of animals, and more especially of groups of them, *it is of the first importance*, if we would avoid mistakes, that our attention should be kept alive to what the friend lately alluded to has said on the subject of affinity and ANALOGY.* By his judicious observations on this subject, he has opened a new door into the temple of nature, and taught us to explore her mystic labyrinths, *guided by a safer clew than we were wont to follow*. And whoever casts even a cursory glance over her three kingdoms, will every where be struck by resemblances between objects which have no real relation to each other. He will see on one side *dendritic* minerals; on another, *zoomorphous* plants; on a third, *phytomorphous* animals; and among animals themselves he will see numberless instances of this simulation of affinity where the reality of it does not exist. *From this part of the plan of the Creator, we may gather, I think, THAT EVERY THING HAS ITS MEANING, AS WELL AS ITS USE; and that probably to the first pair THE CREATION WAS A BOOK OF SYMBOLS, A SACRED LANGUAGE; OF WHICH THEY POSSESSED THE KEY, and which it was their delight to study and decypher.*"†

* The gentleman alluded to is Mr. Macleay, who has demonstrated the existence of a remarkable analogy between insects and fungi: See our third Lecture, p. 153 and 155 (notes.)

† Phil. Mag. Dec. 1823, p. 461.

Here then is asserted in the most conclusive manner, and as founded on the most certain facts, the very principle which it has been a chief object of these Lectures to establish. Not only does this enlightened philosopher and divine affirm the existence of a fixed analogy between the various objects of the three kingdoms of nature, but he recognises, as an unavoidable consequence, its existence between the kingdoms of nature and those of mind : and when he concludes that it forms a sacred language, of which our first parents possessed the key, he leads by an easy step to our further conclusion, that in this language the Word of God is, and must be, written. Little, certainly, did I think, when I first propounded the principle in this Hall, that it was being advanced, almost at the same moment, in one of the most distinguished philosophical societies in the kingdom ! But from this and other tokens I am quite satisfied, that the advances which science is at present making in all directions, are very rapidly leading the mind of reflecting men to the same doctrine of Scripture interpretation as has been offered in these Lectures. The final consequence will be, that there will be no resting place to be found between absolute Atheism, and those views of the nature of the Divine Word which we have endeavoured to develope. These, all real science will be found more and more to confirm : and

Atheism, also, will then become far more inexcusable, because the testimonies to the divinity of the Scriptures will become so palpable and so abundant.

4. Finally, we have endeavoured to shew, that the communication of a Revelation from God to man, must follow the same general law as regulated the production of the creation; thus that the Analogy found to exist between natural things and spiritual, must govern the composition of writings constituting such a Revelation; and that, in point of fact, such a regard to this Analogy is discoverable in every part of the Holy Word, and is the true key for decyphering its contents. Examples in proof of this, with dissertations on the true nature of divinely inspired prophecy and divinely inspired history, and on the design of the selection of the Israelites as a peculiar people, occupied our two last and longest Lectures: and I do trust, that some of the instances which were given of the applicability of the Doctrine of Analogies to the interpretation of the Divine Word, though very imperfectly elucidated, must yet have been sufficiently clear to carry conviction to every accessible mind.

The presumption, then, in favour of the divinity of the Scriptures, created by the former part of our argument, now rises to certainty; for this branch of the argument stands thus: A Com-

position which has God for its Author must own the laws of the same Analogy as reigns through all the divine works : This characteristic exists in the Sacred Scriptures : Wherefore they must have proceeded from the Author of nature. If it be objected that this only proves that the Scriptures *may* have had such an origin, but not that they *must*; a supplementary member may be added to the argument : As was shewn at the commencement of the fifth Lecture, No composition could, *everywhere*, follow the laws of the Analogy between natural and spiritual objects, unless dictated by a Being to whom the properties of all natural and spiritual objects were perfectly known : As then the Scriptures do everywhere follow this Analogy, they must have proceeded from a Being of Infinite Intelligence.

Thus have we arrived fully at the conclusion, that the Scriptures are, what they profess to be, the Word of God.

II. If then it is true, that such is the nature of the Word of God ;—if, as has been shewn, it is not given to communicate to man natural knowledge, but spiritual,—and if, as likewise has been evinced, to communicate spiritual things without a veil would be to injure those who are in states of confirmation against divine things, and not to benefit them ;—if, finally, it is because it fol-

lows the Law which must necessarily govern the communication of a Divine Revelation, that the Word of God is couched in language outwardly simple, whilst it contains divine wisdom within; which, also, is capable of being decyphered by an application to it of the laws observable in nature: then are we furnished with a satisfactory answer to every argument that can possibly be urged against it. It necessarily follows, that it is the Word of God indeed: and it is immediately seen that all infidel objections proceed upon a partial view of the case, and that they fall to the ground of themselves, as soon as the true nature of the Writings against which they are raised is known, without the necessity of being separately refuted.

By way of conclusion, however, we are to shew more particularly, how the system of which we have been endeavouring to give a sketch, applies to the four classes of infidel objections noticed in our first Lecture; which impute to it many statements contradictory to each other; many that are contradictory to reason and science; many that are contradictory to just morality; and many that relate to matters of an indifferent nature, totally unworthy of the concern of an Infinite Being.

1. There will be some convenience in considering *first*, that class of infidel objections

which imputes to the Scriptures Contradictions to Reason and Science.

Rightly to estimate the chief of these objections, it is necessary to be acquainted with the peculiarity of style belonging to that part of the Word of God in which they occur; which is, the first portion of the book of Genesis. We have endeavoured to draw the line of distinction, in our fourth Lecture*, between some of the books contained in the collection denominated the Bible, and others, and to shew, that while the greater part are written by the plenary inspiration for which we contend, and thus contain a spiritual sense within that of the letter, which is the criterion for distinguishing the proper Word of God; the remainder are the offspring of the illuminated intellect of the writers, possess no regular sense beside that of the letter, and cannot claim any higher inspiration than that lax and partial one, which is now all that is usually allowed to the whole of the Sacred Writings. But among those books which are written by the plenary and immediate inspiration, there are also some specific differences of style, though they are all composed in the general divine style. Thus the prophetic style is evidently different from the historical. There also are two species of that which assumes the his-

* Page 240; but more particularly in the Appendix, No. II.

torical form ; and which must be distinctly seen, before we can meet effectually that class of infidel objections which is founded on imputed contradictions to reason and science.

(1.) We have seen in the fifth Lecture*, that the Israelites were selected by Divine Providence, to be made the instruments of *representing* things of a divine and spiritual nature ; hence, though the particulars of their history recorded in the Scriptures are all typical, exhibiting spiritual and divine things under symbolic actions and descriptions, they still are histories of real occurrences, which took place, in general, as they are related. But it is easy to see, that this combination of symbolic meaning with actual facts could not exist, till the nation, thus invested by divine appointment with a representative character, existed : this species of Divine Writing, therefore, can only commence with the origin of the Israelitish nation. What style, then, might we expect would be employed in that portion of the Word of God, which relates to the affairs of the inhabitants of the earth before the birth of Abraham, the great founder of the Israelitish nation? What could be so proper, as the style of writing which prevailed among the natives of the globe at the period it describes? And this was the style of pure allegory, in which the things meant are so entirely inde-

* Page 409 to 444; &c.

pendent on the things mentioned, that the latter are invented to serve merely as a vehicle for the conveyance of the former.

If such be the fact, there cannot be a greater mistake than to imagine, that the first chapter of Genesis is intended to be an exact description of the process of the Creation of the world. It can answer to it no further, than as the real order of that creation answered to the order in which the endowments necessary for rendering man a purely intelligent and heavenly-minded being were successively implanted in him; and which was an order similar to that, in which the child now advances from the ignorance in which he comes into the world, to the understanding of a man. All the objections then which scepticism has advanced against the divine inspiration of the Word of God, founded on the inconsistency of some of the facts related in the early part of Genesis with the known principles of reason and science, fall to the ground at once, when it is seen, that this is not intended to be the record of a natural but of a spiritual creation; and that the events which follow to the time of Abraham, are not intended to give the history of mankind as to their outward transactions, but a history of mankind as to the state of their minds, and their reception or perversion of divine gifts and graces. To affirm, as is now the fashion, that the narration is to be literally un-

derstood,—that the ordinary date of human life was then about a thousand years,—that serpents could talk, and that the woman was literally made of her husband's rib,—is to exact of the believer a blind faith indeed. In the early ages of Christianity, her teachers knew better: they did not thus “bind heavy burthens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders.” Clemens of Alexandria, one of the most learned of the early Fathers, declares, that such was the style customary in the ages to which this history belongs; observing “that all who have treated of divine subjects, whether Greeks or Barbarians, industriously involved the beginnings of things, and have delivered the truth in enigmas, signs, and symbols, in allegories and metaphors, and other such figures.”* Origen, when the shrewd enemy of Christianity, Celsus, ridiculed the stories of the rib, the serpent, &c. as childish fables, reproaches him for want of candour, in purposely keeping out of sight, what was so evident upon the face of the narrative, that the whole is a pure allegory.† Indeed, so universal was this sentiment, that De la Bigue, in his *Bibliotheca Patrum*, after quoting a number of testimonies to this effect, says, “For these reasons, the Interpreters whom we have mentioned, understanding all that is

* Strom. l. v. p. 658, Ed. Ox.

† Cont. Cels. l. iv. p. 187, Ed. Sp.

said of Paradise in a spiritual manner, affirmed, that divers heresies had arisen, because certain persons had understood what is said of God and Paradise after a carnal manner*:" so that although orthodoxy, as the prevailing opinion is always called, has since gone over to the other side, it is certain that, in the primitive days, the heretics were those who interpreted this part of Scripture according to the letter.

However, there is an evident prospect, that Reason and Truth will, in this respect, again resume their sway ; for just sentiments in regard to the bearing of Revelation on physical science, are now frequently promulgated from high authority : Indeed, the sentiment which I have advanced, that Divine Revelation is not intended to communicate to mankind natural knowledge, but moral and spiritual, seems likely soon to be generally admitted. Thus the Rev. W. D. Conybeare, in his admirable Introduction to " *Outlines of the Geology of England and Wales,*" by himself and Mr. Phillips, delivers his views on this question thus : " Before we examine the bearings of physical science on Revelation, our ideas should first be settled as to what may reasonably be expected from Revelation in this respect. Both its opponents and some of its defendants often seem to argue, as if it should have included the discovery of a system of phy-

" Propter has causas," &c. tom. i. p. 270. (Par. 1589.)

sical truth; which, it would not be difficult to shew, gives an entirely erroneous view of its professed object;—to treat, namely, of the history of man, only, and that, even, but as far as affects his relations to his Creator, and the dealings of Divine Providence in regard to him.”* He afterwards gives three views of the manner in which the term *days* may be understood in the first chapter of Genesis; the second of which, and by far the most tenable one, he states thus: “We may perhaps without real violence to the inspired writer, regard the periods of creation recorded by Moses, and expressed under the term of *days*, not to have designated ordinary days of twenty-four hours, but periods of definite but considerable length; such a mode of extending the signification of this term being not unexampled in the Sacred Writings. Those who embrace this opinion, will of course assign the formation of the secondary strata, in great part at least, to these days of creation; and we have the authority of several divines in favour of this mode of interpretation.”†

Here we have the principle openly admitted, that to convey physical instruction cannot be the design of the book of God; and that even to make the statements which appear in the form of physical details harmonize with the unquestionable discoveries of true science, great lati-

* Page l.

† P. lx.

tude must be taken in the interpretation of the terms. The same doctrine is powerfully advocated in a late Number of the Quarterly Review; which I advert to, because that journal is devoted to the interests of religion, as understood in the Church of England,—and because the reputed author of the article alluded to is likewise a clergyman.* Supposing, however, that this part

* The passage is rather long; but its interest being fully commensurate with its length, it is here given. It forms part of the review of Professor Buckland's late work, *Reliquiæ Diluvianæ*.

“The more the strata which compose the crust of the earth are examined, the stronger evidence do they present of revolutions and catastrophes occurring at wide intervals of time, of slow progressive advancement to its present state, and of the existence of varied orders of created beings which successively occupied its surface before it was finally fitted for the abode of man. These phænomena, or rather the principles on which they are explained in the modern schools of geology, have been thought to militate against the history of the creation contained in the first chapters of Genesis.—

“The usual mode of solving the difficulty has been, to interpret the six *days* of creation, not as natural days determined by the revolution of the earth on its axis, but as indefinite periods of time: and to this explanation Mr. Buckland seems disposed in that [his Inaugural] Lecture to incline. Others object to it with great vehemence, as wholly incompatible with the institution of the Sabbath, which is manifestly set forth as the seventh day: and therefore they contend, that the other six must necessarily be regarded as days in the same sense, and of the same kind.

“Instead of presuming to decide peremptorily in this

of the narrative of the beginning of Genesis, were capable, by this latitude of interpretation,

matter; our object will rather be to caution the friends of religion against a rash and possibly mischievous mode of vindicating their opinions. We beseech them to bear in mind, that similar alarm has been taken, and similar zeal manifested, in the cause of religion, in several instances which have all terminated in establishing the points so much dreaded; and yet Christianity, so far from receiving a shock, has only emerged from the controversy with increased vigour and lustre. It is hardly necessary to remind them of the persecutions raised against the first teachers of the Copernican system of the universe. The doctrine was pronounced to be contradictory to the language of Holy Writ, and was accordingly condemned as false and impious. Nay, so late as the early part of the eighteenth century, when the Jesuits' edition of Newton appeared, it was thought necessary by the Editors to prefix an advertisement, disclaiming all belief in the system thus demonstrated, because it had been declared unscriptural by the church, and setting it forth only as a series of deductions from a false hypothesis.—

“ Well indeed it is for us, that the cause of revelation does not depend upon questions such as these: for it is remarkable that in every instance the controversy has ended in a gradual surrender of those very points which were at one time represented as involving the vital interests of religion. Truth, it is certain, cannot be opposed to Truth. How inconsiderate a risk do they run, who declare that the whole cause is at issue in a single dispute, and that the substance of our faith hangs upon a thread—upon the literal interpretation of some word or phrase against which fresh arguments are springing up from day to day!

“ Why, for instance, must we be compelled to understand the word *day* in the first chapter of Genesis precisely in the

of being reconciled with the facts as now ascertained, much difficulty would still remain to account for the existence of light for four days (and days too of this indefinitely long duration, amounting, altogether, at least to hundreds of years;—to account for the existence of light all this while) before the creation of the sun, moon, and stars:—for the hypothesis which has been so eagerly caught at by some of the Chris-

same sense it now bears, viz. the period of the earth's rotation upon its axis? Certain it is from the narrative itself that the word does not bear the same meaning throughout the whole chapter; for the first three days were passed before the creation of the sun is mentioned: and yet in these, no less than in the others, the portion of time is denoted by the words 'evening and morning:' which, according to their received import, necessarily suppose the existence of the sun. Let us not, however, be misunderstood. We are firmly convinced that the institution of the Sabbath is a divine ordinance from the beginning—that the observance of it is enjoined as commemorative of the close of the great work of creation, and that its solemn obligation is expressed by the parallel which it pleased God to draw between the progress of his own works, and the destined employment of that being whom he made in his own likeness. Yet no one can believe, when it is said God *rested* from his works, that he really underwent fatigue and required repose. The same principle of accommodation to our perceptions and modes of speaking must be admitted here as it is in a thousand other passages of Holy Scripture. Our *duty* cannot be mistaken, whatever interpretation we put upon the disputed words; and *it is this duty which it is the main purpose of that volume to declare and to impress upon us.*" Q. R. No. lvii. p. 162 to 164.

tian advocates, that this light was what certain modern philosophers have called "the matter of light," diffused through all space, cannot be accepted till it is shewn, that light can ever be rendered perceptible without some luminous centre to put it into activity. When such philosophic advocates of the literal sense can introduce us into a closed room, containing neither lamp nor candle, yet fully illuminated by the universally diffused "matter of light," their explanation of Genesis may be received: but to receive it before, is only to combine the dreams of philosophers with the dreams of divines. But every difficulty would be surmounted at once, were it admitted, that to describe the spiritual creation,—the endowment of man with those gifts and graces which were so eminently conspicuous in the primitive times,—in those times which the poets have designated as the golden age, and have represented by the fiction of the garden of Jupiter, and which our Scriptures depict by the happiness of man when the garden of Eden was his abode;—were it admitted that to describe this creation is the true object of this relation in Genesis. The truth is, that the circumstances detailed agree with the facts attending the physical creation, so far as the analogy between the one and the other is exact; but when it holds no longer, the inspired relation

follows the course of the moral creation, and disregards the physical altogether.

(2.) The truth of this view will be greatly strengthened, if we stop a little to consider the genius of the inhabitants of the world in those very ancient times, according to the best idea we can form of it from the traditions and accounts handed down from ancient writers.

This is a circumstance which has much puzzled the explorers of antiquity, and which has frequently led historians immensely out of the way; that all history is, in the beginning, involved in fable. Trace up the records of any very ancient nation to its origin, and they are universally found to become enveloped in mystery,—to contain relations as remote from probability as those delivered in the early part of Genesis; wherefore they are considered by all as incredible. Now the air which they thus wear of incredibility, cannot possibly arise from their antiquity alone. Never was there a more gross attempt to impose an egregious sophism upon the public, than when a celebrated infidel advanced, that all testimony diminished in credibility in the ratio of its age. The history of Thucydides and the commentaries of Cæsar, will carry as much conviction to the mind of the reader that they were intended to be records of actual occurrences, and are in the main true,

five thousand years hence, as they do now, or ever did: whereas the fabulous history of the origin of Thebes, and of the armed men that sprung out of the earth when Cadmus had killed a dragon and sown his teeth in the ground, equally wore the character of fable when first the story was broached as at the present day: only, they who lived in the age of its invention, knew that it was to be regarded as an allegorical and not as a real history; they knew, also, how such allegories were to be interpreted; and did not, like many of the modern learned, suppose, that every writing wearing the historical form was meant to be understood literally, and that, if it was in this shape incredible, it was to be rejected altogether. The fact is, as the remains of Grecian, Egyptian, and Indian antiquity which have come down to us abundantly evince, that it was the custom in very ancient times, not only with the people who lived before the flood, but with those who flourished many ages afterwards, to couch whatever they wished to be conveyed to posterity under the form of an historical relation, but intermingled, like the history of Adam and Eve, with circumstances so extraordinary, as shewed that it was not designed to be literally apprehended. But in process of time the meaning of the symbols which they used was forgotten; and then the narratives composed by their aid, being accompanied with a traditional

feeling of respect which prevented their total rejection, began to be understood in their literal sense only, and mankind were lost in amazement at the marvellous things, which they supposed their ancestors witnessed. Thus the vulgar, in the latter ages of Greece and Rome, looked back with admiration at the times when their heroes went to school to the centaurs, and sacred statues or holy shields fell from heaven for the protection of favoured cities; as the vulgar of modern date,—such of them, at least, as love the world so well they fain would never leave it,—envy the longevity of the antediluvian patriarchs, and think how happy they should be were a thousand years still the duration of human life.

But further: The people of the earliest ages of the world were of a turn of mind so devoted to exalted sentiments and sublime contemplations, that they never thought of committing to writing accounts of common occurrences: they were too indifferent to the affairs of this world, in which *they knew* they were but pilgrims and sojourners, to deem them worth recording: for which reason, no authentic history of political or civil events, of any very great antiquity, exists. Hence the well-known remark of the learned Varro: that the space of time before the flood was *αδηλον*,—the period of utter obscurity; that the age from the flood to the first Olympiad was

μυθικόν—the period of fable or mystery; and that it was only with the first Olympiad that commenced the period ιστορικόν—that of literal history. The reason why the genius of these ancients led them to describe interior subjects in the language of allegory, was, because the illumination of their minds was such as to enable them to discern, in natural objects, the image of the spiritual and divine things which are the causes of their production; because, as elegantly expressed by Mr. Kirby, “the creation was to them a book of symbols, a sacred language, of which they possessed the key, and which it was their delight to study and decypher.” Hence, when they wished to communicate to others their interior perceptions, they would veil their thoughts in language borrowed from natural objects and occurrences. Whilst, indeed, this knowledge was possessed intuitively, they probably would not think of writing at all. The whole creation was to them an open book: whatever they had occasion or desire to know, they there could read: every object in it spoke to them, in the clearest terms, of the supreme objects of their regard,—of God, and heaven, and heavenly things; and reading every thing there, they had no occasion for any books beside. But when this faculty of intuitive perception began to decline, in consequence of their beginning to turn their affections towards outward

objects, instead of only using these, as before, as means for nourishing their love for heavenly things as contemplated in them; whilst yet, among the better sort, a desire for the knowledge of heavenly things remained; then, we may conclude, they would study those things as a science which they before knew by intuition. Then books would begin to be composed, in which they would endeavour to express their meaning by analogies taken from the objects of nature, the knowledge of which they would long regard as the first of sciences, and the distinguishing mark of wisdom and learning.

Now the early chapters of Genesis treat of the people who were of this character and genius,—both of those who had an intuitive perception of spiritual things in natural objects, and of those who enjoyed the knowledge of them by science and study; and therefore that part of the book is written in a style similar to that which those people used; that is, spiritual and interior subjects are described in language borrowed from the appearances of nature,—in the form of apologue and allegory,—in a narrative that appears in the letter to relate only to natural and ordinary facts. Whole classes of people, whose modes of thinking and feeling, especially in regard to sacred subjects, were similar, are personified as one man, to whom an age is assigned, answering, probably, to the period during which

the principles represented continued to prevail: the manner in which one class of religious sentiment and profession is propagated from another is described by family descents: and the fates among mankind of religion in general, or the vicissitudes which the church of God, under different forms, experienced, are represented by the fortunes of these allegorical personages. That such a mode of describing such subjects is agreeable to nature, is evident from the tendency to it which still occasionally shews itself; of which many examples might be given from modern compositions.

(3.) That such is the character of the Scripture history antecedent to the birth of Abraham, may also be inferred from the similarity which is observable between the events which it relates and the traditionary accounts of the ancient heathen mythologers. This resemblance has been observed by many of the Christian advocates, from Justin and Clemens to Bryant and Faber; and has been dwelt upon as affording a strong testimony to the authenticity of the Mosaic writings. Many, however, have here run into an error, which has thrown a shade of doubt and suspicion over all that they have urged upon the subject: they have assumed, that whatever exists in heathen writings which bears some similitude to facts, or apparent facts, detailed in our Scriptures, was borrowed from this source:

and they who do not affirm this, consider such fables of the heathens to be mere distortions of matters of fact, which are simply true as recorded in the Bible. But the argument in favour of the authority of the Volume of Revelation is much stronger, when it is admitted, as doubtless is the truth, that neither the mythological stories nor the corresponding relations in Genesis are details of external facts, but both are allegorical records of the same facts in the moral and spiritual history of mankind, handed down through different channels: the former being the productions of men who possessed the knowledge, and wrote in the style, which was common to the learned of those ages; and the latter being also composed in the style which was common to those times, so far as this consisted in the purely allegorical character of the narration, but written by absolute inspiration, and thus possessing all the fulness and truth which inspiration only can convey. This will account for the considerable variety in the images under which the circumstances are described. Thus, for example, we have the record in Scripture of the termination of two distinct dispensations of divine things to man; the first of which, beginning with Adam, closes with the flood; and the other, which commenced with Noah, began to be corrupted at the building of the tower of Babel, and was totally so by the abominations which were plunged into

by the Canaanites, the Egyptians, the Assyrians, and other nations which flourished in those ages, and which originally were branches of the Noetic Church. These events are evidently the same as are described in the Grecian mythology, by the two wars waged against heaven by two different races of giants, the first called the Titans, and the second, simply the giants.* The first race is described in Scripture by the giants which are said to have existed before the flood, and who are represented as having sprung from the intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men: and the second race, though not denominated giants in the Scriptures, are they who undertook the gigantic enterprise of building a tower whose top should reach to heaven,—an enterprise very similar to that of scaling heaven by a pile of mountains. By these relations, both the mythological and Scriptural, is not meant that a race of people of enormous stature then existed; but giants, in the language of Analogy, are they who are great in their own conceit; and such giants as are here spoken of, were they who absolutely looked upon themselves as deities, arrogating all merit, all goodness, and all wisdom to themselves, and not allowing that every thing they possessed which was really good was imparted to them by gift and perpetual derivation from the Lord alone.

* See our third Lecture, p. 204 & 210.

In short, the symbol of monstrous giants was adopted, to represent those who fell into such direful persuasions, as to imagine that the Deity had actually transfused himself into them, so as to have no existence independently of them; approximations to which sentiment are to be found in some of the doctrines of the Greek philosophers; and at this day it lies at the bottom of the religious system of the Hindoos, and has decided affiliations in that of Thibet and China: the origins of all which rise to the highest antiquity.

Is it not then, we may now ask with confidence, in the highest degree probable, that the early part of Genesis, and the mythological tales which bear so much resemblance to it, relate to the same facts, not in the political and civil, but in the moral and spiritual history of mankind? that they equally are composed in the general style prevalent in the ages to which they refer? that neither the one narrative nor the other was ever intended to be understood according to the literal form? that both are intermixed with such stories as, in the literal sense, are in the highest degree extravagant and incredible, purposely, among their other uses, to intimate to mankind that a common record of facts was not intended? but that the mythological tales, though originally composed by men who possessed a knowledge of interior things and their analogies with natural

objects, yet not being communicated by plenary inspiration, have not a spiritual sense, except as to the general circumstances, do not exist in any record which carries a spiritual idea in every expression, and are not always, perhaps, exact representations of the things intended ; whereas, in Genesis, the same occurrences are described in language inspired throughout, and all the representatives are infallibly exact ?

We may, I trust, now repeat as a certain fact : that this early part of Genesis is written in the language of pure allegory, because it describes the moral history of a people with whom that style of writing was the only one in use ; and because, further, it could not be given in the style of true but representative history, whilst the nation afterwards raised up to sustain the proper representations was not yet in existence ; and because, finally, these are the only two species of narrative that can be delivered by plenary inspiration ; from which source, a history of mere facts, containing no internal meaning, never can proceed.

Now what objection, carrying the smallest weight, can be raised against this view of the subject ? I can see none. It solves all difficulties, and is, itself, absolutely unattended by any.* Nothing further, then, needs be urged to overturn

* See Appendix, No. VII.

from the foundation that class of Infidel Objections which rejects the Word of God for the alleged contradictions to reason and science to be found in this part of its contents. The literal history was never intended to be understood as such ; it, therefore, can contradict nothing. The questions, then, respecting the manner and order in which the world was created, and respecting the vicissitudes which its surface has undergone; whether all the convulsions of which symptoms are apparent in the disposition of its strata, and in the vegetable and animal remains found in its bowels, took place before it was brought into a state fit for the habitation of man, or whether part of the indications have been occasioned by a general deluge which it has undergone since; are matters which may safely be left for decision to the unfettered progress of science. The Word of God pronounces no *dictum* upon such subjects: and nothing which Science may ever bring to light respecting them, can, in the slightest degree, affect the title of the Scriptures to be received as the Word of God. The only bearing of all real Science upon the Word of God, is, to point to and confirm its true nature.

2. The class of infidel objections which we are next to consider, is that which is drawn from apparent contradictions between the various statements made by the sacred writers.

It is undoubtedly true, as is generally urged by the advocates of Revelation, that the greater part of these admit of a sufficient explanation when the context is fairly considered: but, as was stated in the second Lecture, if there are any which cannot thus be reconciled, it is, because, in such cases, the letter has yielded a little to the weight of the matters contained within; a slight turn has been given it to make it express more fully the spiritual contents, respecting which *alone* it is the object of inspiration to impart instruction.* Of this an example was given, and the principle more explicitly developed, in our last Lecture, from the history of Jephthah and his daughter. Though the circumstances related are true, they may not immediately exhibit the whole truth, as far as the outward history is concerned. "Just so much is recorded as conveys the true spiritual sense, and no more: and Divine Wisdom, which only regards things eternal, deems it of no moment whatever, if an impression be thus left of transient events different from the true one."† Admit this principle, (and if we admit that a Revelation from God must primarily treat of spiritual subjects, it will be difficult to dispute it,) and we shall find no instances of seeming contradiction which can occasion the smallest embarrassment to the candid inquirer.

* P. 48, 49.

† P. 483, 484.

(1.) In the case, for instance, of the turning of the waters of Egypt into blood, by Moses and Aaron; when it is afterwards said that “the magicians did so with their enchantments;” upon which the Deist asks, When all the water of Egypt was changed before, how could the magicians repeat the operation?—It is here well answered from the letter, that the context shews that water was still attainable for the experiment, since we read, two verses below, that “the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink.” If, however, it had been more difficult to account for the manner in which the magicians obtained their water, there still would have been a necessity, to convey the spiritual lesson intended, that the narrative should be so framed as to imply in the letter, that all the waters of Egypt were changed into blood by Moses and Aaron, and yet that the magicians performed a like miracle afterwards. The subject here spiritually treated of is respecting the false persuasions which adhere to those who cultivate natural science, but oppose themselves to the will of God and the truth of his Word, and respecting the judgments with which they are visited to compel them to desist. The waters of Egypt are all the truths possessed by such persons: blood, when considered in any way different from its proper relation, is the symbol of

* See the first Lecture, p. 31.

truth to which violence is done by wresting it from its just application. Moses is the type and representative of that Law or Word which was given by his instrumentality; and Aaron, as his prophet, or spokesman, represents the true doctrine or instruction which that teaches. The miracle, therefore, was performed *by them*, to indicate, that, before the wicked are finally condemned, their real state, as Divine Truth discovers it, is shewn to them. But “the magicians did so with their enchantments,” to represent how the natural man finds excuses for not setting his heart to consider the divine judgments when openly displayed before him, referring them to other causes: in fact, the magicians are the proper types of that ingenious mode of reasoning from fallacies, which resolves the most express interferences of Deity into the common operations of nature. The spiritual lesson, surely, is deeply interesting, and the analogies from which it results self-evident: to yield those analogies is the main thing regarded in the construction of the letter: and when matters so weighty are to be expressed, it surely is more important that the language of the sacred history should be such as gives the spiritual contents in all their fulness, than that it should be absolutely free from obscurity in regard to all the minutiae of the literal details!

But the difficulties in the literal narratives

of the Word of God which appear most considerable, to those who do not attend to the proper design with which all the narratives of the Word of God are constructed, are those which are presented by the frequently varying accounts of the four Evangelists.

(2.) The question, why so many as four authentic Gospels should have been written, has embarrassed not a few inquirers. Many, even of those who have no prejudice against them on account of any part of their contents, would be glad of a plausible pretext for ejecting some of them from the Canon: thus the celebrated Michaelis, entertaining the common notions of inspiration, regarding it as a personal and permanent endowment, and being at a loss for a certain rule to discriminate between compositions which are inspired and such as are not, would fain limit the inspiration of the New Testament to the Apostles' writings alone: and he intimates that no small advantage would result from accepting Apostleship as the criterion of inspiration, since there would then be but two Gospels which we should be concerned to harmonize.* But if we regard the historical Scriptures as containing throughout a spiritual meaning, and conclude that, where the same general fact is variously related, it is for the sake of teaching the same

* Introd. by Marsh, Vol. i. Ch. iii. Sec. 3; Vol. iii. Pt. i. Ch. ii. Secs. 4 & 5; Ch. vi. Sec. 2,

general spiritual lesson with some specific modifications; we shall have no need to wish that the number of inspired books were fewer, or to murmur at their Divine Author for the abundance of his benefits.

The Apostle and Evangelist John concludes his gospel with observing, "There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." This would be an extravagant hyperbole indeed, if it referred to the acts of Jesus as they appeared in their simple performance; but it becomes a sober truth, if we understand by it, all that was included and involved within the outward appearances. Only let it be acknowledged, or supposed even, that Jesus was "the Word" or Divine Truth itself "made flesh*," thus was God Incarnate; and it follows inevitably, that there must have been an infinity of meaning in every one both of his words and of his actions; and it may be easily conceived, that one mode of narrating them would be insufficient for their full representation.

Perhaps, also, in agreement with that unvarying constancy with which all the divine operations follow fixed laws, there may be some divine law which rendered it necessary that the Gospels should neither be fewer nor more than

* John i. 14.

four: indeed, if inspiration be allowed to them, such must be the fact; since it were a contradiction in terms to affirm, that *Divine Inspiration* produced the exact number of four Gospels *by chance*. It is somewhat remarkable, that we read respecting the “river which went out of Eden to water the garden,” that “from thence it was parted, and became into *four* heads*:” and it seems possible that the coincidence was not unintentional, which was noticed by an ancient father; that “there were *four* Evangelists, *four* rivers of Paradise, *four* corners and *four* rings to the ark of the covenant†;” not that the first of these circumstances was the cause of the others, nor even that the others were provided to form types of the first; but that they all owed their origin to the same general principle;—that the same law regulating the descent of divine things into nature, governed the one circumstance as the others. Now, what could the rivers of Paradise represent, but the streams of truth and wisdom which nourished the mind of man in his paradisiacal state? And why were there *four* of them, but because that number expresses fullness and abundance? for it is a number which is used in reference to the four quarters of the world,—the east, west, north, and south,—in connexion with which it is frequently mentioned in

* Gen. ii. 10.

† Jerome, *apud* Lardner, vol. xii. p. 82.

the Scriptures* ; and while each of these, singly, refers to some specific quality, the four together manifestly stand for the whole. So, if the four rivers of Paradise, together, were representative of the truth and wisdom, in all their fulness and abundance, which, in the primeval ages, animated and endowed the human mind; each of them must have been the symbol of some general class of these graces. What this is, is discoverable from the import, in the language of Analogy, of the four quarters, from which the number four draws its signification of fulness. The east, being considered as the seat of the sun, represents much the same as the sun does,—a state of love, and of the illumination immediately proceeding from love, in its highest intensity; and the west is the same general state in a lower degree: so the south is expressive of a state of intelligence, with its attendant charity, in the highest brightness; and the north of the same as verging towards obscurity. Thus the east and west, and the south and north, are to each other, respectively, as the internal and external of one general principle. If the cardinal points did not bear, in the language of Analogy, which is that of the Word of God, some such meaning, would they be so frequently noticed in that Word; and this even in its prophecies and

* As when John “ saw *four* angels standing on the *four* corners of the earth, holding the *four* winds of the earth.” Rev. vii. 1.

visions? * Now what if four Gospels were given, describing the history of the birth and ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, with a reference to these four general states? to be divine streams of truth and wisdom, possessing, respectively, these general qualities? to form the unfailing rivers of the Christian Paradise,—the church,—supplying to its inhabitants the waters of life? I throw out this suggestion, not as a certain truth, but because, to me, it yields a probable reason for the number of the Gospels, and because it includes ideas, which, as we shall see presently, tend considerably to clear up the mystery of their varying statements. To me, also, it appears quite evident, that the obviously distinct characters of the several Gospels tally remarkably with those which this view supposes. Will not all who venerate these sacred narratives confess, that the Gospel of John displays the highest order of the illumination here alluded to, treating more openly of the highest subjects of divine illumination, which are, the true nature and character of Him whose history it relates, and the necessity of love to his name? that the Gospel of Luke, with its sweet delineations of charity, and luminous

* See Ezekiel's vision of the New Temple, in the last nine chapters of his book, and John's of the New Jerusalem; Rev. xxi. For the general frequency with which the quarters are mentioned, see a Concordance.

statements of so many essential truths, ranks next in clearness? and that those of Matthew and Mark, though fully imbued with the same spirit, treat their subjects in a more external manner, or clothe them with a somewhat thicker veil, and are to the former, respectively, what the north and west are to the south and east?

(3.) Supposing there to be any truth in this view of the subject, the reader of the Gospels would expect, that, in recording any transaction, each Evangelist would relate such of the circumstances attending it as belonged to the proper character of his Gospel, and would omit others: and if there are any cases in which the circumstances related by different Evangelists are quite incompatible with each other, he would expect further, that the narrative of the facts, as they actually appeared to the senses of the beholders, would most probably be found in one of those Gospels (, Matthew's or Mark's,) which treat the subjects under their most external form; whilst the seemingly incongruous circumstances, *if any*, mentioned by the others, equally belong to the transaction, but exhibit the inward state of mind of the parties concerned, which did not manifestly appear in the words or actions actually spoken or performed, but yet were as really present as those words or actions themselves.

This suggestion may be illustrated in a very familiar manner. Every one knows how fre-

quently the words and actions of persons in society greatly differ from their inward thoughts and inclinations. To take a rather coarse, but too common example: how often does the greedy expectant of a profitable reversion, express with his lips a great desire for the restoration of the sick possessor's health, while the language of his heart is, "I wish you were dead, out of the way!" Now, if these words were actually ascribed to him by a narrator who knew the heart, there would be no real contradiction between this account and that of another who reported the language of his tongue: they would both record different parts of the same transaction, and both records would be true, though one of them could have flowed from the pen of none but an inspired writer. This is so obvious an idea, that I remember to have seen it very pleasantly illustrated in a fable for the instruction of youth. The writer imagines the existence of an edifice called *the Palace of Truth*; the inmates of which are unconsciously compelled to speak and act according to their real thoughts and inclinations: the consequence is, that they are continually disgusting each other by rudeness of language and demeanour, whilst they fancy themselves to be behaving with perfect good manners, and saying the civilest things imaginable. Who doubts that the universe is, to its Architect, a *Palace of Truth*, in which the inmost thoughts are as audible as the outward declarations?

But not only is there frequently this palpable difference between the thoughts and inclinations and the words and actions—a difference of which the parties themselves are sensible; but doubtless there is much more included within every single idea of thought than comes to the apprehension of him who conceives it: and if the moving springs from which it arises, with all their complications, were discovered to him, they would sometimes be so different from what he himself suspects, that he would hardly recognise himself in them, though they belonged to the very essence of his distinguishing character. If then these unconscious thoughts and inclinations were actually ascribed to him by the pen of that Omniscience to which they are all known, the picture drawn of him would still be in exact accordance with the reality, though the likeness would not be discernible to a superficial observer.

We now, I apprehend, shall be in possession of the true principles for reconciling the seeming discrepancies of the divinely inspired recorders of the Gospel-history.—When circumstances are omitted by one Evangelist which are mentioned by another, it is, because they belong to a different specific modification of the same general spiritual lesson, and, in fact, to a different order of Divine Truth, from those which it is within the province of that Evangelist to

deliver.—When, *if ever*, the circumstances are such as could not, both, have outwardly occurred, one of them is the expression of the state of mind of the parties, within or above their outward speech and actions: it gives such developements of inward character as would have taken place had the parties been speaking or acting in *the Palace of Truth*; and, to carry on the allegory, it belongs, sometimes to the lower and sometimes to the upper stories of that edifice, or is more near to, or more remote from, the actual consciousness of the actors or speakers.

From theory, let us now descend to facts, and try the application of our principles to the actual relations of the Gospels.

(4.) A remarkable example of variations, from both these causes, is, I conceive, afforded by the history, as delivered by the four Evangelists, of the treatment of the Lord Jesus Christ at his crucifixion, and of his behaviour on the cross. Matthew and Mark, agreeably to their office of presenting things as they appeared to the outward observer, and also, as they were perceived by the parties in the lowest and most external sphere of their thoughts and feelings, are very full, especially the former, in the detail of the cruel insults which were heaped upon the Saviour in that dismal scene. They describe all the bitterness of his temptation thence arising, and the severity of his mental as well as body suffering.

They record his despairing exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me*:" and these, as far as can be gathered from them, were the only words uttered from the cross. Luke, on the contrary, states much less of the aggravating scoffs with which the Redeemer was assailed as he hung, and narrates nothing in his conduct which indicates that the sufferings inflicted on him engaged much of his attention. According to this Gospel, when going to execution, he says to the mourning women, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."† Instead of any exclamation of despair upon the cross, we have this effusion of imperturbable confidence: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit‡:" and these, with the encouraging declaration to one of the thieves, and a prayer for his murderers, were, as far as can be gathered from this Evangelist, the only words uttered by him in that situation. How plain then is it, that Luke relates the perceptions and feelings of Jesus on this occasion, as they existed in a sphere of his mind above that, the sensations of which are recorded by Matthew and Mark; with the words which he spoke from this different order of sentiments! And still more is this the case with the narrative of John. This seems to describe his feelings in a sphere of his mind to which no

* Matt xxvii. 46, Mark xv. 34. † Ch. xxiii. 28. ‡ Ver. 46.

consciousness whatever of his indignities and sufferings reached. It therefore does not at all notice the insults addressed to him on the cross. He is represented as occupied with no considerations whatever which regarded himself. To represent his care of the church, which ever dwells with those of whom "the disciple whom he loved" was a type, "he saith to his mother," in reference to that disciple, "Woman, behold thy son!" and to the disciple, who thenceforth took her to his own home, "Behold thy mother!"* To express his ardent desire for man's salvation, and "that the Scripture might be fulfilled," he exclaimed, "I thirst."† And, so far from indicating any feeling bordering upon despair, he does not even express any sense of needing support: he does not, even in appearance, refer to any Divine Helper out of himself; but, experiencing already a perfect consciousness of his union with Divinity, and "knowing that all things were now accomplished" necessary to effect that union, and with it to secure the redemption of mankind, he simply, and with divine composure, says, "It is finished."‡

Now though these very different narratives, may not, regarded only as to the letter, be irreconcilable with each other; though it is probable that all the circumstances recorded by each Evangelist did actually occur; and though

* Ch. xix. 26, 27.

† Ver. 28.

‡ Ver. 30.

the very dissimilar speeches related might all actually be spoken: yet every one must see, that the different narratives and the different speeches breathe different feelings, and belong to decidedly different classes of sentiment; which would have been broken and confused had they been jumbled into one continued discourse, but are preserved in all their distinctness and beauty, by the wise provision of Providence, that several Gospels should be written.

(5.) Another striking example of the excellence of this arrangement, is afforded by the account of the conduct of the two thieves, as related by Matthew and Mark, and by Luke.

Without particularly dwelling upon the behaviour of these unhappy men, Matthew, after mentioning the taunts of the chief priests and scribes, adds, "The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth*:" Mark also says, "And they that were crucified with him reviled him†:" a circumstance deeply aggravatory of the Saviour's sufferings, when he had to endure the insults of the very outcasts of society; and therefore well suited to be introduced in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, the nature and design of which necessarily included the insisting upon such details. Luke, however, who does not give so much of the scoffs of the priests and scribes, mentions the reviling

* Ch. xxvii. 44.

† Ch. xv. 32.

of one of the thieves only, and this, chiefly, to contrast it with the becoming behaviour of the other: his words are these: "And one of the malefactors which were hanged with him, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom."* Now whether both these narratives describe things which took place in outward form, just as they are related, or not; it is certain, that, spiritually, both narratives are true, and that both were necessary for conveying the spiritual lesson intended.

Thieves, in the Word, are types of those who deprive others of truths by infusing false and heretical opinions; as, also, of those who possess the knowledge of truth, but pervert it from its proper object, which is, to lead to a life of goodness: they likewise represent such as arrogate to themselves what belongs to the Lord. The *two* thieves, then, are they who act thus, either from a confirmed principle of evil in the will, or from a false principle assumed by the understanding; and they thus will represent the Jew and the Gentile world. Both these classes of

* Luke xxiii. 39 to 42.

spiritual thieves, viewed as to their doctrinal sentiments, reviled the Son of man ; both Jews and Gentiles entertained opinions adverse to the true doctrines of the Word of God : and this is represented by the fact as stated by Matthew and Mark, that “ *the thieves*, also, cast the same in his teeth :” “ *they* that were crucified with him reviled him.” But though both classes thus reviled the Lord externally, it was only with one that the outward conduct proceeded from an internal ground : Luke, therefore, who relates the circumstances as they exist in, or flow from, an interior sphere, ascribes determined malevolence to but one of the malefactors : the other, who is the type of those who, like the Gentiles, entertain false sentiments merely from ignorance, and of those who fall into improper conduct because they have not had the advantage of such instruction as would teach them better, when brought, even in this extremity, into the presence of the Son of man,—made acquainted with the Truth Itself,—feels all the compunction that a conviction of his error and misconduct ought to excite, and solicits the mercy of him whom he is thus brought to know : and because no one in heart can acknowledge the Lord but from some good principle, Jesus answers, “ To-day,”—in this state,—“ thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Considered then as representative characters,—as the types of two classes

of spiritual thieves, there evidently is no contradiction whatever between the accounts of Matthew and Luke: they describe different parts of the same general facts, and parts so distinct, being those which constitute its external form and its internal, that they could not possibly have been included in the same narrative. And the case will be the same, if, without looking at the thieves as types of general classes, we regard them as individual transgressors of two different characters. Many a one has been led, by untutored passions, into excesses which he never deliberately purposed, and has afterwards been awakened, by the voice of Truth, to the most sincere feelings of remorse. The law may have been so far violated, that the gibbet must expiate the offence: but who will affirm that the redeeming feelings in the heart of the sufferer will go for nothing in his final account, though, being beyond the eye of the human judge, they cannot change his doom here? Every criminal act reviles the Son of man: but we cannot positively affirm, of every one who has been hurried into the commission of a criminal act, that his heart does the same. The outward conduct, then, of these two characters, in which they appeared similar to each other, is described by Matthew and Mark, and their inward state, in which they were dissimilar, by Luke.

Seeing then the spiritual reason for the varia-

tion of these narratives is so evident, and the spiritual lessons they inculcate are so completely satisfactory; to know, how far the facts mentioned by Matthew and Luke appeared manifestly before the spectators of the scene, becomes a matter of perfect indifference. It may be true, as some of the commentators suppose, that both the Gospels relate facts as they happened; that both the thieves at first joined in blasphemous language, but that afterwards one repented, and behaved as stated by Luke: supposing it were so, the view we have offered above clearly explains why neither Evangelist states both facts: to have done this, would have confused the spiritual sense, and would have been a deviation from the proper character of his Gospel. It may be true, again, that Luke alone relates the facts as they happened, and that the penitent thief never reviled with the other: and in this case, whether we suppose, with most of the critics, that Matthew and Mark, who say, "*the thieves,*" and "*they,*" loosely, and not "*both the thieves,*" and "*both of them,*" emphatically, use the plural number for the singular by the grammatical figure called *enallage* (of which they produce several examples); or whether we conclude that they were really ignorant of the different circumstances recorded by Luke; we still see, as before, that there is no mistake in the matter, and that the spiritual sense of the whole tran-

saction would have been mutilated had not both records of it been made. Or, finally, the outwardly apparent circumstances might only have been those given by Matthew and Mark;—either, positively, both thieves did revile, or this might be said because one of them, though silent, gave no outward indication of dissent from the conduct of the other; and still it may be perfectly true that the language of their heart was that given by Luke, though what this spoke, in the penitent, was only audible to him to whom all hearts are known: if, however, such sentiments were there actually heard by Him, he did not make one Evangelist contradict another, when he caused him to give them an open tongue. One or other of these three solutions must be the true one; *which*, is to us of no moment whatever: and it is plain from either of them, that the Gospels are not here really at variance, but only relating different parts of the same transaction, which all belonged to it with equal truth.

We mentioned, in our first Lecture, two of the other seeming difficulties on which infidel writers have founded objections; and as, though solvable upon the same principles, they rather differ in kind from those just considered, it may be expected that we shall not dismiss them without specific notice.

(6.) The first of these is the circumstance, that in the history of the temptation of Jesus

in the wilderness, as delivered by Matthew* and by Luke†, there is an inversion of the order of two of the principal facts; the first Evangelist making the devil set the Saviour on a pinnacle of the temple, before he shews him, from a high mountain, all the kingdoms of the world; whereas, Luke places this latter circumstance before the other. Regarded as a record of outward facts, there must here be allowed to exist a difficulty; but there will remain none at all when it is admitted, that to communicate information respecting the same general spiritual fact is the main design in both narratives; but that this general fact includes two leading branches, one of which is represented by one Evangelist, and the other by the other.

It must here be observed, that all the circumstances of this temptation prove strongly the generally spiritual nature of the Gospel-history, and evince that it treats of spiritual subjects under natural representatives. For who can imagine that Jesus Christ, as to his person, was thus at the disposal of the devil? was personally transported by him from the wilderness to a high mountain, and thence to the summit of the temple in "the holy city?" or that, to effect the temptation, Satan shewed himself in proper form, and carried it on by actual colloquy? And where could the mountain be found, so "exceeding high,"

* Ch. iv. 1 to 11.

† Ch. iv. 1 to 13.

that from the top of it might be seen, by any optics, "all the kingdoms of the world?" Some of the critics would surmount *this* difficulty, by wishing us to believe, that *the world*, here, only means the land of Judæa: but how will the phrase, "all the kingdoms of the world," apply to this little speck of it? Doubtless, then, it was in spirit, and in vision, that these things were presented to the Saviour's perceptions; just as Ezekiel was transported "in the visions of God to Jerusalem*," and as John also was "carried away in the spirit to a great and high mountain."† Thus the transaction, being altogether a spiritual one, must bear, in all its circumstances, a spiritual signification.

A mountain is a symbol, in the Scriptures, of an exalted state of love, either heavenly or infernal: to be incited, thence, to desire the possession of all the kingdoms of the world, is to be tempted with the lust of self-aggrandizement, either as regards the monopoly of all power, or of all wealth, or of both: to be set upon the pinnacle of the temple, and thence incited to do a rash act that includes the persuasion of possessing divine power, is to be tempted by a still more extravagant species of the lust of power,—what may be called the ecclesiastical thirst for dominion,—that which aims at sovereignty over men's souls as well as their bodies. But the ul-

* Ezek. viii. 3.

† Rev. xxi. 10.

timate end which is proposed by any passion that sways the human breast, is what determines its positive quality. There doubtless have been Popes and Grand Lamas, who, in arrogating dominion over the souls of men, have made this pretension and lust subservient to the desire of temporal power and wealth: the latter have been their supreme objects of regard; and the former has been valued as a means to the attainment of these ends. These then have yielded to the suggestions of Satan, as they are represented by Matthew. Other occupants of the pontifical thrones of Rome and of Lassa, have unquestionably been possessed, as their ruling aim and object, with the lust of spiritual domination, and have grasped at temporal power and wealth as calculated to promote it: These then have adopted the persuasions of the devil, as they are arranged by Luke. Thus, while it is perfectly evident that there exist these two general kinds of the lust of domination, it appears no less certain, that each of them undergoes a modification, as it is made subservient, or paramount, to the other. This is even indicated by the Evangelists in the minute distinctions of their language: thus Luke, who represents the appetite for temporal power and wealth as subservient to the ecclesiastical lust, calls the symbol of the state, simply a "*high mountain*;" whilst Matthew, who exhibits it as predominant, exalts its symbol

into "*an exceeding high mountain.*" Now it cannot be doubted, since the Saviour "was in all points tempted as we are*,"—was made sensible, in the human part of his constitution, of the strongest instigations to every evil that ever beset the most corrupt child of Adam; that the tempter injected the propensity to both these general evils in both these states of their development. But the only way, in the language of analogies, in which the two forms of them could be described, was, by placing the representatives of them before, and after, each other, respectively. To have done this in the same narrative would have appeared a strange tautology; neither would it have expressed the order of their manifestation or existence, the one abiding within, or occupying a more interior sphere than, the other. Therefore the symbolic description of each is given in a separate book: and as Matthew's Gospel treats of things in their more exterior, and Luke's in their more interior developments, therefore, in agreement with the respective characters of the narratives, the more exterior and superficial development of these direful evils forms the subject of the temptation as described by the first Evangelist; while the latter represents them in their more interior form, and opens, in its still deeper recesses, their diabolical nature.

* Heb. iv. 15.

(7.) The only other case which we have to notice, is that in which Matthew cites a text, as from the prophet Jeremiah, which is only to be found in the book of Zechariah : he gives it thus : “Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter’s field ; as the Lord appointed me.”* In an ordinary writer, this certainly would argue strange negligence : but what if, occurring where it does, it affords a positive argument for the Evangelist’s plenary inspiration? What if it should be absolutely impossible for a writer whose pen was irresistibly guided by the Spirit of God, to cite these words, how well soever he might know that he had read them in Zechariah, without ascribing them to Jeremiah? Such, I apprehend, will readily appear to be the fact. And indeed, how is it possible that the change of name could have originated in mistake? Is it credible that Matthew could know so little of the Scriptures as to be ignorant in what book the words were extant? And if so monstrous an improbability might for a moment be supposed, is it imaginable that, among those to whom he first communicated his Gospel, there was none who possessed sufficient knowledge of the ancient Word, with which

* Matt. xxvii. 9, 10. Comp. Zech. xi. 12, 13.

every Jew was familiar from his cradle, to inform him of the *erratum*? Really the difficulties of conceiving it to be an unintended error, are greater than those of supposing that it was a dictate from the Spirit of God: they indeed are such as directly point to this conclusion. And in this we shall find an easy and natural solution of the whole seeming inconsistency.

If the Word of God be the Word of God indeed, it is a mere truism to affirm, that the Spirit which dictated it cannot possibly regard it as the work of men: consequently, that Spirit can never mean to ascribe any of its books to the men whose names they bear. Every prophet who was commissioned to deliver any portion of the Word of God, became, *ipso facto*, a representative type of the Word of God itself; specifically, of that portion of it which he was the instrument of writing. Now every such portion of it has a distinctive character of its own, more or less obviously discriminated. So plain is this, in some instances, as to have become proverbial: thus Isaiah is commonly called the *evangelical prophet*, on account of his open annunciations of the incarnation of the Lord and his advent in the flesh; and Jeremiah is popularly denominated *the weeping prophet*, for his pathetic lamentations over the fall and utter corruption of the Jewish Church, and its rejection and maltreatment of the Word of God, in its personal

type, the prophet himself, and in its still plainer type, the roll of inspired writing which Jehoiakim committed to the flames.* When therefore a prophet is cited by name in the inspired writings, it is not that prophet, personally, that was in the mind of the Spirit of God; nor even the specific book which bears his name: but his name is used as a symbol of all that portion of Scripture which is of the same character as belongs, generally, to the writings of the prophet named, whether occurring in his book or in any other. Usually, indeed, it cannot but happen, that the passage quoted is in the book of the prophet who stands as the type of that species of divine composition which distinguishes his own writings: but where occasion occurs for citing a passage of a different character from that which belongs, in general, to the book in which it is found, and of the same as belongs to another principal prophet, Divine Inspiration, which regards the intrinsic qualities of things and not merely their external circumstances, adduces the quotation in the name of the latter prophet instead of the former. Of this, indeed, only this one instance occurs: it cannot, therefore, be illustrated by other examples: but this one itself is admirably illustrative of the principle, and points to it with a clearness which it were difficult to overlook. The weeping prophet, Jeremiah, we have noticed,

* See Ch. xxxvi.

though a real character, is a striking personification of that species of Divine Truth, or of that portion of the Divine Word, which treats of the utter corruption of the Jewish Church, and its maltreatment of the Word: the latter is precisely the character of the divine declaration which is here cited as from him; it treats of the low estimation in which the Word was at this time held by the Jews, who hoped to have purchased of Judas the power of destroying its actual personification, the Word incarnate. And whilst this passage is so decidedly of the same character as distinguishes the writings of Jeremiah, it as evidently does not at all belong to the general character of the book of Zechariah, which is mostly composed in a cheering strain, and dwells more upon the restoration of the church, and her glorious state in consequence of receiving the Lord as the Word, than of her previous debasement and infidelity. The two subjects are nearly connected together, since the one event follows the other; and hence the prophets seldom dwell long upon the desolation of the church and her rejection of the Lord, without some reference to her restoration and her reception of him: but the one subject constitutes the predominant topic of Jeremiah, and the other of Zechariah: wherefore the Spirit of Inspiration designates the statements which even Zechariah delivers on the

former subject, by the name of its proper type, Jeremiah.

Surely I may be allowed to say, how satisfactory, and how beautiful, is this explanation! It is a perfectly easy solution of a difficulty, which, upon every other theory, is insurmountable.* But from *our* system it flows unforced; and not only so, but as a natural and necessary result. May we not then assume, that both the solution and the system must indubitably be true?

The Doctrine that the Sacred Scriptures every where contain a spiritual sense, for the sake of conveying which the letter is constructed, with a knowledge of the just mode of decyphering it by the Doctrine of Representation and Analogy, will solve every other seeming contradiction in the statements of the inspired writers. To examine, in this manner, all the passages in the Gospels which appear contradictory, would constitute a work of much interest: but our design in the present work is, simply to lay down the prin-

* It is affirmed by some, that Jeremiah is named instead of Zechariah, because he anciently stood first in the copies of the prophets, and so might be taken as a name for them all: but that there is no authority for such an assertion, is sufficiently shewn in the Appendix, No. II. p. xix. Others consider the name of Jeremiah to be an accidental interpolation; but certainly it were such an interpolation as it could never come into the head of any scribe to make.

ciples upon which they are to be solved, and to illustrate the applicability of the theory to the facts, by such examples as might be necessary for that purpose. This may now have been done. And I trust that it cannot but be seen, that varying statements, proceeding from inspired pens, may all equally be true, and may detail circumstances which equally belong to the same transaction, though sometimes, possibly, to such parts of it as were beyond the ken of ordinary observation, and could have been known to none but inspired writers. Of their inspiration, then, such circumstances, fairly interpreted, actually become evidences. Thus in this case, as in every other, the system of interpretation which we propose, wrests the weapons of the infidel out of his hands, and makes them assist in demonstrating the divinity of the Scriptures.

3. On the Class of Objections which are drawn from the imperfect morality of some of the distinguished characters of the Israelitish Church, little needs be added, after the view given of the design of the calling of that people, and of the nature of their history, in our last Lecture.

(1.) Admit the Israelites to have been chosen merely to *represent* the subjects belonging to the church; and consider all the persons distinguished among them as *representative characters* only; and all difficulties arising from the questionable

morality of some of them immediately disappear. We then see, how the record may be essentially the Word of God, notwithstanding the craft imputed to the immediate founder of the nation, their adherence to eastern manners in regard to the intercourse of the sexes, and the acts of violence and treachery which several of their heroes and heroines scrupled not to commit. Some of these might perhaps be allowable according to the laws of nations that prevailed in those distant ages: but still they were such as could not, themselves, have been agreeable to the divine will, or have been practised by persons who were the subjects of a spiritual dispensation. The slaughter, noticed in our first Lecture, of Eglon by Ehud, though effected under fair pretences, and thus by treachery, was indeed no more than would have been done, and gloried in, by the most illustrious heroes of Greece and Rome, among whom tyrannicide, by whatever means accomplished, was deemed highly meritorious: but it may be doubted whether any national opinions or customs would justify the still more insidious act of Jael. What then? Does this prove that the book in which they are recorded is not the Word of God? Far from it. It only proves that the Jews were not the subjects of *a real church*, possessing inward principles of life and grace, but only of *the type of a church*,—of a dispensation which symbolized

spiritual things by external acts, the performers of which might be far from any participation of spiritual feelings.

(2.) How heavenly things might be occasionally represented even by acts of violence, has been shewn at large in the last Lecture: and when this is seen, every objection which the infidel can raise against the divine origin of the Scriptures on this ground, is entirely surmounted. We also see how greatly they err, who propose the exploits of the Jewish worthies, in their outward form, as things for the imitation of Christians;—a principle which, at various periods, has been adopted by fanatics, who have perpetrated the greatest outrages under its sanction. The crimes of the Old-Testament *saints*, as they are considered, have, likewise, always formed the main bulwark of Antinomianism; which hence has invented the profane sentiment, that the saints are often permitted to fall into great sins, to convince them that salvation is by faith only, and to make them more illustrious examples of the sovereignty of grace. But when David, for instance, is no longer considered as the *pattern* of a saint, but as the *type* of one, there is an end to the pretended sanction of lust and cruelty, drawn, and which I have myself known to be drawn and openly avowed, from some of his actions. The worst parts of his conduct will then only be viewed as symbolizing the dis-

covery which must be made to the highly graduated Christian, to become the ground of his humility and self-abhorrence, of the tendencies to evil which lurk in the recesses of his heart; not as intimating that he may appropriate and practise such evils, and hope for impunity. This will be perfectly evident, if we consider, for a moment, who that Saint or Holy One specifically is, of whom David was eminently a type.

This king of Israel is allowed, in his highest reference, to be a type of the "King of saints*,"—the Lord Jesus Christ. But, he, it is admitted by all, though "in all points tempted as we are," yet was "without sin."† Sin is evil appropriated in the will and thought, and brought, when convenient opportunity serves, into act. Jesus was "without sin:" how then could David, in his fall, be a type of him? Because, though never was the slightest evil appropriated by the Redeemer in will, thought, or act, but always instantly rejected with a "Get thee hence, Satan‡;" yet, in the nature taken by him from the human mother, were, before it was renewed by spiritual conflicts, the same tendencies as belong to ordinary humanity: As the Apostle declares, "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren§:" and since, in the nature taken from the mother, the likeness was so complete, "we have not a high priest who cannot

* Rev. xv. 3. † Heb. iv. 15. ‡ Matt. iv. 10. § Heb. ii. 17.

be touched with the feeling of our infirmities.”* Had it been otherwise, it would have been impossible for Hell to have approached him with temptations, and thus the great end of his coming would have been defeated; which, according to the same Apostle, was, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”† The death he underwent included, not only the death of the material frame, but of every principle of his constitution which partook of human infirmity, and which presented an impediment to his returning to perfect union with his Father; and *this* death he was undergoing through the whole period of his life: “I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”‡ The fall of David, then, represented, not the falling into sin of Him who was “without sin,” but the deep temptations undergone by him, from the action of “him that had the power of death” upon those principles of human nature appertaining to him which were susceptible of the influence: the remorse and penitence of David typified the utter rejection, by Jesus, of every thing in his nature which could be susceptible of such an excitement; and David’s restoration to divine favour, the renewal of the Lord’s human nature, and of every principle in it, by communication from his divine.

* Ch. iv. 15. † Ch. ii. 14, 15. ‡ Luke xii. 50.

Now how could *the perceptions and feelings* which must have been experienced by Jesus during the suffering of this inward process, be otherwise represented, than by a detail of corresponding *outward acts*? And what could those outward acts which were positively sinful typify, in regard to Him who was *without sin*, but his experimental discovery, that the tendencies to it were inherent in that human nature of which he had become a partaker, and which in him, as in us, was to be "*made perfect through sufferings*?"* For he, also, "*learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.*"†

What then is the doctrine taught by this part of the history of David, to the Christian? What but this? that he has in his nature the seeds of the evils which in David proceeded to such flagitious acts. And what is the practical lesson taught by this part of David's conduct, viewing him as the type of a saint, and decyphering the type by comparing it with the known Antitype, the king of saints? that it is excusable in the Christian, because he has the seeds of such evils in his nature, to adopt them in his will, or thought, or act, as was done by *the type*? No! but that, like the great Antitype, who alone is his *pattern*, he is to engage in conflict with

* Heb. ii. 10.

† Ch. v. 8, 9.

them *within*; to reject them as soon as he is made sensible of their existence in his breast; and to seek from above for that renewal of the heart, which, far from favouring the least tendency to evil, delights in nothing but goodness and purity. This is the real use which is to be made by the Christian of the history of David. Referred to his acknowledged chief Antitype, it becomes intelligible at once. We are to study him as a type, not as an example, and are to take for our example the Antitype alone. Accordingly, the Lord never says to his disciples, "Follow David," but, continually, "Follow me."*

Under such views of the Word of God as these, what becomes of the blasphemous imputation of its encouraging immorality?

(4.) With regard to the charge of Insignificance, brought against great part of the Word of God, it cannot now be necessary to say a syllable. When it is seen that every part of the Sacred Records is profoundly significant, and that the most apparently trifling ceremonies, directions, and statements, include representations of things of all others the most important to immortal beings; the imputation against them of Insignificance comes with the same weight, as would attend a decree, censuring the structure of the universe, and pronouncing the unimport-

* Mat. iv. 19; viii. 22; ix. 9; xvi. 24; xix. 21; &c.

ance of the stars, issued by a conclave of moles.

After this view of the bearing of all Infidel objections against the Word of God as rightly understood, may it not be assumed as certain, that all such objections arise from taking a merely superficial view of the Sacred Scriptures, and from an utter ignorance of their true nature?

May I, then, now hope, that the affirmation made in the first Lecture* will be considered as made good? Does it not clearly appear, that to adduce from such considerations as are urged by Deists an argument against the divine inspiration of the Scriptures, is entirely to mistake the whole nature of the case? Is it not evident, that the argument thence deduced falls to the ground of itself, as soon as the true nature of the Word of God is seen, and the design is regarded with which it was given to mankind? In short, is it not a fact, that a view of the true nature of the Divine Word overturns from the foundation the whole fabric of Infidel Objections? that it takes the ground on which the Infidel stands in making his objections, entirely away from under his feet?

III. But although the objections of Infidels avail nothing whatever against the Word of God,

as it is in itself, they are not so contemptible when urged against *the views of it which commonly prevail*. They afford no argument at all when advanced to prove that the Scriptures have no origin in Divine Authority; but they yield an irrefragable one when applied, as they only ought to be applied, to evince that the Scriptures must contain much more in their bosom than is extant on the surface.

On this subject, then, I fain would address an earnest appeal to all Christian advocates, and to all the portion of the Christian world in general, who adhere to the merely literal interpretation. I would say to them, with all respect, Consider, my brethren, whose zeal in the cause of what you believe to be the truth I venerate, and who, I doubt not, are actuated by a sincere desire to uphold the credit of the Word of God, how much you compromise that credit, when you affirm, (as we have seen is now so generally the case,) that the Scriptures are every where to be understood according to the letter alone; that no spiritual sense is to be looked for, unless, perchance, in those passages where it is expressly referred to in the New Testament; that the inspiration by which they were written, so far from being plenary, and dictating the very words to the writers, did not even secure them from any but "material errors." It is true, probably, that you have adopted these views of the Scrip-

tures, from disgust at the absurdities and abominations which have formerly been advanced, drawn, as was pretended, from their spiritual sense: but are you sure, that while you thus *flee from a lion*, you have not been *met by a bear*?* Is the literal sense attended with no difficulties? and is the abiding, simply, by it, an unfailing preservative from all delusion and error? Are not some of the greatest delusions, such as have just been noticed of the Antinomians and other fanatics, the offspring of the separated letter alone? Assuredly, then, even if, by embracing such ideas of the Word of God, you afforded no advantage to the enemies of religion, you deprive your own souls of great benefits, and expose yourselves to very serious mistakes.

But when, by thus binding the understanding to the letter alone, you give so great odds to our Deistical and other adversaries, and so encumber the Christian cause with difficulties not its own, as to render it, in the eye of reason, almost untenable; how serious indeed does the mischief become! The objections, for example, which are urged from the literal sense of the beginning of Genesis, are fully demonstrative against the credibility of that sense taken alone: they thus, as we have seen, point to the real divinity of the

* Amos v. 19. *The lion*, when mentioned in a bad sense, is the symbol of such false persuasions as arise from the perversion of the interiors of the Word; *the bear*, of such as result from abiding by the letter alone, without understanding it.

Word, by pointing to a spiritual sense: why then give them a direction, which, without abating an atom of their force, makes them fatal to the divinity of the Word altogether? The whole style of the narration in those chapters is such as might satisfy any one, that the literal sense is not that which is intended. Many circumstances are introduced which are clearly designed, among their other uses, to demonstrate, that a spiritual sense only is what is proposed. In what a situation, then, is the modest inquirer placed, when he is told, that he must either give his faith to incredibilities which bear palpable marks that they were intended to be regarded as incredibilities, or must reject the record altogether! Any one who believes in a God, may believe that, on occasions sufficiently important, a miracle may be performed,—a deviation may take place from the customary proceedings of nature; and he will not reject a narration assuming to be divine for affirming such facts: but the marvels of the first chapters of Genesis are not delivered as miracles, but as things in the common course of events; and the most extraordinary of them,—the talking of the serpent,—if it is to be taken as a miracle, was wrought, not by the hand of God, but of Satan; of whom, nevertheless, not a word is said in the letter. To insist then that the literal sense is here to be believed; and not only so, is all that is to be

believed; if it is not crucifying the Son of man afresh, is delivering him, bound, into the hands of Pilate and his soldiers, to be by them mocked, and scourged, and crucified. The infidel, amid his scoffs, may now quote in extenuation the divine declaration, "He that hath delivered me unto thee, hath the greater sin."* Indeed, the literal interpreters ascribe such absurdities to the letter of the Word as are not to be found in it: for, as has been well remarked, the Sacred Narrative does not, with these interpreters, refer the cause of the fall to the eating of the produce of any sort of natural fruit-tree whatever. But when Condorcet ridicules Christianity for imputing the origin of evil to Eve's eating an apple; if he were asked where he learned this, when the Sacred Record says nothing of a tree that bore apples or any such fruit, but calls it "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,"—thus plainly intimating that a spiritual, not a natural tree is signified; he might answer in excuse, "The orthodox told me so:" and Voltaire might make the same apology for his jests upon Eve's *tête a tête* with the serpent. How much better was the chance which Christianity stood with her adversaries, when Origen could reproach Celsus with dissembling what he could not but know, that the whole history is an allegory, and was so considered by those whom he was attacking! Were

* John xix. 11.

this the unanimous confession of Christians now, what modern Celsus would think of again leveling the shafts of ridicule, thus deprived of their point? Before he could find a butt to aim at, he must, like Bolingbroke, change sides with modern Christian advocates, and prove, what they have laboured at so long, that the literal sense is what we are here to abide by: and as the proof of this would be as impossible to him as to them, this part of the Word of God would stand for ever invulnerable to his assaults.

The difficulties under which the Christian advocate labours in defending the Scriptures, by their literal sense alone, from the charge of contradictions, are not, perhaps, quite so great; but still they are such as ought to convince him of the necessity of recurring to higher views of the subject. I wish not to detract from the usefulness of the harmonists; though I think that no one can ever have read what is called a Harmony of the Gospels, combining their respective narratives into one, without feeling himself in a maze of confusion, the consequence of its jumbling together things which Infinite Wisdom provided and intended should be kept distinct. I acknowledge, however, the validity of some of the solutions of seeming contradictions drawn out of the literal sense alone: but in general, I think, it must be allowed, that to seal that validity, and entitle it to pass without dispute, higher inter-

pretations must be joined with them: for though the solutions drawn from the letter alone, in many instances *may* be true, a reason is still wanting why the appearance of a contradiction should exist,—why the *direct* literal interpretation should often be such as to involve a contradiction. It must be allowed, too, after all, that many of the solutions attempted to be drawn from the letter alone, so desperately torture it to wring them out, that, where doubt has once entered, *they* can never expel it. Your very friends confess this. “The violent methods,” says Michaelis, “which have been used to reconcile the accounts of Mark and Luke with those of the other Evangelists, and the insuperable difficulty which has hitherto attended the harmony of the Gospels, have cast a dark shade on our religion, and the truth and simplicity of its history have been almost buried under the weight of explanations.”* Why then, my brethren, not accept the views which alone can satisfactorily remove all difficulty? Why present the Scripture as a jewel of agate, carved in such a manner as is little suited for ornament, and yet insist that its value consists in its outside appearance alone; when the reasons of its peculiarity of form would immediately appear, were it known, that it was made to open, and that its singular shape arose from its exact adaptation to hold

* Introd. Vol. i. Ch. iii. Sec. 3.

and preserve the rubies and diamonds which glow within? Why allow the world to condemn as flaws, what are merely the junctures, designed to lead the examiner from the surface to the contents?

But again: Most certainly, none but such views as we have offered of the nature of the Israelitish dispensation, can meet the objections of the Deist on the score of the immoral conduct, and the acts of wrong and outrage, committed by those who, if we refuse to look beyond the letter, were the personal favourites of heaven. You deny, (most of you,) a typical character to any persons or actions which are not expressly recognised in that capacity, in the New Testament. You deny then such a character to Jael and her slaughter of Sisera: then how justify or excuse them? It is in vain to say, as some have done, that this was a transaction for which the performer alone was accountable, it not being owned by the God of the Scriptures; whereas, as noticed in our first Lecture, it is expressly eulogized by the voice of prophecy. With what sort of feelings do you read of a woman's killing her guest in his sleep, while you believe that it was the act itself, and not something represented by it, which was really agreeable to him who hath said, "Thou shalt not kill?" Beautiful and impressive does the narrative become, when we read in it the manner in which

wicked persons of the specific character represented by Sisera, endeavour to escape detection, by lurking behind the assumed appearance of that species of good of which Jael is the type; and how, when they have thus filled up the measure of their iniquity by adding hypocrisy to their other vices, they sink into a merely natural state, of which sleep is the symbol, and thence pass, unconsciously, into complete spiritual death; nailed to the earth,—to earth-born feelings,—for ever. Jael is thus seen as the representative of goodness of a genuine kind, which does not suffer itself to be prostituted by being made a cover to vice. Here is something on which the divine approbation cannot but rest: but, without it, how vindicate the transaction? Persons even of the best disposed minds, while they look at nothing beyond the letter, cannot reconcile such a deed with the universal command prohibitory of murder, but by affirming, that he who gave the precept, retains the right, when he sees fit, to remit its obligation; that the occasions for its suspension were communicated to such characters as Jael by a divine impulse; and that the slaughter which ensued then became, instead of murder, a judicial infliction. But what a door would be opened by this casuistry to the most horrid enormities! and not a few have actually been perpetrated under its sanction. If a judicial infliction were all that

was intended, how much more impressively would this be exhibited by an immediate visitation, as in the cases of Ananias and Sapphira!* Indeed, the sentiment leads directly to the conclusion, that there is no such thing as immutable right or wrong; that He who gave the moral code could reverse it also. But what a being does this make of the Author of creation! Does it not paint him like those tyrants that blot the pages of history, who made their mere will the law, and whose will was guided by caprice alone? It is true, that the will of God is, and ever must be, the standard of morals, and that obedience to it must always remain the test of virtue: but to imagine that his will can be mutable; that it is not unalterably determined to goodness in the abstract; and that essential goodness can ever be any thing else than love, or its duties any but such as love would dictate:—surely this is to display any but a just idea of the Divine Nature! It is, in fact, to deny to God any unalterable attribute but that of Infinite Power: and the worshippers of mere Power, it may fairly be affirmed, would worship Satan himself, had it been possible for him to have succeeded in the enterprise which is ascribed to him, and to have seized the throne of heaven.

Consider then, I beseech you, my Christian brethren, the consequences in which you involve

* Acts. v.

yourselves, and the cause of God and of Truth, by denying a regular spiritual sense to the Scriptures of Truth. Consider how this persuasion degrades the Word of God, and disgraces its Divine Author. Believe it to be possible that inspiration really may be inspiration; that the Word of God may be the Word of God indeed, and that the wisdom of God may be actually included in it. Look for it then, as you would look for God himself. As you do not expect to find him in the scenes of nature, but in the inmost sphere of mind; so neither is it reasonable to expect to find his pure wisdom in the outward letter of his Word, but in a sphere within it. Look again, I would also intreat you, at the objections of the Infidels. Pretend not to meet them in their own valley, where they can deploy their nine hundred chariots of iron; but let the array they make there convince you, as it did Barak*, of the necessity of taking that elevated station which is your proper sphere, and of rushing down upon them from thence. Suffer them not to persuade you that the Scriptures are not the Word of God; but permit them to point out to you what their nature must be if they are. Thus will the weapons of the Infidel be wrested out of his hands, and made efficient to his discomfiture; as the sword of Goliath became an instrument of mighty efficacy when wielded by a David.† But unless you deal with

* Judges iv. 12, 13, 14. † 1 Sam. xvii. 51; Ch. xxi. 9.

them thus, they will eventually accomplish the object at which they aim. Either Christians must rise to higher views of the nature of the Scriptures, and of the laws of their composition, or, I presume to affirm, the day will come, when all veneration for them as the proper Word of God, all belief of their having been dictated by any thing at all worthy of the name of Inspiration, all sense of their inherent sanctity, and all communication by means of them with God and heaven, will cease to exist through the greater portion of the Christian world. Avert, I beseech you, the catastrophe, by preserving the Palladium in the centre of the Christian Temple. Cast not the Ark of the Testimony out of the Holy Place. Regard the Word as possessing an internal principle within it: and then, and then only, you may defy the fiercest attacks upon the outer bulwarks.

IV. But it is time to turn to the Deists: and to them I would say, Imagine not, men and brethren, should even the half of Christendom openly go over to your side, that you have obtained any victory over Christianity or over the Word of God. Flatter not yourselves that your success were the triumph of truth over error: if were nothing, be assured, but a triumph of one species of error over another,—of simple fallacy over falsified truth. It were not a triumph of

the light of nature over the light of the Word, but over a view of the Word which extinguishes its light and that of nature together. It has become the general opinion of Christians, that the Divine Word is to be understood in its literal sense alone; or rather, as, when looked at merely in the letter, it often cannot be understood at all, that it is to be simply believed: you look at it with these preconceived impressions; and as you thus find in it much that you cannot believe, and are not led to look for its true meaning in a higher sense, you reject it. But what you thus reject is not so properly the Word Itself, as a mistaken idea of it, which you have taken from those whom you regard as its proper interpreters. A very different view of the Divine Book, and to which, as we have seen, none of your objections are in the slightest degree applicable, has now been laid before you. As was observed to me by a gentleman, once of your sentiments, who saw, as soon as this view was presented to him, that against the Scriptures, thus interpreted, nothing which he had read in the deistical writers would attach;—your Paines and Volneys would here have all their work to begin again. An opportunity then is now afforded you, of trying the sincerity of that love of truth which you profess so loudly: for here, I hesitate not to say, is offered you the truth itself; that is, a just view of the Word of Truth itself;

and this declares, by its proper organ, the mouth of the Word Incarnate, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my words."

But, alas! I know too well how many causes, very different from the proper love of truth, tend to swell the ranks of Infidelity, to expect that any great proportion of you will listen to this appeal. Though perfectly satisfied that the view here offered is the truth, I by no means expect that it will satisfy those *confirmed* deniers of the inspiration of the Scriptures, who, instead of being desirous to know the will of God in order that they may do it, would be better pleased to obtain demonstration that there were no God at all whose will they need consider;—that they are free from all obligation of regarding any will but their own. Of those who, from this ground, "hear not Moses and the prophets," Divine Truth has declared, that "neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."* But to such of you as are of a different character, who have fallen into states of doubt, in consequence of having been led to fix your attention upon those parts of the Scriptures, which, when regarded as to the literal statements alone, appear repugnant to reason, but who feel uneasiness in consequencē, and would gladly see a way by which your difficulties might be removed; the view which has been developed may

* Luke xvi. 31.

certainly afford all the satisfaction which you can desire.

Since then there are two so very different origins of scepticism, I would earnestly and affectionately exhort every one who is in such a state, or who feels a tendency towards it, dispassionately to examine his own heart, in order to ascertain the first source of his impressions. You will all, perhaps, eagerly reply, that you follow in your sentiments nothing but the unbiassed suggestions of reason. I would ask in return, Are you sure of that? Every philosopher knows what an extraordinary influence is exercised by the inclinations of the will over the conclusions of the understanding: it has even become a proverbial remark, that whatsoever a man ardently wishes to find true, he seldom fails in the end to persuade himself *is* true. Let then every one, before he trusts too implicitly to what he deems the dictates of his reason, faithfully ascertain, whether he inwardly *wishes* to find that which is offered him as a Divine Revelation true or false: and whether, in the event of sufficient evidence of its truth being presented, he is prepared, cheerfully and without reserve, to follow the course of duty which it enjoins. If he can answer this inquiry in the affirmative, then can we allow him to be an impartial inquirer after truth, all whose scruples we are convinced we could satisfy. Another test

by which any one may judge of his own impartiality, is this: Does he find as much satisfaction, when looking over the Scriptures, in those passages which present truly exalted ideas of God, and the most pure and sublime precepts of moral duty, as when he discovers statements which, to his notions, appear extravagant and irreconcilable to reason? Does he look for and dwell upon these with satisfaction and triumph? and does he feel not disposed to look attentively at the others, but to slur them over, experiencing something like mortification at finding any thing indisputably excellent in a book which he would fain regard as worthy of nothing but contempt? If so, it is plain to which of the two classes of sceptics before described he belongs, and he will do well to relinquish his boast of impartiality, and to allow that his rejection of the Scriptures is not the result of reason but of prejudice;—of prejudice, the offspring of pride and self-conceit, if not of more palpably disgraceful vices.

He, on the other hand, who is really disposed to look impartially at the matter, must surely feel his heart glow with inward devotion, when he reads such a description of the Divine Majesty, as we quoted, in our first Lecture, from Isaiah; in which, as in many other instances, the great attributes of Infinity and Eternity are exhibited with a sublimity and force to which Philosophy

never pretended. And again: while the Scriptures so excel in describing the Divine Majesty and attributes, when did Philosophy deliver so striking and affecting a delineation of the whole duty of man, both to God and his fellow creatures, as in the declarations of Moses, quoted by Jesus Christ as the proper answer to an inquirer, who asked, "What was the great commandment of the law." "The first of all the commandments," said he, "is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:" to which he adds this emphatic declaration; "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* Here we are plainly instructed, that to inculcate love to God and man is the design of the whole Word of God: if then there are any parts of that Word in which this design does not appear upon the surface, the just inference is, that there is something beneath the surface which does not shew itself on a superficial inspection. So, again, in that other beautiful and impressive summary of all moral duty: "Whatever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye unto them;" to which also the Divine Speaker adds, "for this is the law and the pro-

* Mat. xxii. 36 to 40.

phets.”* Now, surely, none who is animated by a sincere affection for truth, and who actually loves the charity which he is so ready to eulogize, can help feeling deeply affected by such touching appeals to the heart and conscience as these; and he who thus feels their power cannot be disposed eagerly to reject, as a fable or a forgery, the whole book in which they are found, and of which they are a part; especially, too, when these declarations affirm so positively, that all the rest of the book is of the same character as themselves. Let him then listen candidly to a system which points out *how* the rest of the book is of the same character as these specimens; which evinces, that there is a spiritual sense contained throughout the whole, which shines plainly through the very letter in such passages as we have just quoted, but which equally exists every where else, though veiled from immediate view by a clothing of images taken from natural objects. In short, every one who is not rendered inimical to the Word of God by passion, prejudice, or pride, may find abundant reason to conclude in its favour upon a candid examination of the general scope of its letter: he may there find, for himself, plain indications that it is inwardly replenished with real divine wisdom: and when he sees this proved by the views of its nature which have now been deve-

* Ch. vii. 12.

loped, he surely will take it to his bosom, and thank its Author for the invaluable boon.

I conclude with expressing a devout hope, that the Author of the Word of God will accompany this attempt at its vindication with his blessing. May the number of the sincere and devotional lovers of Truth, of all classes and of all parties, be rapidly increased! May they learn to venerate the Word of God *as* the Word of God, and draw from its exhaustless bosom the streams of genuine truth! Believing, also, the view of the nature of the Scriptures of which a faint sketch has now been given, to be the truth; and feeling the powerful, the unalterable conviction of their divinity which the reception of it imparts; I add, May mankind in general be speedily brought to do justice to a system, which sets the feet of the disciple of Revelation on a rock of adamant, and invests him with a panoply of strength, aimed against which, the keenest shafts of Infidelity will ever fall blunted and harmless!

...in every way in his power and
think his father for the invaluable boon

I conclude with expressing a devout wish
that the young man, the friend of God, will soon
have this subject at the foundation of his
education. May the number of the sincere and
devoted friends of the cause of the
... be multiplied, and the
... to secure the ...
God will give from his abundant
store of genuine truth. The
view of the nature of the Christian religion
a false sketch has not been given to the
world; and feeling the power of the
conviction of their dilatory which the
of it in general: I add, they standing in general
be applied to do justice to a system
which sets the seat of the throne of
on a rock of adamant, and instead of
...
...
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APPENDIX.

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No. I. (Page 89.)  
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PROOFS OF THE SYMBOLIC CHARACTER OF THE WRITINGS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AFFORDED BY THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

THIS book of the Apocalypse, though itself one of the most mysterious of the books of Scripture, yet affords a key to the interpretation of all the rest;—at least of all those of the Old Testament; for it is impossible to read this book with any attention, without discovering, that it is written throughout upon the supposition, that every thing related in Scripture respecting the Jewish church and people, has a symbolic meaning, and is not merely a record of comparatively unimportant matters of fact. If then this book is written by divine inspiration, (and, notwithstanding the objections which some, judging by totally erroneous criteria, have raised against it, there is no book of Scripture in which the Spirit of inspiration discovers itself by more infallible marks,) we have here the most explicit testimony of that Spirit itself to the spiritual nature of the more ancient Scriptures. We will notice a little more particularly than in the text above, some statements which prove these three points; the typical character of the persons mentioned in the Old Testament;—of the rituals of the Mosaic law;—of the places mentioned in the Old Testament.

I. We need go no farther than the second chapter of this extraordinary book, to find proof that the events related in the historical part of the Old Testament, contain an ulterior reference to subjects of a spiritual nature, important to the Church and her members in every age; and that the *persons* whose actions are recorded in the Holy Word, are all typical characters. For in the divine address to the Church of Pergamos, we have these words: “ But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of *Balaam*, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit

fornication.”* A little further, we find Jesus Christ saying to the church of Thyatira, “Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman *Jezebel*, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach, and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. Behold, I cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds: and I will kill her children with death: And all the churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.”† In these passages we have two of the characters of the Old Testament brought forward, and described as still occupied in their old work of perverting the church.

The book of Numbers‡ relates the history of the prophet Balaam, who was employed by Balak king of Moab, to obstruct the march of the Israelites by his incantations; and who actually did prepare a snare§ into which they fell, and were visited in consequence by a destroying plague. The narrative afterwards mentions his death by the sword of the Israelites||: and there, if nothing but a record of natural events were intended, we should expect the history of Balaam and his arts to end. No mention is made of any “doctrine” taught by him; much less of any sect of followers attached to such doctrine. But in the passage just quoted we find mention occur, not indeed of Balaam himself, as being still alive, but of a body of his disciples, existing fifteen hundred years after his death, during the whole of which interval he does not appear to have had any disciples at all!

But the other instance we have cited is more remarkable still. Jezebel was the wife of Ahab, one of the most wicked kings that ever reigned in Israel; but who, wicked as he was, was not so abandoned as his wife: for the sacred Record says, “There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.”¶ This wicked queen perished miserably** about 2600 years ago, and above eight hundred years before the book of the Revelation of John was written: yet she is here spoken of as being still living,—still practising what she delighted in when alive, which was, to pervert the church, and to seduce or destroy the Lord’s faithful servants;—and she is represented as being still to undergo the punishment due to her crimes, though that had been so dreadfully inflicted upon her, personally, by the instrumentality of Jehu. Can any thing then be more plain, than that this

* Rev. ii. 14. † Ver. 20 to 23. ‡ Chs. xxii. to xxv. § Ch. xxxi. 16.
 || Ch. xxxi. 8. ¶ 1 Kings xxi. 25. ** 2 Kings ix. 30 to end.

mention of Balaam and of Jezebel in the Apocalypse, is designed to instruct us, that they were both representative characters, and thus that the narratives which record their actions are replete with a hidden meaning, beyond that which appears on the surface? To admit, as all must admit, that they were used as types by John, but to deny that they have a typical signification in the Old Testament, is to maintain a gross inconsistency. John gives no sort of intimation that he is assigning them a new relation, but evidently considers their typical character as a thing fully established, and not to be questioned.

We will give two other examples. The Lamb that was seen in the midst of the throne in heaven*, is called "the *Lion* of the tribe of *Juda*."† This is an allusion to the prophetic benediction of his sons by Jacob; in which we read, "*Judah* is a *lion's* whelp: from the prey, my son, art thou gone up; he stooped down, he couched as a *lion*, and as an old *lion*; who shall rouse him up‡:" and thus we are taught, that the ultimate reference of this enigmatical saying is not to *Judah*, or to his tribe, but to the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the seventh chapter, when four angels were seen holding the four winds, and another angel cried to them, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads;" and when, in consequence, exactly twelve thousand were sealed of each of the *twelve tribes of the children of Israel*:—every one sees that the children of Israel and their tribes cannot be personally meant: and if they have a symbolic meaning here, they must have a symbolic meaning elsewhere; which is thus clearly taught.

II. In regard to the notices of the Mosaic *rituals*. In the eighth chapter we read of "the *golden altar* which was before the throne," and of an angel having "a *golden censer*," and to whom was given "much *incense*, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the *golden altar*."§ This is an allusion to the *golden altar* which stood before the veil in the tabernacle and temple, and upon which the *incense* was offered.|| In the eleventh chapter an angel said to John, "Rise, and measure the *temple* of God, and the *altar*, and them that worship therein: but the *court*, which is without the *temple*, leave out, and measure it not¶," &c. This alludes to the *temple*, its *altar* and *courts*, as they existed under the Jewish economy. So, also, when the Revelator says, "I looked, and, behold, the *temple* of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened**;" —"and the *temple* was filled with smoke from the glory of God††;"

* Ch. v. 6. † Ver. 5. ‡ Gen. xlix. 9. § Ver. 3. || Exod. xl. 26, 27. ¶ Ver. 1, 2. ** Ch. xv. 5. †† Ver. 8: See also Ex. xl. 34, & 1 Kings viii. 10.

—“and I heard a great voice out of the *temple*, saying to the seven angels* ;”—“and there came a great voice out of the *temple* of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done † ;”—“And the *temple* of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his *temple* the *ark of his testament*.” ‡ It is plain that these things are all here mentioned as symbols of spiritual things; and what they denote is also in some measure hinted; and thus we are taught that they have a symbolic meaning when mentioned in the Old Testament.

Beside those which are properly rituals, many of the other *representatives* of the Old Testament are also alluded to, and their representative character thus clearly established; as the *tree of life* §; the *manna* ||; the *key of David* ¶; and the *plagues of Egypt*. **

III. Respecting the *places* mentioned in the Israelitish history, there are several allusions. The river *Euphrates* is mentioned thus: John “heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God, saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river *Euphrates* † †:” “The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river *Euphrates*, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.” ‡ ‡ As Commentators are disposed, though with very questionable success, to interpret these passages literally, we will not build any thing upon them, but leave them to the consideration of the intelligent, while we mention other passages for which none can claim a literal interpretation.

Of the two witnesses it is said, after they are killed by the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, that “their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called *Sodom* and *Egypt*; where also our Lord was crucified.” § § Here it is difficult to suppose that these figurative witnesses, when slain by a figurative beast, can lie in any other than a figurative city: and what can that be, but some state of opposition to, or of the perversion of, divine things? The nature of this state then must be denoted by the names which are applied to it; and of course *Sodom* and *Egypt* must have a similar meaning when mentioned elsewhere in the Holy Word; otherwise it would be quite unmeaning to call such a state by those names here.

* Rev. xvi. 1. † Ver. 17. ‡ Ver. 19. § Ch. iii. 7; xxii. 2, 14.

|| Ch. ii. 17. ¶ Ch. iii. 7: (compare Isa. xxii. 22.)

** The turning of the waters into blood, ch. xvi. 3, 4: The plague of frogs (allusion to,) ver. 13: The plague of boils, ver. 2: The plague of hail mingled with fire, ch. viii. 7: The plague of locusts, ch. ix. 3: The plague of darkness, ch. viii. 12.

† † Ch. ix. 13, 14.

‡ ‡ Ch. xvi. 12.

§ § Ch. xi. 8.

Of Mount Sion, we have this remarkable notice: "I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the *Mount Sion*, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads."* *Mount Sion*, or *Zion*, is frequently mentioned in the Old Testament, and is generally allowed to have a spiritual signification; which this passage demonstrates; and also shews that its spiritual reference must be to something of the most holy and exalted nature. The hundred and forty-four thousand here again mentioned, are, no doubt, the same as were before said to have been sealed out of all the tribes of Israel: and what is here said of them further evinces, that we are not to understand by them Israelites according to the flesh, but "Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile†;" or them who receive in the most ample manner the graces of salvation, and yield the most unhesitating obedience to all the divine will: for it is presently added, "These are they which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins" [but not necessarily in the Roman Catholic sense]: "these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth: these were redeemed from among men, being the first fruits to God and to the Lamb: and in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God."‡

The Jews were carried captive to *Babylon*; and the judgments which afterwards befel that proud city, are repeatedly foretold in Isaiah and Jeremiah, whose predictions are considered to have received a complete fulfilment in the total desolation which that metropolis has experienced. But two whole chapters of the Revelation, and parts of three others, are occupied with accounts of *Babylon* and her fall, as if she were still standing, and her fall still to come, at the late period to which those parts of the book evidently refer: and what is equally remarkable, much of the language used on the occasion by John, is the same, or nearly so, as was before used, in reference to *Babylon*, by Isaiah and Jeremiah. An angel says in the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation, "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen*§;" in the eighteenth chapter, another angel cries mightily, saying, "*Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen*||:" in the twenty-first of Isaiah a watchman says, "*Babylon is fallen, is fallen*¶:" and Jeremiah says, "*Babylon is suddenly fallen, and destroyed*."*** The angel in the Revelation adds,—“and is become the habitation of demons, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird††:" Isaiah says, "Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall

* Ch. xiv. 1. † John i. 47. ‡ Rev. xiv. 4, 5. § Ver. 8. || Ver. 2.

¶ Ver. 9. ** Ch. li. 8. †† Ch. xviii. 2.

dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there:”* So it is said in Jeremiah, “The wild beasts of the desert with the wild beasts of the islands shall dwell there, and the owls shall dwell therein.”† The Apocalyptic angel proceeds to say, “For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication‡;” and when Babylon was seen under the figure of a woman, she had “a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication§:” Jeremiah says, “Babylon has been a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, that hath made all the earth drunken; the nations have drunken of her wine; therefore the nations are mad.”|| Another voice was heard by John, saying, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues: for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities¶:” Jeremiah says, “Flee out of the midst of *Babylon*, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the Lord’s vengeance; he will render her a recompense**:” and again, “Forsake her, and let us go every one into his own country: for her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted up even to the skies††:” and again: “My people, go ye out of the midst of her, and deliver ye every man his soul from the fierce anger of the Lord.”‡‡ The voice heard by John proceeds to say, “Reward her, even as she hath rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works§§:” Jeremiah says, “Recompense her according to her works; according to all that she hath done, do unto her.”||| The voice in the Revelation describes her pride and its consequences thus: “She saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow: therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine¶¶:” which is thus paralleled in Isaiah: “Thou saidst, I shall be a lady for ever;—I shall not sit as a widow, neither shall I know the loss of children: but these two things shall come unto thee in a moment, in one day; the loss of children and widowhood.”*** Much then follows in the Revelation which closely resembles what is said of the destruction of Tyre in the twenty-sixth and twenty-seventh chapters of Ezekiel; after which it is written, “And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city *Babylon* be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all†††:” What was thus done by an angel in the sight of John, resembles what was done

* Ch. xiii. 21. † Ch. i. 39. ‡ Rev. xviii. 3. § Ch. xvii. 4.

|| Ch. ii. 7. ¶ Rev. xviii. 4, 5. ** Ch. li. 6. †† Ver. 9. ‡‡ Ver. 45.

§§ Rev. xviii. 6. ||| Ch. i. 29. ¶¶ Ch. xviii. 7, 8. *** Ch. xlvi. 7, 8, 9.

††† Ch. xviii. 21.

by a messenger sent by Jeremiah to ancient *Babylon*: he directed him, when he arrived there, to read the prophecy against it; and he concludes his injunctions in these words: "And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus shall *Babylon* sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her."*

Now it is evident that the *Babylon* of the Apocalypse is altogether a spiritual *Babylon*; as also, that the sublime images by which her judgment is described are all a series of pure symbols, having none but a spiritual signification. But the very same things are said respecting the judgment on *Babylon* pronounced by the old prophets: is it not then evident, that the *Babylon* of the Old Testament, though a real city, was nevertheless a typical one? as likewise, that the language in which the old prophets announced its destruction, was equally symbolic with the same language when used by the Apocalyptic divine, and that although, with them, it had a literal sense, it had a spiritual sense also? Are we not thus plainly taught by the Revelator, what is the nature of the prophetic style of the Old Testament? When he uses the same language, and treats of the same places, as they do; and this long after the places had ceased to exist; does he not clearly inform us, that the places treated of by them had a typical character, and that the language in which they spoke of them had a meaning beyond that which appears on the surface?

There remains but one other place to notice, which is *Jerusalem*. It is allowed by commentators in general, that *Jerusalem* is a type of the church; which principle is frequently recognised by the translators of the English Bible, in the summaries of the contents prefixed to the chapters. There are, however, various passages in the Old Testament, in which, under the name of *Jerusalem*, the church is treated of as being in a state of desolation or corruption: and many in which, on account of their plain applicability to the circumstances of the actual or carnal *Jerusalem*, there might be room to doubt whether any thing further is intended, were it not for other passages which do not admit of such limitation. But in the Apocalypse, *Jerusalem* is never mentioned in a way that will admit of an application to the carnal *Jerusalem* at all. In the only passage where an allusion is made to the carnal *Jerusalem*, as the place "where our Lord was crucified†," it is called, not *Jerusalem*, but "*Sodom and Egypt*." Whenever "*Jerusalem*" is mentioned, it is always in a manner that fully establishes its meaning to be, the true church of the Lord;

* Jer. li. 63, 64. † Ch. xi. 8.

thus completely establishing, at the same time, the symbolic or typical character of the city *Jerusalem* under the Jewish dispensation. To guard against its being referred to the mere city Jerusalem, it likewise is always called either the "*new Jerusalem**," or the "*holy Jerusalem†*;" and it is spoken of as "coming down from God out of heaven‡:" just as Paul, to preserve the same distinction, calls the carnal *Jerusalem*, or *Jerusalem* taken as a type of the Jewish church, the "*Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children§*;" and he terms the true church "*the Jerusalem above,*" or the *heavenly Jerusalem*: thus he says, continuing the sentence of which a part is just quoted, "*But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all||*:" and again, "*Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem.*"¶ So when the Revelator speaks of a *new Jerusalem*, such a one as cometh down from God out of heaven,—while he clearly predicts by the sublime symbol a future glorious state of the church among men, ("*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men*** ;") he distinctly points to the typical character of the ancient *Jerusalem*, as designating the church in general: and, to reverse the proposition, the acknowledged typical character of the ancient *Jerusalem*, points out what is meant by the *new Jerusalem* here. To adopt the words of one of the most learned and esteemed commentators, Dr. Hammond: "*The true meaning of the New Jerusalem mentioned here (ch. xxi. ver. 2,) and again with the addition of holy, and the glory of God upon it (ver 11,) will be a key to the interpreting of this chapter.*" [He might have added, and of all the passages in the Old Testament where Jerusalem is mentioned, He proceeds to say] "*That it signifies not the state of glorified saints in heaven, appears by its descending from heaven in both places, (and that, according to the use of the phrase, ch. x. 1. and xviii. 1, as an expression of some eminent benefit and blessing in the church;) and so it must needs be here on earth: and being here set down, with the glory of God upon it, it will signify the pure Christian church, joining Christian practice with the profession thereof; and that in a flourishing condition, expressed by the new heaven and new earth. In this sense we have the supernal Jerusalem, (Gal. iv. 26,) the New Jerusalem, (Rev. iii. 12,) where, to the constant professor is promised, that God will write upon him the name of God, and the name of the city of God, the New Jerusalem, which there signifies the pure, catholic, Christian Church.*" Filled with this view of the subject, which is so evidently the true one, the pious Watts, in a

* Ch. iii. 12, xxi. 2. † Ver. 10. ‡ Ch. iii. 12, xxi. 2.

§ Gal. iv. 25. || Ver. 26. ¶ Heb. xii. 22. ** Rev. xxi. 3.

hymn entitled "A Vision of the Kingdom of Christ among men*," has these rapturous stanzas :

"From the third heaven, where God resides,
That holy, happy place,
The New Jerusalem comes down,
Adorned with shining grace.—

How long, dear Saviour, O how long
Shall this bright hour delay?
Fly swifter round, ye wheels of time,
And bring the welcome day."

Altogether, then, I trust, it is perfectly evident, that had the Revelation of John been written by that Apostle as an express commentary upon the Old Testament, it could not have taught us more clearly than it does, that every thing relating to the history of the Jews, to their worship, and to the countries and cities inhabited by them and by the nations with whom they had intercourse, as recorded by the pen of inspiration, had a symbolic and spiritual meaning. Had the Revelation been an express commentary, we might indeed have been informed more explicitly *what that meaning is*: but the general principle, *that there is such a meaning*,—that all the inspired writings do positively contain a sense beyond that which is extant on the surface,—could not have been more decisively established. If we deny this principle, we deny to the whole of the Revelation of John any meaning at all: we convert his sublime symbols into a senseless jargon: and, if we still admit his book to have been written by inspiration, we charge with egregious trifling the unerring Spirit of God.

No. II. (Page 241.)

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AN ATTEMPT TO DISCRIMINATE BETWEEN THE BOOKS OF PLENARY INSPIRATION, CONTAINED IN THE BIBLE, AND THOSE WRITTEN BY THE INSPIRATION GENERALLY ASSIGNED TO THE WHOLE.

WE are advocating in this Work "the Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures;" and we are endeavouring to shew, that no writing can be produced by Plenary Inspiration without including stores of spiritual and divine wisdom within the outward covering of the literal expres-

\* Book i. Hymn 21.

sion. It must however be admitted, that there are some books contained in the collection called the Bible, which, though they are to be received as the productions of men endowed with an extraordinary share of divine illumination, do not contain the spiritual sense here claimed for the absolute Word of God, and thus cannot be the results of that immediate and Plenary Inspiration which is essential to such writings as are the Word of God indeed. The particular examination of this subject could not conveniently be introduced into the Lectures themselves; wherefore we will make some remarks upon it here. It is necessary that the distinction should not be passed without notice; since, without a knowledge of its existence, they who should endeavour to interpret the Scriptures by the Rule drawn from the Analogy between natural things and spiritual, or to try the validity of the Rule itself, might be disappointed in the results, in consequence of applying it to those parts of the Bible which are not composed according to it, or are not written by the plenary and immediate, but by the more lax and mediate species of inspiration.

We have stated in our early Lectures the sentiments which are now generally held by the learned on the nature of the inspiration of the Word of God; and we objected to them as not going far enough, and as not giving a proper idea of compositions that are absolutely divine. They all proceed upon the supposition, that inspiration, be it what it may, is a personal and permanent gift to the man by whom an inspired book is written; that the writers of the Scriptures were divinely illuminated men, who, with few exceptions, wrote in their own words the perceptions of their own minds, which were the constant seats of the illumination of the Holy spirit: (though some will not admit so much as this.) If this definition were intended for a certain portion, only, of the books commonly called the Holy Scriptures, we should be constrained to admit it to be correct; but we deem it grossly defective when applied to the greater part of them. The inspiration by which these were written, was, we have endeavoured to shew, such as took an entire possession, for the time, of the faculties of the writers; and after they had written what was intended, it again would leave them, and then they would return into their ordinary state; in which they would not necessarily understand the meaning of the things, which, in their state of ecstasy, they had spoken or written. The other books admitted into our Canon of Scripture, appear, for the most part, to have been composed by persons, who were endowed with such a degree of illumination, by the Spirit of God, as to discern, in the former class of writings, the doctrine suited to the dispensation of Divine Truth under which they lived, and which they were raised up to assist in establishing,—such of them as lived under the Jewish

dispensation, the doctrine of the Jewish church, and such of them as were raised up to establish Christianity, the doctrine of the Christian Church: and the writings of the latter are justly taken, by the Christian Church, as authoritative declarations of her authentic doctrines. Beside the doctrinal writings of this class, there are also some historical ones. All writings of this class are to be interpreted by their literal sense alone; allowing, however, for their occasional use of figurative expressions, and of words and phrases taken from those Scriptures which have a spiritual sense, and which, of course, must bear the same meaning when excerpted as in their original repository. In short, these writings are to be explained by the same sort of criticism as would be exercised to ascertain the meaning of other ancient authors.

I. The assertion, that there are writings of two so distinct classes contained in the sacred collection called the Bible, may at first appear arbitrary and unsupported by the reason of the case: and yet when it is more attentively considered, I apprehend it will be discovered to be founded, not merely in reason, but in absolute necessity; for it will appear, that the designs of the Almighty Father in giving a dispensation of his will to man, could not otherwise have been made effectual.

1. We have endeavoured to prove, in the third, and in the preceding part of this fourth Lecture, that no composition which is truly and absolutely the Word of God, could be produced, the literal sense of which should not be composed of natural images, and of appearances of things taken from the world of nature: and that such is actually the case with the books of Scripture which are written by the plenary inspiration, is shewn in the sequel of this, and in the following Lecture. From this peculiarity of construction, it inevitably follows, that the letter cannot every where present such ideas openly to the view, as are proper to form the doctrine of the church founded upon it:—as remarked in our second Lecture\*, passages which even appear to be in opposition to each other not unfrequently occur, one of which delivers the genuine truth, and the other the truth covered with the veil of a mere appearance taken from human ideas. But the choice between them is not without its difficulties. It is evident, for the construction of coherent doctrine, that one of these classes of passages must be so explained as to be reconciled with the other: but man, in his untutored, natural state, is not qualified to decide with accuracy by which he ought to abide; and when he studies the Word under the influence of an unpurified heart, he is but too apt to catch at the appearance to the exclusion of the reality; he is ever disposed to *kill*

\* P. 116.

*the prophets, and to stone them that are sent unto him, and he is never so well pleased as when he can destroy, spiritually, the disciples of the Lord, or the pure truths of which the disciples are the depositaries, under the persuasion that he is doing God service, and can allege as his authority the letter of God's Word, of the ambiguities of which he avails himself for the purpose.*

That the ambiguities of the letter of the Word are very numerous,—that it is *a sword which turns every way*,—is a fact which has become proverbial. Every sect turns it in favour of its peculiar doctrines; and into what a multiplicity of sects the Christian Church has been divided, and what monstrous sentiments have by some of them been maintained, are things well known: yet the most extravagant of them all have professed to found their sentiments upon the Word of God, and have produced passages from its letter which might be construed in their favour. Of this fact, the writers of the Romish Communion have not failed to take advantage: the Word of God, on account of its admitting, as to its letter, of such a variety of interpretations, has, by them, been blasphemously denominated *Liber Hæresiarum*; and they invite their opponents to take refuge from its uncertainties in the *ever-consistent* decisions of a self-constituted infallible church. If then men have thus *parted the Lord's garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture*, (which circumstances are explained in our fifth Lecture,) notwithstanding it has been provided, as will presently be seen, that the books written in the language of Analogy should be accompanied with others in which the leading doctrines of the former are explicitly developed; to what extremes of perversion would they not have gone, had they been left, without such help, to draw their doctrines from the more mysterious books for themselves!

It being then a demonstrable fact, that writings composed in the style which belongs to the absolute Word of God, cannot be understood by the simple and unenlightened, without the help of doctrine, as a lamp to direct their path, drawn thence by some person or persons endowed with special illumination for the purpose; there arises a necessity, that, ever since a written Revelation has been the medium of conveying the divine will to man, in every church possessed of such a Revelation, divinely illuminated persons should be raised up, qualified to deliver, either by oral instruction or by writing, such views of doctrine, founded on that Revelation, as were adapted to the genius of the people among whom they lived, and to the character of the dispensation of which they were the subjects: and there can be no reasonable doubt that the Author of Revelation would provide the aids necessary to render it effectual to its object. Under the Jewish

dispensation, which, as well as the Jews themselves, was of a very external character, and in which very enlightened views of doctrine would have surpassed the comprehension of the people, little was wanted beyond the literal enunciation of the Mosaic law, all the rituals of which were by them to be observed according to the letter; yet even then teachers arose, who composed codes of morality, and delivered doctrinal precepts, adapted to impress upon the minds of the Jews such of the truths involved in their law as were more especially calculated for their state and capacities: and, under the Christian dispensation, teachers, gifted with much higher illumination, were raised up, to discover more of the truths involved in the ancient Scriptures, and to declare that "Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth\*;" and that "he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law†;" because "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."‡ Nor can it be reasonably doubted, that, if any further discoveries of the divine will should ever be necessary, they would be made in a similar manner: nay, many believe that, if not further discoveries, re-discoveries of it have thus been made by Luther and Calvin, to whom some ascribe a spirit of understanding in the Scriptures not much inferior to that enjoyed by the Apostles: indeed, most sectaries entertain a similar opinion of the leaders whom they respectively follow; and though they may be greatly mistaken as to the fact, their belief of it affords a recognition of the principle. So general, indeed, is the conviction, that without sound doctrine as a guide, the Word cannot be understood, that many have viewed the labours of that first of modern Institutions—the British and Foreign Bible Society,—in circulating the Scriptures without note or comment, as pregnant with mischief, and, tacitly adopting the Roman Catholic principle, have imagined, that thus to communicate the Word of God, is in effect to sow the seeds of heresy. There would have been less room for this apprehension, had the fact not been overlooked, that in the Bible, together with the books which are eminently *THE Scriptures*, are included writings which deliver the leading doctrines of the former without any recondite meaning. Divine Wisdom knew that books composed in the purely divine style were liable to be misunderstood by the simple and unintelligent; wherefore it has provided that they should be accompanied with writings intended to fix their general import, and to afford a clew to their safe and profitable interpretation.§

\* Rom. x. 4.

† Ch. xiii. 8.

‡ 1 Tim. i. 5.

§ It must however be confessed, that many things in these writings also, are, as must unavoidably be the case in all writings of great an-

2. It may now, we would hope, in some measure appear, that there was reason grounded in absolute necessity for the production of writings of this second class to accompany those of the first: but perhaps it may not immediately be seen that there was any necessity for the production of writings of any other kind than these. The doctrinal purport of these being more easily intelligible, they seem to have acquired, by degrees, a superior degree of estimation: at least it is certain, that it is from these that ministers most frequently take the subject of their discourses in the pulpit; and probably many would wish that the whole Bible consisted of such compositions, and are somewhat scandalized that it does not. But to this it may be sufficient to answer, that had not the Scriptures of plenary inspiration first been given, the others would never have been composed. They were all written by men to whom the compositions which are the Word of God, absolutely, were previously familiar; and the kind of inspiration by which they were produced, consisted in endowing the writers with the faculty of discerning the doctrines contained in that Word; to which, therefore, as higher authority, they continually refer. Indeed, it is a fact, on which something is said in the fifth Lecture, that without the existence of the Scriptures of plenary inspiration in the world, no illumination in divine things could, in the present state of mankind, be afforded. Accordingly, after the resurrection of the Lord, it is said respecting his disciples, "Then opened he their understandings that they should *understand the Scriptures*\*:"

And in antiquity, "hard to be understood;" they being full of allusions to circumstances and opinions of which nothing at all is now known, except by the learned, and but little by them, and containing many words used in a sense peculiar to the writers: hence it is but too true, that some of the greatest theological errors have been founded upon these very writings; as was naturally to be expected when men went to the study of ancient writers with minds pre-occupied by modern ideas.

\* Luke xxiv. 45. It is to be observed, that, in the Bible, no writings are ever called, simply, "the Scriptures," but those which are written by the Plenary Inspiration: to them the term is applied by way of eminence, and as an ellipsis for *the divine or inspired Writings*. It will hardly be maintained, that when Peter, (2 Ep. iii. 16,) in contradistinction to the writings of Paul, mentions "the other Scriptures," (*τας λοιπας γραφας*), he means to admit that the Epistles of that Apostle are writings of the same kind. It is to be remembered, that the term "Scriptures" simply means *Writings*, and that the Greek name for them is the common name for *writings*: when, therefore, the Apostle Peter, after mentioning the Epistles of Paul, speaks of "*the other writings*," the fair inference is, that he means to advert to the plenary inspired Scriptures as *writings of another kind*,—of that kind which are



giving the promise of the Holy Ghost, the Lord says, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you: but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, *whatsoever I have said unto you* \*:" that is, he should recall all the Lord's words, and teach them to understand them. One of the chief effects, then, of the communication of the Holy Spirit, was to be, to enable the disciples to understand the Lord's words, together with the Scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, which are equally his words though communicated in a different manner,—not to write new *Scriptures* themselves: and such of them as did write new books of *Scripture*, must have done it by a special additional inspiration, distinct from that which was common to them all, and which constantly abode with them. Accordingly, they began their preaching with explaining the ancient Scriptures†; and this seems to have continued to be their usual practice: and all their discourses and writings are filled with the light which this illumination, or this mediate and personal inspiration, brought to their minds. If it can be shewn that, in their ordinary discourse or writing, they ever spoke or wrote from immediate dictation, in those instances their ordinary and personal was exalted into extraordinary and plenary inspiration, and their language flowed according to the Laws of Analogy, and contained, what was not the case at other times, a spiritual and divine meaning beyond the outward expression.

If then there are, in the collection called the Bible, writings or books of these two very different classes, it becomes a matter of great importance to discriminate between them. This, therefore, we will attempt; first, in regard to the books of the Old Testament; and then of the New.

usually called *the Writings* by way of eminence. Believing this to be the Apostle's meaning, I do not think the interpretation is to be accepted which understands by "the other writings," *the other writings of Paul, beside those which treat of the specific subject here under discussion*: though Schleusner seems to adopt this meaning, which he gives as that "*plerorumque interpretum*." If this is the true meaning, there is not left a shadow of pretence for the notion, that Peter puts his brother Apostle's writings on the same footing with those which are eminently *the Scriptures*. Schleusner also shews, that the word here translated "other," is as frequently used in the New Testament in reference to other things of *other kinds* as to other things of *the same kind*. Peter's accurate discrimination on the subject of inspiration is noticed below, p. xxii.

\* John xiv. 25, 26.

† Acts ii. 16, &c.

II. The existence of writings in the Old Testament, written under two species of inspiration, is expressly affirmed by the Jews themselves: they, indeed, have placed in the second class some which belong to the first; but the error is easily rectified by the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ, who quotes no books, and acknowledges none as *the Scriptures*, but those which are written by the Plenary Inspiration, or those in which, in the language of the Apostle Peter, "the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of *men*\*, or wrote by their hands.

1. The Jews divided their sacred books into the *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Ketubim or Hagiographa*, (*Writings, or Holy Writings.*) (1.) The Law includes the five books of Moses, so called from the preceptive character of great part of their contents: though Moses is to be considered as a prophet, and the greatest of prophets; as indeed he is expressly called.† (2.) The division denominated by them the Prophets, contained all the books which we call the historical ones, *written before the Babylonian captivity*, viz. those of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings; with all those, one only excepted, which we commonly call the prophets. The former of these they called the *Prior or Anterior Prophets*, and the others the *Later or Posterior*; and they so named them, not, as Horne‡ and others have affirmed, "with regard to the time when they respectively flourished;" for it is certain that the writings of some of the *later* prophets were composed *before* those of some of the *prior*; but doubtless for another reason assigned by Leusden: "*Quia Anteriores, &c.* Because the *anterior* prophets relate affairs transacted *before, or anterior to*, the time of narrating them; whereas the *posterior* prophets treat of things to happen *after, posterior to, or later than*, the delivery of the prophecy."§ (3.) The division styled *Hagiographa* contains, according to the modern Jews, the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles. But it appears certain, by the testimony of Josephus||, that Daniel, in his time, was reckoned, as he so clearly ought to be, among the Prophets; and he seems to have been transferred to the *Hagiographa*, because those books were not regularly read in the Synagogue, and the Rabbins, after the time limited by his prophecy of the seventy weeks for the coming of the Messiah had undeniably expired, became unwilling to read before the people so plain a proof of their error in rejecting the Lord Jesus Christ; and because, also, by placing him among books not regarded as possessing prophetic authority, the

\* Acts i. 16.

† Deut. xviii. 15, xxxiv. 10.

‡ Introduction, vol. ii. p. 149, vol. iv. p. 27. (Ed. 1822.)

§ *Phil. Heb. Dis.* ii. § viii.|| *Ant. B.* x. Ch. xi. § 7.

weight of his testimony would be diminished. It also appears well established, that the Lamentations and the other writings of Jeremiah were anciently reckoned as one book; and equally stationed, as is so evidently necessary, among the Prophets.

2. Before we proceed further, it appears necessary to ascertain what is the idea properly belonging to a Prophet and his writings.

It seems extraordinary that so learned a writer as Leusden should pronounce it improper to call all the books so denominated by the Jews—the *Prophets*, “because some of them are in reality historical books, and differ much from prophetic writings properly so called\*,” when it is certain that the seeming impropriety only arises from our attaching the modern idea to the term *prophet*, and forgetting that of the ancients, and particularly of the Jews. We now generally think of a Prophet as a *foreteller of future events*; but this idea is not at all conveyed by the Hebrew name for the character, which properly implies *an utterer or enunciator of communications from God*; or, as Parkhurst gives it, more generally, *an interpreter of God’s will, to whom he freely and familiarly revealed himself*: in which sense alone is it applicable to Abraham; [Gen. xx. 7;] or to Aaron: “And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be THY PROPHET: thou shalt speak all that I command thee, and Aaron thy brother shall speak unto Pharaoh,”—not a prediction, observe, but a command,—“that he send the children of Israel out of his land.” [Ex. vii. 1, 2.] This is illustrated in another place, where the Lord says to Moses, “Thou shalt speak unto him, [Aaron,] and put words in his mouth;—and he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.” [Ch. iv. 15, 16.] If then Moses was to Aaron what God is to a prophet, and Aaron was to Moses what a prophet is to God, it is perfectly evident that, in the original sense of the term, a prophet is one who receives words from God, and declares them to man: he is an enunciator of a divine message, let the subject of that message be what it may: and it is only because it frequently happened that divine communications related to things future, that the word at last acquired the signification of a predictor of future events. As the above is the idea constantly attached in the Scriptures of plenary inspiration to the word *prophet*, the Jewish philologers have endeavoured to find it in the word itself. The Hebrew root is NĪBBA (נבא); which the celebrated Solomon Jarchi says is formed from another root, NOUB or NAB (נב), by the addition of an *aleph* (א) taken out of the name of God (אלהים): now the word NAB radically signifies *to put forth* as a

\* *Phil. Heb. Dis. ii. § iii.*

plant its buds or fruit, whence, transferred to human speech, it means *to utter*, which is another kind of *putting forth*: when therefore from this verb is formed the verb *NIBBA*, by the addition of an *aleph* taken from the name of God, it means *to utter from divine dictation*. The signification thus given to the word for *prophesying* is equally clear and weighty: nor does it suffer any detraction from the fancifulness of the etymology: for the meaning of the word is not dependent upon the etymology, but the etymology was invented to account for the well-known meaning of the Word.\* That the ancient Greeks, from whom we have received the word *prophet*, understood it in a similar sense, is abundantly proved by Schleusner.

It is quite evident then, that the word *prophet*, in the Scriptures, does not merely signify a foreteller of future events, but may be as applicable to *Anterior* as to *Posterior Prophets*. It is also evident, that when the Jews gave this name to their sacred writings, they meant to affirm that they were written by immediate divine dictation: and as the propriety of the application is recognised, as will presently be seen, by the Lord Jesus Christ, we have, in this name alone, no contemptible evidence, that the books to which it is applied are the productions of plenary and verbal inspiration.

3. Such being the character of *the Prophets*, what is that of the *Hagiographa*?

(1.) Among the books of the *Hagiographa*, when the catalogue is corrected as above, it is certain that the Lord Jesus Christ only acknowledges as divine the book of Psalms; for when speaking of the whole Scripture, he calls it the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and *the Psalms*: “All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in *the Psalms*, concerning me†:” and, doubtless, there is no book among those written by plenary inspiration, which does not, either in its literal or mystical sense, treat at all of him. At other times, when he intends to speak of the whole Word of God, he calls it, more compendiously, “the Law and the Prophets‡,” or “Moses and the Prophets§;” and then he evidently includes among “the Prophets” the book of Psalms, much of which is palpably, and the whole of it really, of a prophetic character: accordingly, David, the chief author of the Psalms, is expressly denominated by Peter “a prophet||;” which title is never conferred on the writers of the other books called *Hagiographa*. Ezra himself, whom the Jews hold in such honour, has no higher rank given him than that of “a scribe¶,” “a ready scribe in the law

\* See Gusset. *Comm. in voce*.

† Luke xxiv. 44.

‡ Matt. v. 17; xi. 13; xxii. 40.

§ Luke xvi. 29, 31; xxiv. 27.

|| Acts ii. 30.

¶ Neh. viii. 1. *et passim*.

of Moses\*," and "a scribe of the law of the God of heaven†;"—titles which lend much support to the opinion, that he restored the copies of the plenary inspired Scriptures, and in a manner republished them, but give no countenance whatever to the notion that his original writings are equally inspired. On other occasions the Lord Jesus Christ calls the whole of the books which are eminently *THE Scriptures*, "the Law‡," and especially quotes the Psalms by that name.§ It is quite certain then, that, by this infallible Authority, the Psalms are placed on an equality with the Law and the Prophets, and are even recognised as a part of them:—a rank which can on no pretence be claimed for the other books of the *Hagiographa*. By the same divine authority, Daniel is taken from the *Hagiographa*, and established in his proper grade among the Prophets||: the book of Lamentations did not require a similar recognition, if it was then reckoned as part of Jeremiah.

An objection or two here demand notice.

(2.) When I say, that this rank can on no pretence be claimed for the other books of the *Hagiographa*, I am not ignorant that it is customary to affirm, that where the Lord mentions the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, he includes under the latter title the whole of the *Hagiographa*: but really this is a pure figment, invented by the schools to support the credit of books, the true nature of which they did not know how to estimate, and which they saw, unless they could thus be tacked on to the Psalms, must be confessed to be disowned, by divine authority, as forming part of the proper Word of God. In behalf of this fiction it is urged, that it was customary with the Jews to connect several books in a volume, and to call them all by the name of the first: but no example of their thus connecting *so many* and *so different* books together, and giving to them all the name of the first, can be produced. It is urged, that it was usual thus to unite the books of Judges and Ruth, and to call them both "Judges:" but every one must see that this is by no means a parallel case, since Ruth might, without any obvious impropriety, be considered as a supplement to Judges. The union of Jeremiah with Lamentations, which is also pleaded, is still less in point: since these are unquestionably from the pen of one writer. The calling of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah the first and second books of Ezra, is not more to the purpose, since this originated in the mistake of supposing that celebrated "scribe" to be the author of them both. And to appeal to the book of the twelve minor prophets, is to produce a comparison destitute of all similitude, since this combination is not named, as the case in

\* Ezra vii. 6.

† Ver. 12, 21.

‡ Matt. v. 18; Luke xvi. 17.

§ John x. 34.

|| Matt. xxiv. 15.

proof of which it is cited requires, *Hosca*, but *the Twelve*. Indeed, as well might the Divine Speaker, instead of "the Law" have said "Genesis," and "Judges" instead of "the Prophets," as have named "the Psalms" instead of the *Hagiographa*: and as well might the learned undertake to prove that he deviated from the peculiar Jewish modes of citation in not using the two first titles, as that he followed it in using the last.\*

(3.) Nor is the division of the Scriptures anciently used by the Greeks, which regards the books of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles, as possessing a common poetical character, and thus proper to form a general book together; and which many have maintained to be the division alluded to by the Lord Jesus Christ; at all capable of being better accommodated to his words: though it seems to have been contrived expressly for the purpose. This theory assumes as its basis, that these five books are the only poetical books in the Bible, and may on that account all be included under the description of psalms or hymns: but beside that none of these, except the proper book of Psalms, (unless it be that of Canticles,) is at all adapted for singing, it is indubitably known, since the labours of Bishop Lowth, that all the prophetic books have as much right to be called poetical as these, the language of them all possessing quite as decided a rhythmical arrangement. Josephus, also, who, beside the law and thirteen historical and prophetic books, reckons *four* others, says of these *four*, that they "contain *hymns to God*, AND precepts for the conduct of human life†;" whence it is evident, that the title of Hymns or Psalms, far from being common to all the books since called the poetical ones, was then, as now, limited to the

\* An example which Horne gives of "the Jewish manner of quoting," (vol. ii. p. 149. Note 2.) with a view to illustrate this subject, is singularly *mal-a-propos*, and shews to what weak shifts the defenders of the notion are fain to have recourse: "St. Peter," he observes, "when appealing to prophecies in proof of the gospel, says—'All the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days,' (Acts iii. 24.) In which passage," adds the learned writer, "the apostle plainly includes the books of Samuel in the class of prophets."—Who doubts it? And who doubts that when Jesus Christ speaks of "the prophets," he includes the books of Samuel? But St. Peter ought only to have mentioned Samuel when he meant all the prophets, to lend any countenance to the inference, that when Jesus Christ mentions the Psalms he meant all the *Hagiographa*. Peter's mentioning, beside Samuel, "all the prophets," plainly shews that it was *not* "the Jewish manner of quoting" to cite by the lump, and to destroy all intelligible meaning by palpable misnomers.

† Against Apion, B. i. § 8.

single book which alone answers to the name. And assuredly the language of the Lord Jesus Christ, is not less justly appropriated to its subject, or employed with less discrimination, than that of the historian Josephus.

Altogether, it is perfectly evident, that the Jews never gave the name of "the Psalms" to any books but the one which bears it at present, and that the notion that this was a generic name for the whole *Hagiographa* has nothing to support it but gratuitous assertion: hence it follows, that when the Lord, in the passage above cited, mentions "the Psalms," he uses the title in its proper and specific sense, and meant to select the book so named from those which the Jews called the *Hagiographa*, and to place this, to the exclusion of the rest, in the same rank with "the Law and the Prophets,"—to claim for it alone, in conjunction with the Law and the Prophets, the honour of immediate and plenary inspiration.

4. Another proof that the books called the Law and the Prophets, with the Psalms, are the only books of THE WORD in the Old Testament, and that those properly named *Hagiographa* are not so, but merely, as the name implies, the writings of holy men, is afforded by the striking fact, that the latter are never quoted, or in any way referred-to, by the Lord or by the Evangelists. Neither are any of them, except the book of Proverbs, (four or five times,) and the book of Job, (*once*,) cited or alluded to in the Apostolic Epistles, which so abound with citations from the Law and the Prophets. We shall see presently, that the book of Proverbs is an authentic doctrinal writing of the Jewish Church; whence it is properly acknowledged in the authentic doctrinal writings of the Christian Church: but as such writings, though produced under a special illumination, are not absolutely divine, they are not noticed in those books which are divine indeed; being the compositions of men, though of highly gifted men, they are not recognised by Him who *receiveth not testimony from man*.\* If their being quoted in the Epistles proved them to belong to the plenary inspired Scriptures, we must receive as plenary inspired Scripture the apocryphal book of Enoch, quoted by Jude†, and the comedies of Menander, cited by Paul‡; if not, also, the *Phænomena* of Aratus§, and the *Chresmoi* of Epimenides||.

5. The distinction, then, between the *Hagiographa* and those writings which the Scriptures themselves acknowledge as THE SCRIPTURES, is marked, by the highest Authority, with a line sufficiently broad and impassable: and it is equally admitted by the Jews themselves, who, though their ideas on the subject do not seem very clear,

\* John v. 34.

† Ver. 14.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 33.

§ Acts xvii, 28.

|| Tit. i. 12.

affirm the inspiration of the *Hagiographa* to be essentially different in its kind from that of the Law and the Prophets. Horne states on this subject\*, (and his statement is the same in substance with that of Leusden†,) that “this third class or division of the Sacred Books has received its appellation of *Cetubim*, or *Holy Writings*, because they were not orally delivered, as the law of Moses was; but the Jews affirm, that they were composed by men divinely inspired, who, however, had no public mission as prophets: and the Jews conceived, that they were *dictated not by dreams, visions, or voice, or in other ways*, as the oracles of the prophets were, but that they were more immediately revealed to the minds of their authors:” and what is this but confessing, that they were not positively *dictated* at all, but were the thoughts of the minds of the authors, the result of a certain illumination which they had received? It is true, that this is described by the Jews in pretty high terms; but not in higher than those in which they speak of their Talmud and its Rabbins, all whose writings or sayings, though often avowedly contradictory to each other, they equally affirm to be the productions of inspiration.‡ They admit, however, this inspiration to be not the same as that of Moses and the prophets. But only two general kinds of inspiration can possibly be conceived; the one being that in which the inspired person is entirely possessed by the inspiring power, and, no longer *compos sui*, is the mere organ for expressing its dictations;—in which, according to the precisely accurate definition of the Apostle Peter, *the prophecy*, or thing enunciated, *comes not at the will*, or pleasure, *of man*, but the party *speaks as he is moved* or actuated by the *Holy Ghost*§;—and the other being that in which the speaker or writer still remains his own master, and what he delivers proceeds from his own mind, though from a mind illuminated by a wisdom which is the gift of God; which species of inspiration, also, the same Apostle defines with the same accuracy, when he says, “Even as our beloved brother Paul also, *according to the wisdom given unto him*, hath written unto you.”|| Now as the Jews do not affirm that their *Hagiographers* possessed the first of these kinds of inspiration, it follows, however they may express it, that they only mean to claim for them the second.

6. A clear distinction, then, we find, between the inspiration of the absolute Word of God and that of the *Hagiographa*, comes out full on all hands: and a slight inspection of the principal of these writings will further evince, that an inferior kind of inspiration, but sometimes

\* Introd. Vol. ii. p. 150.

† *Phil. Heb. Dis.* ii. § ix.

‡ Leusd. *Phil. Heb. Mixt. Dis.* xii. § vi. *Dis.* xiii.

§ 2 *Pet.* i. 21.

|| *Ch.* iii. 15.



attended with great illumination, is the highest to which they have any pretensions.

(1.) We have stated above, that, owing to the manner in which the letter of the Divine Word is necessarily constructed, it is according to the order of Divine Providence, that, under every dispensation which derives its knowledge of divine things from a written Word, men should be raised up to deliver authoritatively, in less ambiguous language, the doctrines proper to guide the faith and practice of that church; which doctrines are all contained in the Word itself, and are all capable of being confirmed by express declarations of its literal sense. Now who will not readily admit, that the books of Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, though not drawn up in the style that would be chosen by modern composers of Bodies of Divinity, are writings of this character, delivering, in a compendious form, the authentic doctrines of the yet uncorrupt church of Israel? How many plain precepts of true wisdom are presented, in the former part of the book of Proverbs, as the exhortations of Wisdom personified! In the latter part, how many dictates of prudence regarding the conduct of life! In the book of Ecclesiastes, how impressive a sermon is delivered on the unsatisfactoriness of all earthly enjoyments;—a sermon most admirably adapted to the correction of the Jewish character, which is so prone to place, in earthly enjoyments, the whole of its satisfactions! So, after the author of “the Proverbs,” has propounded the design of the book, and has stated, almost in so many words, that he is about to deliver a body of doctrine, how suitably to such a design does he begin his instructions with declaring, in a quotation from the plenary inspired Scriptures which speaks the plain truth in the letter, that “the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge\*!” and how appropriately as well as pithily does the author of Ecclesiastes close his work with the sum of all true doctrine, concisely stated in language taken from the same source: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: *Fear God and keep his commandments*: for this is the whole duty of man†!” It is true that both these books contain much figurative language; but they are not written with a uniform regard to the laws of spiritual Analogy, and do not, like those books which are so written, include a spiritual sense in a regular series: thus the words in which the sentiments are expressed were not dictated, as in the other books, to the pen of the writer, but were selected by himself: and though phrases borrowed from the language of Analogy are frequently introduced, they are such as are still, for the most part, easily intelligible, and must, among the orientals, have been quite familiar. Indeed, one intention of the book of Proverbs is

\* Prov. i. 7 : See Ps. cxi. 10.

† Eccl. xii. 13 : See Deut. vi. 2.

expressly stated to be, to enable the reader “to understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings\*:” and thus to afford a clew to the doctrinal interpretation of the Holy Word, according to the highest views that were capable of being received under the Jewish dispensation.

(2.) But a considerable portion of the books of the *Hagiographa* consists of historical writings; and these, if not directly useful for the doctrinal interpretation of the Word, are yet eminently so for the elucidation of many allusions in it, which it would be difficult to understand without a knowledge of some facts, respecting which the historical books of the Word itself are silent. This remark is eminently true in regard to the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles: whatever then might be the degree of the secondary inspiration enjoyed by the writers and compilers of those books, we can have little hesitation in conceding to them, all that Bishop Tomline requires us to admit respecting the historical books that are absolutely *THE Scriptures*; when he says, “It is sufficient to believe, that, by the general superintendance of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they borrowed their information, and prevented from recording any material error;”—a description which is as honourable and just, when applied to these *Hagiographers*, as it is unjust and degrading when applied to the *Anterior Prophets*.

(3.) But what shall we say of the Song of Solomon? Doubtless the reader expects that I should be glad of a plea for taking this book out of the *Hagiographa*, and vindicating its title to a place among the prophets. Many who will deny *THE Scriptures* to be written in the language of Analogy, and will not hear of *their* containing a spiritual sense throughout, will be ready enough to make us a present of this book, to be thus decyphered, and proved to be really an edifying performance. But we cannot avail ourselves of the boon: and we think that modern expositors have erred as much in seeking for spiritual mysteries in this amatory effusion, as in rejecting them in the greater part of the books which are essentially divine. Here the interpreters are ready to adopt any mode of explanation that will give a religious turn—to what? to a work which never speaks of God, nor shews by a single trait that God was ever in the thoughts of the writer. Even the true principle of spiritual interpretation has here been thought of, and endeavoured to be applied: and the analogy of the marriage covenant has been beautifully deduced for this purpose by Bishop Lowth.† Speaking of the covenant between God and his church, the conditions of which

\* Ch. i. 6.

† Apud Horne, Vol. iv. p. 141, 142.

are, "on the one part, love, protection, and support; on the other, faith, obedience, and worship pure and devout;" he proceeds thus: "This is that conjugal union between God and his church; that solemn compact so frequently celebrated by almost all the sacred writers under this image. It is, indeed, a remarkable instance of that species of metaphor which Aristotle calls *analogical*; that is, when, in a proposition consisting of four ideas, the first bears the same relation to the second as the third does to the fourth, and the corresponding words may occasionally change their places without any injury to the sense. Thus, in this form of expression, God is supposed to bear exactly the same relation to the church as a husband to a wife; God is represented as the spouse of the church, and the church as betrothed to God. Thus also, when the same figure is maintained with a different mode of expression, and connected with different circumstances, the relation is still the same: thus the piety of the people, their impiety, their idolatry, and rejection, stand in the same relation with respect to the sacred covenant, as chastity, modesty, immodesty, adultery, with respect to the marriage contract," &c. This is a valuable testimony in favour of the principle of Analogy, the regularity which properly belongs to it, and its use in the Word of God: it is also an elegant and clear elucidation of the specific analogy which the marriage-union bears to the connection of God with his church; but to apply this to the erotic strains of the Song of songs, appears a real prostitution. The image is truly said to be of frequent occurrence in the really divine books of Scripture; but it is there always used with the dignity and gravity suited to the august Being who is the principal party in the represented union. It is, true, also, that the image afforded by the conjugal covenant is exactly representative of the union between God and his church: but every love-song is not therefore to be gravely explained of this sacred union: and it will be difficult to say, if this explanation is to be admitted in regard to the Song of Solomon, why it should not be applied to the Idyls of Theocritus, between which and the Hebrew poem the critics have discovered some extraordinary points of similitude. It is true, again, that the language of the book, like that of all oriental poetry, is, throughout, loaded with figures, some of which, no doubt, are drawn from the language of Analogy: but it is not the containing of a few, nor even of many, phrases and ideas of this kind, that will impart to a book a truly spiritual sense. As hieroglyphical representations were applied to other subjects beside religious ones, so were the forms of speech drawn from the lower analogies. Thus, of ideas connected with the subject of love, numerous images may be found in inanimate and irrational objects. Various significant phrases of this kind are contained in this poem; and be-

cause these give it a mystical air, it has been assumed to be a divine composition, treating of no lower love than that between the Lord and his church. As a sample of Asiatic poetry, the Song of Solomon may be very beautiful; and it certainly is very interesting, as a curious remain of antiquity: but as it contains nothing that savours of holiness, any further than as all mutual love that is sincere and pure is holy, there is room to suspect that the Jews have made a mistake in putting this poem even among their *Hagiographa*. Not one reference to it can be fairly traced in the New Testament; though the commentators, sensible how much it stood in need of countenance, have not failed to force a few.

Very different is the book of Job, which abounds with real spiritual analogies, and the whole structure of which is doubtless framed to convey an important spiritual lesson. Its great antiquity is acknowledged; and indeed it scarcely seems to be a writing belonging to the Mosaic dispensation: but an attempt to estimate the true character of this book would demand an extended discussion, and is not at all necessary to the present argument.

Perhaps we may now be permitted to consider, that the point in question, as far as regards the Old Testament is established;—that in that division of the Bible the books properly called the Law and the Prophets, with the Psalms, are alone written by the plenary inspiration; and that the bulk of those denominated *Hagiographa* consists of doctrinal, and supplementary historical writings, designed to assist the interpretation of the former.

III. In regard to the smaller collection of the New Testament, the case will be found to be the same: and though here we do not possess, respecting the several books which compose it, the recorded testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ to determine to which class they respectively belong, the internal evidence afforded by the books themselves is sufficient to guide our judgment: beside which, strong external evidence may also be offered.

Suppose then, in the New Testament, the four Gospels be considered as possessing a character similar to that of the Law and Anterior Prophets of the Old Testament, and the Apocalypse as belonging to the same class as the Posterior Prophets; whilst the Acts of the Apostles, and their Epistles, answer to the ancient *Hagiographa*, though replete with the superior light belonging to a higher dispensation: thus that the Gospels and Apocalypse were written by the primary and plenary, and the Acts and Epistles by the secondary and personal inspiration: in which case, in the former books

the very words will be inspired, and will contain a spiritual sense within them, and in the latter, the doctrinal sentiments alone will partake of inspiration.

1. We will not here offer any examples to shew, that the Gospels and Apocalypse contain a spiritual sense, which is the necessary consequence of plenary inspiration; some are given in the Lectures themselves. But we may observe, (1.) as some sort of external evidence, that an idea of the greater sanctity, and more immediate divinity, of the Gospels than of the Epistles, extensively prevailed in the early ages of Christianity. I take a few testimonies hastily from Lardner.

Ignatius speaks of “fleeing to the Gospel as the *flesh of Jesus*, and to the Apostles, as the *presbyters of the church*.”\* Justin Martyr says, “The Gospels were read publicly as well as the Old Testament†;” but he does not say the same of the Epistles. Irenæus says, “the doctrines of the Apostles are *agreeable* to the Sacred Scriptures‡;” thus distinguishing them from THE Scriptures themselves. Augustine says, “In the New Testament, the four Gospels have the *highest authority*.”§

(2.) That the Gospels are written by the plenary inspiration, is also what any man would naturally expect, who reflects on the nature of the matters which they contain; for surely no language but that of plenary inspiration can be worthy of recording the actions and discourses of the Incarnate God. The subject is too eminently sacred, and too profoundly important, to be easily compatible with the supposition, that He to whom it relates would suffer the narratives of it, which have actually been received as authentic and venerated as divine through all ages of the church, to be composed in any but the truly divine style of writing. If the books of Moses and the Anterior Prophets, which are chiefly of the historical kind, recording the dealings of God with the children of Israel, were, on account of the spiritual signification of the things of which they treat, delivered in the style which constitutes a writing the absolute Word of God, and were, as we have seen, acknowledged as such by the Word Incarnate; much more should we expect that the authentic accounts of the Incarnation, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Glorification, of the Word made Flesh, would be given by the same inspiration, and would equally belong to the written Word. All such parts of them as record the discourses of the Lord Jesus Christ, if they only faithfully record them, *must* be of this character. For, as is shewn in the Lectures, all revelation of the Divine Truth flows from God, who is in the

\* Gospel History, vol. iii. p. 178. 8vo. ed.

† Vol. iii. p. 262.

‡ Ib. p. 393.

§ Vol. xii. p. 302.

inmost of all things, into the world of nature, and there clothes itself with natural expressions; whence it necessarily includes spiritual and divine ideas in its bosom which do not appear upon the surface: now if we believe the Lord Jesus Christ, while on earth, to have been the Divine Truth itself personified,—to have been “the Word” which “was with God,” and which “was God\*,” “made Flesh†,” then must all his words have been divine in the most absolute sense; they must have flowed from the Divinity resident within him, and must have been the proper expressions, in natural language supplied from the human part of his constitution, of the pure Divine Wisdom: accordingly, as is shewn in the second Lecture‡, he himself claims for them a spiritual and divine meaning. And all the actions of this wonderful Being must have been equally expressive. For, as is shewn in the third Lecture, none of the objects in outward nature are arbitrary creations,—mere shells of matter unconnected with any spiritual essence, but are actual outbirths from things of a superior order,—developements in a lower sphere of purer existences in a higher, and first originating in their prototypes in the Divine Nature, for the expression of which they thus afford the proper corresponding types. Now if this is the character of all the works of Divinity, it must equally be the character of all the actions of a Being who had Divinity within him. As every word which the Lord Jesus Christ spoke while on earth, he spoke from the Divinity within him; so every work which he performed, he performed from the same Source; and both must equally have been expressions of divine affections and ideas. When he spoke, he could not but communicate divine instruction; and when he acted, he could not but communicate divine instruction also; only, as the commentators affirm of many typical events in the Old Testament, he then communicated instruction by actions instead of words. Is it then to be supposed, that the just recording of actions so weighty, the true import of which might be lost by the slightest misstatement, or by the use, in describing them, of a single inappropriate expression, would not be provided for by a plenary and verbal inspiration? The recording of the most wonderful of all events that have ever been transacted on the theatre of the universe, and the most pregnant with eternal consequences, is too holy an ark to be touched with unhallowed hands; and all hands must here be regarded as unhallowed, even those of the holiest of men, if in any respect actuated by “the will of men,”—if not entirely, to the exclusion of all human operation, possessed and “moved by the Holy Ghost.”

(3.) But proof quite demonstrative of the plenary and verbal inspiration of the Evangelists, might, I am satisfied, be drawn out of

\* John i. 1.

† Ver. 14.

‡ P. 73, 74.

the famous controversy on the origin of the three first Gospels : but to do any justice to this argument would require an extended discussion ; and our limits will here confine us to a brief statement.

No one can have read the New Testament with any attention, without having observed, that there is, among the three first Gospels, a considerable similarity, which extends so far, that they frequently detail occurrences in the very same words. This has given rise to an opinion, that they, in part at least, copied from each other ; and as the resemblance is greatest between Matthew and Mark, it became usual with many to consider the Gospel of Mark as a mere abridgment of that of Matthew. More accurate examination, however, has shewn, that this is a mistake ; and it has even been proved to be in the highest degree probable, that the Evangelists never saw each other's compositions, and quite certain that not one of them copied from either of the others in preparing his own. This being ascertained, the critics, to account for their resemblances, had recourse to the supposition, that some prior document, since lost, was extant before any of the Gospels was written, and that the three first Evangelists, though they did not copy from each other, all drew from one common source. But it was soon found that the supposition of *one* previous document would by no means account for all the circumstances of the case : and whoever wishes to see the extent of gratuitous supposition which the advocates of this theory are compelled to employ, before they can make it yield even a possible solution of the difficulty, should consult Bishop Marsh's elaborate Essay on the origin of the three first Gospels, appended to his translation of Michaelis on the New Testament : the learned writer is obliged to conjure up no fewer than ten imaginary sets of memoirs, before he can find sufficient materials for the construction of these Gospels : and, after all, his hypothesis has been shewn, by Bishop Randolph, Mr. Veysie, and others, not completely to explain the phænomena, and, if it did, to be itself attended with difficulties which render its truth impossible. Other attempts to account for the coincidences and variations of the three first Evangelists, upon the supposition of their being drawn from prior documents, have been made : but their failure has been such as completely to prove, that the theory of their copying from previous documents is as incapable of solving the circumstances of the case, as that of their copying from one another.

What then must be the conclusion ?

The facts, be it remembered, are these :

A frequent verbal agreement occurs among the three Evangelists, and this, not only when they relate the discourses of the Lord Jesus

Christ, where some agreement might be expected ; but when they are narrating facts.

But it is evident, that if two or three eye-witnesses of certain facts were afterwards to draw up an account of them, though they might agree in the main circumstances, they would never relate them in precisely the same words.

Where, then, two or more merely human historians relate their facts in precisely the same words, we have a sure proof that they either copied from each other, or from some common document accessible to them all.

But it appears to be certain, that the coincidences of the Evangelists cannot be accounted for from either of these causes.

What solution then remains, but that they drew from a common source of a different nature ; viz. from the Spirit of God, which not only inspired them in regard to the facts which they were to record, (which degree of inspiration, even, is totally incompatible with the picking and culling, altering and omitting processes which the other theories involve,) but dictated to their pens the very words in which they should record them ? This is, in reality, the most natural solution of the difficulty ; or rather, it is a solution of the case which removes all difficulty : since the circumstances are found to admit of no other, it is the only possible one, also ; and, to those who admit the possibility, which, I believe, none have ever denied, of plenary and verbal inspiration, it is equally easy and satisfactory.

And if this will account for the verbal agreements of the Evangelists, it will equally account for their variations : but that is a question which we will not take up here. Something is said upon it in the sixth Lecture.

There is then, unquestionably, very strong reason for supposing, that the Gospels are written by plenary inspiration, and, of course, contain a spiritual sense within the outward expression : and surely as much may be said of that evidently symbolic and mysterious composition, the Apocalypse. We may then safely assume, that these books are the plenary inspired writings,—the Law and the Prophets,—of the New Testament.

2. And it will be found, on a careful examination, that the other books of the New Testament are its *Hagiographa*, and are to be understood, except when they relate visions or prophecies, by their literal expression alone ; that they contain the doctrines of the Christian religion, with the actions of some of its first promoters, written by men whose minds were under a general illumination from the Spirit of God.



(1.) In application to these books, the nature of inspiration is accurately laid down by Dr. A. Clarke, in the words of Dr. Whitby, one of the most learned and highly esteemed of the Commentators on the New Testament: but I choose to take his testimony from Dr. Clarke, because it thus comes as the decision both of Church-of-England and of Methodist orthodoxy. Dr. W., indeed, applies his *assertions* to all the writers of the New Testament; but it is remarkable, that he finds his *proofs* in the Epistolary compositions alone. His words are these:

“ I contend only for such an inspiration or divine assistance of the sacred writers of the New Testament, as will assure us of the truth of what they wrote, whether by inspiration of *suggestion*, or *direction* only; but not for such an inspiration as implies, that even their *words* were dictated, or their phrases suggested, by the Holy Ghost. This, in some matters of great moment, might be so; St. Paul declaring that ‘ they spoke the things which were given them of God, in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth,’ (1 Cor. ii. 13;) *if that relate not to what the Holy Ghost had taught them out of the Old Testament.* But that it was not always so, is evident, both from the consideration that they were *Hagiographers*, who are suffered to be left to the use of their own words; and from the variety of the style in which they write\*, and from the solecisms which are sometimes visible in their compositions; and more especially from their own words, which manifestly shew, that, in some cases, they had no such suggestion from the Holy Ghost, as doth imply, that he had dictated those words unto them. For instance, when St. Paul declares his will or purpose to do what he was hindered by the providence of God from doing; as when he says to the Romans: “ When I go into Spain, I will come to you,” (ch. xv. 24.) “ I will come by you into Spain,” (ver. 28.) For though he might, after his enlargement, go into the west, where St. Clement says he preached; and even into Spain, as Cyril, Epiphanius, and Theodoret, say he did; yet it is certain he did not designedly go to Rome in order to an intended journey into Spain: And when he says to the Corinthians, “ I will come to you when I pass through Macedonia,” (1 Cor. xvi. 5.) and yet confesses, in his second Epistle (i. 15, 16, 17,) that he did not perform that journey: for it is not to be thought the Holy Ghost should incite him to promise, or even to purpose, what *he* knew he would not perform. This also we learn from all those places in which they do express their ignorance. or doubtfulness, of that which they are speaking of; as when St. Paul says, “ *I know not* whether I baptized

\* This however, as is shewn in the Lecture above, is not a conclusive reason.

any other," (1 Cor. i. 16 :) and again, " *Perhaps* I will abide with you, and winter with you," (1 Cor. xvi. 6 :) and when St. Peter says, " By Sylvanus, a faithful brother, *as I suppose*, I have written unto you." (1 Pet. v. 12.) For these words do plainly shew, that in all these things they had no inspiration or divine assistance. This, lastly, may be gathered from all those places in which they only do express their hope, and that conditionally, of doing this or that; as in these words: " *I hope* to see you in my journey," (Rom. xv. 2 :) " *I will come unto you quickly, if the Lord will:*" (1 Cor. iv. 19 :) " *I hope* to stay some time with you, *if the Lord permit:*" (1 Cor. xvi. 7.) " *I hope* in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy quickly to you;" (Phil. ii. 19, 23.) " *And I trust* that I myself also shall come quickly;" (24.) " These things I write, *hoping* to come to thee quickly; but *if* I should tarry, that thou mayest know how to behave thyself in the church of God;" (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.) " *I hope* by your prayers, to be given unto you;" (Philem. 22.) " This will we do, *if the Lord permit;*" (Heb. vi. 3 :) " *I hope* to come to you." (St. John, 2 Ep. 12, 3 Ep. 14.) For *spes est incertæ rei nomen*;—the word *hope* implies an uncertainty; whereas the Holy Spirit cannot be uncertain of any thing; nor can we think he would inspire men to speak so uncertainly; and there can be no necessity, nor even a use, of a divine assistance to enable a man to express his hopes, seeing all men do, by natural reflection, know them."

It will doubtless be admitted, that Dr. Whitby has here proved, with perfect clearness, that the New Testament has its *Hagiographa* as well as the Old. Thus he has proved, that the Apostolical Epistles are not writings of plenary inspiration, and that the personal inspiration of the first teachers of Christianity consisted in a general illumination and divine direction, but did not extend to their very words. I will only add a few remarks upon a passage in their writings, which, while it plainly declares that their inspiration was not in general more immediate than this, has mistakenly been supposed to imply also, that on some occasions what they delivered was the absolute Word of the Lord.

(2.) The Apostle Paul, when giving his advice on certain questions relating to the marriage state, says, " But I speak this by *permission*, not of *commandment*."\* Presently he says, " And unto the married *I command*, yet not I, *but the Lord*, Let not the wife depart from her husband: but and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: And let not the husband put away his wife. But to the rest *speak I*, *not the Lord*."† Again he says, " Now concerning virgins, *I have no commandment of the Lord*: yet I give my judg-

\* 1 Cor. vii. 6.

† Ver. 10, 11, 12.

ment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful."\* Again, respecting a widow's remaining single, he says, "She is happier if she so abide, *after my judgment: and I think also that I have the Spirit of God.*"† Here he expressly gives his own judgment, as something distinct from, and inferior to, the positive command of the Lord, and not even infallible; and yet as the result of a certain inspiration,—of his possessing the Spirit of God. He plainly teaches then, that his own personal inspiration consisted in a certain general illumination of the understanding: but what is the *commandment of the Lord*, which he considers so superior? Authors tell us, "that the subject of which the Apostle here delivers his opinion, was a matter of Christian prudence,—not a part of religious sentiment or practice." "But," they say, "the Apostle's declaration, that as to this particular matter, he spoke *by permission and not of commandment*, strongly implies, that in other things, in things really of a religious nature, he did speak by commandment from the Lord. Accordingly, in the same chapter, when he had occasion to speak of what was matter of moral duty, he immediately claimed to be under divine direction in what he wrote: *And unto the married I command, yet not I but the Lord, Let not the wife depart from her husband.*"‡ But the distinction between points of duty and of prudence here laid down, will not hold through: for the advice which the Apostle introduces with, "But unto the rest speak I, not the Lord," does relate to a question of moral duty: it is no less than this: Whether the reception of Christianity is a justificatory plea for putting away a wife or deserting a husband: and the Apostle decides it thus: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away§." &c. The decision is worthy of a judgment enlightened, as the Apostle affirms of his, by "the Spirit of God:" again then we ask, What is that *commandment of the Lord* which he considers so superior? Evidently, it is the express decision of the Lord himself, pronounced while in the world, and recorded in the books of plenary inspiration: and we find the very commandment which Paul says is not his but the Lord's in Matt. xix. 9, Mark x. 11, 12, and Luke xvi. 8: and the first Gospel was certainly written, and the others very probably, before this Epistle to the Corinthians: But if it can be proved that he had not learned the fact in this way, then it will follow, that, as he seems to intimate in Gal. i. 12, he had received by immediate revelation a knowledge of the chief passages of the Lord's life and discourses in the world:

\* Ver. 25.

† Ver. 40.

‡ Parry on the Inspiration of the Apostles, &c. *apud* Horne, vol. i. p. 563.

§ Ver. 12 to 15.

and this may afford countenance to the opinion which many have entertained, that he was the real author of the third of the Gospels, and that it was only written by Luke as his amanuensis. However he became acquainted with it, certain it is that he knew that the Lord had delivered such a commandment, and that he speaks of this as a different thing from his own customary and personal inspiration. Just in the same manner he distinguishes, on other occasions, between his own sentiments and the authoritative declarations of *THE Scriptures* themselves; as when he says in the next chapter but one, "Say I these things *as a man?* or saith not *the Law* the same also?"\* and quotes a passage from Deuteronomy. Plainly then does this Apostle avow, what Peter affirms of him, that he wrote *according to the wisdom given unto him*; and fairly does he acknowledge that this inspiration is different from that, the subjects of which *spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*.

Altogether it appears perfectly evident, that the Epistles are doctrinal writings, given through eminently illuminated men, to afford a clew to the doctrinal interpretation of the plenary inspired Scriptures; respecting which they testify, among other things, that *they* are written by a more immediate inspiration, and, differently from themselves, contain a spiritual sense within the covering of the Letter; some of their testimony to which effect is given in our second Lecture.†

Without the slightest wish then to depreciate either the Apostolic writings or the *Hagiographa* of the Old Testament, it must, we think, be conceded, that the Gospels and Apocalypse, the Law and the Prophets, are compositions of a very different order. All that is said, by modern definers of Inspiration, of the sacred books in general, we readily concede to be true of the writings which we have now been considering: these we leave where the critics have placed them: but we would fain elevate the others far higher. Respecting the character of the Apostolic writings in particular, I fully accept the definitions of the generally approved Author last quoted: "When they acted as writers, recording Christianity for the instruction of the church in all succeeding times, I apprehend, that they were under the guidance of the Spirit as to the subject of which they treated; that they wrote under his influence and direction; that they were preserved from all error and mistake in the religious sentiments they expressed; and that, if any thing were inserted in their writings, not contained in that complete knowledge of Christianity of which they were previously possessed, (as prophecies for instance,) this was immediately communicated to them by revelation from the Spirit. But with respect

\* Ch. ix. 8.

† P. 54, &amp;c. and p. 75 to 87.

to the choice of words, I know not but they might be left,"—says our author, who might safely have omitted the words of hesitation,—“to the free and rational exercise of their own minds, to express themselves in the manner that was natural and familiar to them, while at the same time they were preserved from error in the ideas they conveyed.”\* All this is true: but it is greatly to be lamented, that what is true of a part of the writings contained in the Bible,—of the hagiographical compositions, only,—should inadvertently have been extended to the whole. As it is obvious to every student and believer of the Bible that some of its writers were under the influence of a secondary and personal inspiration, it has been concluded that this was the case with them all: and as it is evident that writings thus produced can have none but the plain grammatical sense; whilst the radical difference between compositions of this character and those which are the result of an immediate divine *afflatus* has been overlooked; many have at length concluded, that there is no real sense but the grammatical one throughout the Word of God.

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### No. III. (Page 259.)

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#### THE GREAT OBJECTS AND PHÆNOMENA OF THE MUNDANE SYSTEM CONSIDERED, AS THEY ARE REFERRED TO IN THE LANGUAGE OF PROPHECY AND OF THE SCRIPTURES IN GENERAL.

The significations by Analogy offered in the Lecture, of the great objects of what Sir Isaac Newton calls “the world natural;”—of heaven, earth, and earthquakes; of the sun, moon, and stars; and of the darkening of the sun, turning of the moon into blood, and falling of the stars; must, it is presumed, be readily perceived to be well founded. Not much argument then will be required to establish them. It may, however, be useful to add a few remarks upon them, and to shew, by some examples, that such is actually the meaning borne by these magnificent symbols in the language of prophecy, and of the Holy Word in general.

I. When the earth or world, in a most general sense, including the whole “world natural,” is mentioned in Scripture for the church universal,—the church considered in the most general manner; it is only by a modification of a mode of expression frequent in common discourse. We constantly speak of various countries, not with any

\* Parry *apud* Horne, vol. i. p. 561.

allusion to the mere soil, but as a metonymy for the nations that inhabit them,—for the government and people. It is in this sense that we speak of the distress or prosperity of *our own country*; of the policy of *France, Austria, or Russia*; of the general aspect of *the continent*; and of the growing power of *America, or of the new world*. Just so it is when particular *countries*, or when the *earth* in general, are mentioned in the Word of God: the continent is put for the contents; the land for the *inhabitants*. This then seems to support Sir Isaac Newton's application of "the world natural" to "the world politic." But we are to remember, that, in the Word of God, he who uses the figure is the Divine Being himself: and in what respect can the inhabitants of the earth be supposed to be regarded by the Divine Mind, but as to their reception or otherwise of the principles which constitute *the church*? It is not, we may be certain, as to their political, but as to their spiritual relations, that the inhabitants of the world are regarded by God. They are considered as belonging either to *the church* properly so called, consisting of that portion of the inhabitants of the earth who stand in a nearer relation to the Author of their existence, in consequence of possessing a knowledge of him by revelation;—or to the church universal, which includes the whole of mankind considered in their relation to God. As then, when *the earth* is mentioned in Scripture, *the inhabitants* of it are meant; and as the inhabitants are only regarded in their relation to God, that is, as connected with his church; it is perfectly agreeable to the use of a well-known figure of speech, to name *the earth* to signify *the church*.

It is also well known, that when the earth is mentioned, it is frequently only the land of Canaan that is referred to; and this is an acknowledged symbol of the church: and the meaning is similar, but more universal, when the earth is named for the whole "world natural."

Now that this use of the term is frequent with the prophets, might be shewn by numerous examples. Thus, in that beautiful prediction so evidently referring to a future glorious state of *the church*, when it is declared that "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb," and when it is said of various noxious animals, "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain;" the reason assigned for it is this; "For *the earth* shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."\* So in that awful denunciation of judgments upon *the earth*, in the twenty-fourth chapter of the same prophet, where the word *earth* or *land* is repeated almost in every verse; although some of the calamities enumerated might seem to relate to

\* Is. xi. 9.

*the earth*, literally, yet there is much which shews that the subject really treated of is *the church*. To what else can these words be applied: "The windows from on high are open, and the foundations of *the earth* do shake: *the earth* is utterly broken down; *the earth* is clean dissolved; *the earth* is moved exceedingly: *the earth* shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it *shall fall and not rise again*"? \* The last clause, in particular, is by no means predicable of *the earth*; but the whole is most accurately descriptive, in the language of Analogy, of the utter destruction of the Jewish *church*: and to this alone, and to the substitution of pure Christianity for corrupt Judaism, can be applied what is said of the sun and moon at the conclusion of the prophecy: "Then the *moon* shall be confounded, and the *sun* ashamed, when the Lord of Hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously." †

II. Without then further extending our quotations, it must, we may presume be readily seen, that the earth, when mentioned generally, is used as a symbol of the church. But *heaven* is spoken of in the Scriptures as frequently as *the earth*; and it often happens, that *heaven and earth* are mentioned together: and then it may be seen with equal clearness, that by *heaven* is meant the internal of the church, or, with respect to individuals, the internal man, and by *earth* the external of the church, or the external man.

Two states of the church,—the church militant and the church triumphant,—are usually recognised by divines; all who are members of the church on earth constituting the former, and all who are enjoying the reward of victory in heaven, constituting the latter: thus the *church militant* is that which is usually called simply *the church*, and the *church triumphant* is but another name for *heaven*. Now it is certainly a very remarkable circumstance, that in so many languages the name for the *state and habitation of the blest* is the same as that for *the visible heavens or sky*; or rather, the name properly belonging to the latter is transferred to mean the former. In the English language indeed, which has two words that signify the expanse above or around the earth, we now more frequently apply the term *heaven* to the seats of the blest, and the term *sky* to the visible firmament; though we still frequently use the former word in its primitive signification:

"As from the face of *heaven* the scattered clouds  
Tumultuous rove."

and we are apt to transfer the latter to the figurative sense; thus, the soul

"Breathes hopes immortal, and affects *the skies*."

\* Ver. 18, 19, 20.

† Ver. 23.

Now whence came this application, by consent of nations, of the name of the visible heavens to express the invisible, but from a perception that they properly answer to each other by analogy, and that the lower heavens are a proper type and symbol of the higher? Hence in the Word of God, the one is constantly described by the name of the other.

But further: As, in addition to the analogies of each taken separately, there is a similar relation between the visible *heaven* and *earth* as between *the heavenly state*, or *the church in heaven*, and *the church on earth*; therefore, also, these are described by the combined phrase *heaven and earth*: As, likewise, there is a similar relation between *the internal principles* and *heavenly graces* constituent of a church and its *external order, profession and practice*; and between all that belongs to the *internal man* and all that belongs to *the external*; therefore these, also, are included in the meaning of the phrase, *heaven and earth*.

Of the use of the terms in these significations, abundant instances are afforded by the Scriptures. What else can be meant by these images, when the prophet says, "Drop down, ye *heavens*, from above, and let *the skies* pour down righteousness: let *the earth* open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together?"\* It is perfectly evident that *the heavens and skies* which pour down *righteousness*, and *the earth* which *opens to receive it*, and from which, in return, *salvation and righteousness spring up*, cannot be the visible heavens, and the material earth: neither can they be Sir Isaac Newton's "thrones and dignities" and "the inferior people:" but they must be the heavens the abodes of bliss, and the church rendered fruitful in good works by the divine influences thence descending: and the same language may be applied to the two principles of the human constitution recognised in theology by the names of the internal and external man. So when Jehovah, in reference to the establishment of the Christian dispensation, speaks of heaven and earth as being then to be created, and says, "I have put my words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of my hand, that I may plant the *heavens*, and lay the foundations of the *earth*, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people†:" and when he says again, "Behold, I create *new heavens* and a *new earth*, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind: but be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy ‡:" who can fail to see, that the *heavens*, and *new heavens*, here spoken of, are *the internal principles* of the Christian church, and the *earth*, and *new earth*, her

\* Isa. xlv. 8.

† Isa. li. 16.

‡ Ch. lxxv. 17, 18.



corresponding *external*? whence they are in both cases mentioned in connexion with *Zion* and *Jerusalem*, the acknowledged types of *the church*; and the creating of new heavens and a new earth is actually spoken of as synonymous with creating *Jerusalem* a rejoicing and her people a joy. Equally easy will be the interpretation of these symbols, drawn from “the world natural,” wherever they occur in the sacred writings; understand by *heaven*, in relation to the church, or to the man of the church, *the internal essence*, and by *the earth* the *external form*, and you will obtain a satisfactory and coherent meaning for every passage in which they are mentioned throughout the Word of God.

III. If it be admitted that the earth signifies the external of the church and of man, it will easily be admitted that *the lowest parts of the earth*, with *Hades* or *Hell*, will signify *the external man when entirely separated from the internal*, so as to be the mere abode of infernal lusts and insane follies; with *the state of misery consequent thereupon hereafter*:—and also, that it may sometimes signify *a state of temptation*, because then man appears to himself to be in danger of such a condition. In the former sense of the phrase, the Psalmist says, “But those that seek my soul to destroy it, shall go into the *lower parts of the earth*.”\* On account, also, of the manifest analogy, the term *Hades* or *Hell*, though originally signifying merely a subterraneous region, has been transferred to denote, in common use, the state and place of misery hereafter; just as *heaven*, though originally signifying the visible firmament, has come to be regarded as the proper name of the state and place of eternal blessedness. But that sometimes the term is used for a state of extreme temptation, appears from the prayer of *Jonah*, all whose adventure with the fish was representative of such a state, and who says respecting it, “*Out of the belly of hell* cried I, and thou heardest my voice.”†

IV. From the signification of the earth, and of heaven and earth, as expressive of the church, it necessarily follows, that *great earthquakes*, and *the shaking of heaven and earth*, are put for *the shaking of churches*, so as to distract and overthrow them, or at least to occasion *a remarkable change in their state*. Thus in the passage quoted above from the twenty-fourth of *Isaiah*, in which *the earth* so evidently signifies *the church*, it is said of it that its “foundations *shake*,” and that it shall “*reel to and fro* like a drunkard.” As no change in the state of the church ever occurred so great as that consequent upon the Lord’s coming into the world; therefore, in reference to that event, it is written, “For thus saith the Lord of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will *shake the heavens*, and *the earth*, and *the sea*, and *the dry land*; and I will *shake all nations*;

\* Ps. lxi. 9.

† Ch. ii. 2.

‡ Hag. ii. 6, 7.

and the Desire of all nations shall come.”\* So, that a change in the constitution of the church not less extraordinary was once again to be experienced, seems to be intimated by the Revelator; when, after he heard “a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done,” he adds; “And there were voices and thunders, and lightnings: and there was a *great earthquake*, such as was not since men were upon the earth, *so mighty an earthquake and so great* †:” a most significant emblem, surely, of such a change as must attend such a consummation as alone is worthy to be indicated by the emphatic words heard from the throne of God, “It is done!”

V. We have considered already the signification of the creating of a new heaven and a new earth, and, by consequence, of “the passing of an old one, or of the beginning and end (or rather end and beginning) of a world.” If, as we have seen, the new heaven and new earth predicted by Isaiah describe the Christian church, which was to be a new dispensation both as to inward essence and outward form, of course, *the former heaven and earth*, which, it is declared, should no more be remembered nor come into mind, must be *the corrupt internal and ceremonial external* of the Jewish church: and, as the Word of God must ever be consistent with itself, similar must be the import of these portentous symbols wherever they occur in its pages. Certain it is that this interpretation of them will every where yield a good and coherent sense.

VI. Sir Isaac Newton, though he interprets *the sun* of “the whole species and race of kings,” yet allows it occasionally to be *Christ*: and that it is a striking representative of the Divine Being is testified by the consent of the numerous nations who have worshipped him under this image. Accordingly, the Psalmist affirms that “*the Lord God is a sun* ‡:” so, Isaiah says of the restored church, “*Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light* §:” and by Malachi, still more directly, the Lord declares, “*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings.*” || Indeed, the analogy between the Lord as the source of life to all creation;—of spiritual life, which consists in love and wisdom, immediately, to all intelligent creatures,—and of natural life, mediately, to inanimate and irrational subjects;—and the sun as his vicegerent for the communication of *its* life to mere matter, by dispensing its beams of natural heat and light to this nether world; is too obvious to escape the attention of any one. The analogy between the heat of the solar beams and the ardour of divine love, between the lucidity

\* Hag. ii. 6, 7.

† Rev. xvi. 17, 18.

‡ Ps. lxxxiv. 11.

§ Ch. ix. 20.

|| Ch. iv. 2.

of the sun's rays and the illuminating efficacy of divine wisdom, are also most striking. It has been shewn in the third Lecture\*, that there is an obvious and fixed relation between *fire* and *love*, between *light* and *truth*; and this must eminently hold between the *solar* fire and light, and the love and wisdom of *the Lord*. The sun also, as the secondary source of existence to its dependent worlds, cannot but, in the very nature of things, image forth in its properties the First Cause of existence, the Creator of itself and of all things. It cannot then be doubted, that in writings composed upon the principles of Analogy, the sun would often be taken as a symbol of the Lord; as we see is done in the passages above quoted.

But it is not so much of the Divine Being, personally, that the sun is taken as an emblem in the Scriptures, as of the first essential property of the Divine Nature, which is *the divine love*; whence it is often coupled with *the moon*, and it is even said, as in the passage just cited from Isaiah, that the Lord will be both *a sun and moon* to his people; for the moon, as shining by a borrowed light, is the apt symbol of the principle of faith, which is produced in the mind by instruction in divine subjects outwardly communicated. There is also a distinction made in the Scriptures between *the light* of the moon, and *the light* of the sun. *The light of the sun* is a perception of divine truth grounded in love: it is that which is experienced by those whom the Lord calls *his friends*, or, as the original more strongly says, *his lovers*, and who become such by *doing whatsoever he commands them*†: and of which he declares, that *it consists in a knowledge, communicated by him, of all things that he hath heard from his Father*‡: but *the light of the moon* is that of those whom the Lord calls *servants*, whose faith, being not so much founded in love, is not attended with so clear an illumination of the understanding; whence the same Authority says, that *the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth*.§ Hence the one state is called in the Scriptures a state of *day*; the other, respectively, a state of *night*,—not of a dark night, but of a night irradiated by the light of the moon: thus we are called upon to praise “him that made great lights;—the *sun* to rule by *day*,—the *moon and stars* to rule by *night*.”||

The stars, as noticed in the third Lecture¶, are apt images of heavenly truths, or of specific matters of knowledge on spiritual subjects.

That such is the signification, in Scripture, of the sun, moon, and stars, may sufficiently appear from this circumstance alone. John the Revelator beheld “a woman clothed with the *sun*, and the *moon* under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve *stars*.”\*\* Now this

\* Page 174. † John xv. 14. ‡ Ver. 15. § Ibid.

|| Ps. cxxxvi. 7, 8; 9. ¶ P. 197. \*\* Rev. xii. 1.

woman is evidently the same as is elsewhere called "the bride, the Lamb's wife\*;" that is, she is the representative of the true church; wherefore also she is a personification of the new *Jerusalem*.† The *sun* with which she appeared clothed, is a plain image of the *divine love* by which the true church is animated, encompassed, and protected. The *moon* under her feet, forming as it were her footstool, is a suitable image of that true *faith* upon which the church is represented in Scripture as founded: thus when Peter avowed his faith in the Son of God, the Divine Person who was the object of his belief said, "Upon this rock,"—the great doctrine of faith just acknowledged,—“will I build my church.”‡ Because then the church is built upon a true *faith* in the Lord, her personified emblem was seen standing upon the *moon*, which is the symbol of such a faith. The crown of twelve *stars* upon her head, was expressive of the wisdom which results from the possession of all *the truths of the Word*; for the number *twelve* is always mentioned as implying all the truths of the Word and of the church, both those relating to faith and those relating to charity; which is the reason that there were *twelve* tribes of Israel, *twelve* apostles, that the new Jerusalem had *twelve* foundations, and that this number, with its multiples, a hundred and forty-four, and twelve thousand and a hundred and forty-four thousand, is used on so very many occasions. The signification of this number, however, not being requisite to the present inquiry, we will not turn aside to consider it.

But the *sun* and *moon* are sometimes mentioned, not as images of the Lord's divine love, and of a true faith, but of principles *diametrically opposite*; which is the reason why the light of the sun and moon is sometimes put in contrast with that of which the Lord is the author; as in the passage of which a part was before quoted from Isaiah: "The *sun* shall no more be thy *light* by day, neither for brightness shall the *moon* give *light* unto thee; but the *Lord* shall be unto thee an everlasting *light*, and thy God thy *glory*."§ Still they retain their general signification of *love* and *faith*, but denote different species of them: *the sun* is then that *self-love* which rules with those who reject the love of God, and *the moon* is that tissue of *human inventions*, which, in such a state, men miscall faith. In this sense they are spoken of as shedding evil influences, from which the objects of divine protection are to be secured: "The *sun* shall not *smite* thee by day, nor the *moon* by night||:"—"They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the *sun* light on them, nor any heat."¶

VII. The signification of the sun, moon, and stars, in Scripture,

\* Ch. xxi. 9, Ch. xix. 7. † Ch. xxi. 2. ‡ Matt. xvi. 18.  
§ Ch. ix. 19. See also Rev. xxi. 23. || Ps. cxxvi. 6. ¶ Rev. vii. 16.

and the ground of that signification in that positive Analogy which forms part of the laws of nature, must now, we would fain hope, appear very certain: and if so, the signification of *the darkening of the sun, turning of the moon into blood, and falling of the stars*, must also be evident, and they must be seen to denote *the ceasing in the professing church, or the perversion into their opposites, of pure love to the Lord, true faith in him, and all just knowledge of spiritual subjects*. Thus we read in Joel, "I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, fire, and pillars of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come."\* When was this prophecy fulfilled? Peter, at the first effusion of the Holy Spirit, after the Lord's ascension, affirms that it was accomplished *then*.† But what sun was then darkened, but the sun of love in the Jewish church; when a Divine Teacher said of them, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you‡;" "and this is the condemnation; that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."§ And what moon was then turned into blood, but the moon of true faith; when even the books of Moses were not believed by them in any beneficial manner; whence the same infallible Authority says of them, "Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me: but if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words;"|| and they are further reproached, not only for departing from all true faith, but for setting up a false one in its place, "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."¶ So, when it is said that the tail of the dragon "drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth\*\*," how striking an image is presented of the influence exercised by the evil upon the pure truths of heaven, which are deprived, by low interpretations, of their heavenly nature, and reduced to matters of common, earth-born knowledge.

We will conclude with a word respecting the application of these grand symbols to the downfall of particular nations; as of Babylon††, of Idumæa‡‡, and of Egypt.§§ In the truly spiritual sense, the signification will still be the same; only then the nations also must be spiritually understood, as representative of some general principle, or class of persons, connected with the church. Even in reference to the actual downfall of those states, as kingdoms of the "world politic," it would be very difficult to shew that *the sun is the king, the moon the people, and the stars the great men*; beside that they are thus

\* Ch. ii. 30, 31.

† See Acts ii. 16 to 20.

‡ John v. 42.

§ Ch. iii. 19.

|| Ch. v. 46, 47.

¶ Mark vii. 7.

\*\* Rev. xii. 3.

†† Isa xiii. 10.

‡‡ Ch. xxxiv. 4.

§§ Ezek. xxxii. 7.

reduced into tautological repetitions, the heavens and earth having before been explained, by Sir Isaac, to signify princes and people. Even then with regard to "the kingdoms of the world politic," it would afford better sense to interpret the sun, moon, and stars, to be those principles in the state, which love and faith, with divine knowledge, are in the church; and these will be, justice and judgment, civil good and political wisdom, national integrity and sound maxims of state; without the cultivation of an adequate share of which, the mightiest empires hasten to dissolution.

But all applications of such symbols to natural objects or political affairs are attended with great uncertainty, and it can seldom be shewn that, with respect to these, they have a determinate signification: because these were not the things regarded in the Divine Mind, from which the Word proceeded. In giving a revelation, its Divine Author must have had eternal ends and spiritual objects in view: and if we explain, of spiritual objects, the natural images employed in the divine style of writing, we may always, if we possess the proper key, obtain a meaning which is clear and satisfactory; because between all natural objects and certain spiritual ones there exists by creation a fixed analogy, which may readily be traced, when we are sufficiently acquainted with the properties of each. How far this has been accomplished in this essay, in regard to the great objects and phænomena of the mundane system, it must be left to the reader to determine.

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#### No. IV. (Page 361.)

THE SIGNIFICATION OF THE CLOUDS, WHEN MENTIONED IN  
SCRIPTURE, FURTHER ILLUSTRATED.

The explanations of Scripture terms which are offered in this Work, being new to most of our readers, would require, to do them justice, a more extended elucidation and defence than our limits will permit: However, if only one explanation, clearly drawn from a fixed analogy, is firmly established, it is sufficient to evince the solidity of the principle as a Rule of interpretation. We have dwelt at some length, in the Lecture above, on the signification of *clouds*, and have shewn, it is hoped, with some weight of evidence, that, when mentioned in reference to the Lord, they signify the Divine Truth clothed with natural ideas and images, or the Word in its literal sense, which is the Divine Truth so clothed: and as this explanation, though, when

first propounded, it may appear unexpected and forced, seems to become, on reflection, perfectly natural and easy, and to be capable of being established with a certainty which nothing but the extreme of scepticism can dispute; we will here dwell upon it a little further, and try what degree of light may be drawn, by its aid, from several obscure and obviously enigmatical passages of the Holy Word. We have selected this term for a detailed examination, not only because it is well calculated to illustrate what we have called the Science of Analogies, and to prove that in that Science must be sought the key for the true interpretation of the Scriptures, but because it is also eminently adapted to throw light upon the nature of the Scriptures themselves,—to evince that they consist of a *glory* and its *covering*, and to demonstrate that their literal sense is actually a *cloud* which veils over the supernal light that beams within.

I hope, however, that whoever reads this article, will first read the part of the Lecture to which it is appended (; from p. 348).

I. It has been remarked above, that the signification of *clouds*, as being the Divine Truth veiled over with the appearances of nature, or the Word in its literal sense, may, when first announced, appear arbitrary and forced: yet if it thus appears to any one, it must be for want of his having noticed, that this is one of the analogies of which every one knows something by common perception, and from which phrases are frequently borrowed in common discourse. I hope, for instance, that what I am now writing will not be deemed a *cloudy* composition; for I well know how common it is with writers to *cloud* a *clear* subject by imperfect attempts at explanation. There are many things respecting which the truth discovers itself to the mind by its own inherent *light*, and which efforts to illustrate only envelope in *clouds*. Such phrases as these, of which every one immediately sees the meaning, and which every one readily frames for himself, evince that the human mind intuitively perceives, not only the analogy between *light* and *Truth in its clearness*, but also that between *clouds* and *Truth in the shade*. It is only then in compliance with a principle which nature dictates to us all, that *clouds* are mentioned in Scripture as the *chariot* of God: for God, all acknowledge, must dwell in his own Divine Truth, and of Divine Truth, when shaded over with natural images and expressions borrowed from human ideas, as in the literal sense of the Divine Word, *clouds* are evidently the proper symbol.

II. It being certain then that reason gives a decided testimony in favour of the use of the term *clouds* as an appropriate emblem of the Word of God in its literal sense, we proceed to consider further, how

this is corroborated by the instances in which the expression is used in the Scriptures in connexion with the Lord.

1. We have cited in the Lecture this passage of Moses: "There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency in the *sky*\*;" where we have noted, that the word translated *sky* is one which in many other places is rendered *the clouds*. Jeshurun is a name for Israel, which typically means the church, or the true member of the church: and how is it that, in help of the member of the church, God rides in heaven, and in his excellency (greatness or strength) in the clouds? how, unless these phrases mean, that he imparts to man instruction, consolation, and support, by the internal graces of his Word and kingdom, signified by *heaven*, communicated by means of the *external* or *literal sense of his Word*, signified by *the clouds*? The reason of this is, because it is a fact, though not always reflected on and acknowledged, that whatever man receives to build him up as a member of the Lord's church, he receives, either immediately or remotely, by the medium of the Holy Word: it is hence that he obtains all his knowledge respecting the Lord and his kingdom, either drawing it thence himself or receiving it from others who have drawn it from that source: it is by the truths thus acquired that he directs his path: it is the promises which he hence learns that support him and enable him to resist his spiritual foes: and it is even by what he thus imbibes that the graces of charity, as well as those of faith, are infused into his bosom. For the Holy Word, though a system of Divine Truth, is not a system of truth alone. Every truth which it contains has some heavenly affection that properly belongs to it. When the truth is admitted into the understanding merely, still the affection is present and urgent to be received with it: so that although man is not conscious of it, it really is by the Holy Word, and not at all independently of it, that every heavenly grace of which he ever becomes a partaker enters his breast. The Word of God, both as to its internal spirit and life and external form and letter, is the grand medium by which the Lord imparts aid to his spiritual Jeshurun, his true church; it is thus that he rideth upon the heaven to his help, and in his excellency on *the clouds*. If we suppose the visible heaven and vapoury clouds to be meant, what becomes of the sense of the passage?

2. In the eighteenth Psalm we have a sublime description of the deliverance of the church, or of the member of the church, in the person of David, from a state of severe temptation; and in the description of the interference of the Divine Being on the occasion occur these words: "He bowed the heavens also, and came down,

\* Deut, xxxiii.



and darkness was under his feet. And he rode upon a cherub and did fly; yea, he did fly upon the wings of the wind. He made darkness his secret place; his pavilion round about him were dark waters and *thick clouds* of the skies: at the brightness that was before him his *thick clouds* passed: hail stones and coals of fire.\* To *bow the heavens and come down*, is a phrase expressive of the Lord's presence, with the interior things of his Divine Truth or Word, signified by *the heavens*, in its *exteriors*, to which the former *come down*. The *darkness under his feet* is the Divine Truth in its lowest form, where the light of its internal contents terminates in the cloud of the letter: this appears as *darkness* to those who are in a state of opposition, and who can discern nothing of the light which shines through the letter from the pure truth within:—witness the reproaches cast upon the Word by Deists and Atheists, who would fain persuade the world that it is the most senseless and even pernicious book that ever was produced. A *cherub* is used in Scripture as a personification of the Word in its letter: but to go into the proof of this would lead us too far from our immediate object. “He maketh *darkness* his secret place; his pavilion round about him were *dark waters* and *thick clouds of the skies*,”—is said in amplification of the same subject, and still relates to the investing of Divine Truth, in its ultimate form, with a clothing of appearances, within which, nevertheless, abides the Divine Presence. And when it is added, “At the brightness that was before him his thick clouds passed; hail-stones and coals of fire,” the allusion is, to the dispersion of the false notions which are often drawn from the literal sense of the Word not understood, by the manifestation of the Divine Truth contained within, which is called *the brightness that was before him*: *hail-stones*, being frozen drops of rain, which descend indeed from *the clouds*, but in a form which gives them a destructive instead of a fertilizing nature, are appropriate symbols of truths from the letter of the Holy Word falsified by perverse interpretations; and *coals of fire* are suitable emblems of the lusts or concupiscences of the natural man, especially of his lust of perverting and misrepresenting the Word by regarding it under the influence of his evil inclinations. These are spoken of as sent forth by the Lord; as is also the case when similar judgments are described in the account of the plagues of Egypt: yet we are certain that he cannot be the author of the perversions of his Word by mankind: the meaning then is, not that such things actually proceed from him and his Word, but that their existence is discovered at his presence and at that of his Divine Truth; and that when judgment is

\* Ver. 9 to 12.

executed upon the wicked, they are left to their own false and evil imaginations, and to the misery which attends such a state.

It may here be necessary to meet a difficulty which some minds may feel at this representation of the Divine Truth, which we affirm to be the same as the Word, as enveloping the Divine Majesty.

Whilst we think of the Word merely as a book, there certainly is some difficulty in conceiving how it can form "a pavilion" for the residence of the Majesty of heaven. It is easily seen by most persons, as soon as mentioned, that the most essential attributes of the Divine Nature are Love and Wisdom, Goodness and Truth. It is also readily apprehended, that every grace which can adorn the mind of man has reference to Love and Wisdom, Goodness and Truth, under some form or combination or other. Now it is allowed on all hands, that man can receive nothing,—nothing of a heavenly nature,—except it be given him from above; according to the Lord's own words, "Without me, ye can do nothing."\* Yet it is also acknowledged by all, that God is infinitely higher than man, or than the highest finite intelligence: how then can the heavenly graces of which he alone is the Author, be imparted from God to beings so much below him? how, but, correspondingly, as heat and light, the proper symbols of love and wisdom, are conveyed to the earth from the Sun of Nature, the best though faint image of the Sun of Righteousness? that is, by a continual emanation of love and wisdom, goodness and truth, flowing from the Lord, as heat and light continually emanate from the sun. By such an emanation then, doubtless, they are communicated: and all that thus proceeds from the Lord, whether it be regarded as reduced to writing or not, is called in Scripture the Word of God, and is represented by the light, terminating at length in the clouds, with which, in the passage of the Psalms examined in the Lecture, Jehovah is said to clothe himself as with a garment. Of course, it is not the written Word of which it is said, "By the *Word* of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the *breath* (or spirit) of his mouth†;" and "All things were made by him (or it).‡" Now this sphere of Divine Truth (, as we will continue to term it,) emanating from the Lord, when it comes within the confines of the world of nature, clothes itself, as is attempted to be shewn in the Lecture above§, with such ideas and images as we find in the literal sense of the written Word: nevertheless, it may easily be conceived of separately from the writings in which we possess it: it may be regarded as a chain of ideas occupying the minds of a certain class of intelligent beings; or even as a sphere of perceptions, independently of any minds supposed to perceive them, surrounding the Godhead, but far

\* John xv. 5. † Ps. xxxiii. 6. ‡ John i. 3. § P. 233.

beneath the seat of his immediate presence. But it is perfectly evident, that a chain or sphere of ideas of this kind might be reduced to writing without at all changing its nature: accordingly, this has been done in the written Word, which comprehends the sphere of Divine Truth, or the ideas with which it invests itself, when it comes within the precincts of nature, reduced, further, into natural language; and the written Word thus presents, in its literal sense, the very Divine Truth rendered obvious to our senses under its lowest form or manifestation.

Now although it may at first be difficult to conceive how the literal sense of the Word of God, as contained in a book, can afford, as stated in the passage we have just been considering, *a pavilion* for the Most High; it is easy enough to apprehend how a sphere or emanation of Divine Truth, clothed with natural ideas, may be regarded under the image of such *a pavilion*: and yet we see also, that such a sphere of Divine Truth clothed with natural ideas might easily be reduced into writing; that is, a book or writing might be framed which should convey the same ideas to the mind of its reader. Thus it is perfectly evident, that all that is true of an emanation of Divine Truth clothed with ideas taken from the world of nature and from human perceptions, is equally true of the written Word in its literal sense: of this also it may be said, in reference to its Author, that "his pavilion round about him were dark waters and thick clouds of the skies." Considered as a mere collection of words and letters, the Holy Word, as existing in a book, would indeed be nothing; but considered as to the ideas which those words in their literal sense convey to the mind of an intelligent being, the written Word is the same as the Divine Truth emanating from the Lord, and forming a sphere around him, when brought down to the apprehension of man regarded only as an inhabitant of the world of nature: and thus both the one and the other,—both the written Word in its letter and the sphere of Divine Truth in its extreme circumference,—are considered in Scripture as *the clouds* of heaven,—as the basis in which the pure Divine Truth terminates, and as the covering which shields from unprepared minds its otherwise too dazzling glories.

3. We will proceed to try the application of this interpretation of "the clouds" to another remarkable passage of the Psalms, which reads, "Ascribe ye strength unto God; his excellency is over Israel, and his strength is in *the clouds*."\* Here, as every where else where clouds are mentioned in connexion with the Lord, the merely literal sense affords no intelligible meaning at all: for what sense would there be in saying that *the strength* of the Lord is in the clouds, if by the

\* Ps. lxxviii. 34.

clouds were meant the mere unstable vapours that float over our heads. But understood in the spiritual signification of the term, as we have explained it, the meaning is most beautiful, and the symbol chosen to express it most appropriate. For it is in the lowest or most ultimate form of Divine Truth, which is what is meant by the clouds, that its strength principally resides; provided, that is, it be not separated from its interior contents; for then it becomes like a body without a soul, which is a powerless carcase. It is known to all, that man's body is the covering of his soul, and that, though his soul is capable of existing without the body, it quits with the body all power of acting upon the solid substances of this world of nature: and so the Divine Truth, as seen in heavenly light, would be without the power of affecting the minds of men in this world of nature, were it not invested with its literal sense for that purpose: but in this it is clothed with all its fulness and with all its power. Something similar obtains in human compositions and discourses. Every attentive observer of such subjects must have noticed, that the more the ideas which a speaker wishes to convey are clothed with natural images, provided the intended meaning is distinctly seen, the more strong do the language, and the sentiment too, appear. An orator who should address even a polished assembly in a chain of subtle reasoning, presenting none but abstract ideas expressed in the artificial language of philosophers, would make but little impression; but he who should appeal to their natural feelings, in ideas taken from their common sentiments, and conveyed in language drawn from sensible images, would be esteemed a speaker of far greater power. In the same manner, the Word in its letter is always felt to possess great strength and power, if there be a perception at the same time of its genuine meaning; and the same truths conveyed in abstract terms are relatively unimpressive. Thus if we hear this sentiment, "The Lord at some period will reveal himself to the church by the discovery of the spiritual sense contained within the letter of his Word:" the sense intended is very clear, but it does not affect the mind with any strength: but if the sentiment be expressed in the language of the letter of the Word, "Then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory;" and it be at the same time seen that such is the real sense of these words; they will then be attended by a perception of power as well as clearness;—this portion of "the clouds" will be felt to possess *strength*.

Admitting then this interpretation of the symbol, as being expressive of the Word in its literal sense, it perhaps will be seen with what accurate propriety it is said of Jehovah, that "his *strength* is in the clouds."

4. There is, moreover, one passage of the Psalms, in which this interpretation of *the clouds* is given almost in express terms. Addressing the Lord, it is said, "Thy mercy is great above the heavens, and *thy TRUTH reacheth unto the CLOUDS.*"\* Is not this a plain affirmation, that *the clouds* are used for the lowest plane or basis in which the Divine Truth proceeding from the Lord terminates and closes? and this, certainly, is in the literal sense of the written Word.

5. This view of the subject will also enable us to see the reason why, on various most important occasions, divine revelations, or enunciations of most important divine truths, are said to have been made from *clouds*.

The ten commandments were thus delivered at Mount Sinai. For that purpose "the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a *thick cloud*†:" and accordingly "it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders, and lightnings, and a *thick cloud* upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud."‡ How beautiful and expressive was this, if a cloud is the symbol of the Word in its letter, from and by which it is that God communicates his will to man!

The same remark may be applied to this parallel example. When Moses was afterwards called up into the mount to receive the tables on which the law was written, and to have further revelations communicated to him, the same symbol was repeated: "And Moses went up into the mount; and a *cloud* covered the mount: and the glory of the Lord abode upon mount Sinai, and *the cloud* covered it, six days: and the seventh day he called to Moses *out of the midst of the cloud.*"§

So, because it is by the Word in its letter that all divine instruction is imparted to man, it was customary for a cloud to appear over the mercy-seat: thus the Lord says to Moses, "Speak unto Aaron thy brother that he come not at all times into the holy place within the veil before the mercy-seat, that he die not: for I will appear *in the cloud* upon the mercy-seat."|| And it was from over the mercy-seat, thus out of this cloud, that the Lord, after the tabernacle was erected, held his usual discourses with Moses: "Thou shalt put the mercy-seat above the ark, and in the ark thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee: and there I will meet thee, and will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel."¶ How well the signification of the ark accords with that of the cloud which com-

\* Ps. cviii. 4. † Ex. xix. 9. ‡ Ver. 16. § Ex. xxv. 15, 16.

|| Lev. xvi. 2,

¶ Ex. xxv. 21, 22.

monly hovered over it, may appear from what is said on the former subject in the fifth Lecture. We have noticed above, that the cherubs also were personified emblems of the Divine Word in its letter.

When, likewise, Moses had removed his tent or tabernacle out of the camp, on account of the idolatry of the Israelites in the affair of the golden calf, "it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, *the cloudy pillar* descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle; and the Lord," say our translators, "talked with Moses\*:" but as the Lord is not mentioned in the original, it is actually affirmed that the cloudy pillar talked with Moses.

A cloud being the emblem of the Word in the letter; and it being by the Word, in which the Lord himself has an abode, that the Christian is guided in his spiritual journey; how beautifully and aptly was this represented in the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness; when "the Lord went before them by day in *a pillar of a cloud* to lead them the way!"† As in his darkest states the Christian is still under the Divine Protection, and is led by the Divine Love when his perceptions of truth are most obscure: this was represented by the pillar of *fire* which guided the Israelites by *night*.

We find the same symbol employed, to teach the same lesson, upon a most weighty occasion, in the Gospel. When Jesus was transfigured before the three disciples, "behold a *bright cloud* overshadowed them: and behold a *voice out of the cloud*, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him."‡

As, however, many of the images used in the Word, retaining their most general signification, often take two opposite specific ones; so are clouds sometimes used as emblems of darkness and ignorance; or a state in which no light is seen from the letter of the Word, but false persuasions, adopted as true, exclude the light of heaven; as when the prophets speak of "a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of *clouds* and of thick darkness."§

Surely, on thus beholding how constantly the passages in which clouds are mentioned in connexion with the Lord, yield a lucid and instructive sense, when they are regarded as symbols of Divine Truth in its shade, or when it is veiled over by a covering of appearances, or, specifically, of the Word in its letter: it must be difficult to doubt that this is the true interpretation of the image. This signification is grounded, we have seen, in a clear and just analogy: and when we find that on its application to *the clouds of the literal sense* they in so many instances lose their obscurity, and become bright clouds translucent with the light of heaven; we surely have reason, not only to

\* Ch. xxxiii. 9.

† Ch. xiii. 21, &c.

‡ Mat. xvii. 5.

§ Joel ii. 2.

accept this as the true interpretation, but to admit also, that the principle on which it is founded affords the true key for decyphering the symbolic language of Holy Writ. Such perpetual coincidences could never originate in chance.

No. V. (Page 437.)

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ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE JEWISH CHARACTER; EVINCING ITS APTITUDE FOR A DISPENSATION CONSISTING CHIEFLY IN EXTERNAL RITES.

It is affirmed in the text above, that the Israelites were selected to *represent* those spiritual things which they were incapable of inwardly perceiving and feeling; and it is observed that their genius and temper were such as rendered them better adapted than any other people to this purpose; for they were distinguished by a remarkable tendency to multiply ceremonial observances, even beyond what was required of them, and to substitute these for the morals enjoined by the Law of God. Further to prove that this was really their character I have translated and abridged, from the *Synagoga Judaica* of Buxtorf, a number of examples of the manner in which they find, in almost every text of Scripture, an authority for some trifling ceremony or custom. These exhibit such marks of a gross and superficial turn of mind, as one would hardly suspect was to be found in the history of man: but idle and ridiculous as they are in themselves, they teach a lesson that is weighty and important, if they establish the view offered in the Lectures, of the purpose for which the Israelites were selected as a peculiar people: they also are not a little curious, as unfolding an extraordinary chapter in the great complex volume of human nature. Buxtorf every where gives as his authorities the Talmud and the Rabbins.

It was the practice, says the book *Colbo*, and in some places is so still, when a child first began to learn to read the Law, to give him some cakes made of honey and milk; because it is written, "He made him to suck honey out of the rock:" [Deut. xxxii. 13:] and again, "Honey and milk are under thy tongue:" [Cant. iv. 11:] and the letters of his horn-book, also, were smeared over with honey, which he was to lick with his tongue, because the Psalmist says, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" [Ps. cix. 103.]*—A truly devout Jew ought to rise before daylight, because David says "I will awake the morning;" [Ps. lvii. 9;—in our translation, "I will awake early;"] that is, they say, "I

* Synag. Jud. Cap. vii.

awake the morning; not, The morning awakes me." This is alleged to be necessary on account of the early prayers, which are to be offered at the rising of the sun, and not after it, because David teaches again, "They shall fear thee with the sun;" [Ps. lxxii. 5;] that is, as they explain it, "They ought to praise thee, in their morning prayers, at the very rising of the sun."* (It is to be observed, that in this passage, as in many other instances, they adhere to the letter of the original in a manner that totally destroys its sense, which is here properly given in the English Version.)—They affirm, from Ps. lvi. 8, that there is great efficacy in tears shed profusely; and the book *Reshith Chocmah* states, that if the forehead be washed with tears, certain sins, which are written there, are blotted out; and that this is referred to when it is written, "Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations," &c. [Ez. ix. 4.] †

Their superstitious practices connected with their *Tzitzith*, called by our translators (Matt. xxiii. 5.) "the borders of their garments," being dangling appendages to the corners, and their *Tephillin* or Phylacteries, which are little boxes, containing texts of Scripture, which they fasten on their forehead and arm; and which they found on Num. xv. 38, Deut. xxii. 12, ch. vi. 6, 8, and Ex. xiii. 9, 16; are too numerous to be recited: we will mention only one circumstance. Beside the passages of Scripture put in the Tephillin or Phylacteries, they represent on that which they fix on the forehead the letter Ψ , on the band which fastens it the letter Υ , and on the thong which binds the other to the arm the letter \aleph . Taken together, these letters make the word $\aleph\Upsilon\Psi$ (*Shaddai*), which is one of the names of God; and thus they affirm is fulfilled, with all its advantages, the promise which says, "And all the people of the earth shall see that the name of the Lord is called (or read) upon thee, and they shall be afraid of thee." [Deut. xxviii. 10.] † Instead, however, of the women's wearing these phylacteries, or these talismans, (for such they consider them,) it is sufficient for them to say "Amen" to their husbands' prayers; which, they allege, Isaiah teaches when he says, "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in:" [Ch. xxvi. 2.] The Hebrew word for truth is *Amen*: hence they affirm, that to say, "the nation which keepeth the truth," is the same thing as to say, "they who observe the *Amen*, who say *Amen* to every thing, who believe all that is said in the prayers, and respond *Amen! Selah!*" §

Respecting their Synagogues and the mode of behaving in them, they have numerous precepts, consisting of similar applications of the words of Scripture to external things and performances. Their

* Cap. viii.

† Ibid.

‡ Cap. ix.

§ Ibid.

doctors teach that the synagogue should be built in *the highest part of the town*, because Solomon says that Wisdom “crieth in *the head or crown* of those who are tumultuous” [*in prayer*, as they interpret Prov. i. 21:] It ought therefore to be raised above all the houses in the place, according to the words of Ezra, “*to exalt* the house of our God.” [Ch. ix. 9.]*—The worshippers ought to *rush violently* into it like soldiers who take a city by assault; because David says, (as they understand him,) “We will walk into the house of God *with noise and haste*;” [Ps. lv. 14:]—that is, they say, “as if dogs were set at us, and we felt them fastening their teeth in our hind quarters.” They also ought to *tremble and shake* on entering: for David says “Worship the Lord in the *glory* (or *beauty*) of holiness; [Ps. xxix. 2;] where they direct us not to read בהדרת (*behadrath*) “in glory,” but בתרת (*bechardath*) “in trembling.”† They are to recite the prayers which they call *Shmon'esre*, standing *with both feet straight*; because it is said of the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision, “And their feet were *straight feet*.” [Ez. i. 7.]‡ When they conclude their prayers, they are to leap *three steps backward*, bowing at the same time, and before they raise themselves up they are to incline their head towards the left, because there is the right hand of God, before which, when they pray, they are to consider themselves as standing. Their wise men say that this is done in memory of a miracle which happened at Mount Sinai when God gave the people the law. On that occasion we read, that when “all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they removed, and stood *afar off* :” [Ex. xx. 18:] and the Rabbins affirm, that their terror was such, that in a single moment they fled away *three miles*.§ When they go out of the synagogue, they are to *walk backwards*; and the Talmudists prove the necessity of doing so by the contrary example of the wicked men seen by Ezekiel, “with their backs toward the temple of the Lord :” [Ch. viii. 16:] they are also to retire slowly, making *very short steps*; for *their steps are counted* by God, and, if numerous, obtain a great reward; as it is written, “For now *thou numberest my steps*.” [Job xiv. 16.]]

He who prays at home must choose a convenient place, which must not be an elevated, but a *low one*; that he may be able to say with David, “Out of *the depths* have I cried unto thee, O Lord.” [Ps. cxxx. 1.] He must also *shake and twist his body in all directions*; to fulfil the words, “*All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee?*” [Ps. xxxv. 10.]¶

The commandments which enjoin obedience to the law, they apply

* Cap. x. † Ibid. ‡ Ibid. § Ibid. ¶ Ibid. ¶ Ibid.

to the mere reading or hearing of it. Thus they say, that on a man's returning from morning prayers, before he goes out about his usual business, he must spend some time in reading the law; a commandment for which they find in Deut. vii. 12. The word which our translators have there rendered *if*,—"It shall come to pass, *if* ye hearken," &c.—means, in its primary sense, *the heel*; wherefore the Jews prefer to read the passage thus: "*The heel shall be, and ye shall hear;*" the sense of which they say, is, "Before you *lift up your heels* to go out, you must *read or hear* something out of the Law:" The importance of this practice they illustrate by this strange perversion. While the first temple was standing, they state, the people practised at Jerusalem many evils, indulged in heinous sins, committed all kinds of incest, and defiled themselves with the vilest idolatry: all this God passed over, taking no notice of it till *they neglected the study of the Law*; but then he destroyed or dispersed the people, and levelled the temple with the ground: according to his words in Jeremiah: "Wherefore is the land perished, and is like the burnt up wilderness? Because they have *forsaken my Law*, which I set before them." [Ch. ix. 12, 13.]*

Various trifling ceremonies are to be observed on sitting down to table, and blessing the bread. So, in blessing the wine, the cup is first to be lifted up with *both hands*, because David says, "Lift up your *hands* in holiness and bless the Lord." [Ps. cxxxiv. 2.] It is afterwards to be held with the right hand *alone*, but if too heavy, the right hand may be supported by the left; because it is written, in the singular number, "*I will lift up the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*" [Ps. cxvi. 13.]†—*Salt* is by all means to be put upon the table, because they compare the dining table to the ancient altar and the food which was offered upon it; respecting which it is said, "Every oblation of thy meat-offering shalt thou season with *salt*:" [Lev. ii. 13:] hence their wise ones say, "If there be *salt* on the table in which to dip the consecrated bread, the table becomes an altar of expiation, and a protection against punishment." When they give thanks, they *cut deeply* into the loaf, but take care not *quite to divide it*; because, as they choose to understand Ps. x. 3, it is written, "The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire; and he that *cutteth through* when he giveth thanks, irritateth the Lord."‡

Their synagogue-copies of the Law are fastened to *wooden rollers*, elegantly ornamented, by which alone they are to be carried or touched. These they call *the tree of life*, the same word in Hebrew signifying both a tree and a piece of wood; and they give this name to the *han-*

* Cap. xi.

† Cap. xii.

‡ Ibid.

dles of the books, because Solomon has said, "Wisdom is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her." [Prov. iii. 18.]*

They deem it necessary to celebrate the Sabbath with much festivity, and particularly to have three sumptuous meals, one on the Friday evening when the Sabbath begins, another at the Saturday noon, and the third in the evening. They find this prescribed by Moses, when, speaking of the manna to be eaten on the sabbath, he says, "Eat that *to-day*: for *to-day* is a sabbath unto the Lord: *to-day* ye shall not find it in the field:" [Ex. xvi. 25:] where, because *to-day* is repeated three times, Moses, they say, meant to intimate, that they should have, on the sabbath, three regular feasts. They are also to wear the best clothes they can afford to purchase. It is written of the sabbath, "Thou shalt honour it;" [Is. lviii. 13:] How is it to be honoured? The Talmud answers, "By not suffering your sabbath-day garment to be like your common garment." At dinner, the bread is first laid upon the table-cloth, and then covered with a napkin, in memory of the manna: for, in the wilderness, the dew fell first, then the manna, and then dew again, so that the manna lay in the midst of the dew, just as if it were between two cloths: therefore the bread should be laid upon one cloth and be covered with another. For the same reason, the devout housewives make pies containing meat between two layers of dough. They prove that genial indulgences are to be practised on the sabbath from various texts, and among others from one in which none but a Jew could discover such a meaning. The whole verse of Isaiah before cited is this: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a *delight*, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then" &c. Here the words, "call the sabbath a *delight*," mean, they affirm, that the sabbath is *to be filled with all kinds of delights*. Many of the Rabbins have given similar precepts, supported by similar applications of texts of Scripture: we will conclude with one by Rabbi Judah, who received it, he says from the still older sage, Rabb: "Whoever spends the sabbath *merrily*, shall obtain from God the petitions of his heart: as it is written, 'Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart.'" [Ps. xxxvii. 4.]†

Respecting the feast of unleavened bread, this injunction is given in Exodus: "Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters." [Ch. xiii. 7.] This they have made the ground of various practices, the most remarkable of

* Cap. xiv.

† Cap. xv.

which is, a formal search, on the night but one before the passover, by the master of the family, assisted by his male servants and children, all with wax candles in their hands, into every corner of the house, in quest of leaven. Supposing such a regular search to be intended by the commandment, why conduct it by *candle light*? Because it is written in Zephaniah, “*I will search Jerusalem with candles,*” [Ch. i. 12.]*—At the feast of Pentecost, in memory of the Law received at that time, they strew the floors of their houses, synagogues and streets, with grass, put green boughs, roses, and other flowers in their windows, and wear green chaplets on their heads. What has this to do with the giving of the Law? They answer, The pastures were *green* at the time when Moses went up into the mountain; for it is written, “Let not the flocks nor herds *feed* before that mountain.” [Ex. xxxiv. 3.]†

At the day of Atonement they *light up candles* in the synagogues, one for every man who belongs to it: for it is written, “Glorify ye the Lord in the fires;” [Is. xxiv. 14:] which they read, “Glorify the Lord *with lights.*” But why light them up for the men only? Take here a specimen of the ingenuity of the Cabbalists, and of the kind of mysteries which they find in the Divine Word. The letters of the word נר (*Ner*), which signifies *a candle*, stand for the number 250. Now it is a received opinion with the Jews, that the members of a man’s body are in number two hundred and forty-eight; to which if you add two, for his soul and spirit, you have the number 250: the word נר (*Ner*) therefore, whose letters make that number, stands for a man as well as a candle. But a woman, according to their system of physics, has four members more than a man; so she cannot be resolved into a *Ner* or candle. Very pious persons often light up two wax candles, one for the body and one for the soul, and call the latter, which is the largest, the candle of the soul. As also the soul is called a candle by Solomon, [Prov. xx. 27,] they say that to light up a candle for it, makes an atonement for the soul.‡

Respecting the mode of slaughtering and cutting up animals for food, they have invented so many rules, that the art of the butcher forms with them one of the learned professions, and is not allowed to be practiced without authority from the Rabbins, conveyed by a regular diploma. No sanction is alleged for their fancies from the Scriptures, but the following passage: “If the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to put his name there be too far from thee, then thou shalt kill of thy herd and of thy flock, which the Lord hath given thee, as I have commanded thee, and thou shalt eat in thy gates whatsoever thy soul lusteth after.” [Deut. xii. 21.] Now as no directions are

* Cap. xvii.

† Cap. xx.

‡ Cap. xxv.

any where given respecting the mode of killing animals, they affirm that the words, "as I have commanded thee," (though it is not the Lord who is here the speaker, but Moses,) mean, "as I commanded thee *orally* in Mount Sinai:" the specific directions therefore are not to be sought in the *Written*, but in the *Oral Law*, that is, in their *traditions*; from which source they draw them in great abundance, and have composed bulky treatises on the subject.*

Of the numerous observances with which their weddings are solemnized, we will mention but one. The bride is led three times *round the bridegroom*, because it is written, "A woman shall compass a man." [Jer. xxxi. 22] †

The relatives who attend the funeral of a person deceased, when they return, are to sit bare footed on the ground for *seven* days, neither eating meat nor drinking wine, but exhibiting the utmost wretchedness; and for *thirty* days they are to wear mournful and squalid apparel, neither washing themselves nor any of their clothes. Nothing about the duration of mourning is said in their Law; but they find it clearly defined there notwithstanding. It is written in Amos, "I will turn your *feasts* into *mourning*:" [Ch. viii. 10:] hence they conclude, as the duration of a festival was seven days, that the duration of the deepest mourning must be the same. But the thirty-days neglect of their persons, a part of which consists in not combing or dressing their hair, depends for its sanction on Cabbalistic ingenuity. Aaron and his two remaining sons, when his two eldest were struck dead, were commanded "not to *uncover their heads*;" [Lev. x. 6;] that is, the Rabbins say, not to *clip their hair*, but to let it grow. But how does this point to the number of thirty days? Because the Nazarite was also commanded *to let his hair grow*, and *prohibited from clipping it*, all the days of his vow; [Num. vi. 5;] and this was a period of thirty days. How do they gather this, when still the number is not mentioned? From its being added, [ver. 8,] "All the days of his separation, he shall be holy to the Lord;" where the concluding word *יָרֵיךָ*, when its letters are reckoned as numerals, makes the number 30. By plain consequence, then, the days of separation were thirty; and by a consequence equally plain, the same should be the days of mourning! ‡

Some apology may seem requisite for detaining the reader so long among such a wilderness of absurdities; which, however, cannot fail to afford him some amusement: but when the object was, to establish a tendency to ceremonial observances as belonging to the national character of the Jews, it was necessary to produce more than a few instances, which might be regarded as isolated and accidental.

* Cap. xxxvi.

† Cap. xxxix.

‡ Cap. xlix.

Enow, surely, have now been given, fully to prove our position: Buxtorf furnishes a great number more. How striking a comment do they afford upon the Lord's words; "Laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do!" But, as observed in the Lecture, "this disposition of that people to neglect essentials and to cleave to formalities, if it disqualified them from constituting an interior church themselves, eminently adapted them to be made the *representatives* of such a church, and to have their affairs overruled, so as to be subservient to such representation." And surely the indubitable fact, that such was their distinguishing genius, affords, by itself, an argument of no inconsiderable weight, that the designs of Providence in selecting them from all other nations, were purely those which we have endeavoured in this Lecture to develope, and were not connected with any partial favour to them, but solely regarded the general benefit of all future generations of mankind.

No. VI. (Page 482.)

CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF JEPHTHAH'S VOW.

Judges xi. 31.

As some modern writers have thought they have succeeded in clearly establishing the more pleasing view of the fate of Jephthah's daughter from the very words of the vow; and I have nevertheless stated, that I think that the most unforced inference from the language of the original, and from the history in general, is, that the sacrifice took place; it seems necessary to give a view of the progress and present state of opinion upon the subject, and critically to examine the various renderings which have been proposed.

Four different senses, in ages distant from each other, have been given to the words of the Hebrew original.

I. The first is this: "WHOSOEVER cometh out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall be the Lord's, and I will offer HIM up for a burnt-offering."

2. The second is that adopted in the text of the common English Bible: "WHATSOEVER cometh out of the doors of my house, &c.— shall be the Lord's, AND I will offer IT up for a burnt-offering."

3. The third is that given in the margin of the English Bible: "WHATSOEVER cometh out of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's, OR I will offer IT up for a burnt-offering."

4. The fourth was proposed about sixty years ago by Dr. Randolph, and is this: "WHOSOEVER cometh out from the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's; and I will offer (to) Him [namely, the Lord,] a burnt-offering."

These shall be called, in the following remarks, *the first, second, third, and fourth renderings or translations.*

I. How the transaction was understood by the Jews while Hebrew was their vernacular language, it is impossible to determine; but certain it is, that, in the most remote period to which our means of ascertaining their sentiments extend, they understood the vow in the *first* of the above senses: they believed that a human sacrifice was intended by Jephthah from the beginning, and that his daughter was actually put to death. Thus the Greek version commonly called that of the Septuagint, which was made by Jews between two and three hundred years before the Christian era, gives the pronouns in the masculine gender: ο εκπορευομενος ος αν εξελθη εκ των θυρων τω οικου μου,—εσται τω κυριου, και ανοισω αυτον ολοκαυτωμα: of which the *FIRST RENDERING* given above is an exact translation in English. With this, also, the Latin Vulgate, supposed to have been made from the Septuagint in the first century, and corrected by Jerome from the Hebrew in the fourth, completely coincides.

Josephus, the next ancient Jewish testimony, gives a sense agreeable to our *SECOND RENDERING*, or that of the text of the English Bible: he makes Jephthah promise "to offer in sacrifice what living creature soever should first meet him," and he affirms that the vow, in that sense, was executed by him: "he sacrificed his daughter as a burnt-offering, offering such an oblation as was neither conformable to the law nor acceptable to God."* The same sense is given in the Targum, or Chaldee Paraphrase, which was written later. One or other of these two renderings, was received, for many ages, by all who read the Scriptures, both Jews and Christians.

The celebrated Rabbi, David Kimchi, who flourished in the twelfth century, seems to have been the first who proposed the *THIRD TRANSLATION*, or that given in the margin of the English Bible. This has been since adopted by many commentators and translators: and the discussions on the subject were for a long time confined to the question, which of these two renderings, (our *second* and *third*,) should be preferred. The arguments *pro* and *con*, may be seen at large in Poole's *Synopsis*, and in many other works: but as a specimen of

* Ant. B. v. Ch. vii. § 10.

the nature of the discussions which are included in this inquiry, and as a remarkable instance of the great obscurity which hangs over the whole question, we will give some observations of Noldius on the subject.

This learned writer, in his *Concordantiæ Particularum Ebræo-Chaldaicarum*, among the instances in which the Hebrew particle ׀, which commonly signifies *and*, bears the sense of *or*, adduces this vow of Jephthah; on which he adds this note. *Kimchi in hoc loco, &c.* —“Kimchi on the place, and in his *Michlol*, says, ׀׀׀׀ &c.—*It shall be sacred to Jehovah, if it be not fit for sacrifice; or I will offer it as a sacrifice, if it be fit for sacrifice.* This is a right distinction: for many things might be consecrated to God, (Lev. xxvii. 2 to 9, 11, 14, 16;) but only these five might be sacrificed; viz. oxen, sheep, goats, doves, and pigeons. (Lev. i. 2, 10, 14.) The meaning then is, that the daughter of Jephthah, as she could not lawfully be sacrificed, was consecrated to the peculiar worship of God.—Whether or not she was put to death, is, however, a question of great difficulty. Capellus, in his *Diatrise* on Jephthah's vow, contends for the affirmative: because it is said, (Lev. xxvii. 29,) “Every thing devoted (*Cherem*) shall surely be put to death:” from which he gathers, because (ver. 28) *men*, as well as other things in our power are mentioned as liable to be devoted by *Cherem*, that children might lawfully be devoted and put to death by their parents, and servants by their masters. A harsh and unreasonable assertion! nor is it much softened by Hachspan and Maimonides, who only allow this right to be possessed by the Israelites over their Canaanitish slaves. For though the servitude of these was perpetual, and they were not, like Hebrew servants, to be emancipated in the seventh year or in the year of jubilee; yet they were under the common protection of the laws, which provided that they should not be ill-treated, (Ex. xxii. 21, and xxiii. 9, Lev. xix. 33, Deut. x. 19, Zech. vii. 10;) and even pronounced a curse against those who should oppress them: (Deut. xxvii. 19; *comp.* Mal. iii. 5, and Num. xv. 16, 29;) hence the Jews could not assume over *them*, much less over their own children, the right of life and death: and the Scriptures afford no example of their doing so. As to the passage, Lev. xxvii. 28, 29, by which Capellus defends his opinion, Maimonides rightly distinguishes between the *Cherem of God* and the *Cherem of the priests*, (Num. xviii. 14,) which Leusden more clearly designates as the *destructive* and the *common Cherem*. The former kind includes such things as were either to be put to death in honour of God, as clean animals for sacrifice, (Lev. xxvii. 28,) or to be destroyed as abominable, (Num. xxi. 2, 3; Deut. vii. 26; Jos. vi. 7, 18, and vii. 12, 13; 1 Sam. xv. 3;

1 Ks. xx. 42; Is. xxxiv. 5 & 43; Zech. xiv. 11; Mal. iv. 6; Ezz. x. 18: This is called *Anathema*, Rom. ix. 3; 1 Cor. xii. 3; Rev. xxii. 3.) The latter kind includes whatever was destined to sacred uses, never more to return to its former owner, (Lev. xxvii. 28; Num. xviii. 4; 1 Sam. ii. &c.) It is in vain that Capellus adduces the words, EVERY *Cherem*, [Lev. xxvii. 29] to support his opinion; what is meant is, EVERY DESTRUCTIVE *Cherem*. Thus it is said [Num. xviii. 14,] “EVERY *Cherem* shall be given to the priests;” and yet that which was killed must be excepted; viz. that which was *anathema*,—the hostile and the sacrificial *Cherem*, &c.—for this, being taken out of existence, cannot be said to be given to the priests.* Universal propositions are not always absolute, but the *subject* must always be such as suits the *predicate*. The execution of Jephthah’s vow was postponed for two months: and who can believe, in all this time, even if the people did not interfere, as they did in the similar case of Saul and Jonathan; (1 Sam. xiv. 44, 35;) that the priests would not have prevented the perpetration of such a parricide? which they might have done by a simple statement of the law upon the subject.” Having offered these arguments, with so much appearance of conviction, against the idea of the execution, our learned author here pauses, and then proceeds thus: “These were our first thoughts upon this question; but upon re-examining them, I am almost brought to follow the reasons advanced on the other side, and to acknowledge the actual immolation. For beside that this is steadily affirmed by so many Fathers, Rabbins, and Divines; I do not see how Jephthah, who was a pious and prudent man, could have been so deeply moved (ver. 35,) for the mere consecration of his daughter to the service of God, if she was to suffer nothing worse. But further: we never read of any such custom among the Jews, as that of vowing perpetual virginity: on the contrary, to be childless was esteemed by them a reproach (1 Sam. i. 10, 11, Luke i. 25:) wherefore this was what the daughter of Jephthah lamented (ver. 37). Nor do we read that females ever undertook the Nazariteship; and yet even the Nazarites were not restricted to celibacy†; as may be seen in the cases of Sampson and Samuel, [who were dedicated to God from their birth.] Finally, the long continued

* These two kinds of *Cherem* are better illustrated in Dr. Randolph’s discussion of the subject.

† This argument is met by Dr. Randolph with an observation which is certainly of considerable weight: He remarks, that devotement of females, differently from that of males, must have included abstinence from marriage, because the latter engagement would abrogate the former, and the domestic duties of the wife and mother would be incompatible with a constant attendance on the sanctuary.

custom of an annual assembly and lamentation of the virgins in all Israel, seems to demand a more serious origin than a young woman's remaining unmarried. And suppose Jephthah's wife, or some other married person of his family, had come out to meet him; how would the devotion to celibacy then have taken place? Such instances of living single for a pious purpose as are mentioned Luke ii. 37 and 1 Cor. vii. 5, were either not enforced by a vow, or were for a time only: but we nowhere read of vows of virginity; much less of parents making such vows for their children. And the separation of David's concubines (2 Sam. xx. 3,) was not made in pursuance of any vow, but on account of the incest by which they had been defiled, and independently of their own will; whereas all vows must be free. From all which it will follow, that Jephthah's daughter was sacrificed."

These are the reasons which led Noldius to relinquish his first sentiments: but whoever wishes to see a very strong defence of the opinion that Jephthah's daughter was actually immolated, by a recent author, should consult the celebrated Michaelis's *Commentaries on the Laws of Moses*, by Dr. Smith, vol. ii. p. 276 to 279 and 286 to 290. For the best modern defence of the contrary opinion, see Dr. Randolph's Sermon, entitled *Jephthah's Vow Considered*: in which he proposes our FOURTH TRANSLATION: which we are now to notice.

Dr. Randolph makes Jephthah's vow to include two things; first, the consecration to the peculiar service of the Lord of some person; and, secondly, the offering to Him, as a burnt-sacrifice, of some clean animal. The foundation of his translation is a remark of Buxtorf's in his *Thesau. Gram.* L. ii. c. 17; where, having explained the construction of the Verb with the affixed Pronoun, he adds, *Denique, &c.* "This construction often gives rise to a contracted and elliptical form of speech; the affixed pronoun serving instead of a dative, accusative, or ablative, with a preposition prefixed." Dr. Randolph therefore supposes the affix, הן, which is joined to the verb of offering, (והעליתיהן) to be here used instead of the regular pronoun and preposition לו, and construes it accordingly as a dative, referring it, as its antecedent, to *Jehovah*, not to *whatsoever* or *whosoever*; which gives the sense stated above. This thought so pleased Bishop Lowth, that, in his *Isaiah*, he speaks of it thus: "A late happy application of this grammatical remark to that much disputed passage, has perfectly cleared up a difficulty, which for two thousand years had puzzled all the translators and expositors, had given occasion to dissertations without number, and caused endless disputes among the learned, on the question, whether Jephthah sacrificed his

daughter, or not : in which both parties have been equally ignorant of the meaning of the place, of the state of the fact, and of the very terms of the vow : which now at last has been cleared up beyond all doubt by my very learned friend Dr. Randolph, Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford, in his Sermon*," &c.

II. Such being the history of the four renderings, what is the present state of opinion on the subject ?

After such a commendation, by such a judge, in a book so well known, of Dr. Randolph's explanation; and after this had been adopted also in another well known work, Parkhurst's Heb. Lexicon; one would have expected to find it received into all later comments on the Scriptures published in this country: yet this is far from being the fact. Even Horne, who, in the Appendix to the first Volume of his "Introduction," offers short answers to the principal infidel objections, though he mentions Dr. Randolph's Sermon in a note, takes no notice of his solution of the difficulty, but gives an extract from Dr. Hales, who follows the *third* interpretation; being one of those which are so contemptuously spoken of by Dr. Lowth. Among the modern British annotators on the Bible, D'Oyley and Mant, Brown (last edition by Raffles,) and Reeve, also advocate the *third* rendering. Scott honestly rejects this as not supported by the natural meaning of the words, and strenuously contends for the *second* rendering and the actual sacrifice. Dr. A. Clarke, after appearing to favour the *third*, abides, without naming Dr. Randolph, by *his*, or the *fourth* translation: but *as he gives it*, it is adapted to have but little weight; since he does not notice the grammatical argument afforded by Buxtorf, which is its chief support; and, provided the Hebrew pronoun may be translated by the English *him*, he seems to think it of no consequence, whether that *him* answer to a dative or an accusative. Indeed, he here exhibits a strange hallucination, but little in accordance with the high attainments in Biblical literature, for which some give him credit.† Randolph's, or our *fourth* rendering, is expressly given by Hewlett alone. What is remarkable enough, D'Oyley and Mant give the practical reflections with which Randolph concludes his sermon, but take no notice of his explanation. Altogether, it is evident, either that Dr. Randolph's view is hitherto but very partially known, or that it has met with but very partial ap-

* Note on Ch. xlii. 16.

† He supposes that, instead of the affix ך, it might originally have been ך:—that is, *the nominative instead of the accusative!* But for this, he says, there is no absolute need, "because the pronoun ך, in the above verse, may with as much propriety be translated *him*, as *it*." True: but ך, understood of a person, must be translated *he!*

probation: I have not, however, seen any thing urged expressly against it.

III. Having stated the four renderings, their history, and the present state of opinion respecting them, we will give a brief estimate of the probability of each, as favoured or otherwise by the grammatical construction of the vow, and by the thoughts which Jephthah must have had in his mind when he uttered it.

The **FIRST** and most ancient **RENDERING**, or that of the Septuagint and the Vulgate, which gives it, "WHOSOEVER cometh out of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's and I will offer HIM up for a burnt offering;" is liable to no grammatical objection whatever, but is that which the words, if they alone be considered, most naturally present: yet as it is attended with the insurmountable objection of supposing that Jephthah had a human sacrifice in his thoughts when he made the vow, it has now, I believe, no advocates: it found one, however, not much more than a century ago, in Seb. Schmidt, who, in his Latin Translation of the Bible, gives the passage thus: "Exiens, QUI exhibit extra januas domus meæ, &c.—erit Jehovæ, et offeram ILLUM (*in*) holocaustum."

The **SECOND** **RENDERING**, which may be called that of the translators of the English Bible, being adopted by them in their text,— "WHATSOEVER cometh forth of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's, AND I will offer IT for a burnt offering;" is in like manner liable to no grammatical objection: but it supposes Jephthah's thoughts, when he made the vow, to have been such as it was scarcely possible that they could have been. It makes him intend to offer in sacrifice the first living creature that came out of his house to meet him when he returned in peace from the children of Ammon: but what living creature could he conceive most likely to come to congratulate him on his victory? a human being or an animal? Could he have thought of any but a human being? and, among human beings, who so likely as the one he best loved? Or if, by some strange fatality, this never entered his head, could he think it probable that any animal that could be lawfully sacrificed would come forth to him? Had he a sheep, a goat, or an ox, so tame, attached, and intelligent, as to run to fawn upon him with joy on his return? As has been remarked by others, the only animal likely to do this, would be a dog: but this was an animal that could not be offered in sacrifice.

The **THIRD** **RENDERING**, or that of Kimchi,— "WHATSOEVER cometh forth of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's, OR I will offer IT for a burnt offering;" is liable to a very important grammatical objection. It is certain that the particle ׀ is never used to disjoin things so completely as this translation supposes. It might,

indeed, easily be shewn, that the particle always retains its proper meaning as a copulative; and that, even when used disjunctively, it still connects the words to which it is joined with some common affirmation; quite the contrary of which would be the case if it were used disjunctively here. (See Gusset. *Comm. Ling. Ebr.*) Most critics have therefore felt that this rendering is extremely forced and harsh, and have only acquiesced in it to get rid of what they esteemed a greater difficulty. It also makes the second clause of the vow entirely unnecessary; for if Jephthah meant to say, that whatsoever came out of his house should be consecrated to the Lord in such manner as was suitable to its nature, this is fully conveyed in the first clause; and the addition of the second, separated from the former by an *OR*, instead of helping to determine his meaning, is of no use but to perplex it.

Finally, the *FOURTH*, or Dr. Randolph's *RENDERING*, "WHOEVER cometh out of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's, AND I will offer (to) HIM a burnt-offering;" seems to come within the rules of grammar, and it supposes nothing that must necessarily have been foreign to Jephthah's thoughts: it meets the expectation he must naturally have had, that a human being would be the first to come to meet him; and when he resolved to consecrate that person to the Lord, it is not unlikely that he should propose to accompany the ceremony with a burnt-sacrifice. Dr. R.'s version is, nevertheless, attended with considerable difficulties; and as I have nowhere seen any critical remarks upon it, I will offer the following

Although Dr. R.'s translation appears to be justified by the usage of the sacred writers, it certainly does not follow their *common* usage; nor, though probably the true rendering, is it one which any Hebraist would have thought of, if not driven, by the necessity of the case, to seek for a meaning different from that first presented by the words. He, accordingly, candidly acknowledges that it is not without difficulties; and he chiefly relies upon moral considerations for its support. These, of course, lend equal support to the *third* or Kimchi's rendering, and are much the same as the advocates of that rendering usually offer: but against *that*, the grammatical objections are so great, that (for this reason, I suppose,) Dr. R. has thought it unworthy of the least notice. For his own, he offers, in addition to his moral arguments, two philological ones; the value of which I will endeavour to estimate.

The first, as already noticed, is founded upon an observation of Buxtorf's. But it is to be observed, that this is given, not as a grammatical rule, but as an occasional exception. The *Rule* is, "Affixed Pronouns belong properly to none but active Verbs; and they denote the person of the patient, which those Verbs express by

the accusative case." They are, in fact, precisely in the same predicament, as an accusative case governed by an active verb in Latin. As then the construction is a deviation from the regular rule, Buxtorf, after giving some instances of it, guards it with this caution: "These and similar instances, Kimchi observes in his *Michlol*, are to be observed and noted by use; but all verbs, promiscuously, are not to be drawn to this construction. The Hebrew language does indeed frequently use this concise and contracted mode of expression, *where the sense, notwithstanding, remains clear*: but great care must be taken lest the style be rendered harsh, or ambiguous, and lest any violence be offered to the meaning. It must only be resorted to where the language loses by it nothing of its clearness and elegance." Here the irregularity is itself limited by a rule; and if the rule be accurate,—if the affixed pronoun is never used for the regular dative where it would create harshness or ambiguity; then, certainly, it cannot be so used in the words of Jephthah; where, if it is, the ambiguity it occasions is such, that this acute grammarian himself, who first explained this construction, never suspected its existence here. It is remarkable, also, that among the instances of this construction collected by Buxtorf and Parkhurst, are none in which it attends *verbs of offering or sacrificing*. Such verbs often have the pronoun affixed to denote *the thing offered*, but not another example can be found, in which it is used for *the Being to whom the offering is made*.

The second philological argument urged by Dr. Randolph in favour of his translation, and much insisted on by Parkhurst and A. Clarke, is, the omission of the preposition ל before the word for *burnt-offering*,—עֹלָה. "If Jephthah had meant," says Mr. Parkhurst, "as translated, *I will offer it for a burnt-offering*, ל, *for*, ought to have been prefixed to עֹלָה, as in Gen. xxii. 2, 13." It is extraordinary that the author of a Hebrew Lexicon, who must have been familiar with every word in the Bible, should say that there *ought* to be a ל in this place, when there are many similar instances of its absence. In the writings of Moses, indeed, it seems to be commonly, perhaps always, used; but seldom in the other books; I believe, never. Thus (1 Sam. vi. 14,) we read, that when the ark was sent home by the Philistines, the men of Bethshemesh offered the cows (for) a burnt-offering,—עֹלָה, (without the ל prefixed,)—to the Lord. In the next chapter (ver. 9,) we have, in the marginal reading called the *Keri*, which is evidently right, the very same construction as in Jephthah's vow: the affixed pronoun,—וְהוּא,—is joined to the verb to express the thing offered, and the ל is omitted before the noun: "Then Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it (for) a burnt-offering (ויעלהו עולה) whole to

the Lord." For other examples, see Isa. xl. 16, and Jer. xix. 5. But in 2 Kings iii. 27, is a case exactly parallel to this of Jephthah. What Jephthah, according to the most direct import of his words and the Septuagint rendering of them, is supposed to have promised to do, the king of Moab, when sore pressed by the kings of Israel, Judah, and Edom, is affirmed to have done; and in precisely the same words joined in precisely the same construction. Of the king of Moab it is said, "Then took he his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him (for) a burnt-offering upon the wall." The words that express, *and offered him (for) a burnt-offering*, are *ויעלהו עלה*: Jephthah's are *והעליתיהו עולה*: the only difference is in the mood, tense and person of the verb, and a common variety in the spelling of the noun: the same affix, *—הו,*—is used in both; in both the *ל* is omitted.

It must now, I think, be evident, that although Dr. Randolph's interpretation may possibly be correct, its credit must stand entirely upon the strength of his first grammatical argument, the applicability of which to the case is, we have seen, not indisputable: his second, we find, is destitute of any validity whatsoever.

And it is no less evident, that, after all the labours of the learned to fix a sense upon Jephthah's vow which should exclude the idea that a human sacrifice was either intended by it or might be its unintended result, nothing satisfactory has been produced. It is still undeniable, that the old common translation, or rather the older one of the Septuagint, is that which naturally flows from the words, if taken in their regular construction. Certain it is, that if Jephthah had spoken English, and had said, "Whosoever cometh out of the doors of my house, &c.—shall be the Lord's, and I will offer him up for a burnt-offering;" and these words had been translated from English into Hebrew; they could not otherwise have been exactly rendered than by the very words which now stand in the Hebrew Bible.

Upon the whole, then, I think, it will be admitted, that the assertion in the Lecture is fully made out, 'that the most unforced inference from the language of the original, and from the history in general, is, that the sacrifice took place.' But as, nevertheless, there are other considerations which render it in the highest degree improbable that such a sacrifice did take place, it seems to be reasonable to conclude, that the letter is so framed as apparently to affirm it, because, otherwise, the subjects treated of in the spiritual sense, for the sake of which, pre-eminently, the letter is constructed, could not have been so fully represented. How important then does the doctrine of a spiritual sense become, as affording the only key to a satisfactory solution of such difficulties!

No. VII. (Page 575.)

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ARGUMENTS FOR THE LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF THE FIRST
PART OF GENESIS CONSIDERED.

I have stated in the text above, that the regarding of the early part of Genesis as a pure allegory, solves all the difficulties attending it, and is itself unattended by any. I am aware, however that difficulties have been attempted to be raised against the allegorical interpretation; but the arguments by which they are supported appear to me to be scarcely deserving of the least consideration,—to be such as would never have been offered but in behalf of a cause altogether indefensible. We will, here notice one or two that are most insisted on; being the only ones I have seen which make any approach towards plausibility.

It has been urged, that the account of Adam and Eve, and of the other antediluvian patriarchs, is referred to in the New Testament as real. But, certainly, nothing is any where said of them which is not as applicable to the spiritual as to the literal acceptation of the history. For instance: When Paul says, “that as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*,” the meaning is the same if we understand by Adam the first assemblage of human beings who were ever formed by God into a Church, and by the departure of whom from the primeval integrity man at this day inherits a corrupt nature, as if we understand by him a single individual: indeed it is perfectly evident, that the Apostle uses the term *Adam* for man’s state by nature. In like manner, when the genealogy of Jesus Christ is carried up to Adam, the true meaning is the same, whether some of those personages be purely allegorical characters or not. For although those from Abraham, or perhaps from Eber, were individual men who lived as such in the world, they still were all representative characters, and they are mentioned in that genealogy to denote certain species of human minds, or certain principles which enter into the composition of the human mind: these then are enumerated as ancestors, according to the flesh, of the Lord Jesus Christ, to inform us, that in his human nature was concentrated every thing belonging to the human character, from highest to lowest, from first to last; every thing that had ever entered into it, from the primeval times, when human nature appeared in its highest integrity, so as to be almost a pure, abstract essence, till the age in which he was born among the Jews, who then were the most gross and carnalized race that ever existed: thus that all was assumed, and all was redeemed, by him.

* 1 Cor. xv. 21.

Of the same nature is the objection of Lord Bolingbroke, whose statement is quoted by one of the advocates of the literal interpretation, and who introduces it thus: "Even Lord Bolingbroke (than whom Revelation never had a more subtle opposer) justly rejects the allegorical interpretation: '*It cannot (says he) be admitted by Christians; for if it was, what would become of that famous text [that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head,] whereon the doctrine of our redemption is founded?*'"* But the writer who has adduced this as authority, while he declares the subtilty of this opponent of revelation, has here, in his own simplicity, overlooked the snake in the grass. The passage he quotes is itself an example of the subtilty of the noble infidel; whose object, doubtless, was, to clog the belief of Revelation with all possible difficulties; and who therefore wished to shut out the allegorical interpretation of this part of the Word of God, because he saw that, if this were admitted, no solid objection would lie against it. Whether the woman spoken of in this prophecy denote the first female of the human race, or human nature in general as to its principle of affection or will, it equally was fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was as truly the seed of the woman in the spiritual as in the literal sense of the words.

In another instance it has been attempted to overturn the whole doctrine of allegorical interpretation by a quibble: it has been said, that "a figurative fall would require only a figurative redemption." But it is not the fall itself which the allegorical interpretation represents as figurative, but the description of it: the fall itself it considers as real, and, of course, that it required a real redemption.

Altogether then, I trust, it must be seen, that every consideration which can be brought to bear upon this question, confirms the fact, that the history in this part of Genesis is a continued allegory; and that no reasonable objection can be raised against it.

No. VIII.



REMARKS ON THE RECENT VOLUME OF BAMPTON LECTURES, BY THE LATE REV. J. J. CONYBEARE, M. A.; AND ON THE SUPPORT IT AFFORDS TO THE LEADING PRINCIPLE OF THE PRESENT WORK.

It has yielded no small encouragement to the Author of the work

* Horne's *Introd.* vol. i. p. 174.

now offered to the public, to see issue from the press while these Lectures were in it, a volume which, to a considerable extent, espouses and most ably maintains the same argument; a volume, also, the character and intrinsic merits of which must recommend it to a large and influential body of readers: whilst it can hardly fail to generate, in the minds of many who peruse it, ideas upon the spiritual interpretation of Scripture, which nothing but such a consistent system as the present work endeavours to develop can satisfy and fill. As was to be expected, the amiable and learned author, whose sudden loss to the church of which he was so decided an ornament I sincerely unite with her in lamenting, does not attempt to free the system of spiritual interpretation from those incumbrances and inconsistencies, with which, as has been noticed in our Lectures above, it has in modern ages been crippled. But the reason evidently is, because he had not found in the writers on Scripture-interpretation whom he had examined, any Rule of uniform and universal application. Had such a regular system been presented to him, it appears reasonable to infer, from the affirmative sentiments with which his mind was so strongly imbued on the general question, that he would have accepted it with joy; and therefore, beside the general grounds for regretting his premature removal, I cannot but think that I have a personal one also, and that the present work has lost by the dispensation, not only a well qualified and candid, but, in addition, a favourable judge.

Mr. Conybeare (who was brother to the gentleman from whose valuable writings on Geology an extract or two are taken in our Lecture above*), describes his work as "An attempt to trace the history, and to ascertain the limits, of the Secondary and Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture;" and the argument of the whole is precisely the same, though in a form so much more extended, as that of the third Section of our second Lecture. Had not *our* work been so enlarged as almost to render the single volume to which it is necessarily, by its original plan, confined, a book of inconvenient bulk, I should have deemed it advisable,—for certainly it would materially promote my own design,—to examine these Bampton Lectures at a length proportioned to their importance and interest: as it is, I must confine my notice of them to a few quotations and some brief remarks. Not to notice them at all would be doing equal injustice to my readers and myself.

The first Lecture, after proposing the design of the work, is chiefly occupied with arguments on the reasonableness and necessity of admitting the Scriptures to contain, in general, a spiritual sense, and against

* P. 560, 561.

the low principles of Scripture-interpretation which have become general on the continent.

In the following passage the author advances *several* of the principles which we have endeavoured to establish in this work: "However we may scruple (as many in the fair and legitimate exercise of private judgment doubtless will scruple) to follow the more learned and eminent of these [the authors who have enumerated several divisions and varieties of the spiritual sense] to the full extent of their respective theories; yet, that such a secondary and spiritual meaning was, from the earliest period, partially at least, involved in the traditional and written monuments of the Jewish faith, cannot, we hold, be fairly and successfully denied; cannot even be doubted by any one who, with a belief in their inspiration, and an unprejudiced and impartial frame of mind, applies himself to the study of the books of Moses. Nor can this position be reasonably objected to *a priori* as appearing unnatural or improbable; for in the earlier and simpler stages of society and language, such a mode of giving utterance to the conceptions of mind, so far from seeming rare and unintelligible, is known to have been usually more prevalent and popular.* The original signification of those metaphors, which make up so large a part of all language both spoken and written, must then have been fresher in the memory of man; they were daily, if we may so express ourselves, in the process of being increased in their number, and extended and modified in their import, as the occurrence of new ideas or new associations demanded. The mind habituated to this process would catch and retain, with quite sufficient rapidity and distinctness, the truths and instructions conveyed through the medium of those images and allegories, which in fact do so largely and constantly present themselves in the literature, both sacred and profane, of the ruder ages.† It may be added, that the wisdom and theology of the Egyptians, to whose customs the Israelites had been so long inured, appear, from the remotest antiquity to which we can trace them, to have been involved in figurative and mystical representations. The whole hieroglyphical system must have been little else than a tissue of metaphor and allegory addressed to the eye instead of the ear.‡ These considerations might well lead us to suspect, that even they whom we regard as having needlessly and fancifully assumed or exaggerated the mystical sense of many parts of the Mosaic record, are at least not more *unphilosophical* than they who utterly proscribe every interpretation of the kind, however sanctioned by the

* See our Lect. III. p. 170, &c. and p. 190, &c.

† See our Lect. VI. p. 566, &c. and p. 571, &c.

‡ See our Lect. III. p. 216, &c.

authority of the New Testament, or countenanced by fair and reasonable analogies.”*

The length of time during which this doctrine was that of the Christian Church universal, is brought down by Mr. C. later than by me; for he says, “The truth and reasonableness of this view of the Mosaic records has been acknowledged, until within the last half century, by the whole, or nearly the whole, of the Christian Church.”†

He quotes and adopts, with unreserved commendation, a sentiment of “the learned Spencer,” in which “he acknowledges unhesitatingly the distinction between the ‘*Scriptura exterior cujus sensus minime difficilis se cuivis offert,*’ and the ‘*Scriptura interior legis mirabilia continens, quæ ut planius et apertius intueatur psalmista oculos resectos expetit.*’”‡

I might add some powerful reasoning of our author in confirmation of his assertion, that “we not only find that our Lord and his followers themselves affix a secondary and more exalted sense to many passages of the Old Testament, but that they argue as though such a principle of interpretation were acknowledged as legitimate §:” but I will only take further, from the first Lecture, some remarks which are exactly coincident with some of my own, respecting those Christian teachers who would reject the spiritual sense of the Scriptures altogether. “We may grant,” says Mr. C., “somewhat to the influence of outward circumstances, somewhat more perhaps to the alleged, and, we hope, sincere desire of conciliating the open adversaries of our faith||; a conciliation however seldom effected, and certainly not worth the purchasing, by the surrender of nearly all that distinguishes the Gospel from the mere philosophical creed of the deist¶; but where we are told, in a voice purporting to be that of all the reasonable divines of protestant Europe, that every type, every prophecy, every adumbration of the Messiah’s work and kingdom, to which we have been accustomed to look for the confirming our faith and the invigorating our devotion, is to be at once and entirely discarded, as matter of nothing better than Jewish superstition; where we see this rejection of all spiritual interpretation coupled with an undisguised anxiety to divest even the historical relations of Scripture of every thing exceeding human powers and attainments**, we are assuredly tempted for the moment to inquire, Can these men be Christians?”††

* P. 13 to 16.

† P. 19. See our Lecture II. p. 90.

‡ P. 20. See our Lect. II. p. 70. § P. 24. See our Lect. II. 72, &c. & p. 79, &c. || See our Lect. I. p. 10, &c. Lect. II. p. 47 and 57.

¶ See our Lect. I. p. 13, 14. ** See our Lect. I. p. 11, 12.

†† P. 30, 31.

He afterwards shews that it is an unfounded error to suppose, as some would have us, that the spiritual interpretation of the Scriptures, introduced into Christianity from its foundation, originated with, or even prevailed among, the Pharisees, or that it was borrowed from them or the other Jews.

The design of the *six* next Lectures is to evince, that the principles which thus appear evidently proposed to us upon the face of the Scriptures themselves, have accordingly been assumed and acted upon by the whole body of interpreters of Scripture till within a very recent period; in reference to which fact he observes, "It is both useful and gratifying to find, that those opinions which we believe to be grounded on the firm warranty of Scripture and of reason, have received the support of the wise and the pious in former ages."* Here then they who may wish to see a more detailed and complete examination of this important point than could be afforded by the brief and popular view given in our second Lecture†, will find ample satisfaction: but the two accounts differ in nothing but their length and form; in their tenor and conclusions they exactly coincide.

Having in his second Lecture remarked upon the traces of this mode of interpretation which are found in the Apocryphal books of the Old Testament, and upon the manner in which it was cultivated by the Judaic school of philosophy at Alexandria, and especially by the celebrated Philo; Mr. C. commences his third Lecture with these important remarks: "In the two former Lectures it was endeavoured to shew, that there were reasonable grounds for attaching a secondary and spiritual sense to much of the Law and the Prophets; and that such was, as far as we have the opportunity of ascertaining matters of this nature, the opinion, if not of the whole Jewish church, yet certainly of many among its most learned and pious members. That the practice of such interpretation was carried by some to an unwarrantable excess‡, affords no proof that it was not originally founded upon just conceptions of the character of the older revelation, or that it is repugnant to the wise and benevolent intentions of Him by whom all Scripture was given, and to *whom were known all his works from the beginning*. The course of our inquiry has now brought us to that period, at which the preaching of a new and more perfect dispensation was committed by its divine Author to the apostles and ministers of his choice; committed with the express assurance, and confirmed and sanctioned by the conscious and sensible presence of his informing Spirit. If we believe them to have spoken and written under the gui-

* P. 11.

† Sec. iii. § 4. p. 90, &c.

‡ See our Lect. II. p. 96 and 101; Lect. III. p. 130, 131.

dance of that Spirit, to have been *led* (as it was promised) *into all truth*; if we hold upon any theory the proper inspiration of that which they delivered; I do not see with what consistency we can refuse (as some would do) to acquiesce in their interpretation of the Scriptures of the Old Testament. That to these Scriptures they do affix a secondary and spiritual meaning, and that they refer to them with this view, not merely in a few partial and dubious instances, but repeatedly, and with a distinctness only to be questioned by the most determined prejudice, seems equally clear.* If indeed with one school we are to deny the existence of all types and prefigurations of the Messiah and his kingdom, and to contend that where the Law is said to have had a shadow of the good things to come, no more is meant than that in comparison with the gospel it was as valueless as a shadow when compared to a substance^a; we would answer, that such a theory claims for plain and specific language a much greater laxity and licence of interpretation than any which it objects to. If with others^b we attempt to resolve the whole into one system of accommodation, we certainly do not a little shake the credibility of those witnesses who could rest so much upon so sandy a foundation. But the writers of the New Testament in no place appear either to confess or to suspect that the secondary or allegorical sense, which they attach to the Law and the Prophets, are [is] thus arbitrary and unreal. That we are content to regard some few instances of obscure application as thus accommodated, (and the lists usually given of such accommodations might indeed be much reduced,) does not, any more than the exceptions in various other cases, invalidate the general rule."

On this subject the author introduces this highly judicious remark; "And here I would venture even to submit, whether, as we consent, both from their own internal evidence and from the acknowledged inspiration of those who adduce them, to receive the great bulk of the Scriptural quotations so adduced in the New Testament as truly and originally typical and prophetic, it may not be the part of Christian humility and sober criticism rather to suspend the judgment as to those few which present real difficulties, than to attempt the accounting for or reconciling them by any hypothesis of accommodation, or partial and individual application; by conceding that they are no more than ornaments of diction or at best *argumenta ad hominem*."[†] The most difficult of the supposed accommodations are a quotation or two in Mat-

* See our Lect. 11. p. 79, &c. and Appendix, No. I.

^a "This is the hypothesis of Sykes in his answer to Collins.

^b "This hypothesis the theologians of modern Germany have derived chiefly from the school of Le Clerc.

† P. 75 to 80.

thew's Gospel ; but from these all difficulty would vanish, if we understood the spiritual sense of both the records.

The preceding remarks relate to the Old Testament ; but our author equally contends for the spiritual sense of *part*, at least, of the New. " It cannot," he observes, " be denied or questioned, that even in the records of the new covenant, the things which concern the renewal of the inner man, and the salvation of the believer, are in more than one case shadowed out to us under types and analogies, which, if we accept the testimony of those records, we are not only authorized but bound to understand and to apply spiritually. To pass over much of that part of our Lord's teaching which was confessedly *in parables* ; if we allow that there be any spiritual grace connected with the right usage and reception of the Christian sacraments, we must admit their outward elements to be the certain and pre-ordained symbols of that grace, and of the means whereby it is conveyed to us : we must (be it spoken with reverence and faith) admit the material body and blood of our glorious Redeemer himself to be typical of that spiritual food whereby the inward life of the believer's soul, that life which, as we are expressly told, *is hidden with Christ in God*, is produced and supported.* When the apostle urges, (in which our church has well and wisely followed him,) that as our Saviour died and rose again for us, so should we who are buried with him in baptism die unto sin and rise again unto righteousness ; when he expressly exhorts the believers as *those who are risen with Christ* ; we cannot deny that he sees in the history of thus much at least of his Master's life a spiritual as well as a literal import. The luxuriance of human ingenuity may indeed, as it has often done, push its imitation of these mysterious analogies much too far ; the pride of scepticism may refuse to be taught at all after this manner, and its votary may question the inspiration of those Scriptures which would thus teach him : but neither the abuses of the one nor the perverseness of the other can invalidate the truth of the general position, that the New Testament does not only assert the secondary and spiritual meaning of much that is contained in the Old, but authorizes and strengthens the legitimacy of such interpretation by affixing the like to portions also of its own contents."†

These extracts are quite sufficient to shew, how decided is the support which Mr. C.'s work lends to the doctrine of the spiritual interpretation of Scripture. If it is thus certain, that " portions," at least, of the productions of Inspiration possess a spiritual sense, it is equally certain that they possess it universally ; as has, I apprehend, been

* See our Lect. V. p. 535 to 538.

† P. 82, 83.

fully proved in our Lectures above.* One position being granted, the other follows of course. It is most true, as our author remarks, that if “the practice of such interpretation was carried by some to an unwarrantable excess, this affords no proof that it was not originally founded upon just conceptions of the character of revelation, or that it is repugnant to the intentions of Him by whom all Scripture was given:” but in what consists this excess? Not in applying it universally, but without a just knowledge of its nature: not in drawing from every part of Scripture a spiritual sense, but in deducing from it, under the name of the spiritual sense, notions of mere human invention; or rather, in inventing such notions and endeavouring to force them into the Scriptures. It is thus that “the luxuriance of human ingenuity may indeed, as it often has done, push its imitation of these mysterious analogies much too far;” being ignorant of the real analogies, it substitutes for them some of its own: but this no more proves that the abused passages have no spiritual analogies properly belonging to them, than the personation of the Earl of Warwick, Edward Plantagenet, by Lambert Simnel, proved that no such Earl of Warwick existed. Hence no negative conclusion can be drawn against the affirmative principle thus established, from the circumstance, that when Mr. C., after having in the six intermediate Lectures traced the history of spiritual interpretation, and shewn that it was, for many ages, universally admitted to be of universal application, and never entirely denied till within a very recent period, comes, in his last Lecture, to attempt to ascertain its limits, he exhibits some doubt and vacillation; for doubt and vacillation must, as has been shewn in our Lectures above†, ever attend on the expositor, who, while he admits the principle at all, is deterred from accepting it as universal, by the extravagances into which some have run, who have been guided, in their endeavours to decipher it, by no more certain clew than fancy or conjecture. This is evidently the origin of Mr. C.’s attempted limitations; and thus, instead of proving the non-universality of the spiritual sense, they only prove the want and necessity of such a universal rule for its developement as we have endeavoured to present in this work. Many of the expositions which he details, as samples of the spiritual mode of interpretation as practised in different ages, are certainly sufficiently capricious and unfounded: and though he gives some which he acknowledges to be striking and beautiful, and others which he objects to only because the letter is plain and intelligible without them; (a strange objection, by the by, to follow the admission, respecting the plain and intelligible history of the death

* See our Lect. IV. p. 250, 251, 297, 298. Lect. V. p. 398 to 403.

† Ibid. See particularly the Note, p. 403 to 408.

and resurrection of Jesus, that “thus much *at least* of his life had a spiritual as well as literal import;”) yet it seems as if the wading through so immense a chaos of contradiction and confusion as he was compelled to examine to obtain the materials for this learned part of his work, had had rather an unfavourable effect upon his judgment, and had scarcely left it proof against the effects of unavoidable disgust. His mind was evidently in a state here of great indecision. The doctrine of a spiritual sense, so long as it is supposed, if it exists at all, to be the consequence of arbitrary appointment, is attended with difficulty*; but when it is seen, as we have endeavoured to evince is the fact, to be the result of an immutable law of nature, and absolutely essential to, and inseparable from, the truly divine style of writing†; all difficulty disappears. Then its universal becomes far more defensible than its partial existence. Not even “the pride of scepticism” can then allege a plausible argument against it, or for “refusing to be taught after this manner;” and the votary of scepticism, instead of drawing from it a plea for “questioning the inspiration of the Scriptures which would thus teach him,” may find in it a proof demonstrative of their divinity.‡ I cannot, then, but believe, that had this view of the subject³ been presented to Mr. C., he would have accepted it with eagerness: for he certainly rather considered it impracticable, upon any principles with which his researches had brought him acquainted, to discover the true spiritual sense of the Scriptures, except where it is pointed out by the apostles, than actually denied its universal existence. I would fain examine several of his positions, but my limits forbid. While he viewed the subject as being as yet enveloped in much obscurity, he evidently anticipated that the darkness would not be suffered to endure for ever.§ He decidedly admits the

* See our Lect. II. p. 111. — † See our Lecture IV. p. 228 to 242.

‡ Mr. C. frequently cites the judicious canon of the early fathers, “Argumentum mysticum non valet ad probanda fidei dogmata,” which affirms the same principle as we have urged in our second Lecture, p. 114, 115: but he surely extends it too far, when he seems to infer, that no argument can be drawn from the spiritual sense in proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. To prove *by* the spiritual sense a specific doctrine, is quite a different thing from proving, from the literal sense, and from rational and scientific considerations, that there *must be* a spiritual sense within, and that, if so, objections drawn from the letter not understood are invalid. Mr. C. makes his remark, (p. 316, note n,) in reference to a work, dedicated to the *Sceptic*, entitled “An Analytical View of Christianity:” How far that work may seem to provoke such an observation, I cannot say, having never seen it.

§ “All,” he observes, (p. 2, 3,) “who profess to accept and to search

Word of God to be still in a great measure a sealed book : but he doubtless believed the prophecies which announce that this darkness shall have an end; that the time will come in which he who is **THE WORD** will open more of the contents of the written Word to his church; in which it shall be said, “the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof.”

Altogether, the appearance of such a work at the present juncture, from such a quarter, is not a little extraordinary. I have touched in these Lectures, and Mr. C. also dwells in his, upon the prevalence, in the present day, not only of absolute infidelity, but of low and unworthy ideas of the Scriptures among those who still profess to accept them as the sources of true religion; ideas which not only reign almost universally on the continent, but have spread their contagion in this country to a greater extent than Mr. C. might deem it prudent to notice. The influence of such sentiments is evidently rapidly increasing. According to appearance, the bulk of the Christian public is fast verging into such notions of the Divine Word, as differ from open infidelity in little but in name. In such a state of things, are we to regard Mr. C.'s publication as a vain attempt to check the spread of error, established, from the circumstances, that Anglican Church, or as a herald of the universal darkness, but for a moment, “ere universal darkness duly an?” Or may we hail it as the real harbinger of returning day? as the symptom of a new order of intelligence arising in the Christian mind of this country? as indicative of a state of preparation commencing among British Christians for the reception of just views of the Word of God,—for the diffusion among them of the genuine light of that Word? *Faxit Deus!* the Scriptures as the record and testimony of God, (without the exception even of those whom we regard, not perhaps unjustly, as leaning to the side of error and enthusiasm,) do uniformly admit that a partial, though not always an impenetrable cloud, yet rests upon the sanctuary of divine truth.”

THE END.

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